

## The Blade

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## The Blade

by [Gibraltar](#)

### Summary

Some promises demand to be kept.

\*This story is in response to the Weekly Challenge #54 - Postcards from the Other Side

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The ice moon of Andoria was, in stark contrast, populated by a hot-blooded people.

The most martially minded of the Federation's founding members, the Andorians were passionate, quarrelsome, and fierce, traits that had seen many of their people rise to the apex of Federation leadership in many positions over the centuries. Once enemies to the Vulcans, the Andorians had matured over the intervening decades, improving relations with former adversaries and scaling back the size of their Imperial Guard. They had collectively allowed more of their young people to join Starfleet, where they might serve the interests of the whole Federation rather than those of Andoria alone.

Newly promoted Commodore Nandi Trujillo sat still and tried not to fidget as her shuttle entered the planet's upper atmosphere. She had taken two full weeks of leave to travel to the core from near the frontier, all for a task she was less and less sure would be welcomed.

The death of a loved one was hard enough without some stranger arriving to reopen wounds that had only just begun to heal.

Truth be told, Trujillo feared that this gesture might just be to salve her own conscience for not having been able to save the officer in question.

In the twenty-nine years since she had first put on a Starfleet uniform, she had never set foot on Andoria. Trujillo had been to the system's starbase a dozen times but had never had cause to go to the surface.

That changed today.

In a small meeting room in a Starfleet Academy Annex campus in the capital city, Trujillo was introduced to the three spouses, two children, mother, and maternal grandmother of Starfleet Lieutenant Jaron'Jesh, an Andorian officer.

It was a small gathering due to the sensitive nature of the contact and the fact that Starfleet was loath to acknowledge the reason behind it. Command found Trujillo's actions distasteful, no matter how culturally appropriate.

Jaron'Jesh's previous and final assignment had been to the Joint Orbital Interdiction Mission, the Federation/Klingon cooperative effort to prevent the remains of the shattered moon Praxis from colliding with the Klingon homeworld, Qo'noS. Because of a renewed campaign of hostilities against neighboring species, Starfleet had sent a task force under Trujillo's command to retrieve their personnel and to end the decades-long joint mission.

During a tense standoff with the Klingon military, Jaron'Jesh and his fellow personnel had become hostages of the Empire, their lives to be exchanged in return for a Klingon national secreted aboard Trujillo's ship.

To prove his resolve, Klingon Commander Verad had vaporized Jaron'Jesh in an impulsive act of violence that Trujillo had been unable to stop.

Trujillo had yearned for vengeance, but her duty denied her such satisfaction in that moment. Later, while egressing the system, *Reykjavik* had been cut off by Verad and his squadron of ships. Trujillo had sworn an oath that if Verad did not stand down and forced a confrontation with her, she would claim the knife on his belt, its handle emblazoned with his family's sigil. She had told Verad the blade would be given to the Andorian's family as recompense for his unjust murder. Verad had refused to yield, and Trujillo had made good on her promise.

Trujillo stepped forward, a lump in her throat, her eyes locked on Jaron'Jesh's spouses and their expressions, fixed as ancient glaciers.

She reached out to present the sheathed *d'k tahg* knife to them, atop a folded flag bearing his family's crest. The Andorian ambassador herself had recommended that touch.

"I regret that I was not able to save your mate. That failure is mine. I present this small token of my remorse, a weapon worn by the person who took his life. That death has been avenged."

Two males and one female reached out as one, taking hold of the knife and flag. The eldest among them spoke. "We thank you for this gift, and for the consideration shown to Jaron'Jesh. This is not something we would have expected from Starfleet, and it is gratefully accepted."

And with that, the deed was done, the promise kept.

She hoped that sleep might now return to her.

\* \* \*

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