

*The characters Jeffrey Andrews, Na'Krista Nahala Keth, Kamram Keth, Na'Kesta Keth, Bosteg Haas, Kestam Ramm, Treman Baze, Merret Treet, Tascal Hone, along with the characters Torvald and Victoria Svensen are the property of Kellan Meig'h and may not be used without express written permission.*

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## “Scribe”

by Kellan Meig'h

### Chapter Six

#### “The Morning After”

Kam put his finger to his mate's lips and listened carefully, since the master bedroom was directly over the guest room that he and his mate occupied. He shook his head, then gave Kess a crooked smile.

*“They are not yet awake.”* he said softly.

*“Are you sure?”* the almost white female Elazi asked.

*“I am sure. Our troopers are still sleeping, too.”* Kamram could hear them snoring in the living room, which was on the other side of the wall from their room. *“We should wait until our child is awake before we get out of bed.”*

Kess snuggled up to her *One Love* before she asked him an important question. *“Kam, what is your impression of Jeffrey?”*

*“We seem to have much in common,”* Kam said thoughtfully. *“He thinks himself to no longer be a warrior but I think differently. I see him as a warrior. From what he has told, he has lost much and still maintains a strong mind. Only a warrior can survive war with a sound mind.”*

*“Is that all?”* Kess asked.

*“No that is not all, my love. I can see Jeffrey is deeply in love with our daughter. I believe he would do anything to become joined to her.”*

*“So, will you allow him admission into House Tal-Hassanai?”*

*“Yes, I will.”* Kam replied. *“This will be a first for any House on Elazia. Our House will be the first to allow a being not born on Elazia to become a member. There will be objections, I am sure but they will be personal objections, in private. No member will openly object to this.”*

*“Has he asked you for admittance into our House?”*

*“He has yet to ask, although Krista has told him that he must ask me personally. I believe he will ask, once he has come to understand the fact that I am approachable.”*

*“You? Approachable?”* Kess put forth. *“I remember how you treated Kayla's One Love before they were*

*joined. You acted very arrogant around Hammet. He almost didn't ask, for fear of what you might do to him!"*

*"I have learned much since then." Kamram stated, right before he rolled over to face his wife. "I was testing Hammet, to see what he was made of. I do not need to test Jeffrey because I can see what he is made of. He is warrior material."*

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Na'Krista shushed Jeff, trying to hear what was going on in the rest of the house. After a moment, a smile slid across her lips as she rolled over to face her future *One Love*.

*"My parents are awake,"* she stated in Elazian, just to see how the learning system was working for her future husband.

*"You can hear them?"* he replied. Pausing to give some thought to what he had just said, Jeff continued. *"I understood you clearly."*

*"Then you are learning our language."* Na'Krista mused. *"See, it is not hard, once you've tried it."*

*"How many words did I learn?"* Jeff asked.

*"About four hundred words. Enough to carry on basic conversation."*

Jeffrey rolled over to face his future wife, taking her in his arms. "Um, when did you take off your pajamas?" he questioned, since all he could feel was warm, silky pelt beneath his hands and against his bare chest.

"You took your pajamas off, so I thought I would, too."

"Krista, I took mine off because it was seventy-five degrees in here." Jeff explained. "I usually keep the house at sixty-five. It was a bit too warm for me."

"You notice a difference in ten degrees?" Na'Krista asked while she snuggled up tighter to her future husband.

"Yes, I can, but I think it's because sixty-five degrees is right in a temperature zone where I feel comfortable."

Jeff could feel her warm breath on his neck and her right arm, draped around him. She was gently teasing his back with her claws and her breathing was becoming deeper and somewhat irregular. She also seemed to be snuggling closer still to him.

"Krista, is something up?"

"Jeff, I will not lie." she stated, "Your musk is driving me wild. I cannot help it, my future *One Love*. Your musk is so tantalizing." Krista had never felt this way in her life. There was something about the scent of her future husband that was tickling her senses in a way that no other Elazi

male had ever done for her.

“Should I do something about it?”

“Please. I am becoming desperate to mate with you.” She knew that was a fact. It was actually painful for her to suppress the urge to tear Jeff's briefs from his body and make mad, passionate love to him.

Although she almost didn't let go of him, Jeff got up from the bed and went into the master bathroom in search of a particular item. He found his deodorant in the cabinet where it should be so he gave his armpits and chest a wipe with the solid stick, masking his natural scent. Hoping this would do the trick, he went back into the bedroom and laid back down.

“Is this better?” he asked.

Krista took a small sniff, sampling the air. “You smell spicy now.” After a few moments of snuggling, she offered up her opinion. “Yes, I think you have covered your musk sufficiently and I am no longer being driven wild. I feel you should wear this scent diligently . . . at least until we are joined.” she added with a knowing smile.

Now Jeff was curious. “So, if I hadn't put on some deodorant, you and I would have eventually been doing the horizontal bop?”

“I think I understand what you meant by that.” she agreed. “Yes, we would have been having very intimate relations.” After a moment, she added, “When the time comes that we do find out what sure bliss feels like, we will have to cap my claws. For your protection, you understand.” Krista extended her claws on her right hand fully so her hubby-to-be could see them.

“Wow. Now I see what you mean, for my protection.” Jeff commented as he examined her personal armament closely. Her claws were over an inch and a half long, wickedly hooked and with a needle-sharp point to them. “So, you will get that carried away, that you would possibly claw my back by accident?” he wanted to know.

“Yes, I would.” she replied. “Even an Elazi male, with his thick pelt might have some injuries after intimate relations.”

“Oh . . .” Jeff looked at her claws again, noting how they were razor-sharp and something that struck him odd, they were painted a bright red color. “You paint your claws?”

“Well, I ran out of dark blue so I had to use some red polish that I had brought with me.” She looked at him with a smile as she asked, “Do you like the color?”

“I do.” he replied. “Um, in your past times on your planet, how would a female protect her mate from her claws?”

“A female would have used very thick, almost rigid, leather gloves. Her mate would have laced them on her before bedtime and removed them for her the next morning.” She smiled, then continued. “Now, we have composite tip caps that are held on by adhesive. A female not in the

service would wear them almost all the time. Because I am in our military, I do not wear them, since my claws are my last line of personal defense.”

“I will keep that in mind.” he commented.

“Jeff, you must ask my father for admittance into House Tal-Hassanai. This morning.”

“But your mother hasn't questioned me yet.”

Krista smiled. “What do you think she was doing at dinner last eve? She asked you all of the important questions a mother should ask.”

Jeff thought about that bit of information. Na'Kesta had asked a number of very pointed questions about his background, how he felt about various things and particularly, would he move to Elazia if Krista were to join the Diplomatic Corps. Na'Kesta did want to know if he would entertain the idea of moving to another planet, just to be with his *One Love*.

It wasn't like he had family holding him here. His brother Harvey and his brother's wife Susan were his only family left and he didn't see much of them as it was. Since there was trade planned between the two planets, he would be able to hitch a ride now and again. Besides, the thought of going to a new planet seemed exciting.

“Krista, how do I ask your father for admittance?”

“Just ask. There is no formal way of asking for admittance. A formal request would be a challenge to enter a house. You are not challenging, you are asking for admittance because of an imminent joining.”

“Krista, I have another question. What would be my obligations to House Tal-Hassanai?”

“A panel would interview you and decide where you would fit in within the House structure. Since you are a warrior, that would weigh heavily upon their decision. Because you would be a member of Sub-House Keth, I am sure you would be favored with a desirable assignment.”

You know Krista, I . . . I would want to be seen for my attributes, not what House I belonged to.”

“On Elazia, that is the way it is.” she offered. “You are a warrior and a doctor. Those would be the main factors. Being part of Sub-House Keth is only a bonus for you. We may not be the strongest Sub-House but our lineage sits on the most important boards.”

“Krista, It will take me a long time to fully understand your culture.”

“It will soon be your culture, too.” she reminded him. “I have a great idea.” she stated.

“And what is that?”

“Let's make first meal for my parents.”

Krista slipped out of bed, went over to her hard-pack and removed several brushes from a side compartment. She came back over to Jeff and offered him the larger, softer brush.

“Would you straighten out my pelt on my back?” she asked.

“Well . . .” Jeff knew this might come up. It was something that he didn't know how to handle, mostly because of his feelings toward Krista. He loved her but until they were joined, he didn't want to get too intimate with her. Jeff didn't want to ruin things between them.

“Just brush my back, top to bottom.” she suggested as she began to brush out her shoulder-length dark brown hair.

“Okay . . .” Jeff would have been lying to himself if he said he wasn't nervous. He was sitting on the edge of the bed and his future wife had backed up between his legs, so she was close enough for him to brush her pelt. Close enough that he could smell her inviting scent, too. Taking a very deep breath, he began to brush her back for her.

“Mmm . . .” she practically purred, bending her torso forward to allow him better access to her body. “Oh, I love what you're doing to me.” she said breathily.

“Krista, this isn't going to lead to disaster, is it?” Jeff asked, stopping what he was doing.

She waited what felt like almost too long for Jeff to finally offer up an answer. “Uh, maybe.” she admitted truthfully. “Maybe we should wait until we're joined for you to do that for me.”

Jeff stood up, turned Krista to face him and took her in his arms. “Thank you for being truthful. As much as I would wish to bed you right now, we should follow tradition and wait.”

“You are right; we should wait.” she agreed. “I will say this; your touch ignites a fire in me.”

“As does your body against mine.” Jeff replied. “As much as I would like to cuddle with you all day, just like this, we need to make an appearance downstairs.”

“We do.” Krista confirmed. “Just quickly brush my pelt. I do need it straightened out, since the bed covers seemed to have mussed it up something terrible.”

“Quickly, then.” Jeff gave her back a quick once-over, then they dressed for the morning.

He was watching his future wife put on her pants, some jeans they had found for her in Auburn and were modified for her by the Elazi armorer at Outpost Auburn. Krista certainly made the clothes, he thought as she slipped on a buff-colored sports bra and then a pink polo top. She reminded him of his late wife Terri as she stood at the mirror over the chest of drawers and straightened out her hair.

Krista opened a small box she had removed from her pack and produced a pair of small hoop earrings that she put in her ears and a necklace that had a blood red stone pendant to go with them. She finished with a number of rings that she put on her fingers.

"I'm ready," she stated after she had slipped on a pair of sandals that her mother had brought for her.

"I'm dressed, too," Jeff replied, taking a moment to give his future mate a hug and a kiss. "Well, let's go make some breakfast."

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Kamram and Na'Kesta had thoroughly enjoyed their breakfast of bacon, eggs and pancakes. Kam had marveled about the taste of some of the jams that Jeff had provided for the toast, especially commenting on the strawberry preserves.

"This treat would sell very good on Elazia," he stated.

"I don't know," Kess retorted, "I would think all of the strawberry preserves would end up in our home."

"Do you think so?" Kam asked his wife.

"I certainly think so," Kess replied. She knew her husband and if there was one thing about her mate, he loved exotic sweets. These strawberry preserves qualified fully in her estimations.

Jeff interrupted the conversation at Krista's urgings. "Ambassadors, I wish to say something important. Ambassador Prime, I wish to request admittance into House Tal-Hassanai."

"I suspected you might ask me this morning," Kamram replied. "Very well, then. For now, you are a part of Sub-House Keth on a provisional basis until we can perform an official welcoming. As far as joining House Tal-Hassanai, I will begin your paperwork to join the House once we are back on Elazia." After a moment, he continued. "I hope Krista has informed you that you will need to be present when the paperwork is put before the House Tal-Hassanai Senate."

"No, she did not inform me of that small issue," Jeff looked over at his love, who only shrugged her shoulders in reply, giving him a sheepish grin before she looked back down at her plate in embarrassment.

"She should have told you," Kess interjected, giving her daughter a knowing glance. "I do hope this is not a problem for you."

"Well, how would I get there and back?" Jeff asked.

Kam nodded. "You would return to Elazia with us, in three weeks time," he offered up. Tapping on his tablet, first he frowned, then something obviously made him smile. "We would be on Elazia in time for Senate to convene, then you could return back to Earth by supply ship *Kreshkah*. Your return date would be sometime in the first seven days of the twelfth month of your calendar."

"Jeff, will that work for you?" Krista asked.

"I think so," he replied. "I can arrange for some time off from the clinic where I help out several days a week. Yes, that will be fine, Ambassador Prime."

Kess looked at her mate, then back at Jeff. "Please call us Father Kamram and Mother Na'Kesta. I think we feel like you are almost a part of our family at this point in time."

"Thank you, Mother Na'Kesta." Jeff stated. "I feel honored to be given that privilege."

Kam smiled widely as he stated, "We feel honored to have a warrior doctor join our family."

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Krista watched with anticipation as her father prepared to fire one of Jeff's hunting rifles, a weapon that he had called a 'Four-Sixty Weatherby'. Apparently it was a very high powered projectile weapon that could take down any North American game. Her father had been very taken by the small rifle they had fired earlier. It was a very simple thing, a carbine called a 'Ruger ten-twenty-two' and it seemed to be very easy to handle. Even her mother seemed to like it. It was understood that on the other hand, this Weatherby would pack a huge punch so she could see her parent preparing himself for the recoil.

Kam pulled the trigger very gently and he didn't flinch when the rifle went off. He seemed to have taken the recoil with ease when the rifle fired, which surprised Jeff. Krista glanced over to see her future mate, looking at the target some one hundred yards away with a spotting scope, smiling.

"Nice shot, Father Kamram," the human commented. "Just a smidgen high, but still in the X ring."

Kam smiled back at his future son through joining. "You were very right. This rifle has bite to match its bark."

"Father Kamram, I think you might have enjoyed the session better if you weren't encumbered by your armor," Jeff brought up, since he was the only one not clad in body protection. Even Krista was clad in a suit of armor, one generation newer than her original set.

"Inside your home is one thing," the Ambassador Prime brought up. "Out here in the open, even with two more troopers from Outpost Auburn scouting the area, I do not wish to take any unneeded risks. That goes doubly so for our daughter." After a moment, he added, "I do wish you would allow us to fit you with armor, too."

"Okay, I will agree to that, Father Kamram," Jeff stated. "And I am grateful that your people sent up that mechanic to put the Mattracks back on my truck, even though I could have done that myself."

"I must confess," Kam said softly. "I wanted to go for a ride in your tracked vehicle over the snow. It has been a long time, some sixty-odd years since I have done something like that."

"Well, well, the truth comes out," Jeff stated as he smiled at his future father-in-law. "Let's have

a small bite to eat, then we can take a ride to my friends' house, a few miles up the road. I'm sure Stan Galli would like to meet all of you."

"Um, could I try the big rifle?" Krista asked, pointing to the firearm in her father's possession.

"I'm not sure," Kam retorted, giving his daughter a knowing look. "It is very powerful."

"I will be careful," the younger Elazi put forth. "I have fired a Squad Impulse Rifle, Father. That has a huge recoil to it."

The elder Elazi slowly smiled at his daughter. "Very well. You may fire this rifle, as long as Jeffrey will get in behind you to catch you, just in case you might be knocked off of your seating."

"I'll do that for her." Jeff offered up.

Krista took the rifle and sat down at the shooting bench with it. Getting the rifle settled on the sandbags, she got in behind it and settled herself. She adjusted the front sandbag, getting the sight picture she wanted, then she cycled the bolt to load the rifle. Na'Krista slipped the safety off, took a breath and let it out slowly while she pulled the trigger.

The rifle went off, pounding her shoulder armor with its massive recoil. Just like her father, she did not flinch at all. Krista took a look back through the scope to see another hole in the X ring, right next to her father's shot.

"Good shot!" Kess exclaimed after looking at the target through the spotting scope.

"I did it!" Krista squealed, setting the rifle down so she could stand and kiss her future husband. "Now I know I can use any firearm that you might have available," she added after they broke off their kiss.

"You did good," he replied, smiling because he spied Kam and Kess, kissing one another too. He knew in his heart, they were a very loving couple. He knew they would all get along just fine.

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Not very far away, two soldiers were laying on a ridge-top, using high-powered binoculars to study the home a half-mile below them. One soldier, a Staff Sergeant, nudged the Corporal next to him to get his attention.

"Troyer, what's going on down there?" he asked, since his binoculars weren't quite as powerful.

"There's two of those black Elazi, two tan colored ones and a white one. I think one of the tan-colored ones is female. There's a human male with them, too. They look like they're target shooting with rifles and those Elazi weapons." After a moment, he commented on the situation. "There seems to be a small scout craft in the front yard. I can see heat coming off of it so they must have just used it for something."

"Is that all?" the ranking soldier asked.



“Well, they look like . . . hold it.” Barclay said quietly. After a moment, he continued. “Oh Gods! That human! He . . . he looked like he just kissed that tan female!”

“What!?!” the Staff Sergeant blurted out.

“Listen, Sergeant Atkinson. I saw him hug her and kiss her! I’ll swear on all of the Cardinal Points that he kissed her!”

“So, what do we have? A sympathizer?”

“Sarge, I don't know what else to call it. It appears like he's in with them.”

“Sean, see if you can get some pictures of this. We need to report this to the Captain.”

“Sarge, I think that white one must be the tan male's mate. She's hugging him and kissing him, too.”

The Staff Sergeant was using his GPS to get a fix on the home so they could add that information to their report. While Sean took pictures of the goings-on, Staff Sergeant Wilson Atkinson gave thought to this; why would a human give support to an alien invasion? Furthermore, why would he become friendly enough that he would kiss an alien female? What power did she hold over him that she could bend his mind like that? He knew that he might have to interrogate that man to get some answers and figure out his motives.

“I have a few good pictures, Sarge. Put your tablet into transfer mode and I’ll send you the images.”

The sergeant put his Mil-Spec iPad into Bluetooth transfer mode and watched as the images were uploaded to his device. All in all, the images were damning to the human in the midst of those aliens.

“Okay, Sean. Let me send these images to our commander. I’ll let him decide what to do about this . . .” He stopped talking when a cold, hard object was pressed into his neck.

“I would not do that.” the owner of that object suggested in a heavily accented voice, sort of Baltic in nature. “Do not move, please? I do not wish to kill you.” the voice continued.

The brush that concealed the lower ranking soldier's position on one side parted to reveal a smoky gray-black Elazi trooper, impulse rifle in hand. That trooper relieved Corporal Barclay of his camera, carbine and pistol, before making the two of them stand. Once the Staff Sergeant had been similarly relieved of his armament and tablet, the solid white trooper that was much taller than either soldier, the one that had the drop on Sergeant Atkinson, spoke up in his heavily accented English.

“I am sorry but you have become prisoners of the Elazian Trans-Atmospheric Forces.” he stated. “You are spying on our location, which is a reason to detain you. It would appear that you've been taking pictures of us.” he added while his partner reviewed the images on the camera.

“Hey! Careful with that camera!” Barclay blurted out.

The dark-hued trooper looked at his prisoner. “I understand your concerns. I am merely erasing all traces of our presence. I do know just how much this camera is worth so you can rest assured that I will take very good care of it, until such time that I can turn you over to a neutral party. Then you may have your camera back.”

“I have a problem with this,” the solid white trooper stated, holding the tablet in his hand. “This device has far too much information on it to allow you to have it back like it is currently. I regret the fact that it must be destroyed if I cannot wipe it.”

Sergeant Atkinson nodded. “I guess I can't say I didn't see that coming.” he mused.

The sergeant watched as the Elazi soldier used his Elazi-manufactured tablet to find the user manual for the iPad 9M. It was apparent that the information was available on the Internet so the pale trooper removed the SD card and performed a full factory reset, rendering the tablet useless to his prisoners. A few taps and gestures locked out the Wifi and GPS functions with a thirteen digit password that would survive subsequent factory resets, further crippling the device. The job was finished when the trooper dropped the SD card on the ground and destroyed it with a burst from an impulse pistol.

“I do not know if you were required to purchase this device from your own monetary reserves but you may have it back. It will no longer be of use to you in a military way.” the trooper commented as he handed it back to the Sarge. “Now, you need to prepare for a short hike to our craft. I will see to it that you are fed once we have arrived at Outpost Auburn.”

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Sergeant Atkinson thought that it was odd that the Elazi troopers had made them pick up all of their equipment and had even went a step further in making them police the area. The white one had made a comment that they should leave things cleaner than they had found it. The smoke gray one had even suggested they drink some water before they started their march, just to stay hydrated.

The small group headed off toward that cabin with the dark-hued trooper in front, the prisoners in the middle and that tall, white Elazi bringing up the rear. The prisoners knew there was no use in running, since the snow was almost waist deep except the path that the dark alien had broke. That, and the fact that they had their hands securely cuffed behind their backs.

Staff Sergeant Atkinson just hoped what he had heard about these aliens was true. He hoped that he would be treated fairly and not how his commander had been treating their Elazi prisoners. Those poor aliens had been tortured for information and as a result, some had suffered a very gruesome death.

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The small party arrived at the cabin, which looked much larger to the soldiers now that they

were close to it. They went inside, where the white trooper pointed to the fireplace.

“You might want to get warm again. I can see your clothing is soaked.” the pale one stated.

The two troopers had a short conversation with one another in Elazi, then the smoke colored one turned back toward the prisoners after the white-hued trooper left the room.

“Stay right there and we will have no trouble.”

The soldiers turned to face the fireplace and that was when they noticed the items over the mantle. There was an Officer's saber, dress gloves and belt in a case, surrounded by displays of medals, commendations and awards. Beside the display case was a picture of a Marine officer, a Major, standing arm in arm with a man that resembled the officer and a woman who was standing in front of them.

“Sean, that man in the uniform . . .”

“That's him, Sarge. The one that kissed the alien.”

Sean was going to comment further but he was interrupted by the sounds of many pairs of boots walking through the house. As they turned to face the room again, that human male, followed by the aliens entered the room. The man with the graying hair scowled, crossed his arms and spoke up.

“My name is Jeff Andrews, the owner of this house *and* the land you were trespassing on. Who are you two?” he asked.

“Staff Sergeant Wilson Atkinson, United States Army, serial number 566-15-9889!” the sergeant stated loudly.

Jeff scowled further. “Look, let's not play this game. These people will treat you . . .” he was cut short by the blond-haired man.

“Corporal Sean Troyer, United States Army, serial number 548-15-3286!”

Jeff turned to Sub-Commander Trasc. “*Please unfetter them.*” he requested in Elazi. He then went into the hall closet and returned with two folding chairs. “Here, you might like to sit down and warm up. You both look like you got soaked out there.”

Once their wrists were released they did sit down, as close to the fire as they could stand to be. Once they started to warm up, Sgt. Atkinson spoke up.

“I thought we were prisoners.” he offered up.

“Yes, you are Elazi prisoners.” Jeff agreed. While Na'Krista offered the two detainees a hot cup of coffee, Jeff continued. “You will be taken to Outpost Roseville for processing. I understand the Elazi have set up a prison camp near Turlock that is pretty nice. It's fenced in but the mobile homes they use for bunk houses are very nicely appointed.”

“Good coffee,” Sean offered up after he took a sip. “Listen, maybe we should try to mitigate this problem?” he suggested.

“And how would we do that?” Kam asked.

“Well, I thought,” Corporal Troyer began, “If we give you valuable information, maybe you could let us go?”

“I see.” Kamram stated. “I cannot release you but I can assure you that you will be treated fairly. What information could you offer up?”

Sean hung his head. “I feel like a deserter.” he mused. “The sergeant and I were spying on your location. I don't know if he was able to send your location's coordinates, but they will be coming to look for us if we do not check in or return to base.”

“Is this true, Sergeant Atkinson?” Jeff asked the NCO.

“It is.” the sergeant agreed. “You know, I'm not sure I agree with what we're doing anymore. I can see that these aliens . . .”

“Elazi.” Jeff interjected.

“Yes, Elazi,” the Staff Sergeant continued. “I can see the Elazi aren't bad people now. They had a chance to kill us both and they didn't. They were courteous with us and they were concerned for our well-being. Maybe we were wrong all along.”

Kam spoke up. “We only wanted to chronicle the times of your planet, share our scientific knowledge and set up trade relations with your planet. There are things your planet has that we do not and vice-versa. We would also assist Earth in setting up trade with a handful of other races.”

The two detainees looked at one another, then back at their captors. The sergeant thought this over, then spoke his mind.

“Well, I guess we could help you if you'll keep us safe from reprisal. We will still have to answer to our government for deserting our regular units and joining the RUSA, at any rate.”

“Maybe I can help with that.” Kess put forth. “Since we all wish for this to end as quickly as possible, possibly an offer to allow your soldiers to return to your proper units would help out.”

“Anything would help, Ma'am.” Sean offered up. “There are more than just the two of us that are becoming disillusioned with the RUSA.”

“I see.” Kess mused. “Well, I will do what I can to make that happen for you and the others with a like mind.”