

# *TRANSPORTER*

## Chapter VIII

*“Your dad sure would be proud of you right now,” Yendor said patting Joseph on the back, “You’ve really got a good head on those shoulders of yours.”*

“That large triangle you have attached to your belt is only authorized for certain high ranking officers. Do you think that it might have some clues on how to operate the transporter?” Conrad said pointing to the large key in Denise’s belt.

Regis agreed, “That’s right. There are only a few dozen of those and only the highest ranking officers have them. Perhaps Conrad is right. Why don’t you read the characters on the triangle, it may give us an indication of what it is.”

Denise pulled the larger trinket from her belt and began to read the inscriptions on it. She got a puzzled but positive look on her face. She jotted some notes on her C-Tablet.

“I think we can make this work,” Denise said under her breath. “All I need is a little help from each of you and from the CPU. Then we should be able to transport.”

Then she spoke out loud. “First of all, I need all of my notes on the C-Tablet for the translations from the inscription under the orbs around the room. Next, I will need the large key, the map, and finally I need the CPU.”

Everyone jumped in to help. Mark pulled the CPU from his backpack and set it on the floor in front of him. The others organized the notes on the C-Tablet so that Denise could retrieve the information easily.

“What I need to do is name each of the kings in the order of their reign, next I have

to read the inscription on the larger triangle, at that point the blue org on the dome will open. After that all I have to do is insert this larger key.

From that point we will need the CPU to help us determine the place we want to transport by inputting the coordinates,” Denise recounted her instructions.

She began to read off the names of the kings in a strong voice: “Zorak....Durab....Sema Lah....Yug....Kellbora!”.

Nothing happened.

“Try again maybe you didn’t say it correctly,” Mark stated.

“No I don’t think that’s it, Hmmm.....” Denise contemplated her next move.

“I think I’ve got it!” Joseph jumped in. “If we use the helmet’s universal translator it will change the words into Reidforcian so the dome will be able to understand you.”

“Oh my word, Joseph, I should have thought of that myself,” responded Denise as she smiled up at him.

She donned the Reidforcian helmet Conrad had brought with him, and then repeated the order of the kings “Zorak ....Durab ....Sema Lah ....Yug ....Kellbora!”

A deep bellowing voice from within responded, “Yorkabo, Regarb, Decidi Fondugal, Gro, Benumbi.”

“What does that mean?” The group asked in unison.

“Never mind let me finish,” Denise said irritated. “The key before me is from the lineage of kings and by its power I command the dome to allow access from without,” she read from the key before her.

As soon as she finished reading, the diamond moved away from the emblem and a slot opened into which Denise inserted the special key she took from the officer. At that moment the dome lifted exposing the throne and allowing entrance. As they moved into the dome it became apparent that only six or seven would be able to travel together along with the equipment they had with them.

“Now what do we do?” Conrad questioned nobody in particular. “If only half of us can go who will be left behind?”

“Hopefully no one,” replied Dr. Xelco. “We just have to figure this out. By the way,

Denise, how long do we have before the dome returns to its normal state?”

“I don’t have a clue. There is nothing in the writings to indicate how long we can keep the door open. I just know that once we are gone the next group will have to repeat the entire process in order for them to follow us.”

“However, in order for us to use the transporter the Reidforcian helmet and the CPU have to go with the first party. The helmet is needed to give the instructions to the dome and the CPU is needed to compute the location of the ZX/2,” Denise continued.

“How are we going to decide who goes and who stays?” asked Yendor.

“We’ll need Denise to operate the dome, Conrad and Mark to reinstall the CPU, Regis, why don’t you go, and Dad, you have been through the worst of it. You go along too.” Joseph instructed. “I’ll take the rest through the hall. We’ll contact you using the communicators in the atmosphere suits when we are in view of the ZX/2 so you can cause enough of a distraction for us to safely get aboard. I just hope that they haven’t completely disassembled the craft by now.”

“Go ahead and get out of here before one of us changes their minds,” Joseph ordered. “But first give us your backpack Denise so we can have the extra supplies to help us out. Oh yeah, and how about the C-Tablet too, we wouldn’t want to get lost now, would we?”

“If they take all that other stuff the next group won’t be able to use the dome to leave,” pointed out Maxwell Linden, one of the prisoners.

“Couldn’t the second group go back through the prisoner’s hall?” Mark suggested trying to be helpful.

“That just might work,” agreed Dr. Xelco calmly. “Once outside we can create a diversion so the others can follow.”

They agreed that this would be the best plan. The only obstacle was how to get the large door open again now that they were inside.

Just then Yendor reminded them, “I think you have forgotten that the Reidforcians have found the ZX/2. We’ve got no idea where it’s being kept,”

“My guess is that it’s somewhere in the courtyard. They obviously have the ZX/2

since they had the CPU the courtyard would give them enough space to work on the craft. If the ZX/2 is in the courtyard, then when we exit the door at the end of the hallway, we should be able to see it,” Joseph suggested.

“And it’s going to be well protected,” added Conrad.

As Joseph, Yendor, Maxwell, and Somat, watched, Denise asked the CPU to give her coordinates.

“CPU, please give us the coordinates to where the ZX/2 was left,” Denise requested.

The CPU responded, “Fourteen... degrees... six... minutes... and... two... seconds... north... by... twenty... seven... degrees... two... minutes... zero... seconds... west,” laboring as the backup power drained from the CPU.

“Don’t forget to use the concealment device when you get there,” yelled Joseph.

Denise waved as she began to recite the coordinates to the dome.

Meanwhile Mark took the connectors on the harness of the atmosphere suit and checked them just in case it was going to be needed.

Suddenly the room glowed with the light from the charged lightning bolts as they flashed about the room, and then, just as quickly, the room returned to normal, except that the dome was now empty and the power field surrounded it once again.

“What do we do now?” asked Somat. “How do we get out of here?”

“Good question,” responded Joseph, “Hopefully I’ll have an answer for you in a minute or two.”

Joseph began exploring the surface of the door looking for a clue. The others joined in not sure what they were looking for.

“Am I mistaken or did Denise take the Key of Rashtad with her?” Regis asked hoping the answer was no.

“Oh my word, I think you’re right!” responded Joseph, “I never thought about that. Now what?”

The remaining prisoners sat against the wall. There had to be a solution to this problem, it just wasn’t coming to them.

Just then the massive door began to open. The amber light from the outside streamed

into the room changing the colors of everything in it, then in strutted a Reidforcian officer. The five remaining humans slid slowly behind the door and glued themselves against the walls hoping that he would not discover them.

The Reidforcian guard moved into the room and approached the transporter. The door closed tightly behind him. He bent down on one knee and began to recite the order of the dead rulers of the Reidforcian kings, “Yorkabo, Regarb Decidi.....”

Joseph leaped out of the dim light and flashed on his headlamp, directing it into the face of the officer. The guard grabbed the sides of his helmet and let out a horrifying yell. Yendor remembering how they had succumbed the guards earlier, jumped on top of the fallen warrior and pulled the helmet off of his head and Joseph finished him off. With the yell of terror filling the room the Reidforcian slowly died.

“What a lucky turn of events,” Joseph blurted out, “We now have the tools we need to get out of here.”

“One problem pal, we can’t read the symbols on this key,” responded Yendor.

“Perhaps I can be of some service,” a meek Maxwell chimed in. “I have a photographic memory, and I can remember exactly what Denise said and did to get out of here, including the coordinates to the ship,” he continued.

“You mean we can activate the transporter ourselves?” Joseph said excitedly.

“That’s right,” Maxwell answered back.

“The problem with that plan is that we would end up exactly where the other group is at. If they have encountered a problem we would be right in the middle of it,” Joseph said trying to make sure that what they were about to do would give them the best possible result.

“For one thing we aren’t sure if the ZX/2 is at the location the CPU calculated. Also, if they are on the ZX/2, they may have maneuvered it closer to the prison door to assist us in our escape, or perhaps worse, they may have been caught. We need to stick to the original plan. By approaching the craft from two different directions, if one of the teams has a problem, then other team can help. We now have the tools we need to get back to the hallway. Let’s follow the plan. We will need to be very cautious,” Joseph said taking

command of the situation.

“Your dad sure would be proud of you right now,” Yendor said patting Joseph on the back, “You’ve really got a good head on those shoulders of yours.”

“We’re not out of this yet, Yendor,” Joseph said while still contemplating the direction they should take.

“I think I should put on the Reidforcian armor,” Joseph directed. “Yendor put on this atmosphere suit and Maxwell pick up the transporter key from the floor over there.”

Everyone scurried about preparing for the next step.

“We now have the Key of Rashtad. That will make it easier to get through the doors. Joseph if you take a position behind us we might deceive the other guards into thinking that you have captured us again,” Maxwell commented.

“That was my plan exactly,” Joseph responded, “What two great brains we must have.”

After a few seconds the smaller triangles popped out of the door. Joseph pushed on them simultaneously. He took the Key of Rashtad, waited three seconds, and put it into the slot. Immediately the door responded, first by moving back and then sliding sideways into the wall allowing access to the hallway once again.

They slipped quietly out of the transporter room into the hallway. To the right they would return to the Processing Room and the other way to the hallway where the prisoners are kept. They moved to the door to the left and cautiously looked out into the hall. So far it was quiet.

“If we go to the left we’ll go to the dining hall. So we need to go right and move down to the exit. First, in order to protect ourselves, take some of the manstaka jelly and smear it on the floor over there,” Joseph pointed to the hallway leading to the dining hall.”

“That way if any of the guards should come out of their quarters they won’t be able to follow us,” Joseph conjectured.

Maxwell took the manstaka jelly out of the pack. He and Somat began to smear the goo across the floor. The jelly, being clear, was barely visible, but it represented a real threat to anyone trying to cross it.

The door to the hallway closed behind them, but presented no problem as the Key of Rashtad could re-open it easily. Joseph took a position behind the others and marched them down the long corridor. As they approached the door at the end of the hall, two Reidforcian guards stepped out and turned to confront the group.

“Congratulations Constine Morg, you have captured part of the escape group, but why are you taking them to the courtyard?” questioned one of the sentries.

Joseph gave them the arm salute then responded, “Lord Froth wants to set an example of these low lifes. He wants to have them executed in plain view of the other prisoners. For to defy Lord Froth is to die.”

“I beg your indulgence Constine (a Reidforcian rank equal to commander) but Lord Froth demanded that all prisoners be brought to the Processing Room for interrogation,” the sentry replied.

Yendor, realizing that they were in trouble, switched on his headlamp. The two guards fell to the ground in apparent pain while Maxwell and Somat prepared them for death. They pulled off the helmets while Yendor shone the light on their ugliness. The guards screamed in agony as their skulls collapsed.

“We need to take these guards and hide them!” Joseph ordered.

Joseph took the Key of Rashtad and opened the first door he came to so they could toss the guards into the cell. When he opened the door he didn’t consider that he had found another cell filled with prisoners; this time Bignols.

When they saw that it wasn’t a guard opening the door, but humans, they got very excited and began to ask all kinds of questions. When Joseph came around the corner in the Reidforcian armor, the Bignols crowded together and slumped to the floor, and began to whimper in obvious fear of the brute in the doorway. Only Joseph could understand their cries of panic because of the universal translator built into his helmet.

He talked to them trying to console them, “I’m not a Reidforcian. I’m a human. I only have this suit on so we they won’t discover us. This is the only way I can communicate with you. Please trust me,” Joseph pleaded with them as he took off his helmet to reveal that he was indeed an Earthling.

“What are you doing here, hu-mans. Why have you invaded our cell?” questioned one of the voices in the crowd in clear language.

One of the larger Bignols, which isn't saying much considering they are a small race to begin with, stepped forward and identified himself.

(Bignols are a unique race in the galaxy. They have pointed heads with a small amount of hair encircling the brow. Pointed ears stand almost to the tops of their pointed heads. They have bushy eyebrows above tiny little squinty eyes, and almost no nose at all. They use their mouths exclusively for talking as they ingest their food through a small pouch at the waist. They waddle when they walk because their legs are so stiff. The upper portion of their bodies is five times stronger than humans.)

“I am Fragon. I am the leader of the Bignols here on Reidforcia. I am formerly a government official. What is your purpose here?” he questioned.

“We accidentally chose to put the bodies of these two sentries in here. We just killed them and we needed a place hide them,” Joseph answered.

“You killed Reidforcians?” Fragon exclaimed. “How did you do that?”

“I can't answer that right now. We've got to leave,” responded Joseph somewhat irritated at the delay.

Yendor and Maxwell tossed the dead bodies into the cell. When the Bignols saw the bodies they couldn't believe what had happened. All they could see was the slime inside the helmets and the crushed of the dead sentries.

“You can't just leave us here now!” demanded Fragon. “If you leave those dead soldiers here they will blame us and then we will visit the Processing Room. You have to take us with you!” Fragon ordered Joseph as the six little creatures bolted for the door behind Fragon.

“Now what do we do?” asked Joseph the others.

“I guess we take them along,” replied Somat, “It's the least we can do for them.”

Now there were eleven of them. Joseph knew that it was going to be tougher for them to fool the guards anymore, but the door to the outside was just ahead.

“OK, come along,” Joseph agreed. “Yendor and Somat, get the weapons off of the

dead Reidfocians. We can also use the chronthium shields,” he continued.

After the Bignols put the soldiers at the back of their cell, Joseph opened the cell door and stepped out into the hallway.

He walked up to the massive door to the courtyard and tried to remember the code that Denise used to open it the first time. He turned the key in the center of the door two times to the left and three times to the right. Nothing happened. Then Joseph thought, “Maybe from this side it’s the opposite,” so he turned the key two times to the left and three times to the right. The exterior door opened.

Cautiously Joseph stepped into the doorway to the courtyard. He told the others to stay behind by motioning with his hand. To his surprise, there sat the *ZX/2*, in the middle of the compound, surrounded by an ominous group of guards.