

# Dark Territory Night Catches Us

By DarkKush

**Borderland**  
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*Terrence...*

Captain Terrence Glover swallowed hard as the dual images resolved on the holographic communicator pad. He had spent a substantial sum to secure usage of the holo-communicator. The technology was rare even in the Federation, which made it nearly nonexistent on the infrequently policed border between the Orion Syndicate and Klingon Empire.

Terrence didn't want to think about the debt he now owed and who he owed it to. All that mattered was the result. He gasped, breathless, as his wife Jasmine stood before him. The woman was striking, tall, chocolate, with hazel eyes. She had changed her hair since last they met. The austere bun had been replaced by a sleek bob, hiding her forehead and flaring out behind to her neck. She was so lifelike, Glover fought the urge to reach out and push back errant hair strands covering her left eye. "Jazz," he whispered, his voice choking with emotion.

"Terrence," she said flatly. He hoped that it was just a quirk of the communication device that made her sound so remote. Though deep down he suspected otherwise. The last time they had talked, on her ship the Meharry, Jasmine had asked him for a divorce. He had been so stunned, so hurt, that he hadn't been able to respond.

It had taken him days to accept what she had proposed, but he could never do that. He had refused and he had demanded, asked, and finally begged for her to reconsider. Jasmine had at first been adamant.

Forgoing his pride, Terrence enlisted Pell Ojana, an old friend for him, and a new friend for Jasmine. The Bajoran had been reluctant to get involved, but he knew she would. And it was because of Pell's efforts that Jasmine had at least conceded to marriage counseling.

The second person on the pad was a petit, severe looking Vulcan. "Counselor T'Luce, I presume."

The woman dipped her head slightly. She was sitting in a chair. "You presume correctly Captain Glover." Jasmine had insisted on discussing their marital problems with a complete stranger, someone totally objective, and Terrence couldn't disagree that no species he had thus encountered was better than Vulcans at being impartial and objective. "Shall we begin," T'Luce said. The counselor gestured to Jasmine and that's when Terrence noticed the couch behind his wife.

Just seeing Jasmine again had so captivated him that he hadn't paid attention to her surroundings. Terrence hoped his estranged wife was similarly distracted. He didn't want her to know about the seedy, vole hole he was in right now. Nor did he want her to know about some of the questionable things he had been doing as part of his search for his father.

In June, his father had disappeared. As soon as Terrence had been released from Jaros II, after voluntarily joining his crew to show how much he appreciated them breaking the law to save his life, the captain had set out to find him.

Admiral Samson Glover was a predictable man, and for him to go off, without leaving any way to contact him, Terrence knew something was wrong, or that Starfleet had sent him on a dangerous mission. Of course, Command wouldn't tell him anything so he had resolved to find out for himself. The war and what his crew had done for him had reinforced in Terrence's mind that you had to take care of your own.

If things didn't go well with Jasmine, Samson and his long distance Uncle Sheldon would be the only family Terrence had left. He had failed Jasmine, but he would be damned if he let his father get entangled into something he might not be able to handle.

"Captain Glover, would you care to start?" The Vulcan prodded. Terrence hadn't realized a chasm of silence had formed since T'Luce had first suggested they commence.

"Well, I, uh," he said, his nerves getting the best of him. He had never been one to share his feelings, unless around intimates. He paused, took a deep breath, and pulled it together. Terrence knew he was going to have to do this. He had to open up, he had to show Jasmine how much she meant to him. He didn't

want to face the future without her.

"I guess," he paused again. "I don't want a divorce," he said, his emotions surging to thrust everything on his mind and heart out at once. He pushed back against that impulse. He needed to order his thoughts. He needed Jasmine to understand. "I know that things have been tough, really for the last several years. But we were at war, hardships were plentiful, for everyone." Jasmine didn't react. She just sat there, looking at him, or off into space. He really couldn't tell.

"Go on," T'Luce said after a short time.

"I thought things were going fine," Terrence said, his voice hitching. Memories of the night he had spent with Dr. Rieta Cole slashed at him. They had finally given into their mutual attraction and it had been a catastrophic mistake. He hadn't been able to muster the courage to tell Jasmine he had betrayed her, and now he was afraid admitting it would totally ruin his chances to save his marriage.

Jasmine had already been ready to bolt without even knowing about his infidelity. T'Luce leaned forward, her pointed ears twitching. She caught the hitch, he realized with gloom. Terrence froze up, waiting for the inevitable question, but thankfully it didn't come. He proceeded slowly, "I know Jasmine thinks having children with her are important to me, well I can't lie, it was. But the war changed a lot of things."

"But it didn't change that, you know it," Jasmine charged, her voice heated. "I'm damaged goods to you, aren't I Terrence?"

He reared back as if punched, "How could you even think such a thing? Much less say it?"

Jasmine shook her head. "I'm not even a full person anymore," she tapped her artificial arm. She had lost her real one early in the war.

"You're my wife," he declared, "And I don't want that to change, ever."

"Really?" T'Luce asked, the question a well placed dagger. Terrence gulped.

Here it comes, he realized.

"What do you mean by that question Counselor?" Jasmine asked.

"I see that the captain is expert on making pronouncements, but do you feel his actions match his declarations?"

"Well," Jasmine pondered it, "I don't know."

"How can you say that?" He asked, exasperated. "I even got you on Aegis so that we could be together."

"I've read both of your profiles," T'Luce said. "Neither of you spent much time together before or after your marriage."

"Our courtship was haphazard," Terrence admitted. "And a couple little things like two wars overshadowed building our marriage."

"I see," the Vulcan replied, tapping her sharp chin. "Do you concur Lt. Mendes?" Terrence's heart seized in his chest. Jasmine had already gone back to using her maiden name.

"I guess," Jasmine ventured. "No, Terrence is correct. There was very little time to build a foundation for our marriage. We were pulled every which way, and then the incident," his wife faltered and Terrence's heart thudded in his chest.

"The Tyra System," T'Luce remarked. "Would you care to discuss it?"

"No, she wouldn't," Terrence snapped. Jasmine's iciness thawed and she granted Terrence a small smile.

"It's okay Terrence," she said quietly. "I lost my arm in the Tyra System. The Dominion assault there was brutal."

"I am aware," T'Luce said. "I counseled several of the survivors." Jasmine nodded at the woman, apparently in understanding. "Please excuse my interruption," the counselor added before Glover snipped at her about it.

"It...it left me feeling not whole, as...less of a woman," she admitted. "I'll never get over seeing the scarring, the burns for the first time," Jasmine's voice cracked and she lowered her head. Terrence reached out to her, his hand slicing through the photonic projection.

"Oh Jazz," he muttered.

“Not just the amputated arm, but the theta radiation, it...it left me barren,” Jasmine said, her voice choking with tears.

“Jasmine,” Tears streaked Terrence’s face. “I love you. I don’t care about having kids.”

“But I do,” she snapped, her hazel eyes flashing and her nostrils flaring. “I wanted us to be a family.”

“We are a family,” he pleaded. “Jazz, please just give me...”

“No, no you don’t understand,” she shook her lowered head, her voice sounding like it was coming from an infernal pit. Her whole body shook. “I-I never told you...how could I...”

“Jazz-Jasmine, I don’t understand,” he began.

“I...,” she paused, to loudly suck in air. She looked at him, her eyes rimmed in tears. “I was pregnant.”

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## **Earth Spacedock**

*Jasmine...*

Lt. Jasmine Mendes knew the counselor had placed a hand on her shoulder, for support, but she didn’t feel it. She did feel her husband’s anguish at her admission. Even across subspace, she could see how the news had stricken him, devastated him.

As she had known it would in all the scenarios she had thought out, as she had debated whether to tell him or not. She had decided not to. What good would it do to wound him like she had been wounded? What selfish joy could she derive from dragging him into her pit of misery?

So she had carried it around with her, the pain and the guilt, and it had warped her, turned her cold, numb, and afraid of the future.

There were times when she could briefly escape herself and see and hear the terrible way she treated her husband, but felt powerless to change it. In a way

she wanted to push Terrence away. She wanted to bear this agony alone. She deserved it.

Jasmine should've taken the maternity leave that her captain had offered right before the mission into the Tyra System, but she planned to do so right after. She hadn't thought the Dominion was going to be all that tough despite what she heard. And she was on the Mandela, a Galaxy-class ship, the best line in the Fleet.

Once the battle for Tyra had been enjoined Jasmine had quickly learned the error of her ways. She had seen little combat during her time in the service and nothing like the demonic fury of the Jem'Hadar.

The Mandela had almost made it out of that abattoir intact, the Dominion had largely fallen back after they had wiped out most of the Fleet and claimed the system. However, one or more of the overzealous monsters had hit the retreating Mandela on a strafing run, shredding what remained of its shields and slicing into Main Engineering. Plasma coolant tanks burst and theta radiation spread through the section, entangling her in its lethal grip. The plasma coolant took away her arm, but the radiation murdered her child and the possibility of having another.

Life had lost something that day, and Jasmine doubted she would ever be able to recover it. So why drag down Terrence, whose future remained so bright?

"Jasmine," Terrence was quiet, his voice somber. Her heart had fluttered at seeing him again. Broad shoulders, jutting chin, sparkling black eyes, and smooth walnut brown complexion. So strong, so confident...but so sad. She knew the war had taken its toll on him as well, had turned him into something he never thought possible, had made him the author of acts that would haunt him for the rest of his life. He deserved a chance at a happiness she couldn't give him.

"Jasmine, I love you." He declared. "And I love you even more now, because of what you've been able to come back from, and all by yourself."

"You-you're not mad at me? For keeping this from you?" Terrence had told her about a previous relationship with a married woman, Dr. Nya Chace, with whom he had served early in his days on the Cuffe. Their relationship had produced a child, but Chace had terminated the pregnancy once she decided to get back with her husband.

“Listen,” he paused, gathering his words. “I wish you had told me. I wanted to be there for you. This is something we could’ve faced and overcome together.”

“Oh Terrence,” she said, “I couldn’t, I wouldn’t subject you to that.”

“But why,” he cried, his voice clotted with pain.

“No, not after...what happened before,” she said, hoping he would understand. His eyes widened in reply.

“That...had nothing to do with you. That wasn’t your fault.”

“What are you referring to Captain Glover?” T’Luce inquired, reminding Jasmine that the woman was still in the room.

“That’s none of your business,” Jasmine barked, prompting a harsh chuckle from Terrence. She wasn’t going to completely pull out all of Terrence’s skeletons, or her own.

“That’s my girl,” he remarked. But she knew, sadly, that she no longer was.

“Terrence,” she began softly, “I didn’t treat you fairly. I was cold and distant,” she admitted. “I’m sorry.”

“You don’t need to apologize,” he said quickly, “You should never apologize for that. Especially after what you went through,” he declared, “But now that it’s out in the open, we can move on from this, together.”

“No,” Jasmine shook her head. “We can’t.”

“I don’t understand,” he frowned. “I don’t love you any less; your scars mean nothing to me. I just want you back.”

“Terrence...dear, our problems are deeper than even what happened to our child,” Jasmine remarked. “You know that.”

“I-I...what do you mean?”

“It was always a tempestuous pairing. We were so opposite, yet not so opposite at all it seemed,” Jasmine replied wistfully, as she remembered their early courting days from Deep Space Five.

“We complemented each other,” Terrence offered. “We accentuated each other.”

“Yes,” she nodded. “We did for a time, but maybe we are just too different for this to work. Especially if we don’t have something like children, our own family, binding us together.”

“Jasmine, if we really want to make this work, we can,” he stated. “I do, but the question is, do you?”

She sat back, not sure how to respond. She looked to the counselor, but the Vulcan merely looked at her with open curiosity. T’Luce was curious about her answer too. What good you are as a counselor, Jasmine huffed. She was glad she didn’t have to pay the woman for her time, another benefit of living in a moneyless economy.

She sighed and gathered herself. She gazed straight at her husband. “Terrence, I could tell you maybe, and that’s how I feel, but that isn’t the right thing to do. I need time, I need space, I need to understand who I am now, what I want now since I can’t have a family with you. Since I can’t be the wife and mother I had wanted to be. And it would be wrong to ask you to wait around for me to find the answers I need to seek. So...I still want the divorce.”

“Jazz, please,” Terrence was shaking so badly, his teeth chattered. “D-Don’t do this.”

“I have to,” She said, touching where his face would be. “In time, I hope you understand.”

“My God Jazz,” he replied. “How could you expect me to understand that? That you want to end our marriage? That you want to leave me,” he said, now looking away. He sniffled.

“Terrence...”

“No,” he turned back to her, his eyes burning coals. “You’ve had your say. Now, it’s my turn. I love you, I’ve loved you since before even I knew how to describe that tightening in my chest and that heat across my skin whenever I was in your presence. There’s been no one in the galaxy, except you, that would ever make me think about settling down, of altering my career plans, but that is what I had wanted to do with you.



And I'll do that, for you. I'll leave Starfleet right now. I just want to be there for you, with you."

"Terrence..."

"I'm not finished," he exhaled, his body deflating. "But-but I haven't been honest with you either." His dead eyed look pinned her to her seat. "As much as I want to rail against your decision to end our marriage, you might be right."

Jasmine was stunned. Terrence never gave up on anything, or anyone. Ever. "Terrence..."

"Jazz, Jasmine," He said, his eyes boring into her. "I haven't been faithful," he said the words plainly, clearly, in his command voice. But Jasmine still hadn't heard him.

"What?"

"It...happened several months ago. Only once...with Dr. Cole," he said, his voice cracking as his eyes lost focus. He lowered his head. Jasmine couldn't believe it. She had met the winsome medic in passing, and she and Terrence had seemed to be quite friendly, but she never would've imagined that something like this was going on.

"Only once? Like that's supposed to make it okay?" She balked. Her bluster covered the hot knife digging into her stomach.

"I know, I know it doesn't," he said quickly, "But that's the truth, and we both knew it was wrong as soon as it was over. That's why she left the ship."

"How dare you bring me onto the same ship you had her on! Is that why you did it, you needed a new playmate?" The blade continued ripping into her insides. At the moment she prayed it would hit a vital organ so she didn't have to hear any more from Terrence.

"Of course not, I wanted you with me because sleeping with Rieta brought it home how much I loved you and needed you in my life."

"Bullshit."

"Hell Jazz, it wasn't like you were much of a wife to me then."

“Bastard! And-and after what I just shared with you.”

“I didn’t know, I didn’t know that at the time,” Glover’s voice was raw with agony. “All I knew, all I felt was my wife pulling away from me, pushing me away, not wanting us to be together. Rieta was...she was just different. We bonded during the war...and I let it spiral out of control.”

“And you’re telling me this now?”

“I want us to be together,” he said, “but it has to be based on trust, all around. You were honest with me and I wanted to be honest with you.”

“Terrence, I knew you were capable of many things, but nothing like this. I never could imagine you a cheater, as someone who would betray his vows...as someone who would hurt me like this.”

“I didn’t either...until it happened. But it was one night...one time. I know, God I know what a mistake it was. I want another chance, I need another chance, please give me another chance.” He was up now, hovering in front of her. Terrence lowered to one knee to be eye level with her. “Please...” She had heard Terrence beg more in this counseling session than she had ever in her life. She knew he loved her, and that knowledge melted her heart. But Jasmine also knew that love sometimes just wasn’t enough.

She reached out to him, her hand hovering over where his heart would be parsecs away. “I’m sorry Terrence, but this is for the best. For both of us, it would seem. I need to find my way again, and maybe you do to.”

“That’s not what I wanted to hear,” he admitted. “It’s what I’ve been dreading hearing, even if I it could feel it coming.” He reached out, attempting to clutch the hand over his heart. She pulled it away. Terrence stood up and resumed his position.

The sparkle was gone from his eyes, and his expression was impassive. But Jasmine knew him well enough to know how crushed he was, and how he was trying to put on a brave front. “I-I’ll sign the papers and send them to you in the morning.”

“Thank you Terrence, it really is for...” He deactivated the link. The concluding words died on Jasmine’s tongue. She crumpled over as the knife sliced her open. Deluged in tears, she couldn’t talk, she barely could breathe. She knew

she was a mess, and that her emotional meltdown must have been disgusting to the Vulcan counselor, but the other woman kindly said nothing. In fact, T'Luce calmly waited for her to right herself again. The counselor waited a long time.

**The End**