

The Witches of Eriadne: Toil and Trouble - Part 5: Breaking Away

by [The Space Witches](#)

[Chapter 1](#) {[Chapter 2](#)} [[Chapter 3](#)] {Epilogue}



Max Eilerson

Epilogue

The door buzzer to Gideon's office sounded. "Open."

He looked up to see Max entering the room. "Do you have a few minutes, Captain? I have something that might interest you."

Gideon gestured toward the chair on the other side of the desk. In the four days since they'd returned from Eriadne, the Captain had lived mostly in his office and on the bridge, only returning to his quarters when he was too exhausted to stay awake any longer. He knew that he was drowning himself in work as a way of forgetting how much he missed Deborah. He realized that he hadn't seen Eilerson once during that period, and assumed that Max had been doing the same--working day and night to avoid thinking about what he'd lost. Leaving both Ilas and Dureena behind must have been difficult for him, especially after the loss of the baby. Gideon looked carefully at Max as he sat opposite, and could see the shadows and lines around his eyes that betrayed his exhaustion. Gideon decided to tackle the issue head on.

"You look tired, Mr. Eilerson. Have you been working too hard?"

Max narrowed his eyes and stared back. "Well, that's a bad case of the pot calling the kettle black, Captain. You look like shit yourself."

Gideon snorted. "Thanks, Max. I really needed to know that. What can I do for you?" Gideon grabbed a coffee pot and poured coffee into two mugs, pushing one toward Max. "Maybe this will help us both stay awake until you're done."

Max sipped at the 'coffee' and grimaced. "Not as good as the stuff they have on Eriadne, is it?" Gideon didn't respond. He didn't want to get into any conversation about Eriadne. It only started him thinking about Deborah. He watched as Max pulled himself upright in the chair and started to speak.

"You know I brought a lot of material back with me this time? Well, I've spent the last four days working on it, using the Medbay databanks. I've reached a preliminary conclusion, and you need to know about it." Gideon gestured for him to continue.

"OK, here's the summary. I'll give you the detail later if you want it. Up to 1,000 years ago, Eriadne was inhabited by a Shadow slave race. They may have been Drakh, but probably not, however, they used a similar language to the Drakh. I think Eriadne was a manufacturing center, and they manufactured viruses."

Gideon sat up quickly. [Where's Max going with this?]

"This next bit is guesswork, but educated guesswork. I think the Vorlon destroyed the planetary population and most of the manufacturing centers in the last Shadow War 1,000 years ago, then took over the planet for themselves. I have no idea what they used it for, but eventually they built the castle and used it as a sort of training center for their abductees."

Gideon nodded. This fit the limited data they'd obtained from the castle.

Max carried on speaking. "The material I brought back from the ruins contained chemical formulae and diagrams of genetic material and viruses. These indicate that the Shadows had some kind of viral screen available to them, which prevented their slave races from becoming infected by the viruses they manufactured. Eriadne appears to have been one of the places where they made that viral screen."

Max paused and leaned forward, his arms resting on Gideon's desk.

"I think we can use the information I've found and translated to do more work on the Technomage virus we discovered a couple of years ago. Galen helped Dr. Chambers turn that Technomage virus into a screen that protects for forty-eight hours. With the information I've discovered, I think we can make that screen permanent. We can stop people from becoming infected by the Drakh plague. It's not a cure, but it's a hell of a step in the right direction.

[Chapter 1](#) { [Chapter 2](#) } { [Chapter 3](#) } {Epilogue}

The Witches of Eriadne: Toil and Trouble

{ [Part 1: Anticipation](#) } { [Part 2: Reunion](#) } { [Part 3: Out and About](#) } { [Part 4: Life and Death](#) } { [Part 5: Breaking Away](#) }