

# The Witches of Eriadne: Double, Double - Part 5: Departure

by [The Space Witches](#)

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John, Lily and Luke

## Epilogue

They gathered on the bridge to watch as the Excalibur turned and left Eriadne B. Gideon ordered a rear view as they left the planet, so they could watch it right up to the moment they jumped. He sat in his command chair, feeling more relaxed and content than he had since he was first given this mission. The instruments and books they'd brought back from the planet could make a real difference - not a cure, but a big step in the right direction.

He thought back to the message the Box [Lucas?] had given him when he first asked about this place. "Much danger, much pain, much pleasure." Well, he'd had all of that, but at the end more pleasure than anything else. He smiled to himself as he thought of Deborah and wondered how soon he could get back there.

Luke Raven stood next to John Matheson, who wasn't yet fit for duty, but was recovering well. Luke leaned over to John and murmured, "When I came to your room in Medbay with Gideon and Demon I noticed you had quite a healthy color..."

John blushed slightly, and then gave him a sideways look. "And now you're wondering what caused it?"

Luke shrugged, managing to maintain his innocent facade. "I'm always looking for new methods

... they can come in handy sometimes."

John arched his eyebrows. "Ah, I see ... well, I'm afraid I can't tell you..."

Luke turned fully around and looked at him. "What - don't you trust your doctor to keep a secret?"

John couldn't help a slight grin creep on his face. "No, but I don't want to embarrass you in front of the crew."

Luke grinned at him and shook his head. "Lucky son of a bitch..." He turned back to the screen and sighed, serious again. "Do you think we'll ever see them again?"

John looked out at Eriadne B, and then said, "The future isn't written in stone, I was told."

He turned to Gideon, who sat smiling in his chair.

"Gas, Captain?"

Gideon looked up at him and grinned. "Hell no, Lieutenant, can't you tell when I'm smiling?"

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Angel watched from the end of the long corridor as Ilas and Lily hung up the latest tapestry, a beautiful work depicting their recent adventure with the Excalibur. Demon stood back, a wide smile on her face as she instructed Ilas to lift the tapestry up a little on her end. Both Ilas and Lily were giggling as they struggled with the tapestry.

"I wish Angel were here, then we..." Lily almost dropped her end, which sent Ilas into a fit of laughter. Lily shot her a mock look of anger before she continued. "...Then we wouldn't have such a hard time with this."

Angel saw Demon frown slightly. "You know Angel would be here, but she had to go to the village to help out one of the colonists with an injury."

Lily and Ilas turned, struggling slightly under the weight of the tapestry. The three of them looked at each other in silence. They each knew what the other was thinking. That wasn't the reason Angel wasn't here.

Since returning, Angel had been distant, brooding and quiet. None of them had confronted her about it, deciding it was probably better to let her come to them if she wanted to talk about it. So when Angel had told them she hoped they didn't mind that she couldn't make it for the hanging of the tapestry, they hadn't pushed her.

They were brought back to the task at hand when Ilas almost dropped her end, bringing on a giggling fit from Lily. "Oh, Ilas, why don't you just change into a Narn or something just as strong," she said gasping for air.

"I want to do this as myself, you know that ... now come on, put some muscle behind it, will you?"

Angel watched her sisters struggling and enjoying themselves. She wanted to go to them, to join in. To feel like everything was normal again, but she couldn't. She watched for a little while longer and with a frown turned away. There was something she wanted to do, something that had been foremost on her mind. She had to do it while her sisters were occupied; they wouldn't be happy if they knew.

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She had to take a fire torch to light her way as she made her way down into the darkest regions of the castle. It was dark and musty, cobwebs hanging from every corner. She had to contain a shudder. This place gave her the creeps. Her footsteps echoed as she walked down the long row of steep steps that came to an end in front of a heavy metal door.

Angel stood there very aware of how heavily she was breathing. Biting her lips, she stood for a moment struggling with her thoughts. She knew that she should just turn around and forget about it. But for a while now she'd been fighting an undeniable urge ... a need to come here. After what seemed like an eternity, Angel moved forward, attempting to use her power to unlock and open the door. Nothing happened. She tried again and met with the same result. Something was blocking her. She focused on the door and realised that a binding spell had been placed around the door. She snorted with contempt. [As is that's going to stop me!] She concentrated on the words of a nullification spell and threw it at the door. The binding crumbled. Again, she exerted her power on the door. It groaned loudly as it swung open. Angel glanced behind her nervously like a guilty person who was afraid that the noise would attract attention, even though logically she knew that no one could hear anything from above. She would have a lot of explaining to do if her sisters by some chance did find her here. When they'd placed it down here, locked away safe, they'd all made a promise that they would never return here. It would remain here locked away and forgotten, where it couldn't do any harm.

Angel hesitated. She knew she should just get the hell out of there, but she couldn't. With a shaky breath, she walked in, the fire torch flame casting the room with light that made shadows dance and shimmer around the small room. She didn't feel the cold as she turned to her right, using the flame from her torch to light another on the wall. Then she placed hers down, leaning it against the wall, leaving her hands free. She turned, letting her eyes come to rest on a shelf cut into the stone.

Angel moved forward, her eyes never leaving the object placed on the shelf. The Apocalypse Box. She reached out and picked up the Box, no longer able to think about being caught. Then she placed it gently on the floor and sat down cross-legged in front of it. Staring at it. In the back of her mind she heard Galen's words to her. "No matter what. Never open it. Never!" But she was like a moth drawn to a flame. She reached out her hands, and slowly opened the outer casing.

The yellow glow from the Apocalypse Box cast an eerie light over Angel who sat transfixed by it. Since their return, she had felt him calling to her. She'd tried to ignore it, to shut out the way that she felt drawn to it. She sat there brooding. Despite all that had happened, despite how Lucas had hurt her, threatened her and her sisters. Although she knew that others thought he was evil, she couldn't deny anymore that she missed him. In those final moments in the landing bay, she had

almost broken the link, not wanting to send him back. It didn't escape her that she was probably out of her mind. How, after all that, could she still want him?

Even after Gideon had half-raped her she still longed for him. Every time she thought about what had happened between them in the library she flushed with pleasure. Her nipples hardened as she thought of it now. She felt guilty, as she knew what her sister felt for Gideon, but no man had ever given her the pleasure he had.

She still wanted him, or Lucas, she didn't really know which, and although the Box in front of her was silent and wasn't speaking to her, she could hear his voice in her head, calling to her.

Angel sat there, watching the eerie glow pulsing in front of her. She raised her hand from where it had been in her lap and started to reach out to it. It was like she wasn't in control of her movements as she stretched her hand to the small, glowing, carved Box. When the tip of her fingers touched it, she jerked her hand back in surprise. She had felt something, like a small vibration that still made her fingers tingle. Had it been her imagination? She reached out again, wanting to know. This time, she let her whole hand come to rest on top of the Box.

There was a slight tingling sensation in her hand, and then suddenly her whole body shook as a strong, current shot up her arm. Strangely it didn't hurt. Her head snapped back, and her eyes closed. Her body shook. A strange wind kicked up in the cell, and the room was filled with a loud jumbled whispering, as the Box glowed brighter. After a few moments, the wind and noise died away. Angel's body stopped shaking, and her hand moved off the Box, falling across her lap.

She brought her head back up and opened her eyes slowly, letting them come to focus on the Box that was once again glowing gently. She stared at it for a while, a strange gleam in her blue eyes, then a slow smile played across her lips and she said two words, her voice husky. "Yes, Lucas."

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