

All That's Left

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Summary

2238: Rose Reilly leads a landing party to a colony world that's been attacked by Klingons, hoping desperately to find any signs of life.



The knot in her gut grew tighter by the second despite the years of training echoing in her brain telling her to remain calm. The *very* last thing she was in this moment was calm — angry, sad, furious at herself and this damned war, those things she could reach out and touch.

“Dropping out of warp now, sir,” helm reported. Rose Reilly forced herself to blink. A moment later their vessel was back in normal space, Davlos II before them.

The knot in her gut turned to an anchor and she could hear the small gasps around her. She stood from her chair. “Lifesigns?”

Her XO gave the answer anyone with eyes could have guessed. “I’m detecting none, Captain.” He stepped away from his console and stood next to her. “Rose, we couldn’t have know,” he whispered.

She stared at the planet and the clear destruction of the colony on it. Lights of homes had been replaced with scorched, burning earth. The colony had been razed to the ground and left the planet with a gaping wound for all to see.

She turned to her XO. “Commander, you have the bridge. Have a security team meet me in transporter room one. I’m going down there to confirm there are no survivors ... and I hope I fail.”

He looked at her for a long moment before giving a nod. “Aye, Captain.”

She walked with a brisk pace off the bridge, to the turbolift, and then rode that all the way down to the transporter room. Rationally, she knew this was pointless — the ship’s sensors were good enough to easily tell if there were any lifesigns from orbit. But she couldn’t just sit up here and do nothing.

Those people down there deserved they be thorough. They deserved to have every box checked before she reported this as another casualty of war.

Minutes later she and her security team were on the surface, as close as they could be to the former colony site. When the materialization process had completed, her senses were engulfed with the destruction the Klingons had wrought. They were on a tall mountain, overlooking the former colony site, the fires raging in the distance and the air thick with smoke.

She coughed into her elbow, her eyes watering, and opened her tricorder to confirm what she knew.

The tricorder told her exactly the same thing the sensors did: no lifesigns.

She stepped back, gathered herself, and looked towards her security team. “Fan out and scan the area. I know the odds are low ... but we owe it to these people.” Her team acknowledged the order and scattered.

Mercifully, she was now left alone. She stared out at the raging fires and forced herself to breathe the smoky, ash-filled air. This was all that remained of this place ... they had become another statistic in a war that had dragged on for three bloody years.

“What’s the point?” she asked aloud. “Why turn this place into a massacre? There’s no strategic value, no exotic resources.” She stared up at the sky, her hands trembling. “Bastards!” she screamed, over and over into the sky, for what felt like an eternity.

When the flash of rage had subsided, she found herself in tears — not from the smoke, not from the loss, but from anger.

Over 2,000 lives had been extinguished from orbit ... and the war still continued. The war *would* continue.

The sounds of rushing steps snapped her back to reality. She wiped her face, gathered her emotions, and stuffed back down as deeply as she could.

She turned to face the leader of her security forces and waved them off. “It’s fine, Lieutenant. I just needed a minute ... that’s all.”

The young officer, phaser in hand, gave a slow nod. “Sir, we’ve not found anyone alive.”

Rose nodded. “Then let’s get the hell out of here.” She called the team back, they beamed up, and she made her way to the bridge smelling of smoke and death.

The colony of Davlos II had been reduced to that ... a place of beauty turned to ash.

Like my soul, she observed as she resumed her duties.

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