

From the Ice, An Opportunity

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by [B_Radley](#)

Summary

A foster-daughter gets a chance for a small escape.

Notes

NOTE: Vilaah hasn't shown up quite yet in the storylines, but will. Content warning for shitty foster parents.

Amnesty

Andoria

Vilaah G'atorin feels the burn of the cold on the small bits of exposed skin around her eyes as she swings the ushaan-tor into the ice. As she cuts out a perfect section of ice, she hears the old miner beside her grunt in something that sounds like the very tiniest version of approval.

"Not bad," L'aora says. "You've finally achieved something that a six-year-old apprentice should be able to do." She does give a slight smile, to take the sting from her words.

Vilaah tamps down her sarcastic reply, then turns back to the field. As she does, a large hand clamps on her shoulder, yanking her away from the ice. She whirls to find herself staring into the nonstandard golden eyes of her father's bodyguard and muscle, J'ank.

"So I've got to go into the cold outside of the cities to find you once again, whelp," he says, his antennae twitching in anger. "I swore I'd never go back to the ice fields. If your father doesn't tan your hide blue, I'll be glad to do it myself." He makes to seize the knife from her, but she evades his grasp and finishes the move she'd watched on numerous holosites with the blade flush against his throat.

For an instant, she sees something else in his shocked expression. She shoves the thoughts of his approval down as she holds the blade. Beside her, the other miners watch the driver who had accompanied J'ank, their blades held loosely, but ready.

"Keep it," J'ank says. "But you're coming with us. If we have to have the company mine-bulls sweep this place, we will." His eyes flit to the others. She drops the blade away from his throat, but true to her wishes, she keeps it in her hands.

She looks down in the floor in her father's study. Edanic G'atorin stares at her over the work on his desk. Without a word, she removes her outer layers, then moves over to the plasma fire. She smiles to herself as anger flows over his features.

Features that she doesn't share.

"I guess I should've figured that you'd go out into the ice again. What is this, J'ank? The twelfth time?"

"I've lost count, sir," the muscle replies.

"It's something that I've come to expect," Edanic says. "From someone plucked from the gutter."

She feels a stab of anger through her heart, but she manages to tamp it down. Even though her 'father' wouldn't lift a finger, he had the threat

of J'ank to do it for him.

Just like he has minions in Section 31 to perform other, even less pleasant tasks for him. She shoves thoughts of that organization away. He doesn't know that she knows.

"You were sponsored in the Enclave by me, for one thing. I'm beginning to believe you'll forget your training. I should send you back," he finishes, looking at his fingernails.

She feels her heart twist.

He shakes his head after a long minute. "Your Gift-mother won't let me do that," he says. She feels a stab of annoyance at that title. *You mean the Gift-woman you married*, she thinks.

He lifts a PADD from his desk. "You've got awhile before your duty comes due," he says. "I guess I'll have to find a way to channel your energy into something I can use." He slides it towards her.

"You've qualified for an appointment to Starfleet Academy, as a cadet, rather than just a trainee-crewman. In fact, you've highly qualified. At least I'm getting my money's worth in that." He stares at her for a bit. "You're a bit older than normal, but nineteen isn't too old. Plus you've got two years of academic credits towards a degree. You can perhaps concentrate on learning your technical skill, and maybe a bit of discipline."

The excitement builds in her, as he turns away. Something she had desired above all else, even when she was an apprentice at the Enclave, staring at the stars.

He returns to his work, dismissing her.

J'ank leads her out. "We've got time. I can maybe teach you proper fighting with your blade."

She barely hears him through her joy.

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