

Lōkāhi

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“Remind me to never let Tamara take me for a girls’ night out again.” Grae said to herself as she lay in her bed, in the dark, grasping at her aching head. Even the normal gentle vibration of the TARDIS’ engines seemed a few decibels louder than usual, the gentle, dim lighting from behind the roundels, even brighter. “This must be what death feels like.”

Slowly, gently, she pulled the covers over her head then turned over onto her stomach and moaned, “Why can’t I shake this.”

During the course of the night, Grae had alternated between being very warm and uncomfortably hot and had since stripped everything off her save a thin sleeveless t-shirt and a pair of boxer shorts. Now she was cold and trembling, but in too much pain to move to retrieve her duvet. She had been tossing and turning for hours, surely it was near time to wake up. Today was Saturday, and she was supposed to check her lindos levels. How would the three and a half Margaritas she drank the night before effect her blood test?

Suddenly, her door was thrown open and the lights turned on in a flash. Grae pulled the blankets over her head, cowering from the lights

“Wake up!” Tamara shouted as she rushed into the room.

“Grae’s not here,” the hung-over young woman replied, “but if you’d like to leave a message, please do so at the bleep.” Then she added, deadpan: “Bleep.”

“You’ll never believe where we’ve landed!” Tamara sang as she sat on the edge of Grae’s bed. “Go on, guess where we are!”

“A Tibetan Monastery, late on a Friday night just in time for a fun-filled evening of ‘Name that Chant?’” Grae sarcastically guessed. “As long as it’s quiet, calm and cool, I’m all for it. Or rather I will be in about twelve hours time.”

“I’ll give you one hint.” Tamara asked, “Do you want it?”

“Alright, Tamara, I’ll bite. What’s the hint?”

Grae’s body broke out in gooseflesh as Tamara ripped the covers off her bed.

“No wait!” Grae shouted as she fought to cover her body in embarrassment. She was able to open her eyes long enough to see a large cup full of water heading in her direction. Tamara jerked the cup quickly and it’s cold contents splashed into Grae’s shocked face, dribbling down over her neck and shoulders. Tamara laughed until she saw her friend there, in her underclothes, soaking wet and burning with anger.

“Oh Grae, I’m so sorry!” Tamara turned around; grabbed a fluffy green towel out of the top draw of the bureau and tossed it to her friend. Turning to the hot plate on Grae’s desk, Tamara added, “Here, let me make you some coffee.”

“Thanks,” Grae rose from her bed, wrapping the towel around her torso, “I needed to snap out of my funk anyway. Besides, I’ll get my own back when you least expect it.”

“Oh, will you now?” Tamara joked nonchalantly. “We’ll just have to see about that. How’s your head?”

“Actually it’s better now that I’ve taken my mind off it for a bit.” Grae answered.

“Coffee’s up.” Tamara poured the coffee into a large blue cappuccino-style mug and offered it to the young Time Lord.

Grae took the coffee mug with both hands and took a big sip. She shivered ever so slightly as the warmth filled her body from head to toe. Her headache began to dissipate as well. By the time the cup was empty, she felt a good deal better. She walked to the shower, undoing her waist length hair from the intricate braids she had done up the night before. Closing the frosted glass shower door behind her, Grae tossed her clothes over the top and ran the water hot.

“You never did tell me where we’ve landed.” Grae shouted over the sound of the water.

“Remember how I told you that my brother, Shawn, was stationed in Honolulu?” Tamara shouted back.

“We’re in Honolulu?”

“Well, we’re close enough!”

“What’s so special about Honolulu?” Grae turned the water off and stepped from the shower with a towel wrapped about her torso.

“Well,” Tamara began, “I haven’t been to the Hawaiian islands since I was a kid, but it’s so beautiful there.” Tamara turned away from the young woman as she began to dress.

“Why?” Grae asked.

“Why?”

“Why is it so beautiful?” Grae asked as she finished dressing and turned her friend around by the shoulders.

“Well,” Tamara responded, as she looked her friend over, “for reasons that you’ll see pretty quick in that outfit.”

“What’s wrong with my outfit?” Grae asked her friend. Tamara bought her the outfit during their recent stay in London. Grae thought she looked particularly nice in the khaki dress slacks and sleeveless white v-neck pullover. She looked over Tamara’s yellow sundress and wondered if she should ask to borrow one.

“There’s nothing wrong with it,” Tamara explained, “it’s just not appropriate for the Hawaiian Islands.”

“Oooh, a different kind of island from Great Britain, then? Tropical islands, then?” Grae said with a smile. “Now I’m interested! I get the water joke, but I don’t have any warm weather clothes.”

“The Doctor’s getting us rooms at a resort,” Tamara said as she grabbed her friend’s hands and pulled her out of her bedroom, “there’s a shop in the lobby. We’ll get you some clothes and a new bathing suit, a green one, you look so good in green.”

* * * * *

The lobby of the resort was spectacular to say the least. A creamy marble lined the floor and lush tropical plants lined the walls. The whole of the lobby was in fact completely open to the air, which was very warm and extremely comfortable. The TARDIS had set down in a nice, enclosed grove of palm trees in the front grounds of the resort, out of sight from passers-by.

Tamara and Grae stepped out of the grove as a van from the local airport arrived. A group of tourists stepped from the van and were greeted warmly with leis. Tamara pulled Grae into the greeting line and they approached the young Polynesian man with a dozen leis draped on his arm.

“Aloha,” he said as he looked Grae over, “welcome to the Road to Hana Resort, Maui. Enjoy your stay.”

“Alo-ha?” she said, uncertain.

“Yes, aloha,” the young man said as he slid a ring of delicate purple flowers over her head, “it’s a greeting in our language.”

“Well, aloha then,” she said confidently, “and thank you for the lovely flowers.”

“My pleasure, Miss,” he replied with a smile, but she had already run into the lobby and hugged the Doctor who was standing at the reception desk. The young man’s eyes, however, followed her the entire way.

“Ahem,” Tamara cleared her throat and the young man snapped back around. “Come on kid, put your tongue back in your mouth and lei me.”

“Sorry Ma’am.” He placed the lei around Tamara’s neck then looked, embarrassed, at his feet.

“Ma’am,” Tamara muttered under her breath as she entered the lobby, “my arse.”

* * * * *

“Doctor *who*, exactly?” the concierge asked as he looked up from his computer. What a strange group! The man had longish brown hair and goatee and was medium height, fully dressed in long

grey trousers and a blue starry waistcoat that twinkled in the light. He was flanked by two gorgeous women: one lithe, athletic and of African descent and the other, small but curvy and with a definite Irish look about her and incredibly long hair. He made a mental note to look for them on the beach during his lunch break.

“Smith. Doctor John Smith.” Unimaginative, but it always works.

“Oh, Dr. Smith, of course. We received your reservation in advance. You didn’t specify how many rooms?”

“A three-room suite if you could manage it?”

“Yes, Sir,” the concierge answered as he keyed the information into his computer, “we are under the strictest orders to give you and your nieces everything you need for the duration of your stay.”

“How very kind of you,” the Doctor said as he snatched a butter mint from a bowl on the desk and popped it into his mouth.

“With all the unfortunate goings-on lately we have plenty of rooms available. Besides, it’s the least we can do for you, all things considered. You helped us out of quite a scrape last time you were here.”

The Doctor coughed as he choked on the mint.

“Doctor?” Grae took the Doctor by the arm. “What is he talking about?”

“I know I haven’t been here before,” the Doctor mumbled to the young woman, “have I?”

“Nonsense, Doctor,” Grae said cheerily, “any of your future selves could have traveled here in the past. You know that better than most. Just because this present is your past and your future has already visited here, doesn’t mean that we can’t stay here for a few days in your future self’s present future... or something like that.”

Tamara chuckled as the concierge’s mouth dropped open; his eyes glazed over.

She cleared her throat, “Ahem, can mere mortals be included in this conversation, *Uncle?*”

“Yes, come on *Uncle*,” Grae said as she turned him away from reception, “best we get you off your feet, it’s been such a long journey.”

“Thanks,” Tamara said as she smiled politely to the concierge and snatched up the keys, “could you send up a bottle of your best brandy and today’s paper? *Uncle Johnny’s* been on the road for a really long time and needs to take a load off.”

* * * * *

By the time the Doctor, Tamara and Grae stepped from the lift, the Doctor’s spirits had perked back up.

“I’m sorry about that.” The Doctor paused outside the door to their suite. “That came as a bit of a shock, but such is the nature of time travel. I’m used to running into my past selves in the present, but-”

“Listen, your little conundrum might have put the brain freeze on the Concierge, but,” Tamara started as she slid her key card through the locking mechanism and pushed the door open. “It doesn’t really matter: you have got to see this place.”

The Doctor and Grae entered arm in arm.

The suite was opulent. The main area, Grae noted, was larger than the TARDIS’ Zero Room but a similar pinkish colour. It was decorated with creamy coloured wicker covered furniture and lots of greenery. There was a large gift basket filled with candies and Macadamia nuts. The far end of the room opened onto a large lanai that overlooked the Pacific, in all its sapphire glory. Grae walked out on the lanai and plopped herself into a reclining beach chair. Closing her eyes, she took in the warm breeze over her skin and let the sound of the waves crash over her psyche, clearing her mind.

“I see what you mean Tamara.” She said happily. “I could get really used to this.”

“So could the Doctor.” Tamara walked onto the balcony with her friend. “He’s already asleep in an armchair.”

“You want to take a nap, too?”

“Why, do you?”

“Absolutely not!” Grae leapt to her feet. “Let’s go exploring!”

Tamara shook her head. “A better idea: let’s go swimming.”

* * * * *

The sound of an airplane overhead tore through the air. A young man speaking on the pay phone paused until the noise dissipated. Crowds passed by on their way to the luggage claim areas. Maui International was a busy airport, always bustling with people. Tourists mostly from the mainland, which is good as they’d never be able to comprehend how bad the situation had become. At least things were still beginning to fall into place.

“Still there?” he asked. “Good. Don’t worry, everything is going according to schedule.”

“I should hope so.” A voice responded. “Is there anything that could get in our way?”

“Houston, we have two problems.”

The voice paused. “Shit! I should have expected him to be here from your report. Good work, Keau. Houston always manages to show up with a problem or two. He never seems to travel alone.”

“That’s for sure.”

“Whenever Houston turns up, trouble follows.”

The man scratched at his unshaven chin. “Should I make a point to talk to him?”

“No, no, not yet. He has no reason to assume anything out of the ordinary is going on. Your job is to follow Wilson when he arrives and to make sure he’s never out of your sight.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Don’t worry Ben, we’ll be ready to back you up if needed. The dossier should arrive tomorrow. Don’t let it out of your hands.”

* * * * *

“Now what, exactly, is a bikini?” Grae asked as Tamara grabbed her by the wrist and pulled her into the Hotel gift shop.

“Ta da!” Tamara cheered as she pulled a very peculiar pair of pale green objects strung over a clothes hanger from a nearby rack. “*This* is a bikini, and the colour is perfect! It’ll show off your curves and your eyes.”

Grae lifted the bikini top off the hanger and turned it over in her hands. “What in creation is it?”

“You wear it, silly.”

“Where, over your ears?”

Tamara stared bizarrely down at her naïve friend when it suddenly dawned on her. Grae always dressed modestly. Sure she was known to wear the odd midriff-bearing top every so often, but that was mostly on her own insistence. Considering on Gallifrey, where even exposing a woman’s bare arms was frowned upon, bearing a bit of tummy was a big deal. Could Grae handle this kind of exposure? The Doctor would kill her for what she was about to do. She began to chuckle to herself.

“What?” Grae asked defensively. “Sure, make fun of the new girl.”

“Just look at it, you’ll figure it out.”

Grae cast her eyes back down to the curious object she was holding. “Fine. Let’s see. Well, this bit looks like it could fit my... my... my...” Her voice trailed off as realization dawned. Her jaw dropped open in terror.

“Wait a minute, Tamara, You *cannot* be serious! I might as well wear my underwear! Or be naked!”

“They have beaches for that too,” she said as she smiled wickedly.

“What?” Grae’s face quickly blushed. “Here?”

“No, no babe.” Tamara laughed. “Not here.”

“Well thank goodness!” She heaved a sigh of relief. “I can’t wear this, Tamara. Are you going to wear one?”

“Of course I am, I’ve been eyeing that blue one over there.”

Grae’s face drained of all colour. “What will the Doctor say when he sees you dressed like that?”

“When he sees *us*, you mean!”

“No Tamara, I couldn’t!” Grae began to slowly back away from her friend. “Besides for this price, I can certainly buy a whole shirt!”

“You’re in Paradise. Just try it on.” Tamara edged closer, not wanting her friend to get away. “Look, you’re a beautiful girl, Grae. I want to see you in this bikini!”

“No, I don’t think so!”

“You’re already turning heads! The guy out front with the leis could barely stop drooling long enough to greet me!”

“But—” Grae stopped when her back bumped up against a wall.

“No ‘buts’! Look, you’re already in a fitting room!” Tamara tossed the bikini bottom to Grae and grabbed the doorknob. “Okay, Grae. If you don’t turn more heads than me on the beach, we can take it back and we’ll hear no more about it.”

“B... um, Tamara!”

“I’ll even buy you a skirt to go over the bottom, if you like.”

“What about the top?”

With that Tamara slammed the door closed and grabbed the blue bikini from the rack. She checked the size, and then held the top up against her body. Nodding satisfactorily, Tamara approached the counter where an older Polynesian woman was sitting watching the entire altercation.

“Your friend never saw a bikini before?” She asked as she rang up Tamara’s purchase.

“Nope.”

“Where the heck would someone grow up as sheltered as that? Where is she from?”

“Gallifrey.” It slipped out. Tamara couldn’t believe she had just made such an elementary error. She decided that the best bet would be to put on a poker face and hope the clerk didn’t notice.

“Gallifrey, huh?”

Damn! “Yeah.”

“That’s a town in England, then?”

“Erm, yes. Near Cornwall.”

The door to the changing room squeaked open and Grae cleared her throat. “Um, Tamara?”

Tamara spun around and her jaw went slack. “Grae, you look incredible! I mean, I could tell you had a nice body, but...”

“But, what?” Grae asked, uncertain.

“Let’s just say I didn’t expect your body to be so much *more* nicer than mine in a couple of places.”

“What?” Grae looked down at herself and covered her cleavage with her hand.

“How do you feel?”

“Cold.” Grae grabbed a blue beach towel covered in little rainbow-coloured fish from a rack and wrapped it around herself. “And naked.”

“Grae,” Tamara said as she crossed to her friend, “You’ll be fine when you get outside. I guarantee you every woman out there under thirty-five is wearing one.”

“Tamara, I’m thirty-seven.”

“You’re thirty-seven?” the clerk said surprised, “I wish I looked half as good as you do when I was thirty-seven.”

“Oh, Grae!” Tamara said, elbowing her in the side and forcing a laugh. “You’re such a joker.”

“Huh, what?” Grae looked uncertainly at her friend. “Oh, yeah. You know me, always the joker.”

In an attempt to salvage the conversation, Tamara turned back to the clerk and said, “Kids today...”

* * * * *

The Doctor woke and smiled at the note Tamara had left for him.

“Aloha Doctor,” he read aloud, “Grae and I are going swimming after I introduce her to the world of male ogling by buying her a bikini. Meet us at the restaurant at six for dinner. It’s on me.” He laughed to himself. If Grae is anything, she’s modest. “If she gets Grae in a bikini, I’ll buy dinner.”

A slight knocking upon his door broke him from his thoughts.

“Come in!” He called cheerfully, but received no reply.

Suddenly a brown envelope appeared from under his door. The Doctor ran to the door and opened it. The hallway was empty as far as he could tell in either direction. Reaching down, he grabbed the envelope the headed back into the main area of the suite, closing the door behind him.

Once he was comfortable on the chaise lounge he opened the envelope and spread the contents out on his lap.

“Interesting...” The Doctor shuffled through a three-page document containing a list of local destinations as well as flight information. “Someone’s travel itinerary, no doubt. Arriving tomorrow morning from Washington, D.C. A politician of some sort, perhaps? Ah!”

Finding a picture, he flipped it over and read aloud: ‘Senator Wes Wilson of Idaho; Mainland Co-Chair of the Hawaiian-Mainland Relations Committee.’ I wonder if this is for him, or for someone meeting him?’

He picked up the newspaper that had arrived with his brandy earlier and glanced over the front page.

“FBI no closer to finding terrorists that claimed responsibility for the bombing of Maui International’s Terminal 3,” he read aloud.

Shuffling everything back into the envelope, and then tossing the envelope onto the bed, the Doctor resolved that he could always get the envelope to the Concierge later. Leaning back onto the lounge, he drifted back into the deep sleep of the completely physically exhausted.

A light breeze tiptoed through the open patio doors and blew the envelope onto the floor, knocking loose a post-it note that had become stuck to the inside and sending it tumbling across the floor. In a black marker, one word was scrawled across the note:

TERMINATE

Nearby, the Doctor snored away into oblivion...

* * * * *

By the time Grae reached the beach with her soft drink, Tamara had already laid out two white beach towels on the pale sand and was soaking up some rays. The blue bikini did suit Tamara

extremely well. The pale blue material looked so nice in contrast to her darker skin. Grae, on the other hand had another beach towel wrapped around her body, protecting it shyly from onlookers.

“Here’s your Fizzy, Tamara.” Grae handed the drink to her friend who lazily lifted her arm. “I didn’t realize you had Quantum Fizzies shops on Earth.”

“We didn’t in England,” Tamara explained as she sat up. “I guess they did in the States.”

Grae sat down on the vacant towel next to her friend and sipped modestly on her drink. Tamara downed hers quickly and turned back to her friend.

“Look, Grae, lose the towel already.”

“Do I have to?”

“Look, if you’re going to go in the water, you’re going to have to leave it here. How else are you going to dry off?”

Grae finished her drink and watched her friend climb to her feet. “Tamara, I can’t; I’m embarrassed.”

“Look just stand up, okay.”

“Okay.” Grae stood up and as she did, Tamara whipped the towel off. “Damnation!”

“There - suspense over.” Tamara gave Grae the once-over. “I swear, Grae, if I had curves like yours I certainly wouldn’t hide them.”

“Tamara, people are looking at me.” Grae spun around nervously, catching the eyes of several men as they sized her up. Her long hair, which she had braided into a long, thick rope swung behind her as she turned.

“As well they should be.” Tamara placed her arm around her friend’s shoulder. “Grae you’re hot!”

“Actually, I’m still a bit cold...”

“No Grae, face it, you’re sexy. You look good!”

“What? I do?” Grae blushed.

“Yeah!” Tamara turned to a passing couple, grabbing the man by the arm. “Sir, excuse me for a moment. Take a look at my friend here.”

“Uh, hello.” He said, embarrassed. He looked over the young red head and was transfixed.

“Hi.” Grae said as she cast her eyes to the ground.

“Do you think she looks good?” Tamara asked.

Without hesitation he blurted out: “Yeah, she’s hot!”

Without hesitation his newlywed-wife smacked him across the face. “We can’t even make it through our honeymoon without you staring like a horny teenager at other women! My sister was right, I should have left you on the bottom of that gorge!” She stormed off, tossing her wedding ring into the ocean; her new *ex*-husband trailing her like a puppy.

“What the hell was that?” Tamara chuckled under breath.

“That poor girl.” Grae frowned. “Her marriage is over and it’s my fault!”

“How do you feel?” Tamara asked.

“He had what was coming to him, what with him saying that I was hot and all!” Grae turned to Tamara and winked.

“Evil.” She laughed. “Pure evil. What have I created?”

“Let’s go in, come on!” Grae shouted as she ran out into waist-deep water. As Tamara set her drink down, and prepared to join her friend, she noticed a large wave swelling in the distance.

“Grae?”

“Yes?”

“Turn around.”

“Okay.” As Grae turned around, she met the large wave full in the face. After it passed, Grae turned back around to her friend, completely drenched from head to toe, her mouth hanging open in disbelief.

Tamara couldn’t hold back a laugh.

* * * * *

The sun hung low in the cerulean sky. Gentle ukulele music wafted through the air on a cool breeze. The Doctor looked up from his cup of Darjeeling as his traveling companions crossed the wooden bridge that connected the restaurant area to the rest of the resort grounds.

“Aloha, Doctor!” Grae shouted as she waved.

“Grae!” He said in disbelief. “I never imagined even Tamara would be able to get you in one of those bikini thingies.”

“Well, I’m always one to try new things.”

“Like it was that easy!” Tamara said as she elbowed Grae in the arm.

The Doctor rose and gave his friends a warm embrace. “You look very fetching Grae, my dear... dears: both of you. I’m honoured to be dining with two such lovely ladies.”

“Thank you, Sir.” Grae curtseyed, taking the lightweight flowing beach skirt in her hands.

“Either of you care to attend the seminar with me this evening after dinner?” The Doctor handed them a flyer as they sat.

“‘Traditional Spiritualism in Modern Hawaii with Kahuna George Ka’alakea’,” Tamara read aloud, “Hmm, it starts at eight. I better pass so I can take a sunrise beach run tomorrow.”

“Grae, what about you?”

“I’d love to go!”

“Good, let’s eat.” The Doctor turned around and spotted the waiter. “*Garçon!* Some drinks for my friends!”

“Right away, Dr. Smith!” The waiter cheerfully responded. In an instant he was at the table with four cocktails on a tray. “Mai Tai or Piña Colada?”

“Oh!” Grae looked at Tamara puzzled. “Which one is better?”

“Do what I do,” she replied with a smirk. “Have one of each.”

Grae nodded and the waiter placed the cocktails on the table. He then turned to the Doctor.

“Another cup of Darjeeling, Sir?”

The Doctor nodded then turned back to his friends. “So are you two enjoying yourselves?”

“Most definitely,” Grae answered between sips of her drinks.

“Oh,” Tamara interrupted, “I got a hold of Robby’s voice mail. He’s down in New Zealand on a mission and won’t be back until Friday. Do you think we could stay until then? It’s only three more days. Besides, I want to hike Haleakala.”

“Me too! I’ve never seen a real volcano before!” Grae leaned in and whispered, “Can we please?”

The Doctor rocked back in his chair casting his eyes back and forth from one of his friends to the other. “My dears, we can stay here as long as you want.”

Tamara and Grae cheered as the waiter returned with the Doctor’s tea and an extra cocktail, which he placed in front of Grae.

“Compliments of the bartender, Miss.”

“That’s very thoughtful of him.” Grae replied, naively. “Please offer him my gratitude.”

The waiter nodded and returned to his responsibilities.

Tamara looked at her young friend in disbelief. When she realized that Grae was serious, she burst out laughing. “No, no, no Grae. You have to thank him yourself.”

“Why?”

“If I’m not mistaken,” the Doctor chimed in, “he bought you the drink because he wants you to thank him in person.”

“That’s a bit backwards, isn’t it?” Grae said with a huff. “I mean, if he wanted to meet me, why doesn’t he just come over and say ‘Hullo, I’m Mr. Bartender, I wanted to meet you.’ instead of making me do all the work?”

“Where’s the fun in that?” Tamara answered. “Go say ‘hi’ to him.”

“Oh, very well.”

Just then, the bartender came around to the front of the bar.

Tamara gasped, “Grae, look who it is!”

“Oh, it’s the boy with the flowers from this morning.”

“Oh yes,” the Doctor added, “he was handing out the leis, wasn’t he?”

“And I know he fancies you,” Tamara said, turning back to her young friend. “He couldn’t take his eyes off you!”

“Really?” Grae blushed.

“Yeah! Wait until he gets a good look at you in that bikini!”

The Doctor nearly choked on his tea. “Tamara!”

“What?” She retorted. “Women should never underestimate the power of cleavage.” She turned to Grae, who had stood, and gave her a swift push on her lower back. “Go!”

The force of the push caused Grae to lose her footing and stumble forward. From out of nowhere, she felt herself being caught by the shoulders. Then she fell into an awkward hug the other person.

“Are you okay?” The young bartender looked down at the young woman he had caught in his arms.

“See,” Tamara whispered to the Doctor, “my timing is impeccable!”

“Yes, I’m fine. Thank you.” Grae smiled as she pulled slowly from the embrace. “Oh, and thank you for the drink.”

“My pleasure, Miss…”

“Graekatziasa’asterus.” Grae extended her hand rigidly, and then realized her mistake. “Um, Smith.”

“Pardon?”

Grae cast a quick look at Tamara who was shaking her head and giggling.

“Grae, Grae Asters-Smith.”

“Grae, I like that. I’m Emory Ka’alakea.”

Immediately Grae relaxed as he took her hand in his. “I like your name too.”

“Are you enjoying your stay?”

“Oh yes!” Her eyes widened. “It’s so bright here.”

Emory laughed. “Bright?”

“What?” She responded with a blush.

“Oh, I’m not laughing at you. It’s just not the first thing people say about Hawaii.” He offered her a seat at the bar as he returned to his duties. “It’s really unique.”

“Thank you.”

“I saw you talking about my father’s seminar,” he asked as he gestured to a flyer taped to the bar. “Will you be there?”

“It’s your *father’s* seminar?”

“Yeah, my dad’s the most well regarded kahuna on the island.”

“Will you be there?” Grae leaned forward eagerly awaiting the answer.

“Of course.”

“Then I’ll be there too.” Grae smiled again as she took the sight in. He was tall, with short dark hair. His skin was the bronze of Polynesian descent with well-defined arms. She had never seen anything like him before.

“Good. I’ll see you later, then!” Emory turned to a customer, then back to Grae. “You know, you have the most incredible hair I’ve ever seen.” Then he disappeared back into the kitchen.

Grae paused, soaking in the moment. What was that feeling she felt deep in the pit of her stomach? What was it about him that was different than every other young man with whom she had shared a conversation? As she returned to her friends, she decided what it was.

“Remind me not to have two cocktails the day after Tamara takes me on a Marguerita binge.” She said as she plopped into her chair.

“Why ever not?” The Doctor asked.

“Because I’m drunk again.”

“Why do you say that?” Tamara leaned close to her friend.

“I feel all giddy, like I did last night.”

“It’s not the alcohol, babe.” Tamara put her arm around Grae’s shoulders. “It’s love. Grae, I do believe you have your first crush.”

“I do not!” Grae responded with a blush and a frown. Then Emory’s face danced across her mind’s eye. She jolted upright. “Oh no, I do! I’m totally infatuated with him. What do I do?”

“Relax,” Tamara sighed, “take it easy. Enjoy it. As I always say: you only live once, right?”

“Well, actually…” the Doctor began.

Unheard by her friends, Grae whispered: “How true.”

* * * * *

That evening, the Doctor and Grae watched the seminar with awe, soaking in as much knowledge as they could. After it ended, Kahuna Ka’alakea offered to personally answer questions so the Doctor approached him. Two hours later, the two men were still chatting away over coffee. This, of course, suited Grae just fine as she and Emory were left alone to enjoy each other’s company as they sat by the fireplace at the opposite end of the room. Grae watched Emory intently as she they spoke. She loved the way the fire danced across his dark eyes. It was as if she was looking directly into his soul.

“One thing your father didn’t mention has me curious.”

“What’s that?”

“You both are wearing the same type of necklace.” Grae moved in and gingerly scooped Emory’s necklace up in the palm of her hand. It was a curve of what appeared to be ivory or bone of some kind.

“It’s a hook. Remember when my father talked about the god Maui?”

“Sure. That’s the deity that brought all the Hawaiian Islands together to give your ancestors a place to live, right?”

“Right, he brought them together using a hook like this. That’s why so many Hawaiians wear these necklaces.”

“My people don’t have anything like that.” Grae frowned.

“What about the Union Jack?”

“The Union what?”

Emory looked confused. “The Union Jack, you know the British flag. I assumed you were British because of your accent. ‘Asters-Smith’ isn’t British? Where are you from?”

“It’s a bit farther away than England I’m afraid.” Grae answered.

“Where then, South Africa? Australia?”

“Something like that, yes.”

“Which one?” Emory laughed, intrigued.

“Do you want some more coffee?” Grae asked, avoiding the question.

“No, but thank you. Why are you avoiding the question?”

“Because…” Grae paused, Tamara’s words from earlier echoing in her head. “Because, it’s a secret. You have to guess.”

“Do I get clues?”

“Maybe.”

“What do I get if I guess it?”

Grae looked heavenward as she thought for a moment.

“It’s a surprise.”

Emory smiled and placed his hand on her shoulder.

“My lady, I would be honoured to accept your challenge.” As they looked in each other’s eyes, they were transfixed, unable to move from their gaze. Slowly, they moved closer, never breaking their eye contact.

Grae let her eyes relax as he moved toward her. She could feel his breath dancing across her lips. It was warm and tasted like coffee. She closed her eyes and opened her mouth ever so slightly, then felt his hand brush a strand of hair from her face...

Then the Doctor cleared his throat, which broke their concentration.

“I see you two have gotten to know each other a bit better.” He said as he approached, the Kahuna at his side. Emory leapt, embarrassed, to his feet.

“Did you know Emory runs the resort’s scuba tour?” Grae said, half trying to cover her nervousness and half impressed with his talents.

“Really?” The Doctor responded as he read Grae’s body language. She was positively glowing. She was happy, but he could still tell that something was bothering her. The happiness she felt, in turn made him extremely happy. But there was a twinge of sadness in his hearts too. He remembered a dark haired girl about the same size and shape from a long time ago. She fell in love with someone once...

“Yes.” Grae answered, snapping the Doctor from his reverie. “I mean it’s not Hexa-dimensional multi-plane geometry, but it still sounds fascinating.”

“Hexa what?” Emory laughed.

“No need to show off, Susan.” The Doctor responded. “You’ll find that... did I just call you Susan?”

“We best be going, Doctor,” Ka’alakea said as he shook the Doctor’s hand. “Believe me, it was a pleasure. I look forward to dinner tomorrow. Aloha, my friend.”

“Seven o’clock, then.” The Doctor returned the sentiment.

“Goodnight, Doctor.” Emory shook the Doctor’s hand then turned to Grae and shook hers. “Grae.”

With that, Grae rose onto her toes and kissed Emory on the cheek. “Goodnight.”

Blushing wildly and grinning from ear to ear, Emory took his leave. His father followed slowly behind.

Grae turned to the Doctor. “Dinner?”

“Yes, the kind Kahuna has invited us to his home tomorrow evening.” The Doctor chuckled as he watched Grae’s wide smile spread wider.

“Thank you.”

“You seem quite fond of young Emory.”

“I am.”

“Just remember Grae, you’re a Time Lord.”

“I know: I have a responsibility to the Universe, blah, blah, blah.”

“Well, yes, but what I was going to say is that in a romantic situation, it may cause a problem as he ages and you remain young and adorable.”

Grae embraced the Doctor happily. “So you don’t mind my having a crush on him?”

“You mean, a *crush*. No, not at all.”

Grae rose again to her tiptoes and kissed the Doctor on the cheek. “Thank you.”

Arm in arm, the Gallifreyans returned to their suite. Once Grae shut the door to her room behind her, the Doctor was left alone to ponder the events of the evening. He ran some water through the coffee pot and brewed himself some Earl Gray. Taking his steamy cup to the lanai he sat alone, listening to the waves.

He thought back to seeing Grae and Emory nearly kissing earlier. Why did he interrupt them, as they were about to make contact? A kiss is a kiss; no harm no foul, right? Grae was so graciously not offended, too. Then he remembered back to that dark-haired girl again. Susan, his granddaughter, left his company because she fell in love. He actually locked her out of the TARDIS so she could remain on earth with him. What was his name? It had been a long time, but that wasn't the reason he had forgotten it. He forgot the name because he resented the man. It wasn't a hateful type of resentment, of course, but a sad one. The Doctor loved his granddaughter dearly and hated to leave her behind. But it was the right thing to do and she'd be happier in the end. He liked the young man, but resented having to make the choice. Damn it, what was his name? It was wrong to dwell on this, but the Doctor remembered she wasn't the only one that left his company for love. Jo Grant did. So did Leela.

Leela.

The Doctor winced at the thought of her sudden death at the hands of the seductively evil Bramahl. Leela left his company for love and look what it got her: a neck snapped clean through.

Could he handle it if Grae decided to stay behind with Emory? Based on his reaction to their near-kiss, he knew it would be troublesome. Even if she didn't elect to stay behind would she be acting in her own best interest or his? Or Tamara's? Grae was the most selfless person with whom he had ever traveled, would he be forced to make the decision for her as he did for his granddaughter? The Doctor knew the truth: it didn't matter how it would happen because he knew that regardless of the circumstances, he would miss her something fierce.

What was it about the young Gallifreyan that has caused him and Tamara to feel so strongly for her? What was it about Grae that completed the team so perfectly? Grae's joining the team not only brought him closer to the young girl, but also to Tamara in a way he hadn't connected to anyone in a long time. A very long time. There was something there, though with Grae. Something new that troubled him because he couldn't quite put a finger on it. Perhaps she longed for a romantic connection with someone and found it in Emory? Back to Emory again...

The Doctor sank deeper into his chair.

"May I join you?" Tamara sauntered onto the lanai in her robe and fell into another chair.

"What's troubling you?" The Doctor offered her a sip of tea, but she refused.

"I don't know." Tamara spoke, but never turned her gaze away from the ocean.

"Are you not enjoying yourself?"

"Oh no, I'm enjoying myself very much." Tamara answered. "*Too much*, I think."

"Too much?"

"I keep waiting for the body count to start rising."

"I know how you feel, my dear. I can't remember when I actually was able to relax on a vacation."

"Me neither. I guess that's just a side-effect of saving the universe as many times as we have, eh?"

"Indeed." The Doctor smiled, sipped his tea, and then turned back to his friend. "Have you noticed something different with Grae lately?"

"Lately, Doctor?" Tamara turned to face him, "Grae may be a fellow Gallifreyan, but she's the human equivalent of a teenager; a very un-jaded, naive one, which is unusual these days, but still a human teenager. If she's a bit moody or testy it's par for the course."

"I suppose you're right. It's been so long since I was that age I sometimes forget what it was like."

"Grae explained the Looms when we were on Giminae, but I know you have a granddaughter. That means you must have had at least one child."

"Hmmm." The Doctor sighed.

"Well?"

"The passage of time allows for one's wrongdoings to be healed."

"What?"

“I’d rather not talk about it.”

“I’m sorry.”

“No, no, it’s okay. It’s just that it’s best left unsaid.” The Doctor went to take another sip but realized he had already finished his tea. “There are things I can’t even tell my most trusted friends. As much as I hate it, it’s a part of the life I chose.”

“I understand. And, I can sympathize with your worry for Grae.” Tamara let out a sigh. “She’s my best friend and I worry about her too, sometimes. She is quite capable, though.”

“I know she is, but-”

“I’ll talk to her.” Tamara rose.

“Tamara-”

“I’ll talk to her, Doctor. *In the morning*, goodnight.”

“Goodnight.” The Doctor turned and smiled at his friend. “And thank you.”

* * * * *

The following morning, Tamara and Grae woke and watched the sunrise over coffee. The beauty of the sight moved Grae to tears. Tamara couldn’t suppress a slight chuckle.

“This is better than any simulation the Doctor could conjure up.” Grae said as she drank down her java. “I’ll have to add that to my collection.” She ran a finger over her wristcomm, and then waved it through the air.

“A sunrise collection; why does that not surprise me?” Tamara remembered back to the first time she met her friend, when she came into the TARDIS to halt a virus attacking the machine’s power core. When the Doctor converted the TARDIS’s inner dimensions to an artificial environment in which to fight the virus, he loaded a sunrise that had been the first one Grae had ever seen. But a sunrise collection? Only Grae could be so wonderfully odd. That little adventure had left Grae in a coma on Gallifrey. Tamara had hoped to see her friend again, and sure enough fate worked out kindly. Grae was here, with her, in Hawaii, decked out in a maroon tank top and gym shorts ready to join her for a run.

“Ready?” Grae asked as she rinsed her mug out.

Tamara downed the rest of her coffee and replied, “Ready.”

As they left they peeked thought the door to the Doctor’s room. He was sleeping peacefully.

“You sure we shouldn’t wake him?”

Tamara looked down at her friend. “He hasn’t had the chance to sleep this much since I started traveling with him, let’s let him.”

The girls quietly closed the door behind them and jogged to the elevator.

Once they reached the lobby, they turned outside and set onto the path that lead to the beach. Something at Grae’s feet caught her attention and she stopped to look down at it.

Wriggling in the dirt was a small cockroach that had been knocked upside-down. It was flailing its legs wildly as the sun peeked over the horizon and tinged at its underbelly.

“Poor Mr. Buggy-Bug!” Grae said to herself as she grabbed a stick from the nearby garden. Squatting down next to the creature, she tried to flip it back upright.

Tamara finally realized she was alone when she reached the bottom of the hill. Turning around, she saw Grae halfway up and called for her. “Grae, what are you doing?”

“Just saving a life.” Grae shouted back. “Even the creepy-crawlies deserve a fighting chance.”

“It’s just a roach, leave it.” Tamara jogged back up to her friend.

“Tamara.” Grae looked up from her work. “If you knew a life would be lost right now, wouldn’t you want to do something to save it? Sure, Mr. Buggy-Bug here doesn’t have a lot of personality, but he’s certainly more deserving of life than most politicians I’ve met. There you go.”

The cockroach happily scurried away.

"I have to agree with you there."

Just then a single gunshot rang out. Instantly, Tamara and Grae's eyes turned towards the direction of the shot. From where they waited, they could see the body of a man in a grey suit flip backwards over the side of a seventh floor balcony and fall to the ground.

"There goes number one." Tamara said under her breath.

"What?"

"Never mind. Did you see where that was?"

"Yes," Grae answered as she leapt to her feet, "that was next door to our suite."

Both girls took off running as the hotel burst alive with panic, confusion and fear. By the time they reached the seventh floor, the Doctor was waiting for them at the elevators. He gestured for them to keep quiet. A few hotel security guards were milling around outside the door to the suite where the murder had taken place. Once they all disappeared inside the room, the Doctor grabbed Grae and Tamara's hands and pulled them into their own room.

Tamara noticed the worried look upon the Doctor's face and asked, "What's going on?" Doctor brought a finger to his lips. She repeated herself, quietly.

"Look at this." The Doctor handed Tamara the file that had been shoved under the door earlier.

Grae read aloud, over Tamara's shoulder, "'Senator Wes Wilson of Idaho; Mainland Co-Chair of the Hawaiian-Mainland Relations Committee.' Was that the man who was murdered?"

"Doctor, how did you get this?" Tamara flipped through the file. "This is a dossier. Someone had a copy of his flight schedule and his itinerary for his visit to the island. Someone wanted to be aware of his every move. You have to turn this over to the police!"

"I agree," the Doctor replied, "I just have a nagging suspicion that I've been framed."

"Damn it." Tamara said. "This is what I get for questioning us finally being able to have a vacation."

"What do we do?" Grae asked.

"Best not to beat around the bush, Doctor." Tamara plopped onto the sofa and flipped on the television, resigned. "Look, we've been through this before. You know they'll find us no matter what they do. If they knew enough to frame you, then I'll bet you two to one that someone on the police force has it in for you. Best to show up first."

"Yes," Grae responded, "Perhaps they'll be nicer to us if *we* approach *them*?"

The Doctor looked back and forth between his companions. Tamara had her resolved face on and Grae was grinning her winningly naïve smile. "I say, that *is* a novel idea."

* * * * *

"Okay, so it didn't work." Tamara shrugged as three policemen escorted her and her friends to the lobby.

"Well, they did *nicely* loosen my handcuffs when I asked." Grae said, deadpan.

"That was a jab, wasn't it?" Tamara said in disbelief. "Bloody hell, trust me to teach you about sarcasm."

"It seems that the police aren't the only ones involved," the Doctor said as he was pushed along. Aiding in a complete evacuation of the hotel and surrounding area were a troop of men and women clad in military fatigues.

Tamara noticed an unfamiliar green disk insignia on the front of the soldiers' berets. "Surely they're UNIT soldiers, aren't they?"

"Possibly," the Doctor replied. "This is bigger than we thought."

"UNIT?" Grae asked. "The United Nations Intelligence Taskforce? Then we're okay, right? Just tell them that you're a personal friend of General Lethbridge-Stewart."

“You seem pretty well informed about international military history for such a young lady.” A tall man approached the group. He motioned to the officers, who released their prisoners. He was a solidly built man, for his height and very muscular. He had a strong square jaw that framed a small mouth. He was immaculately shaven, with short brown hair under his beret.

Grae took a look at the man and took an immediate dislike to him. “It’s all established human military history, available to any and all-”

“Traitors?” The man interrupted. “Was that what you were going to say?”

“Pardon me,” the Doctor asked, “I don’t believe I’ve caught your name? I’m the Doc-”

“I’m Colonel William Arnolds, of JADE. And you are traitors to your countries; members of a local branch of an international terrorist syndicate.” Arnolds pointed at Tamara. “I’m not surprised to find one of your kind in with the terrorists, where are you from? Jamaica?”

“London.” Tamara said harshly. “And if you knew what was good for you, you racist son of a-”

She was interrupted by Arnolds smacking her hard across the face. Losing her footing, she slipped and hit her head on a table and fell to the floor unconscious.

At once both the Doctor and Grae leapt toward the man who pushed them away with ease. He was only slightly taller than the Doctor, but easily had double the Time Lord’s girth. Two soldiers each sprung to their attention and restrained their prisoners.

“I have no time for murderers, traitors and terrorists.” Arnolds approached Grae. “But you are a pretty one, aren’t you?” The way she was being restrained caused her tank top to be slightly pulled up, exposing her green bikini underneath. Arnolds eyes fell upon Grae’s mid-section.

Grae caught his dropping gaze and wriggled free of her captors’ grips. In one swift move, she kicked Arnolds hard in the crotch, then elbowed him on the top of the head knocking him to the ground. A moment later, Arnolds was back on his feet. He pulled a taser out of a belt holster and rammed it into her chest.

“Leave her alone you monst-” The Doctor yelled, but was met by a rifle but to the temple. As he faded from consciousness, he could see Grae’s body twitching uncontrollably as electricity from the taser coursed through her body.

* * * * *

Grae awoke, and for the first time since she arrived in Hawaii, she was cold. It was a bitter cold that reminded her of when she and Tamara were left behind in London shortly after she began her travels in the TARDIS. She could see her breath in front of her, like mist hanging ever so lightly before her eyes before dissipating. There was a soft moaning noise in the background. A sharp pain in her chest jolted her from her daydream. Hearts-attack? Surely not. She was lying on the floor, so she jerked into an upright, sitting position. Her head filled with numbness and her vision danced with splotches and purple light. She took a deep breath and shook her head, clearing it. She looked down at where the pain was coming from and could see a large red welt above her left breast near the strap of her bikini.

Taser.

She had been electrocuted.

Where was that moaning coming from? She was handcuffed, but with a tap of her wristcomm, she was able to disjoint herself and phase through them, causing them to clank loudly to the cinderblock floor. Removing her gag, she looked around and saw stacks of frozen meat and fish: the hotel freezer. She ran to the door and tried to open it, but there was no handle or latch of any kind. Just a small hole, where it had apparently been removed. Turning back around, she saw the source of the moaning. Several people, all Hawaiians by the look of it, were bound and gagged and were trembling from the cold.

Taking another look, Grae realized that all the other cellmates were Hawaiians except one.

“Tamara!”

Rushing quickly to her friend’s side, she released her from her bonds.

“Thank you.” Tamara said as she hugged her friend happily.

“What’s going on here?” Grae asked. “Your brother’s in the military, right? Does he know what’s going on?”

“I don’t think Robby would have any party to this.” Tamara rubbed her bruised jaw.

“Besides, he’s in UNIT, not this JADE thing. I wonder what they could be?”

“A terrorist group must have been planning Senator Wilson’s murder and framed the Doctor for it.”

“Yeah,” Tamara said as she looked over their fellow prisoners, “and with a racist like Colonel Arnolds in charge, I’m not surprised to see that you’re the only white person on ice here with us.”

“So the Doctor’s not here, then?”

“Nope, but we have to get out of here quick, otherwise-”

At that moment, the door was opened and Emory was tossed into the freezer.

“Emory!” Grae shouted as they embraced.

“They have you too?” He asked. “I know they’re trying to round up all the native Hawaiians on staff, but I didn’t think you two would have fit their prejudiced terrorist profile.”

“What’s Arnolds up to?” Tamara asked as she began to untie the other prisoners.

“Well, Hawaii’s been a part of the USA a long time now,” Emory began explaining, as he and Grae began assisting Tamara in releasing the other captives, “My grandfather told me that statedom was supposed to bring the Hawaiian people prosperity. And it did at first, but like everything else *haole* touches, it turned into the dilution of our ancient cultural and religious ways.”

“*Haole?*” Grae asked.

“The white man.”

“I hear that,” Tamara responded, “but surely there’s something the Hawaiian people can do about this?”

Emory sat between down between his friends. “Well, there have always been group that support and teach our history and our old practices. But when the last President was elected, a law was passed outlawing the practice of any religious worship they deemed as pagan.”

“Why don’t they just throw the Constitution out the window while they’re at it.”

“No kidding.”

Grae sat up straight. “Tamara, you taught me a bit about this period of Earth hist... um I mean, *American* history and surely wasn’t that President assassinated?”

“He was,” Emory interrupted, “but he got the religious right in such a stir about it, there was little the new President could do. He’s at least trying though. He was instrumental in forming the Hawaii-Mainland Relation Committee.”

“Sounds like the perfect opportunity to lose the issue in a load of bureaucratic bull-shit.” Tamara concluded.

“That’s what we thought too, until Senator Wilson was appointed to its head.”

“What’s so special about Senator Wilson?” Grae asked.

“He was born and raised across the bay in Lahina.” Emory stated, “and he’s half Hawaiian.”

“So what’s the problem then?” Grae asked. “Why can’t this be worked out?”

“Well, there’s a group that have been destroying commercial areas and resorts. For every step the Committee made, this group took it back two. The government is so angry right now, the fact that Senator Wilson even came back was a miracle.”

“And now he’s dead,” Grae started plainly, “killed, no doubt, by this terrorist group.”

Tamara shook her head, disappointed. "Yeah, and we're being framed for it."

"But why?" Emory asked.

"I don't know and I don't understand." Grae laid her head on Emory's shoulder. He pulled her close as they attempted to keep warm.

"They can't keep us in here like this." Tamara got to her feet and shouted, "Whatever happened to 'innocent until proven guilty'?"

"Hey! How about some food?" A young Hawaiian man with dyed red hair shouted.

"You'll eat when the Colonel says you can eat." A voice shouted back. "Now keep quiet, or I'll come in there and shut you up myself."

"That's it!" Grae sat up. "The guard had a radio, right?"

"I imagine so." Emory replied.

Tamara joined them. "So?"

"Trust me." Grae said. "Just get that guard in here."

"What are you going to do steal it and call for help?" Emory asked.

"Not exactly."

* * * * *

"I know who you are, Doctor, and frankly I'm not surprised."

"Oh really?" The Doctor said proudly, "I would be."

"Bull shit. It's widely known that you always fight for the underdog." Arnolds crossed back to the Doctor, who was tied to a chair. "I've read all the UNIT files on you. JADE was formed from the ashes of that pathetic organization."

"Pathetic? It has been my personal experience that UNIT has been filled with nothing short of the boldest and bravest persons worldwide!"

"Ineffectual old women," Arnolds stated plainly, "and stuffed-shirt bureaucrats."

"Surely UNIT still exists."

"They do, but as figureheads only. Their sheer number of confidentiality breeches made a laughing stock out of the UN. But, since the public was aware of their existence from the get-go we allow them to function."

"As a cover for JADE?"

"Very good, Doc." Arnolds began to pace around his prisoner arrogantly. "JADE stands for Justice and Defence of Earth. We are the first and last word in the protection of the human race."

"So it's happened at last."

"What?" Arnolds asked condescendingly, "The dreaded 'Police State?' It had to be done. UNIT's people proved incapable of defending the civilized, God-fearing world from aliens from off world or beyond our borders. We have been granted the full power to strike first when necessary."

"So you've dropped the need for any form of diplomacy whatsoever?"

Arnolds balked at the idea. "Diplomacy, says the good Doctor. I'm aware of your pansy-assed insistence on negotiating with the enemy when it showed nothing but malice and hatred towards us. You still think we can reason with alien savages when all they understand is how to kill us?"

"First of all," the Doctor replied, "Some of the races I met while I was assisting UNIT were anything *but* savages, and second, some of them had a right to come after us as Earth just happened to be their planet first!"

"Not savages, Doctor?" Arnolds approached his captive and smiled condescendingly down at him. "Yes, and I suppose the natives here who are fighting for the right to worship their pagan gods are civilized?"

“Colonel, different doesn’t equal wrong. Ignorance on your part doesn’t make them uncivilized. Why is it, no matter what I do; no matter how many battles I win, racism still carries on? It’s stronger than any alien creature I’ve faced down!”

“Doctor, you’re boring me.”

“Listen.” The Doctor’s tone made Arnolds jump. “Sure, some of the alien species we came in contact with responded with force to our actions, but to condemn an entire species as ‘savage’ based on the knee-jerk, defensive reaction of a few would be just as absurd as labeling the entire human race as pathetic bigots because of you!” The Doctor stopped, out of breath. Angry he pounded his feet on the ground in frustration.

Arnolds struck him hard across the jaw.

“Think before you talk to me like that again. I may be aware of you past services to humanity, but I also know you are not one of us, and therefore are not to be trusted. Everyone has a price tag, Doctor. How much are *your* loyalties worth?”

* * * * *

Emory still didn’t believe what he had just seen.

Most of the prisoners were eager to get out of the freezer before they got hypothermia, so Grae didn’t have any problem getting assistance for her plan, even though she wouldn’t tell anyone what it was. Most of them, however, were quite puzzled how such a slight girl like her didn’t seem to be bothered in the least by the temperature. While everyone’s lips had taken on a distinct shade of blue, hers were still red and her complexion still as rosy as the moment as she was locked in. Emory was intrigued with her. Her friend, Tamara, was shaking her head and laughing in the corner.

What had just happened?

She wanted the guard’s radio. They all caused a distraction, just like she wanted them to do. The guard came in, just like she said he would. There was a small whoosh and a tingly sensation like he had just woken up. Then the guard left, his radio still attached to his belt, and locked the door behind him.

That was all very straightforward.

Why then was Grae standing in the middle of the room, with a radio in her hand, giggling like a child?

“Girl,” Tamara said with a smirk, “you never cease to amaze me.”

“The guard left with the radio.” The man with the red hair tried to comprehend what had happened. (Emory was relieved to discover he wasn’t the only one who was confused.) “What the hell are you holding?”

“You used your wristcomm didn’t you?” Tamara approached her friend, lifted up her left arm examined the sleek silver item wrapped about her wrist.

“Yep.” Grae replied confidently.

“What did you do?”

“Well, I used the force barrier generator to produce a time bubble sending me ahead twenty-eight continuous in the local spatial...” She trailed off as she watched everyone’s eyes glaze over.

Grae sighed heavily, then added simply: “I went one second ahead in time, and nicked the radio.”

“Then how come he still had it when he left?” Emory looked puzzled.

“Well,” Grae said as she scratched her head, “I gave it back in a few minutes when I’m done using it, won’t I?”

Emory shook his head in confusion. “My brain hurts.”

“It *can* get confusing.” Grae put her arm around his shoulders.

“Okay.” Tamara began. “So you have the radio, what now?”

“Emory is going to say something into it.”

“What?” Emory asked as the radio was thrust into his hands.

“Trust me.” Grae said, then kissed him on the cheek. She stepped away from the group and closed her eyes. Tamara approached her, but before she could say anything, Grae put a finger to her mouth. “Shhh, I need to concentrate. Whatever you do, stay clear of the door.”

Emory cautiously lifted the radio to his mouth and clicked it on. “Um, hello? Is there anyone there?”

Grae clasped her wristcomm. With a whoosh of ion-charged air, she vanished.

A moment later they could hear the guard say: “Where the hell did you come from?”

There was a struggle and suddenly, the door was thrown open as the guard hit it in midair.

Grae walked in wiping her hands off. “And to think, he really didn’t look that aerodynamic.”

Tamara started shuffling the prisoners out of the cell. “Grae, I was with you with the time bubble thingy, but how did you get out of the cell? *I know* my wristcomm can’t do that.”

“Well, the modifications I made to the central power cells only help to boost my own natural molecular-radio transference abilities.”

“Oh, is that all.”

Once the last prisoner had exited the freezer, Emory and Grae clasped hands and together, with Tamara, they headed outside.

* * * * *

The Doctor was looking worse for the wear. Better had interrogated him, but Arnolds was remarkably persistent.

“Have you had enough yet, Doctor?” Arnolds asked, a slow bead of sweat sliding down his right temple.

The Doctor grunted. “Why stop now? I’m sure there’s a Guinness Record waiting to be broken somewhere, isn’t there?”

Arnolds responded with a swift punch across the jaw. The two soldiers keeping guard in the corner of the room winced visibly. The Doctor recoiled several steps, and then slowly regained his footing.

“Ah,” the Doctor began, wiping some newly formed blood away from his lips, “I see that you’ve already beaten it.”

Arnolds towered over the Doctor. “Why don’t you just come clean, Doctor? You were caught with a dossier that detailed every move Senator Wilson was going to make while here. The ink on the goddamn termination order was stick fresh! Tell me who you are working for.”

When the Doctor spoke, his voice rose steadily until Arnolds seemed to just barely wince. “What makes you think I have anything to do with what’s happened here?” The Doctor paused for a breath. “I have fought evils across all of space and time. I have saved this planet innumerable times. And you’re willing to suggest that I might turn my back on all of that just to assassinate one insignificant senator? It seems rather daft, doesn’t it?”

For a moment, Arnolds’ eyes seemed to stay affixed onto the Doctor’s face. He stood motionless, almost as if he was outside of his own body for a few moments.

The Doctor decided to press on.

“Let me help you,” he began, cautious and slow. “Let me assist you in finding out who murdered the Senator, and put an end to this madness. I am not a terrorist, and neither are my friends.” The Doctor breathed in hard. “Let Grae and Tamara go, they are not worth anything to you. But I... I can help you, just as I have in the past.”

Something clicked in Arnolds’ face.

The Doctor didn’t like the look of it.

Before he could even react, Arnolds rushed at him and gored him, slamming him back up against the wall. The wind was knocked out of the Doctor, and before he could contemplate where that pain below his sternum was a cracked rib, Arnolds elbowed him in the back of the head. The Doctor crumpled at his feet.

Arnolds leaned down, and grabbing the Doctor by the collar, lifted him up slightly, and pressed him against the wall. Arnolds leaned in close to the Doctor's face, and spoke in a low, hard tone.

"Help us, huh?" Arnolds began, his voice drenched with spite. "You've been helping us for too long, Doctor."

The Doctor thought of a response to that, but his throat was gurgling with something, and the Doctor was slightly afraid to discover what that "something" was.

"Let me tell you something, Doctor..." Arnolds paused and tightened his grip on the Doctor's collar.

"I know all about you, I've read the files available on you and the work you've done with various military agencies. I know all about the fancy work you've done, stopping invasions and defending the Earth." Arnolds paused again. "And that's why I hate you, Doctor."

The Doctor made a face that said "huh?" but he again failed to articulate the thought.

Arnolds continued. "You're not even *human*! An alien- that's all you are! Surprisingly, you're not one of the Bug-Eyed types. But you're an alien, nonetheless. It sickens me to think that humanity can't even defend itself against alien invasions without the help of someone like you."

"Someone like me?" the Doctor said weakly. "I'm the only one who does this kind of thing..."

A sardonic smile crept across Arnolds' face. "Is that what you think, huh?"

"But," began the Doctor, before being interrupted by Arnolds' yelling.

"You don't get it, do you Doctor? You've been holding us back! You've been holding humanity back from bettering itself! Maybe a lot of people would have died in some of those invasions, but at least we would have learned to better defend ourselves as a species. Instead, we have had to rely on you saving our asses. You, an *alien*! It's almost laughable, if it wasn't so sad."

Arnolds let go of the Doctor's collar, and stood up. He turned abruptly and paced away.

"You see, Doctor, I don't trust you. I have this feeling that you've been helping us for a reason. Maybe you've just been trying to build up our trust in you in case-" Arnolds stopped in his tracks and quickly turned. "-in case your own people wished to invade."

The Doctor's jaw literally dropped open. "Is this what all of this is about? You think I've been saving humanity all of these years just so that I can gain your trust and launch a subsequent invasion by the Time Lords? Do you realize how utterly asinine that sounds? I thought you said you'd done your homework? Obviously you missed out on the whole non-interference bit."

"Is it really beyond the scope of reason?" Arnolds asked firmly. "You interfere."

"I think it's beyond the scope of sanity!" The Doctor slowly stood. The two guards in the corner of the room stiffened, but Arnolds raised his hand to them.

The Doctor set his eyes squarely upon Arnolds'. "You have obviously made up your mind about this matter, about me, and about the terrorists. You are a bigoted and short-sighted man who can't see the greater danger your prejudice is placing your world in." The Doctor paused, bracing himself. "I pity you."

This time, it didn't hurt so badly when Arnolds punched him again.

A young captain appeared on the scene and stole Arnolds' attention, allowing the Doctor a little time to breathe. He could hear Arnolds ask: "This is the intelligence report?"

"Yes, Sir." The captain replied.

“Good. That settles it. They’re based out of the airport after all. We take it tomorrow at 0600 hours. Send Downs in right away.” Arnolds dismissed the captain when another young soldier rushed in and approached him.

“Sir! The prisoners have escaped!”

“God damn it!” Arnolds shouted. “I want you to secure the perimeter, now!”

“Having trouble, are we?” The Doctor mocked.

“It seems your friends have managed to break out.”

“Good for them.”

“Somehow I doubt it Doc.” Arnolds sneered, then turned back to the young soldier. “I want them all shot on sight.”

* * * * *

No matter how many times she did this, Tamara’s heart would still feel like it was going to beat out of her chest.

Tamara almost wanted to laugh at herself. *How many times have I been involved in something like this?*, she thought to herself. She had been chased by all types of creatures, humanoid aliens, and what not. She had been assaulted, trapped, and threatened with death more than most people see in their lifetimes. Yet, each time, her heart would race, and her adrenaline would rush like it was the first time she had ever felt that way. Deep down, she wondered if perhaps her subconscious was telling her, *this could be it. This could be when you die.*

But again, how many times had she eluded Death’s grasp? How many times had she said a final prayer, only to have her soul snatched away from Death’s grip? It was almost too easy. It was like a movie, and Tamara kept waiting for the director to yell ‘Cut!’

Tamara secretly hoped that she would never have to film her final scene.

A sudden stop jolted her senses back to reality.

“What is it?” she whispered annoyingly to Grae, who was standing in front of her.

Emory turned back to Grae, and was about to mutter something when the first gunshot went off.

Then, suddenly, the world went mad.

The escapees, quietly slinking through the corridors until they could make their escape, panicked. Upon hearing the gunshots, they scattered in a rush. Tamara was caught off guard and was pushed down to the ground. Grae turned towards where Tamara stood, and was about to cry out her name when a bullet flew by just above her head. Grae ducked instinctively, and before she could turn to find Tamara, she felt a hand reach out and grab her’s. Grae’s muscles tensed as she turned to look, curling her free hand into a fist and preparing to strike. Upon turning, Grae was relieved to find Emory holding her hand.

“Quick!” Emory said. “We need to get out of here!”

Grae looked back, but couldn’t see any sign of Tamara. “But what about-?”

“There’s no time for that!” Emory face was a contortion of fear and determination.

“But Tamara...”

“Tamara can take care of herself, but we need to get out of here now.” Emory’s voice grew in desperation as Grae looked back uncertainly. “Look, you can’t help her if you’ve been recaptured, too. They may even kill us this time. We need to go *now*.”

Grae took in Emory’s words as the gunshots continued. He was right. If Tamara were to be recaptured, Grae would need to be able to let the Doctor know, or perhaps Grae herself could mount the rescue. Either way, there was nothing Grae could do now for Tamara.

Reluctantly, Grae headed off with Emory, into rush of humanity heading out of the building.

* * * * *

Tamara's body ached all over. It was as if she had been run over by a mob of people.

Oh, wait, Tamara thought to herself. *That is what happened to me.*

Reluctantly, Tamara stood up. The gunshots were still going strong, and quickly, she threw herself against the wall. Tamara scouted the area quickly. No sign of Grae or Emory. Inwardly, Tamara breathed a sigh of relief. *At least they got away.* Tamara turned and saw a narrow corridor heading away from the area she found herself in. Tamara looked around, and then began to run towards the corridor.

She didn't expect a JADE soldier to be coming out of the corridor as she ran towards it.

Thankfully, the JADE soldier wasn't expecting Tamara either.

Tamara tackled the soldier, clearly knocking the wind out of him. He gun rattled against the floor as it slid away. Tamara brought her fist quickly down across the soldier's jaw, and she could see a spittle of blood spray against the floor. Tamara's concentration wavered for a moment, believing that she had subdued the soldier. However, she didn't expect his right leg to kick her from behind, and Tamara crumpled forward off of the soldier. Tamara's hand instinctively reached for her head, but she then soon came to her senses and quickly stood, with the intention of attacking the soldier again while he was down. Tamara quickly rose and turned towards the soldier again...

...only to come face to face with the soldier's gun, this time tightly gripped within his grasp.

Facing Tamara.

His finger on the trigger.

Tamara looked into the soldier's eyes. She saw the anger, the rage. And she knew.

He was going to pull the trigger.

Inside, Tamara began to make peace with whatever God she believed in. She closed her eyes.

And then she heard the gunshot.

When Tamara opened her eyes again, she was surprised to see the soldier lying on the floor, a bullet hole in the back of his head.

She was slightly more surprised that his gun still hadn't gone off.

She was even more surprised when she was the young gentleman with the dyed red hair holding a gun, still smoking, staring directly at Tamara. Tamara gulped, a little louder than she had expected to.

"Come on," he said. "We need to get you out of here."

"I can trust you?"

"More so than these assholes." He extended a hand and added, "Ben Keau."

She took his hand. "Tamara Scott."

Another volley of shots rang out. Tamara and Ben headed for the door.

"I can't leave Grae." Tamara said resolutely, pulling her hand from his grip.

"I saw here and her boyfriend get out of here safely. Come on!"

* * * * *

Emory and Grae reached his family's beach and finally had a moment to catch their breath. The sun had begun to set again and Grae was tired from the day's events. She was glad to be away from the makeshift brig she had been locked in, but was saddened over the loss of life the prison break had caused. She was happy to be with Emory, but was concerned for Tamara's and the Doctor's safety.

"It's not gonna be safe enough to go back to the resort tonight," he explained as the rising tide lapped at their ankles. "But we can sneak back in at sunrise. There's some information at the house that will help exonerate your friends."

“Really?” Grae looked up at the young man who made her tummy buzz with nervousness. “What kind of information?”

“It’s a surprise.”

“Then let’s collect it and go back now!”

“Grae, I admire how much you care for your friends, but Arnolds’ men are a little too trigger happy right now. I want to offer them a white flag when they can clearly see it.”

“But Tamara?”

“I’m sure she’s fine. Trust me, okay.”

Grae paused and stepped directly in front of him. “Thank you.”

“My pleasure.”

Grae took hold of his hand in both of hers’ and smiled.

Emory pulled her into an embrace. “I’ll do whatever it takes to make you happy.”

Grae’s eyes misted up. “Emory?”

“Yeah?”

“Where are we going to go?”

“I live right up at the top of the hill there.” He pointed at the cottage as he spoke. It was a modest affair, with plenty of windows. It was surrounded by several smaller outbuildings. “You can stay here tonight.”

“Thank you.” Grae took his hand and led him to a soft area of sand where they sat down. “I want to show you something.”

Looking up at the sky, she asked, “Do you see the Cruxana tal Asterion?”

“I know a bit about astronomy, but I’ve never heard of that one. Show me.”

Taking his hand, she pointed out a small constellation shaped like a cross.

Emory chuckled, “Oh, Cygnus the Swan, sure I know it. What did you call it?”

“The Cruxana tal Asterion.” She said matter-of-factly. “My family’s house was named for it.”

“Asters, I get it.”

“It’s Asterus, really. My full name is Graekatziasa’asterus.”

“That’s the most beautiful name I’ve ever heard.”

“Yours is prettier.” Grae giggled in spite of herself. “Do you see the space between the top star and the rest of the constellation?”

“Yeah.”

“You can’t see it from here, but on the opposite side of the Cruxana is another constellation called Kasterborous. Right at its centre is a small planet on the edge of a black hole. That’s Gallifrey; that’s my home.”

Emory put his arm around Grae’s shoulders, “If you were anyone else, I wouldn’t believe you. But I always knew that there was something different about you. The way you escaped from the freezer proved it to me. You move at a different, I don’t know, *rhythm*, than the rest of us.”

“It’s my hearts!”

“Hearts?” Emory laughed. “Plural?”

“Yes.” Grae said matter-of-factly. “I have two of them.”

“Now *that* I don’t believe.”

“Here.” Grae gingerly placed Emory’s hands on her chest.

Emory’s jaw dropped as he felt the dual hearts pumping away. “Grae, this is incredible! I honestly didn’t believe you, but they’re beating at different speeds!”

He removed his hands and took a deep breath.

“See,” Grae said as she leaned towards him, “two hearts.”

As she leaned in, the top of her tank top fell away from her, exposing her cleavage.

Emory was shocked at the sight of the large red welt above her left breast.

“What happened?” He asked, indicating the wound.

“Arnolds used a taser on me.”

“That son of a bitch. How bad is it?”

Without a second thought Grae pulled her tank top off. Then she turned around and lifted her bikini strap up. “It went right through me and out the back, it was terrible.”

“I’m going to make him pay for this. No one can get a way with doing that too you. I’ll kill him if I have to! Grae can I kiss y-” Before he could finish his question she pounced, pressing her lips firmly to his. After a moment, he began to kiss back.

Grae felt as if she was about to burst. They continued their embrace as she glowed inside, feeling the burn of first love.

Emory moved a hand to her slender shoulder and slowly brushed her bikini strap down her arm.

* * * * *

“What have you done, Arnolds?” The Doctor was tied in the chair again. Arnolds seemed to have tired of the interrogation and was doing his best to ignore his prisoner. “If you kill them, they’ll be more to take their place. If you were so stupid as to kill innocents, the next attack will be twice as hard.”

“Is that what you think?” Arnolds responded without looking up from his work.

“It’s what I know,” the Doctor shouted back, “from experience.”

“Do you really expect me to take any advice from you?”

“No, not really.”

“Good, then shut up.”

The Doctor wanted to challenge him, but thought the better of it. Silently, he reached out to his companions with his mind. He had to know if they were okay. Since Tamara wasn’t a Time Lord, it was all the more difficult. But he found her and she wasn’t alone.

“She’s alive, and she can take care of herself,” he mumbled to himself.

He reached out for Grae, but couldn’t find her.

Then, the mind of a young female Time Lord bobbed into his head.

“*Doctor?*” It said.

“*Hello, Gr...*” He paused. “*This isn’t Grae, is it?*”

“*No, Doctor it’s me.*”

“*Romana?*”

“*No, silly, it’s Kaihta.*”

“*Kaihta! You’re Grae’s sister, right?*”

“*That’s right.*”

“*I trust you recovered from your regeneration well?*”

“*Very well, thanks.*”

“*Where are you?*”

“*On Earth somewhere.*”

“*A little more specific, please?*”

“*Califormula, I think it’s called.*”

“*California?*”

“*Yeah, that’s it.*”

“*What are you doing there?*”

“*Research. Is Grae alright?*”

“*We’ve just gotten separated, that’s all.*”

“*Do keep an eye on her, if it isn’t too much trouble.*”

“*With my life.*”

“*She needs looking after, even though she won’t admit to it.*”

The Doctor paused, wondering if he should continue. He trusted Grae deeply, and knew she'd come to him with any problems. But Tamara mentioned it herself; something was troubling their young friend. Perhaps Kaihta could shed some light on the matter?

"Is there something I should know about Grae, Kaihta?"

"I'm sure she's told you everything. Why?"

"She's been distant lately."

"Moody?"

"Yes: most out of character."

"Of course it could be related to..."

The Doctor was alarmed by the sudden silence. *"Kaihta?"*

"She must have told you."

"Told me what?"

"She didn't tell you?"

"What are you talking about?"

Kaihta's thoughts became agitated. *"Er, um, nothing Doctor. It's been nice catching up. Bye!"*

She was gone.

"Kaihta? Kaihta!"

"Kaihta!" The Doctor realized too late that he had shouted the name out loud that last time. Arnolds was standing over him with a very disapproving look upon his face.

"I told you to shut up," Arnolds shouted as he raised his fist, once again to his prisoner.

"Wait!" the Doctor shouted.

"Had enough?"

"Well, yes, actually."

"Good, then talk." Arnolds pulled a chair in front of the Doctor and took a seat.

"I want assurance that-

"I don't make deals with terrorists." Arnolds rose.

"For this kind of information, you will."

"What do you mean?"

"Have you forgotten from when you read my files that I'm a time traveler?"

"No."

The Doctor took a deep breath then began. "Then you must certainly realize that I hold certain items of future intelligence that may be worth quite a good deal on the open market."

"Like?"

"If this is 2048, than the United Nations would have just approved the construction of a weather station on the moon in order to regulate the severe hurricanes the Atlantic regions have been experiencing. They plan to build a machine called a Gravitron that works on the theory that..."

Arnolds raised his hand, stopping the Doctor cold in his tracks.

"Everyone leave." He ordered. His aides obeyed without a second thought. Once the room was empty, he turned back to the Doctor. "Continue."

"Not until my conditions are met."

"What do you want?"

"I want my companions found and returned to me unharmed."

Arnolds removed the radio from his belt. "Downs?"

"Sir." Downs responded in a decidedly British accent.

"Are the men prepared for tomorrow's initiative?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Well, I need four men to find the Doctor's companions and bring them back here, pronto. Can you manage that? Over."

"Roger, Sir, will co."

He clicked off the radio and turned back to his prisoner. "Well, continue."
"The Gravitron works on the theory that if the gravity surrounding a storm system is fluctuated the system itself can be manipulated."
"So you read the report," Arnolds laughed, "and understood it hell of a lot better than I did. But what can you really tell me?"
"Ever heard of the Cybermen?"

* * * * *

The Haleakala's Heart Inn was a small but comfortable family owned place in Lahina, across the bay from the Road to Hana and the other exclusive resorts in Wailea. But here, even after three in the morning the bars and restaurants and clubs were still bustling. People were partying loudly enough not have been bothered by the gunshots fired a half-hour earlier. And even if they could hear them, they more than likely assumed they were fireworks.

Ben shuffled Tamara through the Haleakala's Heart into a back stockroom. He knocked a series of four quick knocks followed by a pair of slow ones on the rear wall.

"Name?" A voice crackled over an intercom.

"Ben Keau and guest."

"Password?"

"*Mamo ka po'e kahiko.*"

"Enter." Quietly a panel in the wall popped open and Ben pulled her through.

"Who are you?" Tamara asked.

"A friend." He answered enigmatically.

"How do I know I can trust you?"

"You will after you see this." With that, Ben grabbed Tamara's hand and pulled her down a damp brick staircase.

* * * * *

For the second time in one day, Grae awoke and didn't know where she was. There was a slight tapping in the distance, but the rhythmic crashing of the waves and the heat of Emory's breath on her right breast made her close her eyes in ecstasy. The moon, like the beam of a silver spotlight illuminated the beach in a warm glow.

What had just happened?

Looking around, she found her bikini bottoms at her feet and slid them on. The bikini top and her maroon tank top were lodged under her love's sleeping body, and she felt it best not to disturb him.

But what had just happened?

She wasn't certain. Did she do what she thought she had done? What would the Doctor and Tamara say if they found out? She was a Time Lord, an agent of the Celestial Intervention Agency who was helping the Doctor track down a wanted criminal. She certainly didn't have time to be engaging in acts such as this. Frivolous, selfish and beneath her. Plus Emory was a human: shameful.

Grae stepped into the water and waded out until the coolness lapped at her knees. Her arms were wrapped about her bare chest, covering it.

Looking up at the moon, she began to cry. But they weren't the tears she expected them to be.

She was crying because she was thinking like a Time Lord, arrogant and aloof, as separate from the universe of time as she was from the universe of her emotions. But despite what her upbringing taught her, she wasn't upset over what she had done. She enjoyed it. She enjoyed every new sensation Emory showed her. She enjoyed the way he made her feel on the

outside as well as the inside. Butterflies flitted in her stomach as she recounted what had happened and it made her feel happy.

Looking up at the moon, it dawned on her. Pleasure. The Time Lords had made a science out of denying themselves any pleasures other than that of the purely intellectual. The pleasure she had experienced was experienced by so few of her kind. That made her feel selfish again, but the anger dissipated. Besides, on Giminæ she had told Tamara that everything works the same as humans. The Time Lords deny themselves this by choice. She was saddened by her people's inability to be able to connect with another as closely and intimately as she did with Emory. But there was something else.

For the first time in her life she felt feminine.

Time Lords have little passion for the opposite gender, especially the type that Emory showed towards her. Most wouldn't notice the length of her hair, let alone the curves of her body. Emory made her feel special, unique and she loved him for it.

Then she made a decision.

She pulled her hair back over her shoulders then dropped her arms to her sides, exposing herself to the moon. Tears of joy spilled from her eyes as she said, "I'm not a Time Lord anymore. I am Grae and I am a woman above all else. I am important."

Take that, male dominated Gallifreyan society.

But there was that tapping again, drawing her out of her introspection. Being as far out in the water as she was, she could see a light coming from a shed farther along the beach. Returning to the shore, Emory had rolled off her tank top, so she pulled it on and headed to investigate.

* * * * *

Kahuna Ka'alakea had nearly finished his work. For months he had been chiseling a walking stick out of a branch from the ancient camphor tree in his front yard. He was about to put in his last night of work into it when he noticed the face of a small red-haired female peeking through the doorway.

"Come in, my child."

She entered and bowed slightly. "I'm sorry to interrupt your work, Sir. It's just that I -"

"Nonsense Grae. Please, call me George." He gestured toward a small wicker chair and resumed his work. Tap, tap.

"Thank you, George." Grae took a seat and watched him intently for a couple of minutes. "What are you making?"

"A walking stick." Tap, tap, tap.

"May I see it?"

"Certainly." The Kahuna passed her the object and she turned it over in her hands. The staff was covered with faces of several dozen animals. The detail was breathtaking.

"It's beautiful."

"Thanks, I've been working on it for some time."

"All these animals. They're so detailed."

"I majored in Zoology at the University of Hawaii."

"It shows." Grae ran her hand along the walking stick: lions, wolves, bears, tigers, horses, hawks, foxes, and owls. It reminded her of the totem poles she had seen on a trip to the earth long ago. "This is amazing. Surely these couldn't ever really exist together in the same place in real life."

"They do. They all exist together in nature." Taking the walking stick back, he dusted it down with a handkerchief. "Even as predator or prey, they all help to achieve *lōkāhi*."

"*Lōkāhi*?"

“*Lōkāhi* means unity, harmony,” he explained. “All creatures are unified in nature. Everything serves its purpose to ensure the world continues. Everything is a part of everything else, but that’s not all.”

“I’m not sure I understand.” Grae, eager to understand, leaned closer to the Kahuna.

“I strive to achieve *lōkāhi* as well. It’s the balance in one’s life that we all strive for from day to day. We, as humans, must try to achieve a harmony between mind and body in order to be truly happy.”

Grae looked at her feet and began to cry.

“Come with me.” He rose and helped Grae out of her chair. Placing his arm around her shoulder, they walked outside onto the beach.

“Grae,” George began, “I could tell from when we first met that you were a very different kind of person than myself and my son. It bothered me for a while because I couldn’t quite put a finger on it, so I mediated upon it for a while. I’m not certain I understood what I saw.”

“What did you see?”

“I saw you, my dear, but your life was very short.”

Grae’s eyes welled over.

“Oh, my child, please forgive a stupid old man for being that careless. Don’t worry; you’ll live much longer than I. Or Emory, for that matter. What I meant was that something told me that your life should be longer still. I don’t know how this is possible, but I saw that you have many lives ahead of you. Or rather, you should, but for some reason you don’t and that makes you a rarity among others like you.”

Grae could hold back the sobs no longer. She collapsed to the sand as her body wrenched with sadness. She couldn’t take anymore. This revelation was of no surprise to her, as she had known for some time. To hear someone say it, however, made it extremely painful.

“You’d never believe me.”

“Try me. I can sense your double heartbeat.” He smiled, his eyes kind. “I know you’re not from Earth.”

“No, I’m not.” She spoke through her tears. “People from my world are supposed to be able to regenerate their bodies when hurt. They’re supposed to be able to do this twelve times. The Doctor’s already done it seven.”

“What about your friend, Ms. Scott?”

“No, she’s human, she can’t do it.”

“Well, why can’t you...” he fumbled with the word, “regenerate?”

“It’s a disease, an epidemic among my people. I produce too much of the hormone that sparks the regeneration, so when I need a concentrated burst of it, I don’t have enough.”

The kahuna dropped to Grae’s side and she cried into his shoulder.

“Listen, this is no way for a young lady to behave. So you have one life not thirteen, big deal? You’re still blessed with the most important thing of all, and you should be thankful.”

She wiped her eyes. “What’s that?”

“You should be thankful that you’re alive at all; that you continue to live. Every day you should thank the gods for the gift of life they’ve bestowed upon you.”

“But-”

“But nothing!” George shouted as he helped her to her feet. “Enjoy the life you have, Grae, before it’s too late. You must still strive to achieve *lōkāhi* to be happy. Stop dwelling in your sadness and have a hardy laugh!”

He drew in close, then continued, “Does the Doctor know about your affliction?”

“No,” she shouted, “he mustn’t! He’ll hate me.”

“I’ve seen the way the Doctor and you get along, I don’t think you could possibly ever do anything to make him hate you.”

“I don’t know. Other people that have this disease have been ostracized; their families turning them into the medical sector because they don’t want to risk infection.”

“Is it contagious.”

“Only by blood contact.”

“Still, all the more reason to tell the Doctor, for his safety, right?”

“You’re right. Of course you are, but it’ll be hard.”

“I’m sure it will be, but you owe it to him. He loves you dearly, I can tell.”

“I know,” Grae said as the tears began to dry, “but I need to be comfortable with me first.”

“I understand.”

“Help me find *lōkāhi*. Teach me how to meditate.”

* * * * *

Tamara stood in awe at the makeshift command centre in front of her. Dozens of monitors kept watch over the entire island, while several men and women operated desktop systems monitoring the security systems of local businesses.

“So,” Tamara began, “this is a more efficient operation than I had imagined it.”

Ben rushed back to her side with a fresh cup of coffee. “Amazing, isn’t it?”

“And you expect me to believe you’re not a part of the terrorist faction?”

“Look, we here all agree with the idea that Hawaii should be returned to her people, but that’s all we share with those terrorist bastards. They’ve given us a bad rep and all we’ve done is stage peaceful protests.”

“Then what’s all the security for?” Tamara sat down at a computer system. “I mean, if you’re only staging peaceful protests why do you need it?”

“We’ve been able to monitor our opponents every move with these strategically placed cameras, but they’ve been a little too close to finding our whereabouts. They managed to steal a dossier that we had compiled about Senator Wilson, it gave them a heads-up as to all his whereabouts, where he was staying and who he was planning on meeting with. We should have been able to have saved him.”

“A dossier on Wilson was slid under our door. It showed that he was ordered terminated.” Tamara asked, “Are you telling me the truth?”

“Of course I am, and I’m sorry for getting you and your friends into this.” Ben sat down next to Tamara and logged onto the terminal. After typing intently for a few minutes, he turned the monitor to face her. “Take a look at this.”

A picture of the Doctor flashed onto the monitor and Tamara immediately sat up. Taking a closer look, she noticed that Ben had hacked into JADE.

“I know all about your friend the Doctor from his official entries in the UNIT/JADE database. I personally think he’s a great man and possibly the last shot we have at reaching a peaceful solution.”

“If only we can get to him.” Tamara jumped to her feet. “How many men do you have?”

“Not many at hand, but I can probably scrounge up fifty total.”

“Any weapons training?”

“About fifty-fifty,” Ben said as he scratched at his head. “Like I said we usually do peaceful protests, but we do have some ex-military personnel. And we have a shipment of JADE weapons we made ‘disappear’ thanks to an inside contact.”

“Well sometimes Ben, you need to fight for your beliefs.”

“What do you have in mind?”

Tamara walked around to the bank of monitors and stopped in front of one showing the outside of the Road to Hana Resort. “You don’t believe in violence to make your point, but will you fight those who threaten innocent lives?”

“You bet your ass we would.”

“So would the Doctor. If the terrorists have a headquarters like this, believe me, the he’ll find it. This needs to end before the bloodshed gets out of control.” Tamara crossed to a trunk and picked up an Uzi. She checked to make sure it was loaded then slung it over her shoulder. “I think we best rally the troops and bust the Doctor out.”

* * * * *

By the time the sun rose, Emory had clambered into the house, where his father and his girlfriend were laughing over coffee, and a photo album. Nothing deflates the male ego like the dreaded naked baby pictures.

“He was so tiny!” Grae giggled.

“He was,” George laughed, “who would have thought he would end up taller than me?”

“Dad!” Emory shouted.

“I’m sorry, but I couldn’t resist showing her.”

Grae snorted as she said, “The one with you naked on the bed jumping up and own was priceless.”

“That’s it.” Emory grabbed the photo album. “Show’s over. Got any more coffee?”

George gestured to the pot brewing in the corner. “Just put some more on.”

“Good morning, love.” Grae rose and hugged her beau.

He responded with a kiss on the cheek. “Good morning to you.”

“You got a call this morning from someone named Keoki.” Grae handed him the slip of paper on which she had scribbled the phone number.

“Best give him a call then.” With that, Emory took the paper and disappeared upstairs.

Grae started to follow, but George stopped her. “He’ll be back in a minute, have a muffin.”

A moment later, Emory locked his bedroom door and dialed the phone.

“Emory,” an obviously altered voice answered, “I thought you forgot about me.”

“I’m sorry, Keoki, we had a bit of trouble at the resort last night.”

“So I heard, but I’m glad you’re out. Today’s the day, my friend.”

“Goddamit, Keoki,” Emory shouted, “I won’t do it.”

“If you don’t, then I will.” The altered voice from the other end responded. “Look, Arnolds won’t suspect because you have that girl with you.”

“That girl? That girl just happens to be the best thing that’s ever happened to me.”

Keoki laughed. “Lucky you, you schmuck. You should have known better than to get involved. The plan goes through or I do it myself.”

“Emory?” Grae called from downstairs.

“What do I have to do?” Emory ignored the calls from the kitchen.

“Pick up is at the Renaissance, in locker 32A. Proceed to the Road to Hana resort and if you need any further instructions, I’m not sure your heart is in the right place.”

As Emory ended the call, there was a soft knocking on the door.

“Come in.” He responded.

Grae peeked in. “Did you get everything you need, I need to get back to the Doctor.”

“Just about, give me a second, okay?”

“Sure!” Grae closed the door and padded down the stairs.

Once he was sure she was out of earshot, he reached into his bureau and removed a black Smith & Wesson semi-automatic. With a slap, he locked a fresh cartridge into place.

* * * * *

“Colonel,” Captain Downs reported to his superior, “the men are mobilized and are awaiting your orders”

“Thank you, Downs.” Arnolds responded, “I’ll join you shortly.”

The Doctor, relieved to have released from his bonds was enjoying a fresh cup of coffee as he surveyed over a map of the island and the blueprints of Maui International Airport. The airport was situated on the opposite side of the island from the Wailea area and indeed made a formidable base of operations for the terrorist group with its numerous tunnels and passageways below ground.

The Doctor had told Arnolds the story of the Cybermen’s attempted lunar invasion of 2070 in order to gain his freedom and to be reunited with his friends. He already felt the prickling sensations on the back of his neck that he felt when he knew the Time Lords were watching him. Hopefully he’ll be able to rectify this situation before it got out of control.

As Arnolds finished suiting up for the morning’s strike, there was a commotion out front.

Arnolds’ chief aide ran to his Colonel’s side, “Sir, one of the Doctor’s friends is here with one of them.”

“One of who?” the Doctor asked as he jumped to his feet.

Arnolds nodded to his aide then checked his sidearm. “Send them in.”

Emory and Grae were escorted into the lobby.

“Doctor!” She shouted as she saw the weary face of her friend. She tried to run to him, but a guard grabbed her by the shoulders.

Emory took the opportunity to elbow his guard in the face, then drew his weapon and shot the other guard in the chest twice.

Arnolds quickly trained his weapon on Emory, who grabbed Grae. Wrapping his arm around her neck, he positioned her in front of himself and pressed the gun up against her temple.

“Emory!” Grae was shocked.

“Let her go!” The Doctor shouted. “Arnolds, don’t shoot!”

The Doctor looked the Colonel over; he was smiling like a child on Christmas. “It’s all coming together, Doctor. This proves you were in league with them.”

“It proves nothing, Arnolds!”

“And I suppose that your little slut sleeps with pagan terrorist scum to spy on them?”

The Doctor slowly walked to Arnolds’ side and pressed his index finger to his chest. Arnolds sank to his knees in agony. “I am not a violent man, Colonel. But my friends and I have suffered more than our share of indignities at the hands of you and JADE.” Arnolds dropped his weapon. The Doctor, however, did not release him.

“There are many things I can take,” the Doctor continued his voice growing in anger, “including violence to my person. But I will NOT tolerate this kind of treatment to the people I hold dear!” With that he released his hold on Arnolds, punched him hard in the stomach, then elbowed him swiftly on the head. Taking Arnolds weapon, the Doctor turned to face the Colonel’s staff, all of whom’s weapons were trained on him. He, however, kept his cool and trained the weapon on Emory.

“Emory,” he pleaded, “you don’t want to do this. Let her go.”

Grae screamed in mix angst and terror. “Why, Emory? I love you!”

“I’m sorry, Grae, but it has to be done.”

The Doctor approached slowly, “Listen to me: leave her out of this. Whatever you and your friends are planning, it doesn’t have to mean Grae has to be hurt. We can talk about this.”

“Yeah, just like you and every other *haole* says, Doctor.” Emory shouted as he pressed the muzzle of his gun harder against Grae’s temple. “You want to talk? The time for talking is over! It’s time to take Hawaii back. I thought that slipping you the dossier we intercepted would get Arnolds and his Nazis off our scent.”

“Didn’t it?”

“If it did, why is there a platoon out there set to march on the airport?” With his free hand, Emory fished a radio remote control device from his pocket. “I can stop it! I can stop you all! The whole hotel’s wired up. All I have to do is press this thing!”

“Emory, don’t do it, we can talk out yours and your friends ideas diplomatically. There doesn’t need to be anymore bloodshed!”

Suddenly a volley of shots rang out and the remote control flew from Emory’s hand. The Doctor spun on his heels to see Colonel Arnolds lying on his side, a machine gun smoking.

“JADE does NOT negotiate with terrorists!” He shouted.

He let another volley of shots off and caught Grae in the stomach and arm, she dropped to the floor bleeding.

Before the Doctor could respond, both Emory and Arnolds fired again. Emory was stuck in his left temple and was dead before he hit the floor. Arnolds was hit in his shoulder and stomach.

“Medic!” Downs shouted into his radio. “I need a medic up here pronto!”

The Doctor rushed to his companion’s side and pulled her out from under her Emory’s body as the medical staff arrived. Grae was pale and trembling, but she forced a smile when she saw the Doctor looking down at her. Once she saw the blood on her hands, however, she cowered away from her mentor.

“No, Doctor!” She shouted.

“Grae, what’s wrong?” He asked. “You need me to help you. I can’t let human doctors work on you.”

“Just stay away!” Grae cried. “Please!”

Then she went unconscious. She was surrounded instantly with medical personnel.

At that moment Downs rushed to the Doctor’s side. “Doctor?”

The Time Lord looked the young man over, there was something oddly familiar about him, but this wasn’t the time. His voice was tinged with indignation when he responded, “What?”

“Doctor, your companion,” he asked, “is she a Time Lord as well?”

“What? Yes, yes of course she is.” How could Downs have possibly known to ask that?

“Listen,” Downs shouted to the medical officers, “the young lady is a Time Lord, that means dual cardiovascular system, remember!”

“I was wondering why her pulse was so fast.” One of the officers shouted.

“She’s in good hands, Doctor. Don’t worry.” He said as he turned to the officers examining Arnolds.

Suddenly all the medics surrounding Grae scurried backwards as her wounds began to glow. Instantly her bullet wounds closed; the bullets rolled to the ground.

Grae climbed unsteadily to her feet and ran into the Doctor’s arms sobbing uncontrollably.

“Oh, my dear, dear child.” The Doctor held her tightly and kissed the top of her head lovingly. “Everything is going to be alright. Get it all out, love.”

Downs looked back at the Doctor and smiled. A moment later, he was at the Doctor’s side with a cup of coffee for both him and Grae.

“Look, your name is Downs, right?” The Doctor turned back to the young man before him. What was it about Arnolds’ second in command that itched at the Doctor’s mind? “I appreciate what you’re doing, but how do you know all-”

The Doctor stopped and slapped his forehead with the palm of his hand. “Downs,” he asked, “Connor Downs?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Suddenly I feel a lot better.” The Doctor pulled a handkerchief from the pocket of his waistcoat and wiped his brow. “I say, Tamara will be delighted to see you. It’s good to see that the timelines worked themselves out so well.”

Grae pulled herself away from the Doctor’s embrace and took a sip of her coffee. A medical tech brought her a blanket and she thanked him with a monotone voice.

Downs looked at the Doctor, concerned. “Is she going to be okay?”

“It’s going to take her a while to get over this, I’m afraid.”

“The Colonel’s alive!” Someone shouted.

“Doctor,” Downs whispered, “I want you to know that Arnolds was a minority in JADE. Most of us don’t share his racist streak.”

“That’s good to hear, Captain.”

“I’m glad he’s alive, though.” Downs chuckled, “Now we can finally court-martial the bastard.”

“Really?”

“Yes, you did know that he didn’t receive authorization from his superiors regarding his move against the airport?”

“And you did?”

Downs reached into his vest and flashed the Doctor his badge. “JADE Internal Affairs. I’ve been undercover as Arnolds’ aide for the last month.” Downs’ radio clicked to life.

“Sir,” the voice said, “it’s 0630 hours, are we ready to go? Over.”

“Sergeant Charles, this is Captain Downs, the colonel is incapacitated. Tell all troops to stand down, I repeat: tell all troops to stand down. Over and out.”

* * * * *

When the attack on the airport never came, Ben Keau’s separatist group was able to stand down as well. Tamara was reunited with her friends and the Doctor helped to begin the negotiation process with the U.S. Government. With information shared between JADE and the Separatists, they were easily able to track down Emory’s co-conspirators. Tamara was able to help too, but Grae didn’t. For the most part, her friends allowed her to stay in the background and recover from her experiences. Sure they both helped her, but nothing worked better than the meditation that the Kahuna taught her.

Unfortunately, every time she thought of the kindly Mr. Ka’alakea, her thoughts would drift to his son.

Grae stood at the mirror in the bathroom, examining herself; going over how much her life had changed in the days she had spent in Paradise. She had reached a milestone and turned a proverbial corner. Emory had betrayed her, but not before robbing her of her innocence. Did she regret it? Only in that she should have been a better judge of character. But one of the Doctor’s curious Earth expressions came to mind.

“Hindsight is twenty-twenty.” She said to herself, finally understanding the phrase’s meaning.

Still, she would never be the same after Maui and felt the need to capture the experience in a more permanent way. She looked over the three items that were laid out on the countertop before her: a brush, a pair of scissors and a pair of electric hair clippers and decided that she best use the scissors first.

Even now, after all that had happened, she could still here Emory’s voice in her head.

“You have the most beautiful hair I have ever seen.” It said.

Exactly twenty-seven seconds later, four feet of red hair fell to the floor.

EPILOGUE

“And now, for the finale,” the smiling emcee stated, “the dancers will perform the Dance of the Wind!” In an instant, four male and four female hula dancers rushed onto the stage and began dancing in time to a rhythmic drumming.

Grae turned back towards the stage, watching the dancers. Her emerald eyes sparkled with fascination, her new shoulder-length bob bouncing with each head movement. She turned to the Doctor whom sat next to her. “What did you call this? Hula dancing? It’s so fascinating. It’s so sensual and intricate, yet quick and percussive. I love the way they move their hands! It’s just so exciting! Sorry, I’m gushing again.”

“My dear Grae,” the Doctor said as he laid a hand on her bare freckled shoulder. “Grae-gush as freely as you like. It doesn’t bother me one bit.”

“Me neither, babe. Have I mentioned how much I like your new do?” Tamara said as she ate her last bite of Mahi-Mahi. She was glad to see Grae smiling. She remembered when they arrived in Maui two weeks ago. Grae had faced so much during their visit to the island, from finding and losing her first love to overcoming shyness about her sexual side. Tamara stifled a laugh at the sight of Grae holding the green and white flowered bikini in the gift shop and blushing at the thought of showing so much skin and cleavage. Now, Grae’s confidence had doubled and she sat comfortably in the suit with a matching green wrap around her waist. Tamara remembered her shock when she discovered her young friend had a more curvaceous figure than she did, but she was right to have insisted Grae buy that particular suit as it really showed off those curves and brought out the green of her eyes. With her hair now cut short, Grae could no longer hide behind it and looked positively radiant.

“I’m still not clear about how you managed to escape from the freezer.” Tamara asked.

“Yes,” the Doctor added, “Tamara told me about it. I have to admit I’ve intrigued.”

“Well,” she began, “as a child I was always able to project myself in space a short distance. After the Vardan incident, I began to do a little research into their method of traveling along radio waves. As I grew older, I found that I could do it but not very far.”

Tamara sat up straight. “I see, so you escaped by using the radio you stole and the radio the guard had.”

“Right! I was able to materialize at the other end where I knocked out the guard and set you free.”

The Doctor rocked back, scratching his beard. “But weren’t the two radios the same?”

“Yeah.” Tamara arched an eyebrow, “How did that work out?”

Grae shrugged, “I’m not sure, really.”

“Grae,” The Doctor scolded, “I thought you said you weren’t going to create anymore paradoxes.”

“Take it easy on her, Doctor,” Tamara lightly punched the Time Lord on his shoulder, “she helped save lives.”

“Well,” he said with a laugh, “like I used to say, it’s not the size of the paradox that matters; it’s why the paradox was created in the first place.”

As the dancers finished, a waiter cleared the entrée course from the table and served dessert. The change was so quick that it had finished by the time the audience had stopped applauding.

The emcee returned to the stage. “Thanks for that terrific reception. That’s all for tonight’s entertainment; enjoy your dessert! Good night everyone!”

“Doctor, what is this called again?” Grae asked as she took a bite of the strange wedge shaped object sitting in front of her. The Doctor had treated his companions to a luau and a lovely five-course dinner of Mango and coconut Mahi-Mahi. The Kahuna had recommended Grae slow down and enjoy every second of her life, so Grae had slowly eaten the salad course and the fish savoring every bite as it passed from her mouth to her stomach. She enjoyed it so much she didn’t

say a word throughout the whole of the meal. The last item, the dessert, was incredibly succulent. It was the one thing that the Doctor didn't order as it came with the meal. She had do know what it was.

"It's coconut cr me pie, Grae." Tamara chuckled as she watched Grae shovel another piece into her mouth. "Here, you can have my slice."

"Thank you Tamara." Grae reached across the table and grabbed Tamara's plate, and in the process accidentally put her bare elbow into her own slice. "Oh, look at me. You can't take me anywhere, can you?"

"Don't worry about it, my dear," the Doctor said, passing a napkin to her, "if you like it that much we'll order two to go. Waiter?"

"Yes, sir." The nearby waiter snapped to attention.

"I'd like two of these please, to go."

"Two slices?"

"No, my good man," the Doctor said as he slipped a twenty dollar bill into the man's hand, "two whole coconut cr me pies. And, uh, keep the change."

Tamara rose and straightened her skirt. "Since I didn't get any pictures, I wanted to buy postcard book from the gift shop before we leave, if you don't mind."

"Not at all." The Doctor smiled at Tamara as she left. Grae watched her go, the straps of Tamara's azure bikini-top contrasting beautifully with her dark skin, her short black skirt swishing as she walked.

The Doctor turned back to his young friend. "I remember when I was just like you, seeing everything for the first time. Promise me something, Grae."

"Yes Doctor?"

"Never, ever change."

Grae stopped wiping her elbow and looked at the Doctor. A tear welled up and spilled over her left eyelid. "Thank you." Grae tried to smile, but another tear rolled from her eye. Then another, and another. The tears landed with small splashes in her glass of water. She cast her eyes away from the Doctor, too ashamed to look him in the eye.

"Here you go, Sir." The waiter returned with the Doctor's take-away order. The pies were set in lovely white boxes with gold trim. The name of the resort was embossed on the front.

"Grae, what's wrong?" The Doctor asked, as he reached across the table and tenderly ran his hand through what was left of her hair. The incredible length may have been gone, but it was still thick, soft and pleasant to touch. Then he slowly lifted her jaw until their eyes met.

"I'm sorry," she began, "the Kahuna told me to not dwell in my problems and have a hearty laugh. Laughter is supposed to be the 'best medicine' right?"

"That's some of the best advice I've heard in a long time." The Doctor opened his eyes widely. "I know a lot of people who could benefit from it."

"I know, but since Emory betrayed me I can't think of anything to laugh about." Forgetting that she was still holding the napkin she used to wipe her elbow, she wiped the tears from her face, leaving her freckled skin covered with a streak of whipped cream from her left eye to her nose. When she noticed the Doctor trying to stifle a grin, she checked out her reflection in the blade of her unused knife.

"Oh, Damnation!"

"Here," the Doctor said as he dipped a clean napkin into his glass of water, "allow me." He tenderly cleaned her face with the damp napkin then was suddenly overcome with emotion. Unspoken memories of a life long past poured into the Doctor's mind from deep within his subconscious. Memories that the Doctor fought to suppress emerged and he couldn't stop a slight sob from escaping his lips. He paused and collected himself. Grae was watching him, intently, compassionately. The empathy in her deep emerald eyes soothed his pain. "I'm sorry, I just realized how long it's been since I did something like that."

"I know the matrix files have no records of your immediate family."

“No, they wouldn’t.”

“Do you ever miss them?”

“It’s been so long that their faces are barely even able to appear before my mind’s eye anymore, but I do miss them. Especially considering...” He trailed off, lost in thought. Coming back to reality, the Doctor took the young girl’s hand in his own. “Grae, you and Tamara mean very much to me, I’m very happy that all turned out well, but I have to admit that I don’t know what I would have done if you had decided to stay here with Emory.”

“You left Gallifrey for many reasons, as far as my studies showed.”

“I did. I saw a great evil out in the universe that needed to be confronted, plus I didn’t want to rot in the citadel for the whole of my existence. I wanted to see all the wonders I had studied about, in person.”

“Those are the same reasons why I joined you and Tamara.”

“I know, my dear. We’re two of a kind.” The Doctor clasped her hands in his, then kissed them warmly. “You’re a very special person. The way you freed yourself from the freezer, for example. No one else can do that! Grae, You’re very special to me and you’re very special to Tamara. And I know that one day, long after we part company-”

Grae began to sob. “No. I don’t want to think about that.”

The Doctor clasped her hands tighter. “Listen, you have talents and abilities that are unique. But there’s more to it than that. You have the infinite ability to enlighten the lives of those around you. One day you will leave my company and I know that those abilities will make you very special to everyone. Grae, the future is bright for you. I will see that it is.”

Suddenly the Doctor arched an eyebrow then looked over his shoulder, Tamara was on her way back to the table. He smiled a mischievous grin at Grae.

“What?” Grae said, wiping the tears from her eyes.

“I’ve just figured out a way to make you laugh.”

“What’s that look for?” Tamara asked as she pulled out her chair. Then she noticed the redness of Grae’s cheeks, “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine.” Grae said, forcing a smile.

The Doctor turned to his old friend and said, “Tamara, would you do me a favor?”

“Sure.” Tamara turned to him, curiously.

“The waiter brought the pies, but I think they smell a bit off.” The Doctor took one of the pastries out of its box and held it in front of Tamara. “I’m afraid I feel a touch of a cold coming on, would you smell it for me?”

“You? A cold? Since when do you get colds?” Tamara leaned in, and sniffed the pie. “Smells fine to me.”

“Are you sure?”

“Well, I’ll do it again if you don’t believe me.” As Tamara sniffed the pie a second time, the Doctor pushed it firmly into his unsuspecting companion’s face.

Giving the pie a slight twist to make sure it stuck, the Doctor said, “I’m so sorry, my dear, I’ve always wanted to do that to someone.”

Slowly, the pie tin dropped to the table. Not a single one of Tamara’s facial features could be seen beneath the creamy mask. Without missing a beat, Tamara cocked her head to the side and cleaned her eyes with her index fingers, and flicked the goo onto the ground. Then she licked her lips clean and said, “Well, at least it’s not fattening this way.”

As the crowd witnessing the spectacle began to chuckle, Grae let out a loud snort of a laugh. The Doctor smiled wickedly.

“Uh oh, Grae,” Tamara mumbled under her breath as she wiped globs of cream and crust from her face. “You’re not, are you?”

“What?” Grae asked between chuckles.

“You’re not laughing at *me*, are you?”

Quietly the Doctor scooted back, away from the table.

“Of course I am!” Grae laughed. “You look absolutely ridiculous!”

“Oh no,” Tamara edged closer to the second pie. “You see, that’s definitely a no-no. You’re breaking the first rule of slapstick comedy.”

“What’s the first rule of slapstick comedy?”

“Never laugh at a person who just took a pie in the face when there’s another pie nearby.”

With that Tamara rose and smashed the second pie, hard, into Grae’s face. The girl froze, the tin clung to her face; the pie splattered over her ears, plastering her hair back.

“Grae?” The Doctor asked, but received no answer.

Tamara meanwhile began to laugh the laugh of the avenged. “Karma’s a bitch, isn’t it?”

The pie tin clanged to the table, exposing the mess beneath. Over one half of Grae’s face, the crust of the pie had remained intact, suspended in place by the cream. The other half of the crust dropped with the pie tin, but landed with a splat across her chest, leaving the white cream completely everywhere else/. There was a moment’s stunned silence, and then Grae threw back her head in laughter. Deep, full-bellied, hearty laughter. Uncontrollable, hysterical, bellyaching laughter.

The Doctor, safe with the fact there were no more pies around joined in.

“Come on, babe.” Tamara stood and grabbed Grae’s hand. “Let’s go clean up.” Together the girls ran into the ocean.

The Doctor watched them go, smiling. He knew anything Grae was harboring from him wasn’t important.

She was.

So was Tamara.

“You’ve come a long way, Doctor,” he said to himself, “and you’ve left a lot behind you over the millennia. Lots of places and lots of people. It’s nice to have a family again.”

Quietly, he wrote the girls a note on his napkin and took a long, slow walk back to the TARDIS. But, after a few steps, he paused. With a chuckle, he said to himself, “David. That was his name, David Campbell.”

* * * * *

Tamara and Grae had sufficiently cleaned themselves up and were lying on their backs in the sand looking up at the stars. The warm water licked at their ankles.

“You know, I love you very much.” Tamara turned to look at Grae who smiled back at her. Grae still had a few streaks of whipped cream in her hair and down her face. Tamara reached over and wiped them off gently with her hand. “You’re the best friend I’ve ever had. I’m happy you didn’t stay with Emory.”

“I couldn’t leave you and the Doctor.” Grae turned her attention back to the stars. “Not now, not here. I mean it’s nice and all, but…”

“It’s okay, you don’t have to explain.”

“Thanks.”

“Listen, Grae.” Tamara turned back to her friend. “Whatever happens in the next few weeks, promise me you’ll remember this night and how happy you feel.”

Grae could sense a tinge of apprehension in her friend’s voice. “What’s wrong, Tamara?”

She sighed. “I had a dream last night.”

“What kind of dream?”

Tamara paused, uncertain if she should continue.

“Tamara, you can tell me.”

“It’s just that Arnolds really got under my skin. He had me thinking some really strange thoughts.”

“You’re going around the mulberry bush.”

Tamara chuckled solemnly, “I think you mean I’m ‘beating around the bush,’ which I am.”

“So what is it?”

“I think we’re going to face Bramahl again, very soon.”

“Well, we *have* been trying to track her down.”

“I know.” Tamara looked back up at the stars. “I just don’t know if we’re ready for her.”

“We may never be,” Grae said resolutely, “but I’ll help you and you’ll help me and we’ll help the Doctor just like we always do.”

Silence.

Sniff.

“Tamara?”

Slowly, Tamara reached over and closed her hand over Grae’s.