

**Galaxycats**  
**Episode 6 "Nightmare Reality"**

**Intro**

*We see scenes from Episode 5, Sheba, Malteazer, Tybalt and Tabitha fighting, the F'lar underground- Malteazer and Tieran.*

**AQUILEGIA (V.O.)**

Led by Captain Sheba, a select team defied orders and went to the moon of Kralor to prevent to rescue Commander Vanilla from the clutches of the F'lar. As it turned out, Vanilla was only being used as bait to facilitate the capture of Captain Sheba and Doctor Malteazer, but with the help of a previously unknown colony of prisoners living on Kralor, we were able to evade the trap and destroy the F'lar base.

*Scene switches to Rienne control room, as Galaxycats receives a message from Morax, the Velassian terrorist.*

No sooner had we got home, however, than an altogether different threat emerged. A group of Velassian terrorists have taken over the Galaxycats building in Lavarre, claiming that if we do not find a way to send them home, they will start killing hostages...

*Scene fades. Title and credits appear.*

**1. Sheba's Office, Rienne**

*Rialta and Sheba sit at the desk. Malteazer, Vanilla and Commander Spira (from Episode 3) are there.*

**SHEBA**

Good to have you here today, Commander Spira- we could use your input.

**SPIRA**

I know you Riansh think that you can solve everything by yourselves, but those of us from other cities are equally capable.

**RIALTA**

If we could dispense with the small talk, it would certainly be much appreciated on this end. According to the Velassians' own schedule, we have less than twenty grads to respond before they start killing hostages.

**VANILLA**

Why have they gone to such lengths just to get a ride home?

**RIALTA**

The government has had concerns more pressing than providing a taxi service to a minority.

**VANILLA**

So basically, you ignored them and now they're pissed. Good going.

**MALTEAZER**

Even so, why go to such drastic lengths all of a sudden? It makes me wonder if there's someone else behind this.

**SHEBA**

If that's the case, we should assume that person is experienced, and almost certainly won't be bluffing with regards to the death threats.

**VANILLA**

Can we launch a raid on the Lavarre base? Surely a few teleports would help us gain the upper hand.

**SHEBA**

There really is no time for that if we hope to come through this without losing any of the hostages.

**SPIRA**

Well, is there really any point in keeping the Velassians here? Why not just send them home?

**MALTEAZER**

While I agree that there's no advantage in having the Velassians here, at the same time we'll be sending all the wrong messages if we just give in to these terrorists.

**RIALTA**

Whilst I agree with that in principle, it seems to me that the most expedient course of action at this juncture is indeed to meet their demands, albeit under our own terms. And not only that, but a thorough investigation of the Lavarre Galaxycats crew must be carried out in order to determine just how this group was able to take over their installation in the first place.

**SHEBA**

So, I take it we'll be handling this from Rienne.

**RIALTA**

You have proved yourself more than capable of dealing with such things, have you not? I expect to see everything in place before the first deadline.

**2. Galaxycats Control Room, Rienne**

*Sheba, Rialta, Sandy, Vanilla, Aquilegia, Marval, Malteazer and Tassel are there.*

**SHEBA**

**Aquilegia, contact the terrorists.**

*Aquilegia does so. Morax appears onscreen. A Pantheran woman, recognisable as Sheyana from episode 3, is just visible in the control room.*

**MORAX**

So, Galaxycat, have you reached your decision?

**SHEBA**

We will comply with your conditions, but only on our own terms.

**MORAX**

What terms? We're the ones holding hostages here, and if we don't like what we hear, we'll start executing them right away.

**SHEBA**

We are prepared to take you and your people back to Velassia, but the ringleaders of this little terrorist operation will have to stand trial.

**MORAX**

Do you think you can just rearrange our demands however you want? We-Sheyana steps forward.

**SHEYANA**

Morax, that's enough. We provisionally accept your terms- but if you try to double-cross us, we will execute all the hostages at once.

**SHEBA**

It will take a little while to request a starship for your use.

**SHEYANA**

We'll keep an open communications line whilst you make all the necessary arrangements.

*MALTEAZER. Sheba and Rialta are busy requesting a starship, but Malteazer is barely listening. Vanilla steps up to her.*

**VANILLA**

Malteazer?

**MALTEAZER**

No, no it can't be.

**VANILLA**

Care to let me in on your thoughts?

**MALTEAZER**

That Pantheran woman- I know her. We had a little run-in in Pardela.

**VANILLA**

Any ideas what she's doing here?

**MALTEAZER**

Unfortunately, we didn't get to know each other that well.

**VANILLA**

Oh well, it doesn't really change anything, does it?

**MALTEAZER**

It might.

**3. Galaxycats Control Room, Lavarre**

*Sheyana is in the captain's chair. Morax and various other Velassians are there. Morax dismisses the other Velassians.*

**MORAX**

I'm surprised at you, Sheyana. I have no problem sacrificing my freedom if it means my people get home, but I'm sure getting arrested isn't a part of your game plan.

**SHEYANA**

You know, Morax, you're actually that little bit smarter than I gave you credit for. Unlike most fanatical leaders, you actually realise that there are people who don't actually share your beliefs.

**MORAX**

I am no fool, but my initial query remains. Why did you accept their terms?

**SHEYANA**

I want to get off this rock as much as you do, and this is the most expedient way to do it. Don't forget that if it wasn't for me, you would never have become organised enough to carry this out.

**MORAX**

And don't forget that there aren't many people who would listen to a burned out telepath like you. I appreciate the help you've given to my people, but once we get back to Velassia, our contract is terminated.

**SHEYANA**

I wasn't planning on remaining your business partner forever.

**4. Sheba's Office, Rienne**

*Rialta and Sheba sit at the desk. Vanilla and Malteazer sit opposite.*

**RIALTA**

You three will be part of the detachment to Velassia. Commander Spira and I can take care of things here.

**MALTEAZER**

What are the specifics of this mission?

**RIALTA**

We've tasked a medium cruiser to take the Velassians and their escort from here to Velassia. The three of you will be in command of the Galaxycats team, which will predominantly consist of security officers- we won't be transporting them in holding cells, but we will attach restraining anklets to them as they board. The Velassian authorities will be waiting to take them into custody at the other end.

**VANILLA**

So basically we get to enjoy a free ride to Velassia and back- could be worse, I suppose.

**RIALTA**

There's a little more to it than that. The Galaxycats complement will be remaining on Velassia for an octan or so just in case any complications arise.

**VANILLA**

An octan? And are we just supposed to ignore the fact that there's a war going on during that time?

RIALTA

Contrary to popular belief, the three of you aren't the only ones fighting this war- and right now, none of you are even on the front lines. I think we can spare you for a little while.

*Vanilla doesn't look particularly impressed, but says nothing.*

Comander, Doctor, if there's nothing more, I'd like to speak to Captain Sheba for a few moments.

*Malteazer and Vanilla exit.*

SHEBA

Well then, Minister, what exactly is it that you want to say?

RIALTA

I just thought you'd be interested to know that sending you off to Velassia for an octan so soon after your last mission is no coincidence.

SHEBA

You- you arranged this? Because of Kralor?

RIALTA

I did try to warn you that it wasn't wise to make an enemy of me, but words are next to meaningless if you can't back them up with a demonstration. This little assignment should show you just how far my reach extends.

SHEBA

If you have any grasp whatsoever of my personality, you should know that I don't respond well to threats.

RIALTA

And I'm not one to make a threat without backing it up.

*Pause.*

It's such a shame, really, that we have to be antagonists at all. It would be far more rewarding for us both if you were to ally yourself with me.

SHEBA

I doubt I could ever ally myself with someone who plays by a whole different set of rules to me.

RIALTA

Such a shame.

## 5. Carria Spaceport

*Vanilla, Sheba and Malteazer are sitting in the waiting area.*

MALTEAZER

What's the matter, Captain? You seem preoccupied.

SHEBA

I think I may have an enemy I can't afford to have.

MALTEAZER

Minister Rialta.

SHEBA

I suppose I should be more circumspect around her, but there's nothing I hate more than brown-nosing. I know other people would call it stupid, but there's no point going through life pretending to be something I'm not.

VANILLA

Good for you, Captain. I hate all that game-playing.

*Malteazer glances up at the announcement board.*

MALTEAZER

That's as may be, but it looks like our ride's here.

*Malteazer, Sheba and Vanilla get up.*

**6. Space- Starship Kiriana**

*The cruiser orbits Panthera. A small shuttle docks with it.*

**7. Docking Bay, Starship Kiriana**

*Captain Ravel, a middle-aged, dark-haired Pantheran woman is waiting. Vanilla, Sheba and Malteazer disembark from their shuttle.*

**RAVEL**

**Sheba, Vanilla and Malteazer, I presume. Good to see you could finally make it.**

**SHEBA**

**Captain, I take it all the Velassians and associated security personnel are on board.**

**RAVEL**

**They have been for quite some time now- we were just waiting for the three of you.**

**VANILLA**

**Hey, it wasn't our fault your pickup shuttle took so long.**

**RAVEL**

**My apologies- we're not used to being used as a transport service.**

**SHEBA**

**Captain, if you don't mind, we'd like to see the Velassians for ourselves.**

**RAVEL**

**Be my guest. I'll have one of my ensigns show you around E-deck.**

**8. Elevator, Kiriana**

*A female Pantheran ensign is with Sheba, Vanilla and Malteazer as the elevator moves through the ship. She holds out some snap-on bracelets.*

**ENSIGN**

**Here, put these on. We've divided the Velassians into groups and set aside quarters and some communal areas for them, but as I'm sure you know, they've all been fitted with restraining anklets. The anklets will emit a shock if they get too close to anyone wearing one of these bracelets.**

**VANILLA**

**They sure do make imprisonment look a whole lot cleaner these days.**

*The elevator stops.*

**ENSIGN**

**We're here.**

**9. Corridor, E-Deck, Kiriana**

*The ensign, Malteazer, Sheba and Vanilla are walking down the corridor.*

**VANILLA**

**These people seem awfully quiet for a bunch of terrorists who managed to take over a Galaxycats installation.**

**ENSIGN**

**The Velassians you've seen so far weren't directly involved in that incident.**

**The ringleaders are being held separately.**

**VANILLA**

**Captain, do we really need to go and see them?**

**MALTEAZER**

**I'd like to see *her*.**

*(to ensign)*

**Can you take us to the Pantheran woman?**

**ENSIGN**

**Of course. This way.**

*They continue down the corridor.*

**10. Sheyana's Quarters, Kiriana**

*Sparsely furnished with no computer access. Sheyana is sitting on the bed, idly fiddling with a stylus. Sheba, Malteazer, and Vanilla enter.*

**SHEYANA**

**Ah, visitors-**

*She breaks off when she recognises who has entered.*

**Well, well, this is certainly a surprise. I was hoping you'd show up, actually.**

**MALTEAZER**

**Sheyana.**

**SHEYANA**

**Yes, Malteazer, did you want something? Brought your friends along to rough me up a bit more, have you?**

**MALTEAZER**

**You'd know all about roughing people up, wouldn't you?**

**SHEYANA**

**Fine words, coming from you- do your friends know what you did to me?**

**MALTEAZER**

**You were the one who captured me! You may have gotten away with that, but this last little terrorist stunt alone will earn you a few more years behind a secure forcefield.**

**SHEYANA**

**And there's another funny thing- much as we'd like to cling to the idea, it seems that you just can't rely on people getting what they deserve. For example, look at what you've got- good friends, a respected position helping Galaxycats...and if they only knew your little secret, you wouldn't have any of it.**

**VANILLA**

**What is she babbling on about?**

**SHEYANA**

**Do you want to tell them, or shall I?**

**MALTEAZER**

**I think we've heard enough. Let's go.**

*Malteazer turns to go.*

**SHEYANA**

**Looks like it's up to me to tell them, then, isn't it? Hey, Captain, Commander, whoever you are- did you know that your colleague here is a rogue telepath? Or that she went into my mind and burned out my ability just so she could escape?**

*Malteazer stops.*

**VANILLA**

**What the hell are you talking about? That can't possibly be true...can it, Malteazer?**

*Malteazer says nothing.*

**Malteazer?**

**MALTEAZER**

**I'm sorry.**

*Malteazer leaves.*

**SHEBA**

**Malteazer!**

*Vanilla and Sheba go after Malteazer.*

**SHEYANA**

**Well, this trip has proved to be slightly more interesting than I thought.**  
**11. Corridor, Outside Sheyana's Quarters, Kiriana**

*The ensign is waiting outside as Sheba emerges. Vanilla and Malteazer are already some way down the corridor.*

**ENSIGN**

**Captain, is there something wrong?**

**SHEBA**

**Could you just wait here a moment?**

*Sheba heads off down the corridor, and reaches Vanilla and Malteazer. Vanilla has grabbed Malteazer and shoved her up against a wall.*

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla, what are you doing?**

**VANILLA**

**You little c'ren! Why didn't you tell me?**

*Malteazer says nothing.*

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla, let go of her.**

**VANILLA**

**Stay out of this, Sheba. I thought we were friends, but all this time, you were lying to me- you were a damn telepath!**

*Malteazer continues to remain silent.*

**Well, aren't you going to say anything?**

**MALTEAZER**

**Let go of me.**

*Vanilla directs a look of revulsion-tinged anger at Malteazer.*

**VANILLA**

**With pleasure.**

*Vanilla slams Malteazer against the wall and then lets her go before striding off down the corridor.*

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla!**

*Sheba turns to Malteazer.*

**Malteazer, are you okay?**

**MALTEAZER**

**I'm fine. Could you just leave me alone for a while, please?**

*Malteazer walks away. The ensign approaches Sheba.*

**ENSIGN**

**Excuse me, Captain- is everything okay?**

**SHEBA**

**No, Ensign, I don't think it is.**

## **12.Observation Room, Kiriana**

*A medium-sized room with the outer hull containing one clear window to stare out at the stars. Malteazer is sitting, looking outside when Sheba enters and approaches.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Did you know this is just a computer generated image of the stars? We probably wouldn't want to see what's going on in hyperspace right now.**

**SHEBA**

**Malteazer, are you okay?**

**MALTEAZER**

**What do you think?**

*Sheba sits down next to Malteazer.*

**SHEBA**

**Okay...of course I know you're not all right. It's just a way of initiating conversation.**

**MALTEAZER**

**Don't...don't you hate me now? The way she does?**

**SHEBA**

**Of course I don't hate you- and neither does Vanilla. How can she, after all you've been through together?**

**MALTEAZER**

**But I- all this time, I've been lying to you. I don't blame Vanilla if she thinks I'm not worthy of being her friend anymore- isn't that how most Pantherans feel about telepaths anyway? We have laws restricting the rights of those who can read others' minds- and I broke those laws!**

**SHEBA**

**I won't try to pretend to understand what it must be like to be a telepath- hell, I can't even say that those kinds of abilities don't frighten me a little. But the Malteazer I've seen over the past few monai is a person I've grown to admire and respect in no small way, and I'll be damned if I'm going to abandon a friendship over something like this.**

**MALTEAZER**

**Thanks, Sheba...you don't know how much I hated keeping this secret, and the closer we got, the more I just wanted to come out and tell you. But at the same time, I was afraid to do it, afraid to risk one of the first real friendships I had.**

**SHEBA**

**For what it's worth, it hasn't changed anything- and I promise to keep your secret for as long as you need me to. Say what, I'll even get that idiot Vanilla to see sense by the end of this mission, okay?**

*Malteazer smiles weakly.*

**13. Vanilla's Quarters, Kiriana**

*Sparse, temporary style quarters. Vanilla is sitting on a chair, reading off a datapad. The doorchime sounds. Vanilla swings round, still holding the datapad.*

**VANILLA**

**If that's Malteazer, then I'ak off!**

*Sheba enters.*

**Captain! What do you want?**

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla, what the hell is wrong with you? Don't you think Malteazer deserves better treatment than this?**

**VANILLA**

**What goes on between Malteazer and I is none of your concern.**

**SHEBA**

**Of course it's my concern! We're all friends, aren't we?**

**VANILLA**

**You know, for one brief moment, I had actually deluded myself into thinking that we were- how stupid was that? I should have known you can't trust an ex-F'lar, especially not one who can read your mind whenever she wants to!**

**SHEBA**

**So what? Are you afraid of her? Or maybe just jealous?**

**VANILLA**

**Maybe you can go around making friends with everyone you meet, but I like to be a bit more selective. There's a reason telepaths have to be restrained- it's because they can dive into your mind any time they feel like it. That's how Tieran operates these days.**

**SHEBA**

Is this really about Malteazer? Or is it Warlord Tieran that has you acting this way? After we came back from Kralor, you said that he was your uncle- seeing him in the F'lar has got to have had some impact.

VANILLA

Telepaths, F'lar, Tieran, Malteazer...I'm well shot of all of them.

SHEBA

Stop acting like a child- I know you don't really mean that.

VANILLA

Try me.

#### **14. Space- Kiriana**

*The starship arrives at the grey planet of Velassia, and docks at the orbital platform.*

#### **15. Velassian Spaceport**

*Similar layout to Carria Spaceport. Velassian security officers are waiting as the Galaxycats (including Vanilla, Sheba and Malteazer) and their Velassian charges disembark from shuttles. A Velassian official, Revex approaches Sheba, Malteazer and Vanilla.*

REVEX

Captain Sheba, I would like to thank you and your officers for your efforts on the behalf of our displaced people. I also hope that you can accept my sincerest apologies for the incident that occurred back on your planet- rest assured that the perpetrators will be duly punished.

VANILLA

What exactly will you be doing with all these newcomers?

REVEX

All of these people were abducted by the F'lar, and they have been away from Velassia for varying amounts of time. Some will be able to pretty much pick up their old lives where they left off, whilst others will require reorientation and counselling before they can fully rejoin our society.

VANILLA

I'm surprised the F'lar didn't just conquer this place.

*Revex chuckles sadly.*

REVEX

Ours is a much crueller fate.

SHEBA

Pardon?

REVEX

Oh, nothing. I understand you'll be remaining on Velassia for a few days- we've made arrangements for you to stay in one of our treetop villages. It'll be dark soon, so we really should get going.

VANILLA

Why, do you people not like driving at night?

*Revex does not answer, but begins leading them to the spaceport entrance.*

#### **16. Velassian countryside**

*A Velassian lowglider (a more simplistic form of skimmer) flies over the countryside. In the distance, the movement of a number of black shapes is visible.*

#### **17. Int. Lowglider**

*A Velassian is piloting using a direct neural interface. Sheba, Vanilla, Malteazer and Revex are in the back. The outside is clearly visible on the viewscreen.*

MALTEAZER

What are those black shapes off in the distance?

*Both Revex and the pilot tense up.*

REVEX

**It...it's nothing, probably just a herd of bovirae. Oh look, we've nearly reached the town.**

*Sheba and Malteazer exchange glances.*

### **18.Zinaxxe Town, Velassia**

*A settlement built in the heights of Velassia's great trees. The lowglider is pulled up to town level on a cargo elevator. Sheba, Malteazer, Vanilla and Revex disembark. The three Pantherans are clearly impressed, although Vanilla is determinedly trying to remain aloof and neutral.*

**SHEBA**

**I've always wanted to see one of the fabled tree cities of Velassia- this is even more impressive than I'd imagined.**

**REVEX**

**This is just a small settlement. If you want to see something really impressive, you should go to the greatwood forests further south.**

**SHEBA**

**Provided things aren't too hectic, we may just have to do that.**

*There is a rustling from the ground below as the black shapes pass beneath the city. Various Velassians rush to pull up the elevators and cut off access from the ground with a force shield.*

**What's going on? What are those things?**

**REVEX**

**I told you, it's just a herd of bovirae.**

**MALTEAZER**

**If those are domestic animals down there, why are you acting like this town is under siege?**

**REVEX**

**This is just standard practice around here. If our ways seem alien to you, it's hardly surprising.**

*Sheba and the others don't look quite convinced, but they say nothing.*

**You must be tired- let me show you to your hotel.**

*Revex leads the Pantherans through the city until they reach Zinaxxe Hotel.*

### **19.Reception, Zinaxxe Hotel**

*The reception desk is staffed by a female Velassian, Kalex.*

**KALEX**

**Ah, Revex, you made it back in time. I was beginning to worry that-**

**REVEX**

**Good evening, Kalex- I trust you have rooms ready for these Pantherans.**

**KALEX**

**Of course.**

*(to Sheba)*

**This hotel was specifically built to cater to the needs of offworlders. The other Galaxycats that were with you have already arrived.**

**REVEX**

**Captain, I know this is far from ideal, but there is one thing you should know- the Pantheran named Sheyana is also being held here.**

**SHEBA**

**Here? Shouldn't she be in secure custody?**

**REVEX**

**Ah, yes, well it seems we weren't quite prepared to hold a Pantheran...**

**MALTEAZER**

**Let me guess- she escaped, didn't she?**

*Kalex holds out her arm to reveal a bracelet similar to the one Sheba and the others wore on the Kiriana.*

**KALEX**

**We've resorted to using this proximity bracelet to prevent her from straying too far. However, I'd really appreciate it if one of you...**

**MALTEAZER**

**I'll wear it.**

*With a sigh of relief, Kalex unlocks the bracelet and clips it to Malteazer's wrist.*

**KALEX**

**Thank you.**

*Kalex uses her terminal to print out three keycards and hands them over to the Pantherans.*

**These will get you into your rooms. If there's anything you need while you're here, don't hesitate to ask.**

**REVEX**

**Well, I'd better get going. Goodbye everyone.**

*Goodbyes are exchanged.*

**20. Sheba's Room, Zinaxxe Hotel**

*Standard living room- the bed and bathroom are in separate rooms. Sheba is unpacking a few bits when the doorchime rings.*

**SHEBA**

**Come in!**

*Malteazer enters and looks around.*

**MALTEAZER**

**I see they gave the ranking officer the best room.**

**SHEBA**

**Command has to have one or two privileges. Feel free to try out the chairs for yourself.**

*Malteazer sits down.*

**MALTEAZER**

**So, Captain, what was it you wanted to discuss?**

**SHEBA**

**I'll get to that once Vanilla arrives.**

*Malteazer gets up.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Perhaps it's better if I come back later.**

*Malteazer goes to the door, but as she opens it, Vanilla arrives.*

**VANILLA**

**I didn't realise you would be here.**

**MALTEAZER**

**I was just leaving.**

**SHEBA**

**Nobody's going anywhere. Both of you come in and sit down.**

*Unable to disobey the edge of command in Sheba's voice, Vanilla and Malteazer have no choice but to sit down inside the room.*

**As I'm sure you've both noticed, something's not quite right about this place.**

**VANILLA**

**It's a city in the trees; of course it doesn't feel right.**

**SHEBA**

**You know there's more to it than that. Everyone around here is on edge, and it has something to do with those black shapes. If they're bovirae, then I'm a F'lar warlord.**

**MALTEAZER**

**As if we didn't have enough to deal with on this assignment already.**

**VANILLA**

**I'm sure you can figure it out with your super mind-reading skills, Malteazer. Haven't you already had a good mental poke at those black things?**

*Malteazer does not answer.*

**SHEBA**

**Malteazer, in all seriousness, if you've sensed anything that could help us figure this out, I'd like to hear it.**

**MALTEAZER**

**I'm sorry, Captain, but I've been keeping my mental barriers up since we got here. Alien minds aren't easy to deal with.**

**VANILLA**

**Just how strong a telepath are you?**

**MALTEAZER**

**A-rated...want to hate me some more?**

**VANILLA**

**Are you telling me you're one of the strongest mind-rapers around? Gods, you're even more of a freak than I thought!**

**SHEBA**

**Commander, that's enough! You are way past the line and you know it!**

**VANILLA**

**Why do you keep leaping to her defence? Can't she speak for herself?**

*The argument is interrupted by commotion and screams from outside. Vanilla, Sheba and Malteazer run outside to find out what is happening.*

### **21. Zinaxxe Town, Velassia**

*The black shapes are swarming into town from below- our first clear look at them shows that they are some kind of giant arthropod species. The Velassians are trying to fight them off using liquid nitrogen sprays and projectile weapons to freeze and then shatter the attackers. Although their methods are mainly successful, they are slow to stem the tide and more than a few Velassian defenders are ripped apart or dragged off.*

*Malteazer, Sheba and Vanilla run outside, followed by various other Galaxy cats. Kalex runs over to them.*

**KALEX**

**Get back inside! It isn't safe out here.**

**SHEBA**

**What in hell is going on? What are these things?**

**KALEX**

**I'll explain later- just do as I say and go back inside.**

*Vanilla draws her ion gun.*

**VANILLA**

**Come on, you look like you could a little backup.**

**KALEX**

**Your energy weapons are even more useless than your lack of knowledge.**

**Please, just leave us to it.**

*The attack seems to have subsided somewhat; the arthropods are withdrawing.*

**SHEBA**

**Much as I hate to admit it, she's right. Return to your rooms, everyone.**

*(to Kalex)*

**Please, don't hesitate to let us know if there's anything we can do to help.**

**KALEX**

**Thank you for your offer, but that won't be necessary.**

*Talking amongst themselves, the Galaxy cats return to the hotel.*

**22. Sheba's Room, Zinaxxe Hotel**

*Malteazer and Vanilla are waiting. Sheba enters.*

**SHEBA**

I told the others to go back to their rooms- we'll have a better job finding out what's going on with just the three of us.

**VANILLA**

They'd better give us some straight answers now that we've seen those things.

*Revex rings the doorchime, and then enters.*

**REVEX**

Kalex is outside helping with the clean-up. She sent to me to talk to you.

**VANILLA**

Don't you dare try to pass this off as a herd of bovirae. I want to know exactly what's going on around here.

**REVEX**

Those creatures you saw- they are called the S'h'raya. We don't know how they came to our world, only that by the time we realised they were here, they had established a community in the caverns running through the Mountains of Fire. It wasn't too long before they started attacking our settlements, taking our technology, our livestock, even ourselves, just to satiate their hunger. We've tried everything we can think of to stop them- energy weapons, flamethrowers, and now the liquid nitrogen. All of our methods work at first, but in time they adapt, and we're right back where we started- only with fewer people, and more enemies.

**SHEBA**

Why did you try to hide this from us? Why not ask for help from Panthera and Lan-Kan?

**REVEX**

If we divert you away from the war, the F'lar could well overrun us all. It was decided some time ago that we would handle this on our own.

**SHEBA**

If your story has even the slightest grain of truth to it, then these S'h'raya are far more dangerous than the F'lar ever could be. Aside from the damage to your planet, what happens if they find their way to another world?

**MALTEAZER**

Seeing as we're here now anyway, why not let us help you work on a solution?

**REVEX**

The finest minds on Velassia have applied themselves to this. It may well be that there is no solution.

**VANILLA**

If you're going to talk like that, you might as well just give up, evacuate the planet, and bombard it from space.

**REVEX**

Aside from the obvious practical issues involved in relocating two billion people, do you really think that the people who have made their lives here, or those who risked so much to be brought back, really want to say goodbye to our home?

**VANILLA**

Then make up your mind- either you stay here and fight, or you run away before the S'h'raya kill you all. It's as simple as that.

**23. Malteazer's Room, Zinaxxe Hotel**

*Slightly smaller than Sheba's room. Sheyana is waiting there when Malteazer enters.*

**SHEYANA**

Welcome back, Doctor.

**MALTEAZER**

Sheyana! What the hell are you doing in my room?

**SHEYANA**

From the looks of things, you're the one wearing my restraining bracelet. I thought that meant you wanted to keep me close.

**MALTEAZER**

What is it that you want from me?

**SHEYANA**

Call it childish, but I'm taking a perverse pleasure in irritating you as much as I can. Consider it payback for taking away the one thing that made me special.

**MALTEAZER**

I was just defending myself.

**SHEYANA**

Don't give me that crap! Did you really need to burn out my mind just to escape? You were enjoying yourself!

**MALTEAZER**

I did what I had to.

*Pause.*

**SHEYANA**

Fine- have it your way. But don't think that I'll ever forgive you. I hope your friends hate you forever now that they know what you are.

*Sheyana exits, leaving an irritated Malteazer behind.*

#### **24. Sheba's Room, Zinaxxe Hotel**

*Sheba and Vanilla are seated. Malteazer enters.*

**VANILLA**

Here she comes at long last. Hey Malteazer, good to see you're taking the situation so seriously as to show up ten grads late.

**MALTEAZER**

Sorry I'm late, *Sheba*- I had a run in with Sheyana.

**SHEBA**

Are you okay?

**MALTEAZER**

I'm fine.

**VANILLA**

Shall we get down to business, then? Such as what exactly we're going to do about this whole S'h'raya situation?

**SHEBA**

Revex has already booked us a lift to Yarzel City- that's where the government's primary S'h'raya research facility is based. Apparently Governor Mendrax is more than happy to have some fresh minds working on the problem.

**VANILLA**

Good- we can finally do something constructive.

**SHEBA**

Malteazer, unfortunately, none of the Velassians seem too keen on putting on that bracelet. We'll have to bring Sheyana with us.

**MALTEAZER**

I can't say I'm overjoyed at the prospect, but all things considered, I'd prefer to have her where I can keep an eye on her.

**SHEBA**

Right, well if that's all, I have to go and talk to the security contingent- they'll be remaining here to help with the rebuilding and keep tabs on our original mission.

**25. Zinaxxe Town, Velassia**

*Sheba, Vanilla, Malteazer, Sheyana and two guards climb into a lowglider. Camera zooms out as the elevator descends and it takes off.*

**26. Outside Yarzel City, Velassia**

*The lowglider approaches the much larger and even more impressive city of Yarzel.*

**27. Yarzel City, Velassia**

*The lowglider has docked. Sheba, Malteazer, Vanilla, Sheyana and the guards disembark and are greeted by Haxel, a male Velassian.*

**HAXEL**

Captain Sheba, Commander Vanilla, Doctor Malteazer, I'm so pleased to see you all arrived safely. I am Haxel, first assistant on the S'h'raya project.

I'm sure you'd love to take a look around the city, but if you're not too tired, we'd be most appreciative if you could come straight to the lab.

**SHEBA**

That's fine with us- we did come here to help, after all.

*Haxel smiles.*

**HAXEL**

Follow me- it's just a short walk away.

*The party duly follows Haxel.*

**28. Anteroom, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Haxel leads Sheba and the others into the anteroom. He turns to Sheyana and her guards.*

**HAXEL**

I'm sorry, but the three of you haven't been given clearance to go any further into the facility. I'm afraid you'll have to wait out here.

**SHEYANA**

How boring- I was looking forward to getting my teeth into a good discussion. Oh well, see you later, Malteazer.

*Malteazer does not respond.*

**29. Meeting Room, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Smallish meeting room with table, chairs and computer terminals. One wall is clear, showing a view of a room holding a crashed F'lar ship. A male Velassian, Zalet, is waiting. Haxel leads Sheba, Malteazer and Vanilla in.*

**ZALET**

Greetings, everyone. I am Doctor Zalet, the S'h'raya project's head researcher.

*Brief greetings are exchanged as everyone sits down.*

**VANILLA**

What's a F'lar ship doing here?

**ZALET**

We discovered this near the Mountains of Fire. Although there were no surviving crewmembers, a scan of the ship's computer revealed that it was the vessel that brought the S'h'raya to our world.

**VANILLA**

Are you saying this whole situation was some damned F'lar plan?

**ZALET**

To give them the benefit of the doubt, I don't believe they actually meant to leave the S'h'raya here- at least not yet. According to their ship's logs, they picked up a stasis pod containing a clutch of eggs. When the pod was brought aboard for investigation, the stasis was terminated and the eggs began to develop and hatch.

SHEBA

Let me guess- the F'lar couldn't handle the S'h'raya, and they ended up crashing here.

ZALET

Naturally the logs get a bit fragmented at that point, but that does seem to be the logical explanation. Unfortunately, whilst the F'lar didn't survive the crash, the S'h'raya clearly did. And by the time we even realised that they were here, they had already established a sizeable colony.

SHEBA

It occurs to me that containment really should be our first concern. At the very least, you should shut down your spaceports to prevent the S'h'raya from spreading to other worlds.

ZALET

We've severely restricted space travel to and from the planet, but Velassia is highly dependent on commodities from other worlds. We can't shut it down entirely.

SHEBA

If you're not willing to do what is necessary, then not only is there no point us being here, but you are needlessly endangering the rest of the galaxy.

VANILLA

What she means to say is, if you're not willing to cooperate in the matter, the best way for us to protect the other planets in this sector would be to make yours uninhabitable.

ZALET

What you're talking about is genocide. You would be responsible for the near extermination of my people.

VANILLA

When it comes to protecting Panthera, who knows what I'd do?

SHEBA

Vanilla, that's enough. Doctor Zalet, we have no intention of abandoning your people or your planet- but you must accept that unusual measures may have to be taken if a solution is to be found.

*Zalet sighs.*

ZALET

Very well, then, I'll suggest it to the governor. But what have you to offer us other than instructions to wall ourselves off and await the inevitable?

MALTEAZER

I don't think we can suggest anything until we've seen the results of your own research.

*Zalet nods to Haxel, who passes datapads around.*

HAXEL

Our work is summarised in these reports, but as you can see, everything we've tried has been rendered ineffective within a matter of octans. We don't know how they do it, but even if we kill an entire attack force, the others somehow know how it was done and incorporate resistance into their next wave. Energy weapons, chemicals, extreme heat- they can adapt their exoskeletons to repel them all.

MALTEAZER

If what you say is true, then the S'h'raya must be in constant contact with each other, even over a reasonably large distance.

ZALET

We've tried scanning for ultrasonic communications, pheromones, even some kind of inbuilt EM transmitter- so far every scan has come back negative.

MALTEAZER

Telepathy.

ZALET

Excuse me?

MALTEAZER

If the S'h'raya aren't communicating via any tangible method, then they must be using telepathy.

ZALET

What good does that do us? We have no way of measuring or tapping into telepathic communications.

MALTEAZER

I do.

SHEBA

Malteazer, you don't have to-

MALTEAZER

Thanks for your concern, Sheba, but this situation is too important for me to keep silent. I am a telepath, Doctor, and if you'll give me access to a lowglider I'd like to fly out to the Mountains of Fire and try to tap into their telepathic network.

ZALET

I can't say that I really believe you'll accomplish anything by doing that, but at this stage any kind of lead is welcome. You're free to do what you like- that is, if you can find a pilot willing to take you there.

MALTEAZER

No need for that. I can fly one of those things myself.

### **30. Lowglider Launch Area, Yarzel City**

*Malteazer and Sheba are talking. Sheyana and her guards are a standing some distance away.*

SHEBA

Malteazer, don't take this the wrong way, but are you sure you know what you're doing?

MALTEAZER

If there's a chance my abilities could give us an insight into the S'h'raya, I have to try it.

SHEBA

Malteazer, if you're trying to prove something by doing this, then I want you to know that it's not necessary.

MALTEAZER

Sheba, please, just let me handle this in my way.

SHEBA

Look, if you're dead set on it, then I'll stop trying to dissuade you- but at least let me wear that bracelet so that you don't have to take her along.

MALTEAZER

You know how these bracelets work- whatever pain I feel is transmitted to her. It'll be in Sheyana's best interests to protect me whilst we're out there.

SHEBA

Just be careful. The longer you keep her on a leash, the angrier she'll be when she's let off- and I get the feeling it would be dangerous to assume she won't try to escape sooner or later.

MALTEAZER

Captain, I spent nearly half my life in the F'lar. I appreciate your concerns, but there's no need to teach basics to a master, as the saying goes.

SHEBA

No...I suppose there isn't, although I hope you won't mind too much if I wish you good luck.

MALTEAZER

Thanks, Captain- this is one mission where I really will need it.

*Malteazer boards the lowglider. The guards bring Sheyana over and she climbs in.*

### **31. Int. Lowglider**

*Malteazer is in the pilot's seat. Sheyana is next to her.*

SHEYANA

So it's just you and me now, Doctor. I didn't realise you were quite this interested in me.

*Malteazer doesn't answer.*

So, that's how it's going to be. I was hoping for some interesting conversation, but I suppose I'll have to do make do with annoying you until I provoke an outburst.

### **32. Lowglider Launch Area, Yarzel City**

*Malteazer's lowglider launches and heads out towards the distant Mountains of Fire.*

### **33. Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*A mainly dormant volcano range. Cave entrances can be seen, but no sign of activity. Malteazer's lowglider arrives and makes a pass over the volcanoes.*

### **34. Int. Lowglider**

*As before.*

SHEYANA

You know, I can't say it looks like much down there, considering it's supposed to be the headquarters of a bunch of incredibly evil invaders.

MALTEAZER

Don't be fooled by appearances- they're there, all right.

SHEYANA

Wow, you actually do speak- I was beginning to despair of ever getting a word out of you.

MALTEAZER

You'll have to take over the controls whilst I try to tap into their telepathic network. Just don't forget, that bracelet means you'll suffer for anything you try on me.

SHEYANA

I'm not a novice, Malteazer- I know an elementary fact like that.

MALTEAZER

Okay, I'm going in.

### **35. Mental Landscape**

*Malteazer materialises in blackness. As she opens her minds, the alien thoughts of the S'h'raya start to float around, before they take the physical shapes of S'h'raya. At their centre is an immense queen. As Malteazer heads towards the queen, the landscape shifts once again, transforming into a throne room. The queen metamorphoses into a regal yet terrifying insect-humanoid form. Her voice a curiously metallic, echoing quality.*

QUEEN

Welcome, animal. I hope you appreciate the effort I went to in creating this projection. Normally, I wouldn't bother adapting a mental form to suit one such as you, but it is so rare that your kind are able to speak to us in this way.

**MALTEAZER**

Who- what are you?

**QUEEN**

If you would open yourself up to us a bit more, you could know us fully.

**MALTEAZER**

I'm not letting you in to my mind!

**QUEEN**

You fear us- and well you should. On world upon world, my children have exterminated your kind so that we may expand without hindrance. This world will be no different.

**MALTEAZER**

I think you'll find it'll be very different. You've staked your claim on the wrong world this time.

**QUEEN**

Brave words- but I wonder if you'll be able to back them up. Will the compassion and mercy you animals cling to allow you to slaughter my children in cold blood?

*The queen approaches Malteazer, and caresses her cheek with a long claw.*

**Interesting; perhaps you could after all. I sense a darkness in you, sleeping now, but not too deeply. Would you like me to wake it up?**

*Malteazer suddenly grabs the queen by the throat. As the queen's eyes widen in shock, we cut to-*

### **36. S'h'raya collective memories**

*A series of black and white images. Many of them show the S'h'raya triumphant as they sweep across world after world, but in one case, some kind of device turns the tide and they are driven back.*

### **37. Mental landscape**

*As before.*

**QUEEN**

**So, you saw it...but will you live long enough for it to matter?**

*Camera pans down and we see that the queen has stabbed Malteazer with her claws. Malteazer is bleeding. Cut to-*

### **38. Int Lowglider**

*Malteazer is screaming. Sheyana does something to short Malteazer's console, and the electric shock brings Malteazer back to consciousness. Malteazer looks down, and is clearly surprised to see that she is unharmed.*

**MALTEAZER**

Wha- what happened?

**SHEYANA**

You tell me. I was just minding my own business when you started freaking out. Figured it was in my best interests to do something about it.

**MALTEAZER**

I-I was in their minds...I saw-

*Pause.*

**SHEYANA**

Don't keep me in suspense like that. What did you see?

**MALTEAZER**

We have to get back right away.

### **39. Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*The lowglider heads back the way it came.*

**40.Meeting Room, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Sheba, Zalet, Haxel and Vanilla are there. Malteazer enters.*

**ZALET**

Doctor, what's going on? Since your little trip out to the countryside, the S'h'raya seem to have mobilised in unprecedented numbers. Almost all the border towns are being attacked.

**MALTEAZER**

The queen...she must have mobilised her forces because of what I saw in her mind- a way to defeat the S'h'raya.

**HAXEL**

Really? We must implement it immediately!

**MALTEAZER**

It won't be that easy- unsurprisingly, the S'h'raya didn't know the technical specifications for this device. I have to go by what I saw in the queen's memory.

**ZALET**

Well, don't keep us in suspense- at least share what details you do know.

**MALTEAZER**

We already know that it's the S'h'raya's adaptable outer armour that makes them so hard to beat- the device I saw appeared to be some kind of resonance generator tuned to a frequency that could break right through it.

**ZALET**

Appeared to be? You don't sound too sure of yourself.

**HAXEL**

Doctor, this is the best lead we've had in a while, and it fits right in with what Doctor Yatara was working on-

**ZALET**

Yatara staked her life on testing that device, and it failed! I'm sorry, Doctor Malteazer, but your 'psychic vision' seems vague at best. I was honestly hoping you could come up with something a little better.

**MALTEAZER**

Doctor, I'm sorry you feel that way, but I'd like to ask that you show me this device that you were talking about.

**HAXEL**

Doctor, what harm can it do to show her?

**ZALET**

Given that her last little stunt seem to be the root cause of these S'h'raya attacks, who knows what additional harm this Pantheran might cause?

**SHEBA**

Doctor Zalet, that's more than enough. I understand that you have concerns for your people, but any leader should know that there are times when you have to take a risk in order to make some progress. No one is sorrier than I am that our chosen course of action has precipitated these attacks, but to ignore the potential lead that Malteazer gained is to render the sacrifices that are being made this very grad null and void.

*Pause.*

**ZALET**

Fine- do what you want. As long as you don't disturb our research, it hardly matters.

**HAXEL**

Doctor...I'd like to help them.

**ZALET**

**I should have known. You always preferred Yatara, didn't you? Go on then, get out!**

*Haxel looks awkward.*

**SHEBA**

**Come on, let's go.**

*Sheba, Malteazer, Vanilla and Haxel leave.*

**41. Corridor, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Haxel leads Vanilla, Sheba and Malteazer along the corridor.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Haxel, are you sure it's okay to walk out on him like this?**

**HAXEL**

**When Doctor Zalet gets like that, there's no point arguing with him. We might as well save time and get on with this.**

**MALTEAZER**

**Haxel...Zalet may well be right. This device might just be a waste of time.**

**HAXEL**

**Back then, we all believed in Yatara's research- it was only after her test failed that Zalet and the others lost faith. But if you saw a similar device used on another world, then I know we can make ours work too.**

**VANILLA**

**Hey, will that woman you're attached to be all right whilst we're poking around in this lab?**

**MALTEAZER**

**She'll be fine- you know she can't go too far.**

**VANILLA**

**Guess you've got no other way to keep people close.**

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla...**

**VANILLA**

**Oh come on, aren't we all 'friends' here? I'm sure the doctor over there can take a joke.**

**HAXEL**

**The old lab is down here.**

*They enter an elevator.*

**42. Lab, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*The lights come on as Haxel, Sheba, Vanilla and Malteazer enter. The lab contains two complete resonance generators, and two partially finished ones, as well as various other equipment and computer terminals. Haxel leads the others over to a terminal.*

**HAXEL**

**Zalet wanted to scrap this whole project, but I persuaded him to keep Yatara's research archived here. We even managed to retrieve the generators after the...incident.**

**VANILLA**

**I take you mean after the good doctor was killed when these things didn't work.**

**SHEBA**

**Vanilla-**

**HAXEL**

**It's all right, Captain, the commander does have a point. It's all too easy to euphemise these things.**

**MALTEAZER**

**I take it you never figured out exactly why the devices failed?**

HAXEL

Zalet wasn't about to let us waste any more time on it, but the way I see it, it's one of two possibilities. Either the power output wasn't sufficient, or Yatara's frequency scanner was unable to lock onto the correct frequency in time.

MALTEAZER

I think I can come up with a workaround for both of those. If we power the generators with the keridanium crystals I use in my teleport, and replace the frequency scanners with a more simplistic frequency cycler, this might just work.

HAXEL

Will the cycler really have any better chance of hitting the right frequency in time?

MALTEAZER

If we complete the two unfinished devices, we'll have twice as many as were used in the last test- that gives us a much better chance of finding the right frequency. What I propose we do is use these four to give complete coverage of the S'h'raya colony in the Mountains of Fire.

HAXEL

What about the border towns that are being attacked?

MALTEAZER

If we don't go for the source straightaway, there's really no point in doing this. If we had time, we could try building more of these devices, maybe even create handheld versions for a more complete defence, but we have to make a plan that accounts for the limited time and resources that we have.

SHEBA

Look, you guys may be on the same wavelength, but I really only have the vaguest of clues as to what you're talking about. Is there anything either of us can do?

*Malteazer looks at Haxel.*

MALTEAZER

To be perfectly honest, Captain, it might be faster if you were to leave us to to it.

VANILLA

Sounds good to me. Come on, Captain, let's go.

SHEBA

Malteazer, as soon as you know where you want to place those devices, let me know so we can put together a team to carry out the mission. In the meantime, Vanilla and I will be working with the Galaxycats security team to help the border villages fend off the S'h'raya.

MALTEAZER

Take care...both of you.

*Sheba nods, but Vanilla does not react. Both Sheba and Vanilla leave.*

HAXEL

Well then, shall we get to work?

*Scene fades*

**43. Anteroom, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Sheyana and the guards are still waiting, when Malteazer and Haxel emerge.*

HAXEL

Are you sure we can afford to stop working now?

MALTEAZER

Haxel, we've been working for radia. I don't know about you, but I can barely keep my eyes open. We won't get anywhere until we've had some rest.

HAXEL

I'm not even sure I'll be able to sleep...

SHEYANA

I hope you're not planning on resting, Malteazer. I've been so bored waiting up here, so it seems to me you owe me a few hours of entertainment.

MALTEAZER

Forget it, Sheyana.

SHEYANA

What exactly are you trying to prove by wearing that bracelet? Is it the only way you can gain an advantage over me?

*Malteazer and Haxel walk past Sheyana and leave the building. Sheyana and the guards follow.*

#### **44. Border Town, Velassia**

*From an aerial viewpoint we can see the Velassian defence driving off the latest S'h'raya attack. Casualties are high on both sides; medics tend to the wounded Velassians whilst others carry the dead off the field.*

#### **45. Base Camp, Border Town**

*Sheba is going over an attack plan with a couple of Velassian commanders when Vanilla enters. The Velassians leave.*

VANILLA

Damn it- every time I go out there I lose more people. We can't go on like this, Captain.

SHEBA

I know- the Velassians and I have agreed that we should fall back to a more defensible position once the evacuation of the town is complete.

VANILLA

There's only so many times we can fall back, and you know it! Thanks to this situation we've ended up being stuck on this planet for days, fighting an enemy that seems to have near infinite reinforcements. What happened to that damn telepath and her promises that she could solve this thing?

*A communicator bleeps.*

VELASSIAN (V.O.)

Captain Sheba, there's a transmission for you from the research lab in Yarzel City.

VANILLA

Speak of the devil.

SHEBA

Put it through to here.

MALTEAZER (V.O.)

Captain, we've finished work on the resonance generators. If you could return to Yarzel City, we'll be able to move forward with the next phase.

SHEBA

Acknowledged. See you soon.

VANILLA

Captain, I think I'll stay here.

SHEBA

Vanilla, we're most likely going to need you for the upcoming mission. I won't have you cowering away here because you've suddenly decided you don't like Malteazer.

**VANILLA**

Captain, my personal feelings are none of your concern.

**SHEBA**

They are when they start affecting your professional life as well as your personal one. Or to put it another way, you're coming to Yarzel City even if I have to make it a direct order and drag you there myself.

**VANILLA**

Understood, *Captain*.

**46. Meeting Room, S'h'raya Research Lab, Yarzel City**

*Malteazer, Haxel and Zalet are there. Sheba and Vanilla enter and sit down.*

**MALTEAZER**

Good to see you again, Captain, Commander.

**VANILLA**

You said your devices were ready, so let's just get on with this.

*Malteazer works controls at a computer terminal. A holographic map of the Mountains of Fire appears, with icons marking the projected positions of the resonance generators and their effective ranges.*

**MALTEAZER**

To cut a long story short, we've managed to boost the power and range of the generators. This map indicates the optimum positions for all four generators; all we need now are four teams to guard and operate them

**VANILLA**

How easy are these things to operate, anyway? Do you need a degree in engineering just to switch it on?

**MALTEAZER**

It's just a case of flipping a switch- if there any problems, they can be controlled remotely.

**HAXEL**

I'll be handling the remote connection from a specially outfitted glider.

**MALTEAZER**

I'll be commanding one of the strike teams; Captain, Commander, we could certainly use your experience on the other teams.

**SHEBA**

We'll be happy to oblige, but who'll be heading up the last team? And what are you going to do about Sheyana?

**MALTEAZER**

Sheyana will be coming with me. As for the final team- Sheba, I'm leaving it up to you to pick a suitable candidate from the Galaxycats security forces.

**ZALET**

I suppose it's too late to dissuade you all from this crazy plan.

**HAXEL**

I'm sure if it works, you'll be quick to take the credit, Doctor.

**ZALET**

That was completely uncalled for!

**SHEBA**

Please, everyone- let's just put aside our personal tensions for now, and get this thing over with.

**47. Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*Five lowgliders approach. One remains in flight, whilst four descend to the points indicated on the earlier map.*

**48. Landing Zone 1, Mountains of Fire**

*A hoverglider lands- Sheba and her team get out and begin setting up the first generator. Sheba activates her communicator.*

**SHEBA**

**Team One in position.**

**49. Landing Zone 2, Mountains of Fire**

*A hoverglider lands- Vanilla and her team get out and begin setting up the second generator. Vanilla activates her communicator.*

**VANILLA**

**Team Two in position.**

**50. Landing Zone 3, Mountains of Fire**

*A hoverglider lands- a GalaxyCAT security officer and his team get out and begin setting up the first generator. The officer activates his communicator.*

**GALXYCAT**

**Team Three in position.**

**51. Landing Zone 4, Mountains of Fire**

*A hoverglider lands- Malteazer, Sheyana and their team get out and begin setting up the first generator. Malteazer activates her communicator.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Team Four in position.**

**SHEYANA**

**This should be fun.**

**52. Int. Lowglider**

*Haxel and a pilot are there. The landing zones are visible on the viewscreen.*

**HAXEL**

**Teams One to Four, we are monitoring your positions. Please continue with the set up.**

**53. Landing Zone 2, Mountains of Fire**

*As before.*

**VANILLA**

**Like we needed to be told that.**

**54. Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*S'h'raya begin pouring out of their caves.*

**55. Int. Lowglider**

*As before.*

**HAXEL**

**Everyone, the S'h'raya are making their move. Malteazer, on their current course they'll reach you first.**

**56. Landing Zone 4, Mountains of Fire**

*As before.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Don't worry about us- maintain your positions everyone.**

*Malteazer finishes activating the generator.*

**Generator four is active.**

**57. Int. Lowglider**

*As before.*

**HAXEL**

**Generators one through four are active and scanning. From the looks of things, none of them have found the right frequency yet.**

**58. Landing Zone 4, Mountains of Fire**

*As before. The S'h'raya are nearly at the landing zone.*

**SHEYANA**

**They're coming! When's this magical device of yours going to start working?**

**MALTEAZER**

**Soon, I hope. Defensive positions, everyone!**

**SHEYANA**

**Given the properties of this bracelet, I suppose I'd better protect you, Malteazer.**

**MALTEAZER**

**Don't make me regret letting you have a weapon.**

*Malteazer, Sheyana and the security forces form a defensive barrier, wielding 'freeze and shatter' weapons. They repel the first wave, but more S'h'raya keep coming. One by one, the nameless security officers are downed until only Sheyana and Malteazer are left.*

**SHEYANA**

**When I asked for entertainment, this isn't quite what I had in mind, Malteazer!**

*A S'h'raya lunges at Malteazer, knocking her to the ground. Sheyana moves in to intercept its follow-up blow- she catches it on her arm, shattering the bracelet.*

**Convenient- shame about the timing though.**

*Just as additional S'h'raya are about to close in, the generator hits the right frequency. They chitter in pain as their exoskeletons begin to shatter.*

**59. Int. Lowglider**

*As before.*

**HAXEL**

**Generator Four has found the right frequency- I'm adjusting the other three to synchronise with it.**

**60. Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*The S'h'raya are driven back.*

**61. Landing Zone 4, Mountains of Fire**

*Malteazer is lying unconscious by the generator- the scattered bodies of dead S'h'raya and Galaxycats around her. A lowglider touches down and Sheba emerges.*

**SHEBA**

**Malteazer!**

*Sheba runs over to Malteazer- as she checks her, Malteazer wakes up.*

**MALTEAZER**

**The S'h'raya- what happened?**

**SHEBA**

**The generators worked- a Velassian attack force is clearing out the S'h'raya caves now.**

**MALTEAZER**

**So I did it...and now there's that much more blood on my hands.**

**SHEBA**

**You did what you had to. I doubt the S'h'raya would have listened to reason.**

*Pause.*

**MALTEAZER**

**Sheyana...what happened to her?**

**SHEBA**

**I don't know. From the looks of things, you were the only survivor.**

*Malteazer looks down at the bracelet.*

**MALTEAZER**

**It isn't picking anything up. Maybe she didn't make it.**

*Pause.*

**Wait a grad, my lowglider's gone! That c'ren, she got away!**

**62. Spaceport, Velassia**

*Sheba, Vanilla, Malteazer, Revex and the remaining Galaxycat security officers are there.*

**REVEX**

**Captain, everyone, I can't thank you enough for everything you've done...and you have my sincerest regrets with regards to the lives that were lost.**

**SHEBA**

**I can't say we were expecting to face something like the S'h'raya, but I'm glad we could help.**

**REVEX**

**Doctor Malteazer, I understand you wish to remain on Velassia for a while longer.**

**VANILLA**

**She does?**

**MALTEAZER**

**There's no real reason for me to return to Panthera at this time- I might as well follow up the research I did here.**

**SHEBA**

**Malteazer...**

**VANILLA**

**Well, there's no reason for the rest of us to stay- let's go.**

**63.Space- Velassia**

*A ship departs on its way back to Velassia.*

**64.Mountains of Fire, Velassia**

*Zoom into the caves- deep down, an undiscovered clutch of S'h'raya eggs is on the verge of hatching.*

**65.City Streets, Rienne**

*A skimmer lands at the Galaxycats building.*

**66.Hangar Bay, Galaxycats, Rienne**

*Rialta is waiting as Sheba and Vanilla get out of there skimmer.*

**RIALTA**

**Welcome back, Captain, Commander. I understand your trip was rather more...eventful than planned.**

**SHEBA**

**Indeed it was- I hope things have been a little quieter around here.**

**RIALTA**

**We were able to get by without your expert guidance. However, a new mission has come up which I would like to discuss with Commander**

**Vanilla.**

**SHEBA**

**I'll see the two of you later, then.**

**67.Office, Rienne**

*Rialta sits at the desk, Vanilla opposite.*

**VANILLA**

**All right, Minister, what is this all about?**

**RIALTA**

**Vanilla, we've been looking over your record, and it has decided that you should take command of a forthcoming mission on Lan-Kan.**

**VANILLA**

**Lan-Kan?**

**RIALTA**

**As you well know, Lan-Kan is not only home to our allies, the Lan-Kanians, but also to the Haynars, who chose to side with the F'Iar. For years the**

**planet has been caught in an enforced truce, however with your cooperation we may just have the means to tip the balance, and force the Haynars to become our allies- or face destruction.**  
*TO BE CONTINUED...*