

## A Choice of Betrayal

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### Summary

At the end of Galan's mission, he faces a difficult choice.

Galan walked quietly from engineering, keeping his pace casual and even. He tried not to look like he was in a rush. He wanted to look like he had legitimate business in engineering at this time of night. He ran through the procedures he had completed, anxious that he overlooked something, and that security would be coming around the corner to throw him back in the brig, where his jaunt aboard this ship had begun months ago.

Spend weeks meticulously observing and tracking security walk-arounds to nail down their schedule? Check. Throw a bug to freeze all the security cameras on his route? Check. Erase any digital trace left on the console in engineering? Check. Now all he had to do was bring his newly loaded datastick to the communications deck, upload the data through a secure Net connection to the nearby Romulan ship, erase all evidence of the transaction, and go back to bed. Simple enough.

He knew that he wouldn't be running into any security officers on his way to the communications deck. And he knew that nobody else would question his wandering, even this late at night. In the last few weeks, he had made a habit of going for late night strolls through the decks— he had trouble sleeping, he would say when anyone asked. By now, people *expected* to see him wandering. He nodded to a few of them when he passed them in the hall. When he got to the communications room, he paused in front of the door, checking to make sure nobody would see him enter, then he slipped inside. He kept the lights off in the empty room, in case anyone happened to walk in— it would give him an extra second to hide. But he didn't think that would be a problem.

He tapped at one of the consoles, waking it up, the bright screen casting an eerie glow on his face. As he moved to plug the datastick into the console, his hand trembled. He took a deep breath. Everything was almost over— everything had worked perfectly. So why was he so filled with dread?

He tapped away quickly at the console, opening a secure Net connection. Once he had established a direct, untraceable link to the Romulan ship, he was home free. At the click of a button, his mission would be complete.

But his finger froze just above that button. He felt his stomach rise into his throat. He realized that the anxiety he was feeling wasn't about getting caught. In fact, he realized that he *wished* he had been caught, to avoid the real source of his anxiety— choosing whether or not to go through with this.

Months ago, Galan had allowed himself to be captured, pleaded for asylum, lived in the *Jemison's* brig for weeks— slowly charming the senior crew and earning their trust. Eventually, they believed him and granted his asylum, and even kept him aboard their ship at his request. He had been captured and jailed, earned a new home and made friends all for this— copying vital Starfleet intel and transmitting it straight back to the people he claimed to seek asylum from.

He had accepted the deep cover mission because he thought he wouldn't get attached. It was only now that he realized his mistake. The friendships he made weren't fake— they had started that way, but as he slowly gained the trust and admiration of the crew, they had gained his.

Captain Okoro had been so generous in allowing him to make his home aboard her ship. Soran became his closest friend, even compared to his Romulan friends. People were skeptical of him at first, but by now they had warmed up to him and treated him like one of their own. And now, after all that, he was faced with a choice.

*Who do I betray?*

The only choice was betrayal, and Galan hated it. Neither option was ideal, and because he hadn't been caught, he was forced to decide. And he had very little time to do so.

Taking a deep breath, Galan clicked the transmit key. But not before activating a script to scramble it.

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