

STAR TREK
“Both Hands Full”
by
John Erik Ege

EHP
EXPERIMENTAL HOME PUBLISHING

“Both Hands Full” edition 4 Dec. 2008, first edition Dec, 2006

EPH

Copyright 2007

All Rights Reserved.

Licensing for this is pending and can only be considered fan fiction at this time. The author agrees to share this edition for the sake of sharing and for editing purposes with the understanding that Paramount, the official owners of Star Trek related products may revoke the sharing privilege. Comments and corrections can be directed to the author for story refinement.

Author contact info:

John Erik Ege

214-907-4070

Email

solarchariot@hotmail.com

This story is the third in the series. Book One: “A Touch of Greatness. Book Two: “Another Piece of the Action.” Fourth Book, “Necessary Evil.” Fifth book soon, and growing in demand... Whoo hoo!

PROLOGUE

Lt. Kevin Alber's hands were shaking as he tried to boost the gain on the subspace communication. He had anticipated the signal being jammed and so he had hidden a number of relays through out the the nebula just in case the "worse case scenario" happened. "Worst Case" was happening even as he tried to get Admiral Eric Pressman on the line. Just getting the Admiral on the line was problematic enough. Because Alber's assignment was top secret, even if the Admiral was in his office taking calls, he might not be able to respond. Fortunately the Admiral was available, but he sounded distant, his voice hollow. Admiral Eric Pressman's face was distorted, not from static, but from the waxing and waning of the digital signal which caused blocks of pixels to freeze or fade out completely before new information swept in to refresh it. The Klingon's must have been jamming a wider area than usual, perhaps anticipating that Alber would have hidden relays in order to circumvent their jamming a signal. Which also meant that they knew that he knew that they were onto him.

"They're moving everyone out now," Lt. Kevin Alber said. "I'm not sure where they're taking us, but we're going to lose this project." Alber was afraid of more than just loosing the project. He was certain he and the other black-ops' engineers were likely to lose their lives so that the Klingons could maintain the secret and the technology to themselves. And since the present Engineers and Admiral Pressman were the only ones in Fleet that knew about this particular project, it was unlikely anyone would be missed and Pressman would be unable to complain, even to the Klingon's who he had made the deal with. Alber had known the risks when he had signed on for the joint venture and had figured some of the counter measures he had taken would detour the "worse case scenario." He was wrong.

The project was a simple one. Under the command of Admiral Pressman and his counter part in the Klingon Empire, an Admiral Sheaar, the two would design a new class of starship. It would be the first Klingon Federation hybrid ship, at least, that Alber was aware of, combining some of the best technology the Federation and the Klingon Empire had available. It was Pressman's idea to legally circumvent the restrictions placed on the Federation by the Romulan Federation treaty, a treaty that prevented the Federation from developing their own cloaking devices. Since the Klingon's already had cloaking devices and they were not a member of the Federation when the Treaty between the Federation and the Romulans had gone into affect, there was no restriction on the Klingon's use and development of cloaking technology. The Romulans had no doubt believed the Klingon Empire's days were numbered, and, consequently, were not impressed with Klingon research and development or there would have been greater emphasis on the restriction of Klingon technology. Considering the peace between the two empires was tenuous at best, it was also likely the Romulans had simply chosen to risk the Klingon's improving their technology. The Romulans had stolen technology from the Klingons in the past, so they could do so again if need be.

Truth be known, the Klingon's research and development had slowed to a veritable crawl, and judging by the ships and the uniforms on the Klingons that crewed them, the Klingons were nothing more than a rag tag fleet, a mere shadow of the formidable enemy they once were during the Klingon Romulan War. Admiral Pressman believed this to be true, at least, and apparently, so did Admiral Sheaar, or the two wouldn't have made the agreements they had made, all clandestine in nature. Alber knew

the Romulans would have been concerned about the Federation “borrowing” Klingon technology, but the reverse, the Klingon’s “appropriating” Federation technology wouldn’t have been seen as troubling. And that was what Pressman wanted to exploit, for, as Pressman was always so willing to point out, even though the Romulans were a paranoid lot, the Romulans relied too heavily on the Federation always following through on their agreements.

“Should I set the self-destruct sequence?” Alber asked

“Are you crazy?” Pressman asked. “And lose all the valuable time and effort we put into this research?”

Alber wasn’t blind to the fact that he was expendable in Pressman’s eyes, but he was still hopeful that Pressman had a solution to his present crisis. After all, finding and soliciting the kind of allegiance Alber was providing was a bit risky to one’s career. It was in Pressman’s best interest to protect him.

“Did you install the equipment I sent you?” Pressman asked.

“I installed it per your instructions,” Alber said. “But not knowing what it is or how it works, I don’t see the relevance. It’s not hooked to anything important and it doesn’t seem to be a self-destruct device, but then again, it’s impervious to scans...”

“Activate the security protocol routine I gave you,” Pressman said.

Alber nodded and removed what appeared to be a gold coin from his pocket. He set this down, heads up, on the computer terminal in front of him. Its proximity triggered something in the console. The coin self-illuminated. Command pathways began to appear on several of the monitors, branching off, forcing each page to scroll. The instructions and codes flew by so fast that Alber couldn’t make them out. Pressman’s image disappeared.

Behind Alber, beyond his sight, a cube illuminated. He had never noticed it before, as it blended in perfectly with the ceiling protrusions in Auxiliary Control. Further, it was likely no one had ever noticed the cube before, minus the person who had installed it, blindly following the blue prints and accompanied instructions. Now it had his full attention and he racked his brain trying to remember where he had seen it, or anything similar before. Something from a history lesson, it seemed. The cube produced a strange pattern of lights, causing his shadow on the terminal interface to shift and fade. He turned and looked up at the cube and the psychedelic swirling of colors that filled the box like a soothing night light.

A female appeared before him. She appeared as a point, grew into a line, grew into a two dimensional image of a female, and then filled out into three dimensions as if she had been a picture of a person that had suddenly inflated. It happened so fast that he barely registered the “phase in” part of her manifestation, but it happened sufficiently slow that his mind had interpreted her sudden materialization to mean she was a hologram, not a living person.

“State your name and purpose,” she said.

“Captain Alber,” he answered.

“What’s the password?” the hologram asked.

“Um, I don’t know,” Alber stammered. Maybe she meant his personal computer access code. “Cherry Apple Red.”

“Captain Alber,” she said.

Alber relaxed a little. He had to suppress some stray thoughts. She was, no doubt, one of the best looking holograms he had ever seen, reminding him of a Garcia holo-novel, but his situation was dire and so he couldn't allow his mind to go off on such a tangent as entertainment. He needed to lock down the ship and incapacitate the Klingons who were attempting to steal everything he had worked so hard on. "Are you the new security system that Pressman was telling me about?"

"Captain Alber," she said, softer, stepping forward. "I am for you."

He was confused by her statement and again his mind went towards his idea of entertainment. The fact that she claimed to be for "him," as if Pressman had sent him a present, something to help him through the lonely nights of this mission, was rather a pleasant thought. He actually thought he was going to have to thank the Admiral. She reached out and touched him on the chest, just below the left shoulder, palm flat against him.

Captain George Alber screamed. The pain that exploded through his chest was beyond anything he had ever experienced in his life. Worse than even the Cardassian torture session he had been through about six years ago. The only fortunate thing was that the pain was so great that he passed out before death came upon him.

The woman stepped back, looked up and to the left, accessing the security information for her ship. Her gaze returned forward, she deflated into a two dimensional framework, turned slightly so that only a trace line of her remained, a thin black line. And though the line was visible, a person might easily miss it if you didn't know what you were looking for. That line shrank further, finally becoming a dot no bigger than the tip of an eraser on a pencil, before disappearing completely. The woman appeared and reappeared throughout the ship, disposing of all hostiles on board. In some instances, multiple versions of her appeared.

After her ship was quiet, she turned her attention to the starships outside her station. She determined the quickest way to sabotage them was to over load their warp cores. She killed an engineer and destroyed one of the ships. The other ship fled and she decided to let them go, for they were no longer a threat. Then she turned her attention back to her ship and decided to clean up the mess she had made. After all, it would not do to have the insides of her ship marred by decaying flesh. No, that wouldn't do at all. She would not want her Commanding Officer to find the ship in disarray. No, she would have to clean. And clean she did. There would be no trace of any organics remaining on the ship or in the space station that encapsulated the ship.

CHAPTER ONE

Doctor Selar touched Garcia lightly, waking him. Startled, he grabbed her arm and pulled her off her feet. Selar controlled her fall, landing on top of him, hands either side of his head. Her eyes locked with his and she watched with curiosity the growing recognition on his face as he transitioned from dreams to waking life. He frowned and eased up on her arm and then finally let go. The impression of his grip remained, leaving white marks on her arm from grasping so tight. The white slowly receded, her arm flushing out. Selar didn't protest the injury or the fact that she was pulled onto the couch, practically on top of him. She felt the warmth radiating from him, a heat that came from an unnaturally high metabolism as far as humans were concerned. Selar was wearing the silky gown that she had worn the first night they had participated in Pon Farr rituals. It was like silk, but was a material invented by Vulcans. It was designed to sparkle, fluoresce, and or transition through various level of transparency depending on certain variables. The sparkles caught Garcia's eyes, drawing his eyes away from her eyes for a moment.

"Sorry," Garcia said, returning her gaze.

"For grabbing my arm and drawing me into you or for that look you just gave me?" Doctor Selar asked.

"Both," Garcia said.

"Hiding your feelings for me is not logical," Selar said, and then amended the statement: "For you. What has transpired between us has not been lost."

"Yeah, I'm just unduly influenced by the amount of oxy-tocin flowing through my veins," Garcia said, remarking on the hormone that increases the likelihood of bonding in humans. "And besides, it's not logical for you to wake me up just to discuss my feelings, or am I telepathically projecting to you in my sleep?"

"It was necessary to wake you. You have a Priority One message from Star Fleet Headquarters," Selar said. "Real time, not tape delayed. Would you like privacy?"

"No," Garcia said, not jumping up to respond right away. Though he hated to admit it, he was comforted by Selar's weight on top of him. "Well, I don't think that will be necessary. I've never received a Priority One message."

Doctor Selar repositioned herself to allow Garcia to get up. He pulled on a shirt before activating the viewer in Selar's quarters. Selar remained seated, drawing her feet up on the couch, hands on her knees, while Garcia signaled the viewer with his implant. The Star Fleet screen saver image faded and was replaced by an image of Admiral Leonard H. McCoy. For a moment Garcia hesitated, wondering if this had been a taped message, for he had attended McCoy's funeral a little over three months prior.

"Tam?! I am glad to see you up and about. How are you feeling?" McCoy said.

"Computer, is this a live feed?" Garcia asked.

"Tam, it's me. McCoy. I'm alive," McCoy said, talking over the computer's response of 'affirmative.' "I wanted you to hear it from me before you heard it through the grapevine."

"How is this possible?" Garcia stammered, coming closer to the screen.

"You no doubt know that the Preservers made a copy of you and that your copy was responsible for the destruction of their space station in Iotia space," McCoy said. "What wasn't in the report was that they also made a copy of me, removed my Katra that you were carrying and then put it back into my body. Your copy helped me escape."

“This is too fantastic,” Garcia said, skeptically. Still that would explain why he had not had hallucinations of McCoy ever since he was abducted. He still only had vague memories of the abduction, which he was certain were false memories. What he wouldn’t trade to have some of his other self’s memories from the point of their division.

“No one told me you were alive or that I, the other me, saved you,” Garcia protested.

“I asked them to keep my return a secret. I wanted to tell you,” McCoy said. “I wanted to tell you in person when you got here, but the Enterprise will be arriving after I have already departed.”

“Departed? Where are you going? Better, how did you get to Earth from Iotia if I rescued you at Iotia? None of this is making any sense,” Garcia said.

“I’ll send you my report,” McCoy said. “It’ll explain everything you need to know.”

“Everything I need to know?” Garcia asked. “That suggest there are things you don’t want me to know.”

“Tam, I was afraid you weren’t going to live, judging from Crusher’s reports,” McCoy said. “I just wanted to call and speak to you. I wanted to see for myself that you were okay.”

“I’m well, thank you,” Garcia said. “I’m Okay. You’re okay. Everyone seems to be okay. How come there isn’t a media storm covering your return from the dead?”

“Whoa, hold it,” McCoy said. “I’m not ready for that story to break. And when it does, Star Fleet wants to put a spin on it. They want it to look as if my death had been faked in order for me to complete a mission. In fact, the mission I’m going on requires me to still be dead.”

“Aren’t you a bit old for this cloak and dagger crap?” Garcia asked.

“I’m not too old to kick your butt,” McCoy said.

“Why exactly did you call me?” Garcia asked.

“Because, I love you, son,” McCoy said. “I should only be gone for three to six months, which will have me back in plenty of time to see you graduate. Everything will be cleared up by then and I will be able to go out in public. Just try to be safe till I get back, alright?”

“I’m always safe,” Garcia argued.

“Except when you’re trying to be the hero,” McCoy said. “Look, I have to go. Really, take care of yourself till I get back.”

“I will,” Garcia said. “Garcia out.”

The screen went dark before the Star Fleet emblem appeared. Garcia turned to Selar. “Did you know he was alive?”

“This is the first I am learning about it,” Selar said. “I am just as surprised as you are. And, from the sounds of it, perhaps I shouldn’t have heard this message.”

“Forget it,” Garcia said. “Literally.”

In a bit of a temper, Garcia stormed out of Selar’s quarters. He had not taken the time to put on his boots, but no one he passed seemed to notice or care. It took him all of six minutes to arrive at the guest quarters where Lt. Nancy Carter was staying. Garcia had learned about his Preserver clone from reading her report of her explorations of the artifact slash space station, which everyone believed was Preserver. Apparently it had been an edited report. Garcia had his doubts about the space station being Preserver, but

it did explain so much of what he had seen on Iotia. It fit his theories almost too perfectly. Why would they have edited McCoy out of her report? he asked himself. She answered the door and brightened instantly, hugging him.

“Come in,” Carter said.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Garcia asked.

“Tell you what?” she asked.

“That McCoy is still alive,” Garcia said. “That’s pretty significant.”

Carter frowned. “I was told not to,” she said. “I wanted to, I knew it would make you feel better, considering the number of losses you were grieving, but they made it an order.”

“Who’s they?” Garcia asked.

“Picard, for starters. My understanding was that he was operating under orders from McCoy,” Carter said.

“This just doesn’t make sense, Nancy. Why would this be kept from me? I’m in the loop. At least, I thought I was in the loop,” Garcia said.

“Tam, I am really not at liberty to discuss this any further,” Carter said. “Maybe you should talk to Picard.”

“Maybe I will,” Garcia said, turning to leave. It seemed obvious to Garcia that there was more going on than even the “hot news flash” that McCoy was still alive. What was this crazy mission he was running off on? What was so important that McCoy couldn’t be declared alive?

“Oh, wait,” Carter said. “I almost forgot. Garcia, I mean, your copy, gave me something to give to you.”

Garcia followed her towards her bedroom, but didn’t cross over the threshold. He didn’t know where her daughter, Niki, was but he didn’t want for her to come in and find him in her mom’s bedroom. Nancy reached for her jacket and retrieved two small orbs, no bigger than golf balls. She handed these to him. They had the weight of led, but the appearance of marble.

“What are they?” Garcia asked.

“Preserver technology, I assume,” Carter said. “They act like holographic emitters, only they create real matter. They’re holographic remotely operated vehicles, from what I gathered, and my understanding is that these particular two orbs are attuned to your brain wave signature. You should be able to access them telepathically. You were able to use it to manifest your extra personalities on the hive ship.”

“Something else that was left out of the report,” Garcia said. “How do they work?”

“I don’t know,” Carter said.

“Let me” the Deanna Troi program in Garcia’s head said, coming out of nowhere and into his visual perception. She touched one of the orbs with her fingers and it illuminated. “Accessing. Oh, this is going to be nice. Stand by.”

Suddenly the orb lifted up out of Garcia’s hand, pulled back as if Deanna was carrying it away, and then the Deanna Troi program manifested herself into real life. It was as if she had been transported in. The orb became lost somewhere in her person. The HROV Deanna Troi took in a sudden, deep breath and sighed a pleasant sigh, as if she had just emerged from a long lap of the pool completely submerged. She stepped forwards and kissed Garcia hard on the mouth.

“Oh, Tam, you can’t imagine how wonderful it is to be liberated,” HROV Troi said, hugging him and then biting him on the ear. She turned to Nancy. “How could you have forgotten to give these to him?”

“I was just so caught up in everything that happened, and then being reunited with my daughter, and...” Carter said.

Suddenly all of Garcia’s mental companions were present. Duana and Ilona began to bicker about who would access the remaining Orb when the downloaded program of Lal stepped up and ended all debate. No sooner than she was in her new manifested body was she out the door.

“Hold up!” Garcia said. “Wait.”

Garcia pursued Lal, catching up with her. He had no intentions of grabbing her, for that would have been rude, but he wanted to know what she was about. Ever since Data and he had linked minds, Lal had been running around in his head, which he hadn’t minded so much because she was rather quiet and unobtrusive, compared to his other mental companions. But now, she was out and almost running her stride was so great. Deanna was pursuing, enjoying the exertion. She commented on just how alive she felt and how wonderful it was to feel her blood flowing and her leg muscles flex. She asked him to look at her legs.

“Not now,” Garcia snapped. “Lal, wait. Where are you going?”

“I’m going to see my father,” Lal said.

“Maybe you should call Data,” HROV Troi said.

Garcia couldn’t argue with that. The three of them paused in the corridor. He tapped his communicator badge and said, “Garcia to Data. I need to see you. Now.”

“Ensign Garcia?” Data responded. “I am presently occupied at Ops. Perhaps we could communicate later?”

“Father?” Lal asked.

But the communication was closed out, from Data’s side. She continued on her way to find her father.

“Lal, we will talk with Data later, but right now, why don’t we just return to my quarters,” Garcia said.

“No,” Lal said.

“Deanna, talk some sense into her,” Garcia asked.

Lal stopped and accessed a turbo lift. Garcia and the HROV Troi followed her.

“We could wait in Data’s quarters,” HROV Troi suggested.

“No we can’t,” Garcia said. “I can’t condone entering Data’s quarters, even if she is his daughter.”

“Bridge,” Lal said.

“Computer, relay that order,” Garcia said. “Lal, we can’t go to the Bridge. You can’t just go to the Bridge.”

“Why?” Lal asked.

“Well, because,” Garcia began and stammered at a sudden loss of a good argument. “Just because. There are rules, protocols, a chain of command, and...”

“Computer, resume. Bridge,” Lal said.

“Maybe you should let her have this,” HROV Troi said.

“Maybe you’ve lost your mind,” Garcia said. “I’m the one that’s going to get in trouble, not either of you.”

A moment later Lal stepped off onto the Bridge, took a moment to orientate herself, found her father and headed right to him. Garcia followed, grimacing. Before Lal was even halfway to Data, Garcia's prediction had come true.

"What is the meaning of this?" Picard demanded, expressing his anger at both the interruption and the intrusion onto the bridge.

"I think I can explain," Garcia began.

"I think you better," the real Troi said, standing up, arms akimbo. She was reminded of the time she had met herself on the holodeck, courtesy of Lt. Barclay. "And start with explaining her."

Riker found himself suddenly amused at the real Troi's lack of humor, impressed by the outfit the "fake" Troi was wearing, and not a little surprised that Garcia was somehow involved in it all. Riker managed to maintain his composure, for the most part, with only the real Deanna aware of his mirth. She hit his arm.

Worf stepped forward and grabbed Garcia's arm to impede further progress. They exchanged glances. Worf growled.

"Counselor Troi, rogue Troi program. Rogue Troi program, yourself," Garcia said.

"Senior staff to the conference room," Picard said. "Now. Ensign."

Garcia didn't need further explanation to know that his presence wasn't just expected, but rather, it was demanded. Worf took liberty to escort him.

♪♪▶

"This is very interesting," Doctor Crusher said, completing her scans of both the HROV Lal and the HROV Troi. "There are no signs of the technological devices that are projecting them, nor are there any signs of any radiation fields that one might expect to find around a hologram."

"We're not holograms," the HROV Troi said.

"She's right," Crusher said. "The HROV Troi is actual flesh and blood. The HROV Lal is, however, an android, exactly as Data had designed her."

"Minus the quantum fluctuations that caused her brain to fail," Data added.

"How did you forget to tell us that you brought this alien technology on my ship," Picard asked Carter.

"I'm sorry, Sir," Carter said, appearing remorseful. She looked to Captain Munoz, her commanding officer, and back to Picard, the Captain of the Enterprise who had come to their rescue at Iotia. "Lack of sleep, the joy of being reunited with my daughter, and then, everything else that happened on top of that... There's no excuse, Sir. I dropped the ball."

"Both of them," Garcia said, not quietly enough to draw unnecessary attention.

"Try and help me to understand what's going on here," Riker said, directing his statement to Doctor Crusher. "Is Garcia telepathically controlling these HROV's?"

"Not directly," Garcia said before Crusher could respond. "If I am, it's completely subconscious."

"Do you notice anything unusual?" the real Counselor Troi asked.

"Define unusual?" Garcia asked. "The fact that I'm in conference with two Troi's?"

"I think she meant are you experiencing any unusual side effects to the

technology,” Doctor Selar said. “My readings of your brain scan show nothing unusual, for you.”

“I feel a bit of euphoria,” Garcia said. “Similar to when I plugged into the Kelvan computer, or how I felt when I activated the HROV that I created while on the Philadelphia Freedom. It’s of greater intensity than the HROV I created, so I assume it must be a derivative of the amount of information my brain is now processing through these two Orbs.”

“That would make sense,” Doctor Crusher said. “The Kelvan may have increased the efficiency of your human brain, but in the end, the human brain has a finite capacity, greatly limited from the Kelvan perspective. The addition of these two orbs have increased your mental capacity, approaching your true Kelvan limit. A certain amount of euphoria should be expected.”

“I also feel lighter, for wanting of a better phrase,” Garcia added.

“Well, you are two personalities lighter,” Riker pointed out.

“No,” Doctor Selar said. “The personality matrix of the Deanna and Lal programs still reside in Garcia’s head. They are merely being projected through the Preserver technologies.”

“So, are you saying that right now Garcia is controlling it, howbeit subconsciously?” LaForge asked.

“I’m making an assumption that Garcia is in control of it, since it is his brain that is linked to the technology,” Doctor Selar said. “The fact that the extra personalities seem to have a greater degree of control over the HROV Orbs may only be an illusion, since they are also a part of Garcia’s brain. Ultimately they share a common goal, the well being of the organism we know as Tammis Garcia.”

“Very clinical of you, Doctor” Garcia said.

“Thank you, Doctor,” Doctor Selar said.

“Okay,” LaForge said. “But if Garcia is only loosely controlling it, then we can assume that it would be possible for someone else to gain access of this technology and use it for purposes other than Garcia’s well being. Or ours.”

“I would have to agree with that premise. Since it is telepathically controlled, then anyone of sufficient telepathic strength should be able to operate it,” Selar said.

“Including the Preservers who created the technology,” Worf said.

“Now, just a moment,” Garcia said. “We’re assuming that this is Preserver technology.”

“Gary Seven warned us about the dangers of their technology,” Riker said. “I say we turn the technology off and destroy it before a Preserver decides to hijack it and cause us some harm, damage, or any other inconvenience.”

“Now, wait just a damn moment,” the HROV Troi interrupted.

“Father, please,” Lal said, squeezing Data’s hand. “I want to stay with you.”

“That may not be possible, Lal,” Data said. “If you are indeed a manifestation of Garcia’s telepathic abilities focused through the Preserver’s HROV, I think it safe to conclude that there is a finite perimeter of functionality, with Garcia the center of that perimeter. Should he go out of range, you may cease to exist.”

“No, she would simply disappear,” the HROV Troi said. “We still reside inside Garcia’s brain.”

“But father,” Lal said.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

