

Encounter by Matthias Zarzecki, Jan 2010

He sat back in his chair and awaited the readings. „What do we have?“ he asked his science-officer. „Class M, standard Nitrogen/Oxygen atmosphere, little plant-life.“ The Captain thought that this would be an interesting planet for further study. That is, were the circumstances different. Were Borg not involved. „Let's move on to the next one.“

He scanned his crew. They usually behave professionally, he made sure to teach them that. Although right now he could sense their anxiety. Borg are never to be trifled with. It helped keeping the ship on yellow alert. It helped keeping them focused on their work, and not on their fears.

He noticed a blink on his science officers face. „What is it, Akala“ he asked her. „I'm not sure, sir. It might be nothing, or another glitch in the scanner-system.“ She always was this nervous when she might be wrong. „Just say it already.“ She was a good scientist, but sometimes needed a nudge in the right direction. „Scanners showed several unusual readings for a fraction of a second. It was too short to make any sense of it, and it's probably nothing, really..“ „thank you, Akala. Duly noted.“ „Why do you think it might be important, Sir?“ „Borg.“ The tone of his voice made it clear that this word would be answer enough. Ensign Akala returned to scanning the planet. He was amazed how she could tune out the threat of encountering Borg. He never could, he could just hide it.

„Readings on the planet, ensign.“ „Class M, humanoid population, approximately 3 million on the northern and eastern continent. They are appearing to have bronze-age technology.“ „Anything else?“ „I think not ... wait, there is something. There seems to be a Borg-Installation at the southern pole. No lifesigns, but it is sending a continuous signal heading to the outer system ... apparently to the eleventh planet.“ She stared at the captain. He usually took two seconds to run all scenarios in his head, at least when there was time. „Continue yellow alert. You said no lifesigns, ensign?“ „Yes sir, although Borg could be present, but in stasis.“

Something in this situation wasn't right. Of course it wasn't, Borg usually don't disappear from a system without good reason. They also usually don't build ground installations.

„Sir, the transmission from the installation ... it doesn't seem to be directly aimed at the eleventh planet ... it seems to scatter into space, yet it focuses again ... this is highly unusual.“ „Akala, I agree. Helm, maneuver us to the lagrange-point between the fourth and eleventh planet. Let's see what's out there.“

It took only half a minute for Akala to blink again, although harder than before. „Sir, the readings just spiked. I am getting huge amounts of data here.“ „How is that possible? We haven't really moved that much...“ „These readings seem familiar.... they look like cloaking devices, although not a configuration I would know.“

„Weapons, fire all phasers in 360 degrees, zero elevation.“ This time the captain didn't need two seconds to react. The phasers fired in all directions, and suddenly a green flash appeared in front of them, revealing borg-technology.

„They didn't leave the system. This is a staging ground!“ He paused for a second. „Red Alert, all crew to battle-stations. Helm, turn the ship around, maximum impulse. If these readings are correct, this is massive. We need to get this info out of here as quickly as possible.“