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“Necessary Evil”  
by  
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This is the second printing of the rough draft, so take note of grammatical errors. Any comments for story refinement are appreciated. This is the fourth book in a series. Editing versions of book one: “A Touch of Greatness,” book two: “Another Piece of the Action,” and book three, “Both Hands Full,” may be attained by contacting the author.

An additional short story, “Re-establishing the Neutral Zone” follows the conclusion of this book.

My sincere appreciate goes out to everyone who have sent their regards, pointed out errors, whether grammatical or related to cannon, and those requesting the next book. The fifth is in progress, and I don't see it wrapping up anytime soon. Now, if only work and school would stop interrupting my day dreaming! ☺ Enjoy.

## PROLOGUE

Lt. Commander Zara Undine fired up the thrusters and pivoted the attitude of the shuttle for a steeper departure vector. The angle plus the bank gave Captain Tammias Parkin Arblaster-Garcia an excellent view of the mob gathered at the fence in protest of all things Fleet. The protest signs had been hurriedly assembled, evidenced by the fact that most were in English, bad English with letters reversed or poorly drawn, though some were in Klingon with letters that were even more deformed. The signs were mostly derogatory statements describing biological forms of waste and places where Star Fleet could put it. One of the protesters pitched a small bottle and managed to score a direct hit to the forward window. It caused no damage to the shuttle, but when the bottle broke a green liquid spread itself over the window. Undine blinked and hastened their exit.

Captain Garcia had already been in a particularly foul mood before the fiasco, but now his mood hadn't seen a rival. The Away Team was abnormally quiet, as if they were expecting him to throw a tantrum. Unfortunately for them, he wasn't ready to preach from his soap box yet or his anger might have been dissipated more quickly. Instead, he put a foot up on the console and a fist to his chin and sulked.

"I think your concert went off fairly well," Lt. Commander Tatiana Kletsova said. Her metallic, silver uniform, with red highlights marking her as security, momentarily caught and reflected the sunlight as the light slipped across the inner space of the cabin as the shuttle continued its climb. The sun's intensity polarized the forward window.

Lt. Undine glanced back at Kletsova, glanced to the Captain, and then put her attention back to her piloting. Undine was not human, she was Zaldan. The only evidenced of this were her webbed fingers and toes, and a very straight forward manner that was often mistaken for antagonism. Consequently, she didn't feel the need to try to soften the Captain's mood or in any other way ease the tension that filled shuttlecraft 'Mississippi Moon.' As a Zaldan, she not only saw courtesy and compliments as a form of dishonesty, she believed it was a waste of time. She was aware that Garcia knew his performance was flawless. Saying so could only be construed as social manipulation, an attempt to distract him from his present anger. An anger she believed he was entitled to.

As it was, Garcia ignored the compliment. He didn't even look back at Tatiana, a friend since enrolling in Star Fleet Academy. Instead, he tried to distract himself by the fragment of a song in his head, "Mississippi Moon want you keep on shining on me..." Normally he would be working hard on forgetting the song that was stuck in his head, a manifestation of OCD, but his anger was stronger than his obsession with the lyrics or the tune in the background of his mind. All the shuttles were named after songs, either direct titles or words found from random lyrics, and this was no doubt the immediate trigger of Garcia's current musical tangent, a necessary distraction that was aiding him from verbally chastising his crew in an unproductive manner.

Lt. Commander Tuer, the security officer for the New Constitution, was unable to tolerate the continuing silence and scowled as only a Klingon could. "I don't see why you're angry at me," Tuer said. His uniform was similar to Tatiana's in that it was silver with red highlights, minus the skirt, of course, but it also had Klingon style armor. Polished and cleaned armor, something Garcia had insisted on for his Klingon crew. He wanted his warriors to appear as if they didn't lack for state of the art materials, whether it was weaponry or defensive tools. "It's not like I started the fight."

Captain Garcia closed his eyes, biting down on his first response. “In all of my studies and research of Star Fleet history and protocols, I have never once heard of such a stupendous blunder as the one you pulled, Lt.”

“It was a misunderstanding,” Tuer protested.

“No,” Garcia corrected. “It was a hand-wash sink!”

“It looked like a urinal,” Tuer went on.

Kletsova laughed out loud. Garcia shot a ‘cross’ look at her.

“Shuttlecraft Mississippi Moon to New Constitution,” Undine said. “We’re on final approach. Open hangar bay doors.”

Lt. Commander, and First Officer of the New Constitution, Kitara responded: “Opening hangar bay doors. Is everything alright? You’re returning ahead of schedule.”

Undine looked to the Captain.

“We’re fine,” Captain Garcia said. His tone suggested otherwise.

“We haven’t received the supplies. Are you carrying them?” Kitara asked.

“No,” Garcia said.

“Captain?” Kitara asked.

“Tuer will file the report as soon as we’re on board,” Garcia said, reaching over to close the channel.

Captain Garcia was the first one off the shuttle after it landed and he went straight way to the Bridge. Kitara stood as the deck watch announced his arrival: “Captain on the Bridge.” She saluted, right fist closed over her heart, and became instantly aware that he was sporting a cut and a black eye. She knew first hand what a skilled fighter he was so she suspected his apparent bad mood was due to the fact that someone had achieved a lucky hit, or two, on him. Of course, it was also possible, she concluded, that he had had taken on injuries in order to avoid causing another person injuries, which was one of Garcia’s weaknesses, from her point of view. The quickest way to end a fight was to put the enemy down.

“Captain?!” Kitara asked.

“Get me Star Fleet Command,” Garcia said without stopping to chat. “I’ll take it in my Ready Room.”

“Captain?” Second Lt. Indira Sookanan’s voice was soft, almost pleading, as if she had information to convey but would rather not interact with the Captain in his present mood. Like all people of Trinidadian descent, she had her legal name, the one on her birth certificate, and she had her street name, the one everyone called her. She answered to, and preferred, Trini.

Garcia stopped. “What, Trini? Can you patch me through to Star Fleet or is there some kind of spatial anomaly or misaligned zodiac signs causing interference?”

“No interference, Sir,” Trini said, remaining business like even in the face of heavy sarcasm. “Star Fleet Command called us a few minutes ago and they want to speak to you. I put them on hold, pending your arrival.”

Garcia turned without further ado to go take the call. As soon as the doors to his Ready Room closed, he remote activated one of the wall monitors with his neural implant and waited for Star Fleet Command to come on and berate him. To his surprise, and dismay, it was retired Admiral Leonard H McCoy that had been assigned the task of scolding him. Genetically speaking, McCoy was his biological father, and though their

relationship was hardly father and son, Garcia was expecting McCoy's chastisement to take the form of parental discipline.

"What in Heaven's name is going on over there?!" McCoy demanded.

Garcia frowned, thinking so much for the paternal approach. "It was just a small misunderstanding, Admiral."

"A small misunderstanding?!" McCoy asked. "You were supposed to give a concert in exchange for some supplies and instead you start a riot?"

"The people here have a very elaborate hand washing ritual, rooted in an archaic religious belief system," Garcia began.

"Oh, dear God," McCoy said. "Don't tell me you disparaged their beliefs and offered meds to treat them for obsessive compulsive disorders."

"No, Admiral, I didn't disparage them," Garcia said.

McCoy waited for an explanation. After a reasonable moment passed, McCoy said, "Well?" It came across as a bark.

Garcia frowned. "One of my Officer's mistook a hand-wash sink for a urinal."

Someone on McCoy's side laughed and McCoy's eyes shifted from his monitor to the man laughing. The look McCoy gave the man resembled the very look Garcia had shot at Tatiana some thirty minutes ago. It was a very effective look; the laughter stopped.

"They couldn't find the humor in the mistake," Garcia went on. "There was a small altercation, which blossomed into a full out battle for our lives as we made a mad dash for the shuttlecraft."

"In all my days of Star Fleet," McCoy said, trying hard to maintain his patience. "I have never heard of such a blatant, stupendous error in judgment."

"Nor I," Garcia said.

"You're a Star Fleet Captain, Tammis," McCoy said, pointing out the obvious. "You are ultimately responsible for the behavior of your crew, regardless if they are Klingon or Star Fleet. I expect you to better prep your Away Teams."

"Yes, Sir," Garcia said.

McCoy softened, not to the point of laughing, but enough to put Garcia at ease. "I managed to speak to the Ambassador while I waited for you to arrive. He has agreed to handover the supplies as previously arranged, the caveat being you must make a public apology to appease the masses."

"Of course," Garcia said. He frowned.

"Was there anything else?" McCoy asked.

"Off the record?" Garcia asked.

"Sure," McCoy said.

"I was just wondering if Kirk ever had anything comparable that may not have been in a report," Garcia asked.

"You're not Kirk," McCoy said. "Stop comparing yourself to him."

"Aye," Garcia said.

"Everything else going alright?" McCoy asked. "Your Klingon crew playing nice with the Star Fleet crew?"

"Everything is going just about normal, for me," Garcia said. "Don't be surprised to find that you have a lot of grand kids on the way."

"Rivan is having twins?" McCoy asked.

“Twins wouldn’t be a lot,” Garcia said. “I got to go. The Ambassador is on the other line, no doubt looking for that public apology. I suppose if that doesn’t quell the riot, I can always use the ships phasers and stun a whole city block.”

“Don’t even joke about such a thing,” McCoy said.

“Captain Kirk did it,” Garcia said. “On Iotia, if I’m not mistaken.”

“You’re not Captain Kirk,” McCoy repeated.

“I will get back to you soon,” Garcia said.

“You always say that and then I don’t hear from you until you need me to bail you out of trouble,” McCoy said.

“Really, I’ll call on you soon,” Garcia said. “Garcia out.”

Garcia looked at the blank screen as he took a moment to compose his apology and then he answered the Ambassador’s call.

## CHAPTER ONE

“Captain’s Log, Star date 45352.4,” Tammias Parkin Garcia began his third official entry as Captain of the USS New Constitution. “Having completed my social damage control, the USS NC has finally collected the supplies from Starbase 42 and is en route to the Kartala Nebula, where we will rendezvous with USS Hakudo Maru to deliver said supplies. In addition to these supplies, my orders are to entertain the troops in the field, so to speak, and so I’ve recruited from my crew those with the minimum talents necessary to put a small musical ensemble together. The Klingons took a liking to the Mikado, for some unfathomable reason, but it may just work. Some of it does translate into Klingonese well enough, so it’s going to be quite an interesting adaptation of this comic operetta as we have an eclectic mix of English, Japanese, and Klingonese. The fact that we’re to rendezvous with a Starship with a primarily Japanese crew hasn’t been lost on me. Synchronicity is an interesting phenomenon.”

Garcia closed out the New Constitution’s Captain’s log and opened up his personal logs all the while trying to suppress one of the Mikado’s songs from occupying his brain. “Let the punishment fit the crime,” had gotten itself stuck in his head. He paused as he considered how to start his private entry, sipping a cup of hot, tomato soup, fresh from the replicator. He had to resist the urge to call another grilled cheese from the replicator, since he had already eaten two for the day and two sandwiches were more than sufficient. His dietary beliefs held that if you couldn’t pick it, or hunt it down and kill it, then it shouldn’t be eaten. That meant since sandwiches didn’t grow on trees, he shouldn’t be eating them, but he had wanted the comfort of a grilled cheese before his concert. True enough, the replicator made it more nutritious, so it wasn’t like it was an egregious break with his dietary needs to eat another sandwich, but the other concern he was factoring in was the fact that he hadn’t been as active today as he would have liked, except the short run for his life. In short, he could do with less calories. He had had sufficient comfort food the last few days that he should be feeling better already. It was time to start feeling better, he told himself. “*Punishment fit the crime!*” flared in his mind.

“Personal log,” Garcia said, holding the bowl with both hands, absorbing the warmth radiating out from his soup. “The Einstein’s crew reassigned to the NC have blended in well with the mix of the Path Finder’s crew, which is comprised mostly of Klingons. I would be happier if all the Einstein’s crew were privy to the information about my dark secret, the afore mentioned Path Finder and her mission: to find and expose enemies of the Federation and Klingon Empire and eliminate any Borg using the modified Genesis device, called the Starburst. But, on counsel of the Path Finder’s Senior Officers, I am keeping up the appearances that the NC is my only ship and only mission. So far, only three of the most senior Einstein Officers assigned to me have been recruited into my little circle. The others are on review and will be notified on a need to know basis. All of those in the ‘know’ refer to me as Captain, keeping up the charade, even though everyone in on my secret refer to me as Admiral, in charge of a small, growing fleet of ships on special assignments; the ‘Silent Running’ and ‘Cloak and Dagger’ type assignments. I would prefer to keep the title Captain, but my posse prefers otherwise. I have Gowr to thank for that.”

A light on his desk had started blinking halfway through his personal log entry. Ignoring it failed to make it stop. He knew it was an incoming message for him, live, no

text options, otherwise he would have rerouted it to his implant. Intuition told him it was Simone and he needed to take the call, but he was determined to resist.

Garcia sighed and took in some more soup. “The Path Finder’s mission is still a go, though it no doubt irks those who set it in motion to no longer have complete control over it and the crew. The parable of two masters keeps coming to mind. I have to answer to Star Fleet, as the Captain of the NC, that’s one, and I have to answer to Admiral Pressman for secret ops which is technically Star Fleet but more unofficial, that’s two, and I have to answer to Admiral Sheaar, Klingon Empire’s special ops, for the same reasons as I must tend to Pressman, and that’s three. Fortunately, the NC’s mission is primarily ‘band’ duty, pomp and circumstance, ferrying supplies, personnel, or dignitaries, so there should be no arduous assignments that might interfere with the secret agenda of the PF. In fact, it may help facilitate that mission, by giving me an alibi.”

Garcia hit the pause switch on his log entry and accepted the call, wondering why Trini had put her on hold, as opposed to just taking a message. Simone appeared on the view screen in front of him. She did not look pleased. Agitated actually seemed to describe her appearance.

“Why are you stalling?” Simone demanded.

“Can you be more specific?” Garcia asked, putting his soup down.

“Don’t you feel it? How can you resist?” Simone asked. He had never seen her so emotional.

“Are you telling me you’re deliberately doing this?” Garcia demanded, growing suddenly, equally impatient.

“Deliberately? You think I like being unstable? You’ve put off coming to Vulcan long enough. Now, I demand that you turn your ship around at once, while we still have time,” Simone ordered.

“I don’t have time for these rituals, Simone. You’re just going to have to make do,” Garcia said.

“We’ll die,” Simone said, her voice full of pleading.

“Nonsense,” Garcia said. “It just feels that way.”

“Tammias, please,” Simone said, her tone and mood changing so fast that he thought it was a tactic, as opposed to sincere negotiating. “I will die and you will follow. Remember your reaction when Sarek died? Magnify that times a hundred. My twenty first birth day is in two weeks. If you do not turn around, you will arrive too late.”

Garcia rubbed his forehead. As if he didn’t have enough on his plate. He did want to be with her. He had noticed the frequency of which he was thinking of her had increased, which was annoying, as he needed to stay focused. He had passed it off to an OCD reflex coupled by the fact that he had not seen her since the graduation ceremony on Earth, where Picard had given the commencement speech and Garcia had conducted the final choral orchestra ensemble. It had been a bitter sweet ceremony, since Joshua Alberts had been killed in an accident. His mind began to recall details of Joshua.

“Tam,” Simone cried. “I want you. And though my ability to reason may be clouded with passion and emotions, and my judgment is growing thinner with each passing moment, I am still capable of thinking through this logically and I can find no reason for you to delay in our union.”

“I can think of a half dozen,” Garcia said.

“Fine! Then come here and reject me and our business will be concluded,” Simone snapped, full of rage. She tossed the contents of her desk to the floor. “Either way, you must be here.”

“Fine,” Garcia said. “I’ll be there in three days.”

“Three days? It will take you at least eight from your current position traveling at a rate of warp nine,” Simone said.

“Three days,” Garcia said. “Don’t ask how. But I will be there. You just have this ceremony thing ready to go.”

“Three days,” Simone said. She frowned and put her hand to the screen and then burst into tears. “Do not be angry at me, or this biological compulsion we share. It is what it is. I will be waiting for you.”

“Try to meditate, will you,” Garcia said. “It’ll help take the edge off both of us.”

“I will try. It is difficult. I...” Simone failed to find the words, which caused her some anger. She never had a lack for words. She wiped her eyes, stood up straight, trying to remain stoic and logical. She swallowed air.

“I understand. I’ll see you soon,” Garcia said. He cut the transmission and leaned into his desk, closing his eyes. He took a moment to force himself to think of something else, and then he continued his report from where he had left off.

“Add another boss to my growing list of people making demands on me,” Garcia said, frowning. He hated himself for giving into her, but mostly he hated himself for his own wanting. He was a bottomless pit for wanting. He could find dozens of ways to rationalize himself into a relationship with Simone, but less ways of denying the same, and so the fact that they were going to be compelled due to Pon Farr issues just seemed too convenient, which, interestingly enough, was increasing his desire to resist. His natural tendency to resist any and all kinds of authority seemed to have little sway over his biological compulsion to mate, though. So much for his practicing self denial and delayed gratification, he thought. Three days. He sighed. Surely I can go three days, he mused aloud.

“Delete that last sentence. The Path Finder’s Senior Officers act as a committee to deliberate over which situation warrants our immediate attention, with me making the final decision. It seemed like the only equitable thing to do, to spread the wealth, since my bosses are rather demanding. Lord help us if the Federation and the Klingon Empire ever go to war against each other again, for that will no doubt divide the loyalties of the crew that are already questionable. It is no secret that many of the Path Finder’s crew had been given secret orders to eliminate the others and take control of the ship. Even I was given orders to kill the Klingons and take the ship using my Kelvan technology. For now, though, the Path Finder crew is abiding by the truce and there is a reasonable balance of power,” Garcia pressed on. Three days seemed too far away.

Garcia closed out his personal logs and proceeded to open up the Path Finder’s log. “The Path Finder is currently silent running, monitoring Cardassian troop movement. I am able to get updates by using the interstellar portals provided by the Preservers that connect NC and the PF via a permanent, stable wormhole. The Gateways are primitive versions of the Iconanian Gateway dimensional transport system, created over 200,000 years ago. The Gray Queen informs me that the Iconians stole the technology from the Preservers and there are Gateways hidden all across the Universe. My gates lack the sophistication to send me anywhere in the galaxy. They only work in

tandem with other gateways, attuned to my network of gates, but the Gray Queen believes it might be possible to upgrade them once her colony is better established.

“Either way, I don’t know how people ever got around without Gates before. I prefer Gates to Transporters, that’s for sure. Sorry, tangent. The PF’s assignment to Cardassian space seemed to fit both the Federation’s and the Klingon Empire’s immediate needs for more intelligence. I would rather be scouting the neutral zone studying Romulan ship movement, but, hey, I’m just a lowly Captain. What would I know about intelligence? I am going to have to interrupt the Path Finder’s current intel gathering in order to conclude my business with Simone in a timely manner. I’m still not sure how I am going to explain that trip to the crew.”

Garcia paused, hoping his thoughts of Simone would fade. When that didn’t work, he realized he was probably going to have to seek some sort of physical distraction. Exercise or an adventure on the holodeck without the safety protocols. Perhaps he could just spar with his Klingon First Officer and have her beat him to a pulp.

“Meanwhile,” Garcia said, moving on, “I have the IKV Tempest, formerly the IKV SaLing, which I commandeered during a war game with Klingon Admiral Shear, headed towards an out of the way star system where we have been led to believe we will find an abandoned Preserver technology cache. We’re ‘borrowing’ technology from the preservers to aid in the establishment of the Gray colony, a colony I am providing sanctuary to, paybacks for saving Admiral McCoy’s life. Further, I have hired the Pa Nun to take care of a private mission for me, as I simply can’t be in all the places I need to be at once. I’ve been told that the Preservers made a clone of me; it would sure be nice if I had him now. Ha. Two of me. There will be enough of me soon enough. Sorry, tangent. If you’re not use to my logs, you will have to forgive the occasional bunny. It doesn’t help that I’m distracted by my thoughts of Simone. I don’t have time for this!”

Tired of chasing rabbits, Garcia picked up his soup again, found it sufficiently cold that he could now drink it without fear of burning his mouth. He switched back to personal logs. “I’m fortunate to have so many I can rely on, for keeping Admiral Pressman’s ‘Starburst’ project, and the Path Finder itself, a secret is a challenge I doubt I could do alone. I owe a great debt to Captain Picard, of the USS Enterprise, who not only helped me return to duty as a member in good standing with Star Fleet, but he is one of the few that openly sanctioned my attack against the Borg at TelKiar, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Starburst weapon. (Openly behind closed doors, that is. His efforts in this area got me out of a court marshal and got me an automatic pass at the Academy, so I’m through with school, and don’t have to go through the pomp and circumstance ceremony to be called graduated. (Ironically, I just have to provide the song and dance for everyone else, being in charge of the band and all.)) All the data I collected at TelKiar before wiping out the entire star system with the Starburst weapon suggests that had we not stopped the Borg there, we would not be stopping them at all. Admiral McCoy, my father, is not please with the level of destruction and hopes that that single demonstration will be sufficient to deter any further Borg incursions. I personally think it will only make the Borg more determined. Time will tell. There is no word yet what the Romulans think about the TelKiar situation.

“And finally, after an intercession with my Senior Officers, I have agreed to limit my access to the Kelvan computer on the Path Finder, due to the lack of self discipline and lack of good judgment that occurs when I am plugged into the device. Again, I am

fortunate to be surrounded by such good people, otherwise, there would no doubt be criminal charges levied against me for the liberties I took while under the influence of Kelvan technology. Though Doctors McCoy, Crusher, and Jurak, all assure me that the lack of inhibition while under the influence of Kelvan-tech is similar to being inebriated, I can not forgive my trespass. Not this time. Legal sanctions or not, my abuse of the technology weighs heavily on me, and it will probably not be any easier as time goes by, for I will pay for the mistakes, soon enough.”

Garcia closed out his logs, musing over his ramblings, and became annoyed that his thoughts again turned to Simone. He used his implant to delete the file he had just dictated to the computer. A prompt asked him if he was sure and he said yes. Almost immediately after saying ‘yes’ he had a change of heart. He had the computer reassemble the files before they became permanently irretrievable. He pushed up out of his chair and headed for the Bridge. Unlike the Ready Room on the Path Finder, the New Constitution didn’t have a fireman’s pole to make his entry more fun and dramatic. He really did miss being on the Path Finder. He missed Losira, the artificial intelligence that was the result of all the Path Finder’s computer systems being in gestalt with an alien computer system, created by an extinct race known as the Kalandans.

“Captain on the Bridge,” Undine said.

“At ease,” Garcia said. The crew was much more formal when it came to military courtesies and discipline than any ship he was familiar with. That was no doubt the Klingon influence. There seemed to be a competition between the Klingons and Fleet to see who could extend the most courtesy and discipline. “I’ll be on holodeck three, going through the rituals. Your ship.”

“Aye,” Undine said.

“Rituals” was Garcia’s tradition for his crew. Prior to the start of each shift, that shift would assemble on the hangar deck to participate in a modified Tai Chi slash Line Dancing routine. Rivan was there for the start of each ritual, for she enjoyed it thoroughly, probably more than anyone on the crew. She had proven so apt that she was giving lessons for those who proved less apt at learning the sequences to be performed. Garcia often thought it humorous that people who were extremely tech smart tended to have so little kinesthetic smarts, making dance difficult for them to master. Repetition was slowly bringing everyone up to speed, however. To his surprise, the Klingons also seemed to enjoy the daily rituals, for they liked routines that kept them in sync with their fellow warriors. In addition to the discipline of daily rituals, they also seemed to like the “country” song selections, comparing them to an outdated form of Klingon Opera. Garcia was just happy to go through the motions of the ritual and not think about his responsibility for a time. And, he had to admit, it was a real “hoot” seeing Klingon, Andorian, Nausicaan, an Orion Slave Girl, and Ferengi, all in step with humans of every race. The ship wasn’t a true melting pot, but rather, more analogous to a salad, well tossed. Everyone came together for rituals and it was evolving into something bigger than even he had expected, which was nice since it had initially started as a bet between him and Admiral Pressman to see if he could get his Klingons to comply.

After the exercise, Rivan greeted Garcia with a hug. She practically glowed. Though she had never tried to hide the fact that she was pregnant, there would be no hiding it now. It wouldn’t be long before the first of the many mistakes arrived.

“How are you feeling?” Rivan asked.

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