

All Save One

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Summary

On the cusp of new lives, a group of cadets must first survive the beginning of vengeance from humanity's distant past, as well as their ship's more recent past.

Near the Mutara Sector
2285

Chandra watches her foster-sister in the garish red glow of the emergency lighting. Kaylin fights to keep her balance as another phaser blast strikes the *Enterprise*. She hears Admiral Kirk's voice, a sea of calm on the bridge, trying to make order out of the chaos. She gets up with the extinguisher, aiming it at the nearest console in flames. She tries not to look at her friend, Emma Rosewarne, writhing in agony from the burns on her arms, her uniform sleeves in tatters.

Kaylin's eyes are huge, her sixteen-year-old mind trying to wrap her head around what had just happened on this 'routine training cruise.'

Probably not much better than the nineteen-year-old's, Chandra thinks. She tries to take stock of her friends—her fellow firsties—the ones almost set to graduate as officers; the first round of their class rankings had been published and they had all made it, so far, taking their first steps as Ensigns (Midshipmen).

For most of her tight-knit group, she didn't have to try to find them in the bond of her Gifts. Morgan McMurtry-Walsh, who insisted that they not call her by her actual given name of Michaela, to distance herself from her father, just promoted to admiral, is over trying to get a vital subsystems console working.

Nell Cavendish, her tall frame on her knees, is trying to help Emma. Chandra hears Jamie Blackthorne—Croft's—voice calmly answering Mr. Sulu on the intercom from the torpedo room that he is in charge of.

There is only one that she has no direct or indirect way of finding. Not without the bonding that the six of them had formed. A bonding of classmates, of friends, and of occasional lovers that they had formed from their first year, in the time they had been plebes, just like Kaylin.

She closes her eyes, reaching out in the Link, the psychic, empathic aspect of that bond, the aspect beyond what Deltans are known for. She reaches out for Roged Meeliy, the Rigellian member of their little gang, as a certain tactical officer had termed them, usually in frustration. The most reserved of them, one of five distinct genders of their people.

Now down in the engine room, along with Kaylin's friend and fellow plebe, Peter Preston.

Her hearts twist in despair as she can't find his unique presence in the bond. She shakes her head of the sinking feeling that Roged would never pin on their arrowhead as a junior officer.

She looks at Kaylin's eyes, tears streaming down them, as she holds her extinguisher slack in her hands.

"Come on, ta'eh-bray," she says quietly, not bothering with the 'foster' prefix to the words in her language.

Kaylin's eyes continue to leak, but she moves over to another gout of flame. Chandra is about to join her, but stops as she sees the *Reliant* moving away on the viewer.

A sparkling, spinning circle launching from the aft portion of her hull.

“Brace for impact!”

“Too late,” comes the calm tones of Captain Spock.

Chandra feels herself go flying. She impacts with another console, screaming as something gives in her ribcage.

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