

Star Trek: Lexington First Blood

By David Falkayn

A gasp as her eyes registered the steely glint of the double bladed knife he held in his left hand over his head. Feeling with her body the tensing of his arm and shoulder muscles as the arm holding the blade slashed down. Droplets of salty sweat and saliva landing on her face as he shook his head, his long mane of fine black hair brushing the side of her face as her finger pressed the trigger of the phaser in her hand. A shout...a scream...a gurgle...blood and bile spewed on to her golden minidress as he slumped to the deck, his midsection marked by the still-smoldering hole made by the phaser beam.

“This is a Board of Inquiry into the events that led to the death of Dieter Reese on board the freighter *Star of Rigel* on Stardate 0275.35. This is not a court-martial. Do you understand, Ensign Bathory?”

Her mind brought back to the present, Ensign Aliz Bathory, helmsman aboard the USS *Lexington*, addressed the man seated at the center of the table in front of her, her commanding officer, Commodore Robert Wesley, as well as the two men seated on either side of her, the *Lexington's* first officer, Commander Alexei Kuznetsov, and the ship's science officer, Lieutenant Commander Talana Zha'Thara. “Yes sir, I understand fully.”

“Very good.” The commodore replied as he consulted the data slate on the desk before him. “Please explain to the Board in your own words the circumstances that led to the incident in question.”

Taking a deep breath, Aliz, speaking in her rich Hungarian accent, related her account, beginning at the moment she began her shift, her mind recalling the events of that fateful watch.

“Receiving emergency transmission from the independent freighter *Star of Rigel*.” The communications officer, Lieutenant Cilla Oudekirk reported. “They are being attacked by an unknown vessel...”

"Take us to red alert..." Commodore Robert Wesley ordered from the center chair of the *Constitution*-class starship he commanded, "Navigator...plot an intercept course Helm...warp factor eight."

As the red alert light next to the turbolift flashed and the alarm klaxon sounded, Lieutenant Lawford responded promptly, "Course plotted and laid in."

"Accelerating to warp eight." Aliz interjected as the phaser fire control elevated from its normally hidden location on her console. "Phaser banks charged and ready...shields at full strength."

"Photon torpedoes armed." Lieutenant Lawford chimed in, his posh English accent having a calming effect on the fiery auburn haired woman seated next to him.

As the freighter grew larger in the *Lexington's* viewscreen, the identity of its attacker became obvious. "It's a Spinner." The Bear growled, referring to the small, fast, yet relatively lightly armed Orion corsairs.

"Issue the standard challenge and be ready to fire at once." Wesley ordered as the spinner, recognizing that it had now switched roles from predator to prey, fired its disruptors before jumping to warp.

"Shall we pursue, Sir?" Alexei inquired, licking his lips in anticipation.

"No..." Wesley replied with a dejected shake of his head, "...the *Star of Rigel* takes priority." Turning to Lieutenant Oudekirk, the commodore directed, "Send a message to the *Scipio* and give Captain DeVees the latest course heading on that spinner. She's close enough where she might be able to intercept it before it gets lost in the Outback. Then contact Starbase 31 and inform them of what just happened. Punching the intercom button on his chair arm, the commodore then addressed his security chief, "Lieutenant Mtolu? I want you security teams on board that freighter pronto. Tell them to be careful—that spinner left in an awful hurry and it might not have recovered all of its people before taking off. Finally, Robert spoke to Aliz. "Ensign Bathory...you're to accompany the security detail charged with securing the bridge.

"Aye, Sir." The pixyish helmsman responded as she vacated her seat. Minutes later, she and the security guard accompanying her materialized on the tiny bridge of the *Star of Rigel*. Covering her face as a shower of sparks from the

engine console greeted her, Aliz rushed towards the pilot's station as the security guard moved to cover the door. Flipping her communicator open, she spoke in her rich Magyar accented voice, "Bathory to *Lexington*. The bridge is a mess, but it appears salvageable. A damage control team should be able to restore functionality fairly quickly. No sign of captain or crew though..." she remarked, a note of worry in her voice.

"We found them." A richly accented voice answered back from the communicator. "They're in the cargo hold—all dead. The pirates executed them. Be careful..." the Zulu security chief further warned, "...my team has already encountered a group of stranded pirates. There might be more."

"Understood, Sir." Aliz acknowledge as her security escort cried out once. Turning about quickly, Aliz, feeling a rolling object touching her boots, glanced down to see that it was the severed head of the unfortunate trooper. Screaming in horror she jerked her head up just in time to see the wild eyed human charging at her, his gleaming blade dripping red with blood held high.

"Wasn't your phaser set to heavy stun?" Commander Kuznetsov inquired accusingly in a rumbling voice.

"Yes, Sir." Aliz responded assertively. "I fired reflexively, but..."

Her heart racing as the seemingly possessed human rushed towards her, Aliz's finger tightened around the trigger of her phaser II. A beam of blue light lanced out, impacting on her assailant, momentarily staggering him. Recovering quickly, the giant red-eyed corsair laughed as he charged forward. Her underpants and legs moistening as her bladder, acting of its own volition, voided itself, her urine formed a puddle on the deck underneath her. Aliz's hand shook as she tried to dial her phaser to the next, lethal, setting. But, as her fingers twisted the dial, she felt his hand over hers, trying to take the weapon away from her as he raised his blade in his other hand...

"And then all that blood and vomit..." Aliz recounted as she pushed back the desire to cry, "...and then...he was dead."

"Why didn't your phaser have any effect at the stun setting, Ensign?"

"I didn't know at first, Ma'am." Aliz replied, answering Talana's question. "Later on, I was told by Lieutenant Mtolu that the pirates were all doped up."

“Lieutenant Mtoló’s earlier testimony matches Ensign Bathory’s.” Alexei affirmed with a nod of his head. “He stated that his team’s weapons’ stun settings had no effect on the pirates. He had no choice but to order them to set phasers to kill.

“And Dr. Vincent’s autopsies on the deceased bear out that they all possessed high levels of hyperstim.” Talana added, explaining, “The effects of hyperstim include a massive increase in adrenaline production. Dr. Vincent stated for the record that the concentrations of hyperstim were such that those individuals would have no problem temporarily shrugging off the effects of a phaser’s stun setting. Once they come down off the drug, of course, they’d feel it, but by then it would have been too late for their victims.”

“Enter it into the record.” The commodore ordered as the yeoman seated by herself before a computer console inputted the requested data. While the red-skirted yeoman carried out her task, the three officers sitting at the head table conversed quietly amongst themselves, until, nodding their heads in agreement, they all faced Aliz. “Ensign Bathory...” Commodore Wesley pronounced in a gravelly voice, “It is the unanimous decision of this Board that your actions during the incident in question that led to the death of Dieter Reese were justifiable and well within Starfleet procedure. These proceedings are hereby closed.”

Watching as the young ensign brushed back a tear, Robert spoke directly to Aliz as he stood up. “Ensign Bathory? I understand that Dr. Vincent has suggested that you take the next forty-eight hours off duty. Consider that an order.”

Watching as Aliz tumbled on the mat; a slight smile came to Commodore Wesley’s face as the Hungarian gymnast went through her routine.

Spotting the commodore at the edge of the mat as she completed her program, Aliz’s heart skipped a beat. “Sir?” She ventured as she cautiously approached him, her towel draped around her shoulders, “Is something wrong? Is there a problem?”

“No.” Robert replied, shaking his head gently, “I just wanted to see how you were doing.’

"Not so good." Aliz confessed as she sat down next to the older man. "I keep asking myself if I could have done something else...maybe a second hit with the stun setting might have brought him down without killing him..."

"Don't, Aliz..." the commodore gently admonished, "...you did everything you were supposed to do. You heard the results of Dr. Vincent's report. If you'd have done anything else, you'd have died just like that poor security specialist did." Pausing for a moment, the world-wise Wesley inquired, "How did you feel after it happened?"

"How did I feel?" A surprised Aliz answered back, "How am I supposed to feel?"

"You tell me." Robert riposted.

"I don't know..." the tormented helmsman responded, "...shocked...scared..."

"Relieved?"

"Yes." Aliz confessed, "Relieved that it was him lying on that deck and not me." Seeing the gentle nod of her commanding officer's head at her answer, Aliz ventured, "Sir? Is it always going to be like this?"

"What do you mean?" The commodore answered back.

"It's hard for me to put into words..." the lovely Hungarian woman stammered, "...but I guess what I'm trying to say is, will I ever get used to this?"

"I hope not." Robert replied honestly, "Because the moment you do, that's when I'm transferring you off this ship. Look..." he explained, his expression now taking on a stern demeanor, "...if you're asking whether you'll learn to deal with having to take another sentient's life, then the answer is, yes, you probably will find some means of coping. In fact..." he observed as he pointed down to the mat, "...you probably already have. But you should never 'get used' to taking a life. That's one of the reasons why I ordered the full Board of Inquiry to convene."

"You mean..." Aliz remarked, feeling the faintest stirrings of anger growing within her, "...that this isn't normal procedure?"

"There's always an inquiry whenever a situation like this happens, Aliz."

Robert answered back in a soft voice, "But a full board is only called in certain circumstances. I always call a Board when someone kills another sentient for the first time."

"Why?" Aliz asked plaintively.

"For several reasons." Wesley replied. "First, it gives me and the other senior officers a chance to evaluate the person facing the board. Does that person understand the enormity of their actions? How do they react when forced to face up to the fact that they took a life? Second, it allows the person facing the Board to begin the healing process by providing a sense of closure." Pausing for a moment, Robert regarded the petite young woman sitting on the floor next to him as he asked, "How did you feel after I announced the Board's decision?"

"Relieved." Aliz admitted, "I guess...I mean I still feel bad about it, but..."

"You don't feel as guilty now." Robert completed as the youthful ensign nodded her head in agreement. "You see...you're starting to heal...to understand what happened and why you had to do what you did."

"But sir..." Aliz protested, "I've killed before...during the battle with the Klingons...before that anomaly took us away to that planet...those phasers I fired had to have killed some of them."

"They probably did." The commodore agreed nodding his head. "But the two situations have one very important difference. When an enemy ship is destroyed by your phasers..." Robert explained, "...you don't have to see the faces of those you killed. But with Reese...you had to look him in the eyes. All of your senses were engaged all at once."

"Yeah..." Aliz replied, "I was so scared I pissed my pants. I'd have done worse except I missed breakfast before my shift."

"I've had a few 'Brown Alerts' myself over the years." Wesley admitted with a wry chuckle. "Don't worry, you'll piss yourself and worse again sometime in the future—it comes with the territory I'm afraid."

"Maybe they should issue us diapers instead of normal underwear." Aliz riposted, managing a shaky grin of her own.

"I'll bring that up at the next staff meeting." Robert joked back as he got back

up to his feet. Seeing that his visit was having the desired effect, the commodore grinned, "I think you'll be okay, Ensign. Take the next couple of days off to process everything and if you need someone to talk to..."

"I'll come to you, Sir." Aliz responded with a shaky smile of her own as she got to her feet.

Entering her darkened quarters, Aliz sighed with relief. *Jennifer must be out on a date. Good. I think I need some time to myself.* Approaching the dresser mirror, the lovely Hungarian brushed aside a stray lock of auburn hair. Fingering the medallion on hanging around her neck, she saw what appeared to be the reflection of a faint apparition in the glass.

"It was exhilarating, wasn't it? To watch as the life ebbed from his eyes. To taste his blood on your lips. It was...orgasmic..."

Quickly turning around, Aliz saw the apparition, now apparently a young woman with auburn hair, wearing a long red dress, a gold necklace with a medallion just like that Aliz wore around her neck. "Who are you? Identify yourself or I'll call security."

The apparition responded with a cold laugh, *"Who am I? You know who I am—just as you know who—and what—you are. When the time comes you and your progeny will bring me back and then we shall bathe together in the blood of our prey. But until then...remember how it felt as his body sank down to the ground and as you drank of his blood...remember..."*

As the specter departed, Aliz dropped to her knees, her body quivering as she moaned her ecstasy.

The End