

The Ambassador

by

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The backstory for my universe and the Ambassador.

We have looked to the stars for 10,000 years. From the time before the early orbiters to the first colonies on Mars and the breakthroughs that let us travel to the nearby stars, we wanted to go. We wanted to discover what we didn't know. So we did. We moved out among the stars in our Local Neighborhood. We made friends and discovered new worlds. We learned. We built better ships. We rediscovered ancient technologies. We kept going.

The Central Alliance was founded on Dagon in the Fomalhaut system to protect the Local Neighborhood. As the Alliance expanded, the High Council realized that making First Contact was risky. They needed special teams and a training program. So they asked the Masters at Ras'alhague to create a program that would both reveal a person's character and prepare the person for what they could face. The Masters were widely known and highly respected as Keepers of the Five Elements: Metal, Water, Wood, Fire, and Earth and as Adepts in the Ancient Arts of healing and fighting.

The Council of Nine agreed to create a program but they were selective. They didn't want the best of the best. They wanted those who have overcome some difficulty, the ones who knew what hardship was, the ones who had the potential to achieve more, and the character, determination and will to make it happen.

The training was holistic and demanding. What is needed to grow food, how living things prosper and how they die were all essential parts of the training. How to develop character, courage, and build relationships with others was required learning.

The graduates were all formidable fighters and clever negotiators. They earned a reputation for being polite, fair, honest, shrewd, and not those to cross. Among those who became ambassadors, only a few were offered a First Contact Charter. A First Contact Charter gave the Ambassador the full backing of the Central Alliance High Council to make whatever decisions were required without consultations.

MICHA LAWRENCE wanted to be an Ambassador for the Central Alliance since she could remember. She'd been born into a royal family long after the time royalty mattered to anyone. Her family had titles but not much else. They couldn't afford to send her to the special preparation schools. She worked hard. After several tries, she was accepted by the Masters at Ras'alhague for the special training program. She graduated with honors and joined the Alliance as a trade negotiator. After she completed several missions that could have turned out quite differently were it not for her skills in negotiation and the Ancient Arts, the High Council offered her a First Contact Charter. She accepted.

She gained quite a reputation for the dinners she hosted during which she managed to get agreements signed and disputes sorted out favorably for everyone. A few times, the planetary councils had been hostile. She managed to outwit them, mostly. She had to fight her way out a few times, too.

INT. THE HIGH COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON DAGON

INITIALIZING

Note

Start here. This scene sets up everything. The description of the Ambassador's First Contact pin establishes the stars in the Local Neighborhood and that there is a basis in real-world astronomy with homage to early space exploration. The problem with the Olmeri is set out - they are taking over and need to be stopped. The long-time professional and personal friendship between the Ambassador is presented. It is more pronounced later. The Ambassador has been called. She's being sent out to a remote area to find out what's going on and get a treaty with a civilization they have not formally met. She is not thrilled about going. President Smbarak is worried about sending her friend out there, but she knows she has to do it.

MUSIC CUE: There Beyond the Trees. Royskopff (use tbd)

FEMALE VOICE

The wind will tell its story.
Whether you are listening or not.
Where do you want to go? it
whispers. Who are you? it asks.

NARRATOR

The Central Alliance High Council has summoned AMBASSADOR MICHA LAWRENCE. She is pacing the floor outside the Council Chambers. A tall set of ornate doors takes up most of the inner wall. Clear morning light through tall windows fills the room. Well-spaced woven silk carpets cover the clean marble floor. She isn't tall but she isn't short either. She is pretty but not overtly so. Her long, dark-blonde hair is braided over her left shoulder. She is dressed in the formal gold and rust color robes of a Keeper of Earth with a simple red woven belt wrapped around her waist. Worn, well-polished boots cover the space between her robes and the floor. Her Ambassador's sash with several medals hangs across her right shoulder. The jewels on her First Contact pin glisten as she moves. The pin has a simple, elegant design. The base is flat gold with a ring of gold braid inside the rim. Frank Drake's iconic pulsar map for the Pioneer Plaque is engraved in the center. Eight small jewels are arranged to

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

match the positions of the eight original members of the Central Alliance: Sol, Eridani, Procyon, Vega, Altair, Fomalhaut, Ras'alhague, and Aldebaran.

END MUSIC CUE

NARRATOR

The inner doors begin to open slowly outward.

CLERK

Ambassador Micha Lawrence

NARRATOR

The Ambassador takes a breath and straightens, confident and humble at the same time. Her robes sway gently as she walks into the chamber. She moves gracefully with a traveler's determined gait. She walks to the center of the room, crosses her arms fists closed to her chest, opens her arms to extend both hands palms up, turns her palms over, and bows slightly as she brings her hands down to her sides. It is an old-fashioned elegant gesture all the Keepers used. The original meaning is complicated. The common meaning is simply 'I offer you peace.' She looks up. THE TWELVE MEMBERS of the CENTRAL ALLIANCE HIGH COUNCIL sit on a raised platform in a semi-circle around a large, open floor. Carved oak columns support a curved ceiling. Ebony panels inlaid with mother of pearl front the council seats providing an imposing view and a barrier.

THE AMBASSADOR

My greetings, Madame President. My greetings to the entire Central Alliance High Council. How may I be of service?

MINISTER DARU

We have a problem.

THE AMBASSADOR

Might you be just a little more specific, Minister?

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

We're getting more reports about problems with the Olmeri. Several of our trading partners have reported trouble getting their shipments of grains and other staples.

THE AMBASSADOR

What sort of problems, Madame President?

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Disruptions in deliveries, spoiled containers, booked shipments not delivered. There are too many things that have 'not gone smoothly.' And now, we're getting reports of Olmeri raiders scouting other sectors.

THE AMBASSADOR

What do our traders say?

MINISTER RANG

They don't. They don't tell us anything. Nothing. They won't give us any details. All they say is they went to pick up the shipment and it wasn't there. They couldn't get the permit to load it. They were delayed and the shipment was sold to someone else. It's always some excuse.

THE AMBASSADOR

Is that what's happening, though, Minister? What have they tried? Why did they fail?

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

That is the question we want you to answer, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

I see.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

The latest reports we have are from traders near Ka'len in the Hyades Cluster.

MINISTER PARGALS

(wagging his finger)

And that is where you are going.

THE AMBASSADOR

Madame President? The Hyades Cluster is well outside the Local Neighborhood. It will take weeks just to get there.

MINISTER DARU

Well, yes. That's why we want you to go there. We didn't give you a First Contact Charter so you could take nice vacations. We'd rather not wait for the Olmeri to come closer.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

(smiling)

We need you get to Ka'len and get a treaty with them before the Olmeri arrive. Do whatever you can to stop the Olmeri.

THE AMBASSADOR

I appreciate your confidence in me.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

(not smiling)

We have assigned the Magellan to be your transport and your over watch. Make your preparations quietly, Ambassador. Don't mention your mission to anyone until you are well underway. Not until you are out of the Local Neighborhood. Even your team cannot know.

THE AMBASSADOR

They are used to that.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Whatever you need, Ambassador.

NARRATOR

President Smbarak looked around the room at the other council members as if to tell them they should all agree. They all nodded.

THE AMBASSADOR

I'll get the preparations underway.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Quietly, Ambassador. Quietly

NARRATOR

The Ambassador nodded, pasted a neutral smile on her face, bowed to the High Council members, and turned to leave.

THE AMBASSADOR V.O.

Okay, sure. I'll go out there and see what I can do. Thanks ever so.

MUSIC CUE: Telstar. The Tornados

END MUSIC CUE

INT. THE AMBASSADOR'S APARTMENT ON DAGON

INSTALLING

Note

The Ambassador has gotten up early, about 3 AM. She and her team will be leaving today. She got a cup of coffee and went outside on her paito to think. She's worried about the mission. The night before, President Smbarak called to tell her the problem with the Olmeri has gotten worse. (scenes not included yet) In this scene, when N'amani calls to tell her it's 5:30, that's actually later than she expected it to be. It's later than you think is part of the undercurrent, vis. 'The Olmeri are coming. It's later than you think. We need to do something. And we need to do it quickly.' This scene sets up the ideas that N'amani is not only good at managing things, he's very, very good at acquisitions and the Ambassador is really happy that he's on her team. In the story, after N'amani calls, the Ambassador remembers President Smbarak assigning him to her delegation and their first mission together.

NARRATOR

The Ambassador turns on more lights as she goes into the kitchen. She refills her cup, leans back against the counter and takes a sip.

A chime sounds and a comm terminal lights up.

N'AMANI

Good Morning, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

Good Morning, N'amani. You're up early.

N'AMANI

It's almost 5:30 Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

So it is. Seems I wasn't paying attention to the time. Thank you for the reminder. With all you have to do to get us ready to leave, I appreciate you made time to call me. I have my coffee in hand. I'll be ready in 30 minutes.

N'AMANI

You are very welcome, Ambassador.
Also, those additional supplies you
requested....,

THE AMBASSADOR

Yes?

N'AMANI

I have everything you requested.

THE AMBASSADOR

You what? You have everything? How
did you manage? No, don't tell me.
You have everything? Everything?
Really?

N'AMANI

Yes, Ambassador. The last few boxes
of dried foods and herbs are being
loaded on your shuttle. You have a
little more luggage than usual.
And, em, a few cartons were
included in the stores we already
transported to the Magellan.

THE AMBASSADOR

Already on the Magellan? On already
board? Heeee Ha He ho ho!!! Oh
really? You're a magician! What did
you do? How did you?

N'AMANI

Nothing too much. Some bargaining
here and there. Some of the regular
stores the Magellan requested were
increased by just a little. A few
last minute boxes went in two of
the containers. They will notice
the wine bottles in the rice bins
eventually. I'm afraid we will have
to find a way to manually repack
those.

THE AMBASSADOR

I'm sure we'll find a way to
manage. I'll help. The Doctor and
Beth will too. And Kell, oh, he's
going to enjoy this! You are
amazing, N'amani. Thank you!

N'AMANI

You are welcome Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

You really are a magician. I don't
know how you do it. I'll see you
shortly. Thank you!

The comm terminal fades.

INT. PRESIDENT SMBARAK'S OFFICE ON DAGON (RECALL)

PROGRESS REPORT

Note

The Ambassador has been called to President Smbarak's office. She's literally been called on the carpet. 'You haven't gotten this done and you need to. So were going to help you. President Smbarak is scolding her (Mom) for not turning in her reports. The Ambassador doesn't want a paper-pusher on her team. She's pleasantly surprised when she see's N'amani's picture.

NARRATOR

President Smbarak is seated behind a large, ornate desk in an oval office. Ivory slats filter the light from the tall windows behind her. Bookshelves line the walls. A ficus tree takes up one corner. Several plants are set around the room. A plush green carpet with an oval flower medallion is centered on the hardwood floor. The Ambassador is standing on the carpet.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

You knew we weren't happy with your 'went there did stuff' summaries.

THE AMBASSADOR

Well, yes.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

So, why didn't you write your reports?

THE AMBASSADOR

I don't like writing reports.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

But you are required to write them. It's not optional.

THE AMBASSADOR

Doesn't make me like doing it.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

I take your point. But we can't let it continue. We're assigning you an acting Chief of Staff until you find someone.

THE AMBASSADOR

I've been looking.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
For almost a year?

THE AMBASSADOR
Well,...

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
And your last requisitions report?

THE AMBASSADOR
What's another case of wine or a
few bottles of good sunflower oil
among friends?

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
It was more than a few.

THE AMBASSADOR
(smiling proudly)
It was for a good cause.

NARRATOR
President Smbarak picks up a screen
and turns it towards the
Ambassador. The screen shows a
formal image of a tall, well-built,
dark brown male with a slight blue
tint to his hair and skin.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
N'amani Anrmlar will be joining
your team.

THE AMBASSADOR
You're assigning a Elronym
Administrator as my Chief of Staff?
You must really want those reports!

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
Why, yes. Yes we do.

THE AMBASSADOR
Nice suit. He's got a good tailor.
That gold inlay really sets off his
face. Nice smile. He looks like he
might be able to get something
done.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK
That's the point. When was the last
time you turned in an allocations
report? Hmmm? We've already talked
with N'amani.

THE AMBASSADOR
Oh.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Once he gets your backlog cleared
and your budgets up to date, you
can find someone else if you want.

THE AMBASSADOR

I haven't met him yet.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Tomorrow. You're scheduled to meet
him here to start his orientation.

THE AMBASSADOR

That seems quick. Monday next week
wouldn't be late.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Minister Pargals has been screaming
about your reports for weeks. The
only way to shut him up was to tell
him we would ask N'amani if he
would take this assignment.
Luckily, N'amani agreed. Now,
please give me something. Quickly?

THE AMBASSADOR

I didn't realize. We'll get started
first thing in the morning. Thanks
for running interference. Don't
worry. We'll get it sorted out.

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Thank you.

THE AMBASSADOR

Can I go now?

PRESIDENT SMBARAK

Yes.

MUSIC CUE: not sure Hi ho Hi ho it's off to work we go.
Other children's song.

END MUSIC CUE

INT. THE AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERS ON THE MAGELLAN

NEW SETTINGS

Note

The Ambassador and her team have just boarded the Magellan. They are all going to put their bags in their rooms and go to a briefing. The Ambassador asks N'amani to check her quarters for anything that doesn't belong. He reveals that he saved an old man on a previous mission, showing both his nature (to help others) and his character (he doesn't brag).

NARRATOR

The Ambassador opened the door to her quarters on the Magellan. Her room was standard - a large open living space with a built-in seat along the outer wall, a panel separating the sleeping area from the main room, and an open doorway leading to a sink, toilet, and shower.

THE AMBASSADOR

N'amani, may I have a minute?

NARRATOR

N'amani takes a small cube out of his pocket. He puts it in the center of his palm and walks around the room. The cube glows green.

N'AMANI

All clear, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

Thank you, N'amani. All this secrecy, even here. It makes no sense.

N'AMANI

What makes no sense?

THE AMBASSADOR

All the extra precautions we are taking.

N'AMANI

Well, so far, I haven't found any false walls. I will continue looking, of course. Seriously though, you know you have friends on the Council. You know you have enemies, too. There are those on the Council who would like to see you fail. They may appear to support you and they will rally around if you succeed. But if you fail, they will be happy to make you a scapegoat.

THE AMBASSADOR

I know. I know. I suspect that's part of why Sorrensen was promoted. Not that she didn't deserve it. She did. She's one of the best captains I've ever worked with. She has great instincts and an impeccable sense of timing.

N'AMANI

Being careful isn't a bad thing, Ambassador. I have no wish to be pulling you out of any more piles of rubble. That last attempt on your life was much too close.

THE AMBASSADOR

You made the headlines. Unknown Hero Saves Survivors. Nice image of you bringing that old man out on your back. It really was impressive. N'amani, I'm very glad you didn't stop to talk with their press. It could have been a problem.

N'AMANI

Their press were happy to talk to the old man's family. He was apparently one of the local favorites. Always a kind word for everyone. There's more to it, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

More than you being a hero?

N'AMANI

Yes.

THE AMBASSADOR

What happened?

N'AMANI

That old man was really in bad shape when I got to him. I was with the search teams in the second building when I thought I heard a something. I followed the sound. I was clearing the debris to make a way through when I saw the old man huddled in a doorway, the walls collapsed all around him. He was half-buried under the rubble, shaking, afraid. Nothing I said reached him. I kept asking him to come with me. I told him I wanted to help him. But he was too scared. He couldn't hear me. Finally I told him I was his transport. I was there to take him to see his children and had to get on board right now. When I knelt down to help him get up, he grabbed my shoulders, climbed on my back and put his arms around my neck like a small child hugging his father. He

(MORE)

N'AMANI (cont'd)
started shaking and sobbing. He kept hugging me and wouldn't let go. He couldn't talk. Even after I brought him out to his family, he didn't want to let go of me. He finally took hold of his oldest grandson and let me go.

THE AMBASSADOR
I didn't know. Why didn't you tell me?

N'AMANI
You were being treated for your own injuries. It didn't seem important.

THE AMBASSADOR
Sometimes the smallest actions can make the biggest difference. That old man is never going to forget you. I'm more than pleased you found him.

N'AMANI
I'm glad I was there to do it.

THE AMBASSADOR
What do you know about Logan?

N'AMANI
He's seen as a rising star in the Alliance. He was given the Star Cross last year for extracting a trade negotiator from a difficult situation near Epsilon Indi. The team had been told there was an agrarian planet that was interested in trade. What they weren't told was that there were two governments vying for control of the food supply. When the trade negotiator arrived, he and his delegation were taken hostage in an attempt to force the other side to give them a high-producing hybrid grain they had developed. Captain Logan managed to create a diversion by tricking their weather systems into registering an unusually cold air mass that would freeze their unharvested crops. Then, he offered to send equipment and a team to complete the harvest before the cold arrived. Once the harvesting team arrived, they insisted the trade negotiator and his team were the foremost experts and needed to

(MORE)

N'AMANI (cont'd)
 handle the controls. Once they were
 all on the shuttle, the cold air
 mass disappeared... and so did the
 shuttle.

THE AMBASSADOR
 I heard about the rescue, but not
 how he did it. Clever. Can we count
 on Logan?

N'AMANI
 Ambassador? That's not a question
 you usually ask.

THE AMBASSADOR
 (sharply)
 I need your candid assessment.

N'AMANI
 I think he will do whatever he
 believes is the right thing to do.
 He will protect the ship, the crew,
 and you, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR
 Thank you.

N'AMANI
 We're going to find out what that
 means, aren't we?

THE AMBASSADOR
 Yes, we are.

The comm link next to the door chimed and lit up.

MAJA
 Ambassador, we have left the
 station. The Captain asks if you
 would join him with your team in
 the diplomatic briefing room in 30
 minutes.

THE AMBASSADOR
 Thank you, Maja. We will be right
 there.

N'AMANI
 I'll go get the others.

THE AMBASSADOR
 N'amani?

N'AMANI
 Yes, Ambassador?

THE AMBASSADOR

Never mind. I'll see you in the briefing room. Thank you.

N'AMANI

You're welcome. I'll see you shortly.

NARRATOR

N'amani leaves. The Ambassador sits down near the windows. She watches the ship moving away from the station. In just a few seconds, the station isn't visible any more.

THE AMBASSADOR

Maja, how long will it take us to get to the Hyades Cluster?

MAJA

Just over two weeks, Ambassador. We are not cleared for urgent transit.

THE AMBASSADOR

Thank you Maja. That should be enough time. It has to be.

INT. THE AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERS ON THE MAGELLAN

COFFEE WITH BREAKFAST

MUSIC CUE: Concerto in B Minor for Flute and Piano. Mozart.

Note

The Ambassador and her team have been working non-stop to prepare for two weeks. Research, practice, reviewing trade records, anything they could find that would tell them something about Ka'len and the people, the Kora. They still don't have much. They are almost at the Hyades Cluster and will arrive at Ka'len in two days. In this scene, the Doctor has been up all night. He's found a solution - they can show the Kora how to make a quinnine tonic to treat their version of malaria. He goes to tell the Ambassador. While they are chatting, he notices her magical sword. The sword recognizes him. He is also an Adept and a Keeper of Water. The Ambassador calls Beth. When Beth arrives, the sword recognizes her. The Doctor is surprised. They don't tell Beth that she has a special gift. Only one who is pure of heart with no malice and the strength to keep it can hold Aldadrel, the Mediator; the Ancient Sword of Truth; the Warrior's Sword.

NARRATOR

A small table with a coffee maker sits near the door. A long bench runs under the windows. A few small cases and one long one are pushed off to the end. The smell of fresh

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)
coffee and the sounds of a happy
summer flute fill the room. The
Ambassador pours a cup, brings it
to her nose and smiles. She walks
over to the windows, blows across
the top, and takes a sip.

THE AMBASSADOR
It's the little things that keep me
grounded. Familiar music, the sound
of birds in the morning, the stars,
and, well, I do quite like my
coffee in the morning.

The door chime sounds.

THE AMBASSADOR
Come in.

THE DOCTOR
Good morning. What is that I smell?
Can it be? Fresh coffee?

THE AMBASSADOR
Help yourself, Doctor. You are
always welcome and you know it.
You're up early.

THE DOCTOR
I've gotten used to being up early.
We've been working some pretty long
hours these past few weeks.

THE AMBASSADOR
And you are supposed to be resting
today. We'll arrive at the Ka'len
system tomorrow. We need to rest
now.

THE DOCTOR
I know.

THE AMBASSADOR
Well, then what are you doing here?

THE DOCTOR
Coffee? I've been conditioned. Are
you still unpacking?

THE AMBASSADOR
I brought a few things from the
shuttle.

THE DOCTOR
So I see. Is that long case what I
think it is?

MUSIC CUE: FX/chords repeat for this sword. El E'ran has a different sound.

NARRATOR

A long sword in a polished redwood sheath was set on top of a neatly folded set of red and gold formal robes. The hilt was polished mithril. The sheath was inlaid with mother of pearl. The pommel was trimmed with three-color gold. The Doctor opened the case. The pommel began to glimmer with red, gold, and green lights.

END MUSIC CUE

THE DOCTOR

You brought Aladrel? Since when do you bring your sword? Are you expecting something?

THE AMBASSADOR

I don't know.

THE DOCTOR

So why?...

THE AMBASSADOR

Because I don't know.

THE DOCTOR

You sound like Master Tai.

THE AMBASSADOR

Why thank you. More coffee?

THE DOCTOR

There is no substitute for brewed coffee. This is wonderful. How did you manage it?

THE AMBASSADOR

We're here partly on an agricultural trade mission are we not? And coffee is an agricultural product is it not?

THE DOCTOR

Why yes, yes it is. And yes, we are. You are really good at this.

THE AMBASSADOR

Grapes are also an agricultural product.

THE DOCTOR

Yes, yes they are. We need to have more of those bottled cabernet grapes. They went so very well with my rice pilaf.

THE AMBASSADOR

N'amani hid them well. It took us three hours to find them! Was coffee the only reason you stopped by?

THE DOCTOR

No. But it smelled so nice....Beth seemed to think that the Kora would be very interested in learning how foods affect the body, using foods for their healing properties, and how they could use some of their native plants, trees, and shrubs. So I started looking at what they have and what they might need. Tell me again. What's your plan?

THE AMBASSADOR

You know what I have planned. First convince the Ka'len Council to sign the treaty. I'm prepared to offer them a steady supply of seed grains and a few of the Alliance's newest automated harvesters along with training on how to operate them. Whatever else has to come after. The biggest problem is that we need a way to gain their confidence. But we don't have much information. That makes it difficult for me to figure out what they might want the most and whether or not I can arrange it.

MUSIC CUE: Elusive Butterfly. Bob Lind.

THE DOCTOR

I may have found your elusive butterfly - a way to convince the Kora to trust us. What if we could show them that we are willing to help them and do not want to take over or plunder their worlds?

THE AMBASSADOR

Be careful with what you say. Even stating the negative can be a problem. It opens up too much.

THE DOCTOR

I take your point. We don't have any sort of relationship with the Kora. They have no idea who we are. We need to focus on helping them. Keep it positive.

THE AMBASSADOR

Yes. Go on. Tell me about the butterfly.

END MUSIC CUE

THE DOCTOR

When Beth and I were going through the Kora's main food sources, crops, and historical food supplies, I noticed several plants are very similar to healing plants we have. They can all be quite potent. They could address several of the Kora's most common ailments, including what looks to be a prevalent problem with a disease similar to what we know as malaria. If I'm right, they have a species of tree that can cure it. There is a preparation method and a course of treatment. It isn't too complicated and doesn't require much more than what's needed to prepare a meal.

THE AMBASSADOR

You found it! This could be enough all by itself to get the Kora to sign the treaty. Congratulations! Marc, you just made my day. My year maybe. This is Perfect. Absolutely PERFECT! We host a dinner for the Ka'len Council. You work with their doctors and chefs to prepare the treatment and we include it with the dinner. We record you with their doctors, scientists and chefs, technology transfer, all that - excellent PR, by the way - and they keep a copy for their archives. We take clips from that training and put it together with the finished meal. And, if we are extra lucky, we sign the treaty before we sit down for dinner. Where's Beth?

(opens comm link)

Beth, could you please come to my quarters. I've got something you need to hear.

BETH

I'll need five minutes, Ambassador.

THE AMBASSADOR

Thank you.

(closes comm link)

I'm going to put on another pot of coffee.

THE DOCTOR

That would be super wonderful fantastic.

THE AMBASSADOR

Marc, did you sleep?

THE DOCTOR

No. I didn't find the genetic threads until about four. Then, I double-triple checked. I still need a sample to be sure, but ...

THE AMBASSADOR

This could change everything. You know that better than I do.

The door chime sounds.

THE AMBASSADOR

Come in.

BETH

You wanted to see me, Ambassador? Oh, good morning Doctor. You're up early. Did you sleep?

THE DOCTOR

Good Morning Beth. Thank you, no.

THE AMBASSADOR

Would you like some coffee, Beth?

BETH

Yes, thank you. We were reviewing the files until late or early. I'm not sure which right now.

THE AMBASSADOR

Come sit down. The Doctor tells me he found something that could be the perfect solution for how we approach the Kora and what we can offer them.

THE DOCTOR

We're going to cook dinner for them.

BETH

We're whut?

THE DOCTOR

We're going to cook dinner for them. Remember how excited I was after you showed me the archives on their foods and plants?

BETH

That was right before I left. I thought we were going to start again this morning. I don't understand. How are some common plants a solution for anything?

THE DOCTOR

Yes. Well,... I wanted to have another look before I said anything. We don't have samples or a cross-reference. But I'm pretty sure. Some of those plants we were looking at have medical uses. When properly prepared, they can treat and cure several diseases. The Kora seem to not know this. I didn't see any references in the reports.

BETH

Plants can cure ...?

THE DOCTOR

Sleepiness.

NARRATOR

Beth smiles at her cup, stands, and walks over to the windows. The pommel of the sword begins to sparkle with red, green and gold lights as she gets closer. Beth reaches out both hands to pick up the sword in its sheath, supporting the blade end across one palm and the hilt with the other.

BETH

Ambassador, this is amazing workmanship. Where does this sword come from?

THE DOCTOR

Beth, put that down!

BETH

I'm sorry. I didn't mean...

NARRATOR

The Ambassador looks up at Beth without moving her head. Then, she looks at the Doctor, lowers her eyes, and turns her head ever so slightly from side to side.

THE AMBASSADOR

The Doctor is tired and grumpy. Don't mind him. Beth, how does the sword feel in your hands?

BETH

It feels light, as if there's nothing but I know there is something. It's cool and warm at the same time. It's very comfortable. It has such a fine balance. It fits my hand perfectly.

THE AMBASSADOR

That's an old sword from Ras 2. I used to carry it more often. I'm happy you asked about it. If you would, put it back now, please. I'm glad you asked. Really. Besides, it's your job. You are supposed to make yourself an expert on cultures and artifacts. How can you do that if you don't learn more than what you already know? More coffee, Doctor?

THE DOCTOR

Yes, please.

THE AMBASSADOR

Now then, back to the plants. If what the Doctor thinks might be possible is actually possible, we will be teaching the Kora how to make their own life-saving medications. That could be enough to convince them to sign a treaty.

BETH

You think that could happen?

THE AMBASSADOR

The Doctor has to confirm it. But if it is, then yes, I think they will give us a treaty. We need to be ready. That's why I called you. If something is going to happen, it will happen quickly. We will need full documentation of whatever the Doctor does and we need to make sure we have all the appropriate

(MORE)

THE AMBASSADOR (cont'd)
footage for the archives. More than
the equipment, I need you to bring
your talent for framing and being
able to capture the scene.

BETH
I'll be ready, Ambassador. I'm glad
you told me. I should bring two
more sets of lenses and a few other
things.

THE AMBASSADOR
We need to be ready for - cross
your fingers - the best of all
possible outcomes: a treaty signing
right before dinner. Marc, your
discovery really does change things
in our favor. Both of you have done
amazing work! Beth, why don't you
go get some peanuts so you don't
fall asleep in your chair. We'll
meet you in the briefing room.

BETH
Thank you, Ambassador.

(Beth exits)

MUSIC CUE: reprise sounds for the sword Aladrel

END MUSIC CUE

THE DOCTOR
Something you weren't expecting?
Really? She shouldn't have been
able to touch your sword let alone
pick it up.

THE AMBASSADOR
But she did. And it was effortless
for her.

THE DOCTOR
It should have been too heavy for
her to move, let alone pick up. The
hilt should have burned her hand.

THE AMBASSADOR
But it wasn't and it didn't.
Aladrel recognized her.

THE DOCTOR
Beth doesn't know, does she?

THE AMBASSADOR
Not yet.

THE DOCTOR

How long have you known?

THE AMBASSADOR

Just now. I suspected but I wasn't sure.

THE DOCTOR

Are you going to tell her?

THE AMBASSADOR

You know better. She isn't ready. She hasn't asked.

THE DOCTOR

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.

THE AMBASSADOR

From the Second Book of the Ancients. What I want doesn't matter. I can't teach her anything until she's ready.

THE DOCTOR

Then what?

THE AMBASSADOR

We will help her find out for herself.

THE DOCTOR

Now you really sound like Master Tai.

THE AMBASSADOR

Let's get you a snack, too. We can't have you falling asleep during your presentation.

THE DOCTOR

Could I try that?

THE AMBASSADOR

(gently pushing him
toward the door)

No.

(exit)

MUSIC CUE: Off to See the Wizard.