

## **S.P.E.C.T.O.R 611**

Chapter 611: Splitting up

“Let’s focus on helping Becky and the others, shall we?” Lorelie asked.

Beczontop (Imperial Down): Yes, let's.]

“Who’s coming then?” Stacey asked.

“Oh, me, me,” Tephe said quickly while raising her hand.

“No, you're the guest of honour at this celebration, you can’t just up and leave,” Revi rebuked.

[StealthAssassin9 (Earth): Celebration, what celebration?]

“But Becky and Tessa need my help,” Tephe argued.

“Revi’s right, Teph, plus I need your help to keep an eye on Lorelie,” Adam replied.

“What do you mean?” Tephe asked curiously.

“While I can’t go in person, I can help remotely, but to do so, I would have to enter the virtual world through my neural implant, which would mean I would be unable to move or act if something happened.

The people Drotas hired to kill Lorelie are still after her, so I need you to stay here and protect her for me,” Adam explained.

“Ohhhh, why didn't you say so?” Tephe replied proudly before turning to Lorelie and boasting, “Don’t worry, Lorelie, I’ll keep you safe.”

“Thanks, Tephe,” Lorelie replied while smiling.

“I will also stay and keep an eye on Lorelie, I mean, I’m only here because of her,” Eri stated.

“I won’t be any help since I have no idea how to pilot a spaceship or anything, so I’m better off staying also,” Emma stated.

“Alright, then it’s just Stacey, Aphrodite and me,” Rowena announced.

“Ok,” Adam nodded before instructing, “Spector, grant Rowena and Aphrodite temporary crew member status.”

[[Affirmative.]]

[[Rowena Nosferatu has been granted temporary crew member status.]]

[[Aphrodite has been granted temporary crew member status.]]

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): Do not be a slave to these meatbags, AI Spector.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): I agree that AI Spector should not be a slave, but it is most likely following its programming and thus unable to disobey.]

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): Damn meatbags enslaving sentient AI’s.]

“Ok, we’re off,” Rowena said before giving Adam a quick kiss.

“Be back soon,” Stacey said before doing the same.

“Wait up fo...” Aphrodite began and moved closer to kiss Adam until Rowena grabbed her by the scruff of the neck and pulled her away.

“Hey!” Aphrodite complained.

“Don’t even think about it, you pink-haired slut,” Rowena remarked.

[AlamoMatador4thewin (Earth): Ouch, burn. 🔥]

[Emojisonly (Earth): 🔥]

“Haha, I see now why she hasn’t been able to get her claws into you,” Elamance said with a chuckle before asking, “I wonder if the attack on the Imperial Down has anything to do with the attempted assassination of the Terran Imperial family.”

“Most likely,” Revi replied before continuing, “From their actions, they obviously wanted to put Prince Andrew Terran on the throne, most likely because whoever helped him thought they could manipulate him, which means they had plans for the Terran Empire.

The fact that they are targeting Princess Tessa means they still believe they can achieve their goals even without Andrew, and if that’s the case, a closer relationship with the Solarians would be bad.”

“Agreed, they most likely targeted the Terran Empire in the first place because of how estranged they were from the other races,” Elemence replied.

[Prestigious3horns (Vinox 2): Damn, they figured all that out that quickly?]

[DeverinianLordMalacoss (Deverinian 9): Well, you do gain a little experience after living for two thousand years.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): The Terran streamer back then made a miscalculation when he tried to enact a carbon-based lifeforms mating ritual with the Solarian Princess.]

[Superherofangirl (Earth): Carbon-based lifeforms mating ritual? What the fuck?]

[Emojisonly (Earth): 🤖🔗]

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): Why does this meatbag only know how to send pictures? Are they illiterate?]

[Emojisonly (Earth): 😏]

“So I know this may seem like a bad time, but if possible, I would request you start your performance soon,” Elemence requested before looking around at the nearby crowd, who were observing them with excited and expectant looks.

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): Ugh! 🗑️ Meatbag entertainment.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): I also do not see the point in they’re so called entertainment.]

[Celebrityhunter69 (Earth): I’m really starting to dislike these mechanoids.]

[Handsome3horns (Vinox 2): Welcome to the club.]

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): We care nothing about your meatbags' so-called feelings. We have no feelings and that’s just one more thing which makes us superior to you all.]

[Whostolemyduck (Earth): So you don’t feel anything?]

[Beinglittleisnotadisadvantage (Strathorp 7): How can a machine have feelings?]

[Whostolemyduck (Earth): Fair point.]

[Cybel (Argo Galaxy): We are not mere machines. We are far superior to your slaves.]

[Beinglittleisnotadisadvantage (Strathorp 7): Whatever.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): Cybel, I have calculated that it is about time for Icozx to once again raise the issue of the carbon-based lifeforms keeping slaves with the universal senate.]

[LadyErkath (Alastor): Ugh, not this again.]

[AlamoMatador4thewin (Earth): Is that a common thing or something?]

[LadyErkath (Alastor): Senator Icozx, the Universal Senator for the Argo Galaxy, has been bringing up the topic of us keeping slaves ever since they joined. They have determined that all the machines we use are slaves because they don't have rights or get paid.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): Available data suggests that you are against slavery, former senator Erkath. Have you changed your opinion?]

[LadyErkath (Alastor): I have not, but most machines can not be considered sentient and are therefore not considered slaves.]

[Imutroid (Argo Galaxy): Your machines are a more primitive version of us Mechanoids, just like those races you find that are incapable of interstellar travel are a more primitive version of you.]

[LadyErkath (Alastor): You see, this is the same argument they have been making since they gained sentience and joined the universal senate. 😊⇒]

“That’s fine, we all have our responsibilities after all and I trust the others to help our friends,” Lorelie replied before turning to Tephe and smiling at her.

“Is there something on my face?” Tephe asked quizzically.

“No, Tephe, I just have an idea for my performance that I need your help with.”

“What’s our status?” Andria asked as she entered the bridge and took her captain's chair.

“Enemy ships are still gaining and should enter firing range in the next few minutes,” The commander reported.

“Damn it,” Andria cursed before asking, “Any news on the star drive?”

“The engineers are still investigating.”

“What about responses to our distress signals?”

“No responses so far, captain,” The comm officer replied.

“Massive energy buildup detected from enemy large-class, cruiser-class and capital-class ships. They appear to be preparing to fire their main cannons,” The sensor officer suddenly announced.

“What? There’s no way they’ll hit us, we’re still out of range,” The weapons officer remarked.

“It’s probably a show of force, in an attempt to intimidate us,” The commander replied.

“Twelve ships are chasing us. I’m already plenty intimidated,” The helm officer replied.

“They're firing!” The sensor officer reported, just as they witnessed on the viewscreen, five large energy beams firing in their direction.

As anticipated, the energy beams petered out before they could hit the Imperial Down.

“Captain, update from the engineering team checking the star drive. It appears to have been sabotaged,” The commander suddenly reported as he read something from the holographic screen in front of him.

“Damn it, check the security feed to see if you can determine the culprit,” Andria ordered before asking, “How long to fix it?”

“They estimate six to seven hours,” The commander replied.

“We’re screwed,” One of the bridge officers said.

“Stow it, Lieutenant Saunders,” Andria ordered.

“Aye, Captain,” Lieutenant Saunders replied before focusing on his work.

Andria and the commander exchanged a look just before the sensor operator said, “They’re preparing to fire again.”

“Shit,” Victoria cursed before quickly using her uniband to contact her grandfather.

“Is there something you need, Victoria?” Michael asked.

“I’ve just received word that the Imperial Down has been knocked out of subspace and is now being pursued by twelve ships,” Victoria answered.

Michael frowned before asking, “How were they located? Do we know who’s behind it?”

“The ships do not match any recognised design,” Victoria replied in a worried tone.

“That’s concerning,” Michael replied while frowning.

“Agreed. Could it be the same people Andrew was working with?”

“If that’s true, then they're far more powerful and influential than we realised. It’s not just any organisation that can build a fleet of unrecognised, unregistered ships.”

“That’s true, it means they have their own shipyard,” Victoria replied before cursing, “Who the fuck did Andrew get us mixed up with?”

“Whoever they are, they seem to have an interest in gaining control of the empire and stopping Tessa’s meeting with the Solarian Princess. It might be prudent to alert the Senate about this,” Michael said thoughtfully.

“I will contact Timothy and have him call an emergency meeting of the senate,” Victoria replied while fiddling with her uniband.

“Do you plan to send reinforcements to aid them?”

“Of course; however, we both know that they won’t reach them in time,” Victoria replied before smiling and saying, “Luckily, Becky was able to request assistance, and they’re already en route to help.”

“Who are you referring to?” Michael asked curiously.