

## True Desires

"True Desires"

Opening Dialog

A few months had passed since the Searcher left the peaceful planet of Acklon. They were on their way to Sedna 18, a planet Earth had lost contact with. All they knew about the planet was it was as peaceful and beautiful as Septor 205 and Acklon. The Galactic Council informed Admiral Asimov that it might possibly be having problems with their communication systems. For some reason the Admiral asked if they had lost any shipments or a vessel might have crashed in that area. He kept thinking of the creatures on Septor 205. The Galactic Council assured him that there were no creatures loose there, that they merely lost contact. The Admiral ordered their next destination to be logged in and acknowledged.

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Chapter 1

"Yes sir. Course set and awaiting your order to engage sir," the navigator replied.

"Engage," Asimov said.

With in moments the Searcher was entering star gate. Buck and Wilma stood on the bridge and watched as the Admiral went about his regular duties.

"He misses Hawk about as much as we do, doesn't he?" Buck asked whispering to Wilma.

"Yes, I've heard him call for Hawk to report to the bridge several times," Wilma replied.

"Admiral? Where is this planet located at?" Buck asked.

"It's located about four days away, in the Mecalon system," Asimov replied looking over his shoulder at Buck.

Buck nodded and left the bridge. He walked down the corridor to where Hawk's quarters was. He stopped and ran his fingers gently over the door. He stopped when he noticed some of the crew members watching him. He drew his hand away quickly and walked off. He found himself entering the Galactic Gardens. He walked over and sat down in the same spot he sat in the last time he was there with Hawk, comforting and consoling him over the loss of Black Hawk.

He gazed out the window at the multiple stars.

"I wish you well my friend," he thought to himself. Buck sat there for a few more moments then stood and left. He made his way to the sick bay. As he entered Dr. Goodfellow greeted him close to the door.

"Aw, my dear boy." Goodfellow looked in to Buck's eyes. "You still miss him, don't you?" he asked.

"How did you know?" Buck asked.

"I can tell in your eyes. You have that distant, far away look. Almost like you're somewhere else," Goodfellow replied.

"I do miss him. I know it's only been a few months since we last saw him. But, it's just not the same with out him," Buck replied with a sad expression on his face.

Goodfellow patted Buck on his shoulder and left the sick bay. Buck was truly lost with out Hawk by his side. After a few days Buck was going out on his routine patrols. Murphy was his wing man now. Though Murphy was a friend, he still wasn't Hawk.

"Buck, I'm picking up a vessel or ship of some kind in sector 194. Should we check

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it out?" Murphy asked.

"Negative, we'll notify Searcher first, they can scan to see if the ship is disabled. Then when the Admiral gives the order to investigate, we'll go in," Buck replied.

Buck notified the Searcher of the vessel and requested a life scan.

A few moments later. "Searcher to Buck."

"What did you find Admiral?" Buck asked.

"The vessel shows a possible life force. Make visual contact only and check on the condition of its hull and report back to me," Asimov replied.

"Yes sir...Buck out."

Buck and Murphy slid the throttle forward and headed for the derelict ship. They circled slowly and noticed no damage to the outside hull.

"Buck to Searcher."

"Go ahead Buck. What did you find?" Asimov asked.

"Sir, there's no damage to the outer hull. Requesting permission to attach and board?" Buck asked.

"Permission denied. We'll retrieve it and bring it on board," Asimov replied.

"But sir, the life force might need medical help immediately," Buck said.

"Follow orders Buck. Do not.. repeat do not board. Return to the Searcher," Admiral Asimov ordered.

Buck shook his head in disagreement. "Yes Admiral," Buck replied reluctantly. Buck and Murphy headed back to the Searcher.

"Buck to Searcher, requesting landing bay."

"Approach landing bay 2...Searcher out."

"Landing bay 2 ... acknowledged ...Buck out."

Buck and Murphy approached the Searcher and started to throttle back as they entered the landing bay. They set the fighters down with a light thump, and shut down the engines. They both climbed out about the same time. Buck rushed up to the bridge. He looked up on the monitor and could see the vessel.

"Is there still a life force reading?" Buck asked.

"Yes, but it's very weak," Asimov replied turning back to the navigator. "Lock on tractor beam, and bring it to bay 6," Asimov ordered.

"Yes sir ... beam engaged."

Buck left the bridge and headed quickly for landing bay 6. He entered, standing behind the safety glass he watched as the vessel was drawn in and set down, the outer doors closed. He was about to enter the bay when two security personnel stopped him.

"I'm sorry Capt. Rogers, but no one is allowed inside until it's been checked," one of them said.

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Buck backed up and turned to see four crew members dressed in contamination gear enter the vessel. A few moments later one exited and walked over to the ship's intercom.

"Sick bay ... report to bay 6." He then re-entered the vessel. A few minutes later, the crew carried out a body, wrapped in a silver contamination blanket. They opened the inner doors to isolation bay and placed the body on a gurney inside. They turned around and re-entered bay 6 again, closing the safety door behind them.

A moment later, the outer door opened. Two people entered also dressed in isolation clothes, they pushed the gurney out in to the corridor and down the hall. Buck started to quickly walk down the corridor, trying to catch up with the medical crew. They entered sick bay's isolation room. Buck stopped outside the door and watched through the small window.

On the gurney he could see what appeared to be a human male. Dr. Goodfellow was leaning over the body as if listening to something this unknown person was saying. One of the medical staff turned and saw Buck looking through the small window, he quickly walked over and covered the window. A few moments later the intercom sounded off.

"Capt. Rogers...report to the bridge."

Buck started to walk towards the bridge. He walked on to the bridge and Admiral Asimov glanced over at him.

"Buck, we need to talk," Asimov said as he glanced towards the bridge meeting room.

Buck slowly walked toward the meeting room, the door opened and he went inside and seated himself. Admiral Asimov was close behind. Buck stood again as he entered the room. Asimov walked over to behind his desk and sat down. He motioned for Buck to sit.

"Buck, I just got a report from the sick bay that you were standing outside looking in at the survivor. I know you're curious, in fact so am I. But, the isolation unit is off limits to everyone except medical staff. Dr. Goodfellow said that he will have a report for me with in the hour. If you like, you may sit in on that report," Asimov said.

"I'd like that, thank you Admiral. Is the survivor a human?" Buck asked.

"I don't know Buck. I guess we'll both find out soon enough," Asimov replied.

Buck stood up and walked out of the meeting room. Heeding the Admiral's request to stay clear of the isolation room, Buck walked in to the Galactic Gardens and sat. "I wonder where this survivor came from? And what happened on his ship?" he thought to himself. Buck sat and gazed out the window for what seemed hours.

"Capt. Rogers...report to the bridge."

Buck stood and walked quickly back to the bridge. Inside the Admiral and Dr. Goodfellow were standing by the meeting room doors.

"Come in Buck," Asimov said motioning for him to enter.

Buck walked in followed by the doctor and then the Admiral. The door closed, Buck waited for the Admiral and the doctor to seat themselves first, then he sat down.

"Well doctor, who is he and what happened?" the Admiral asked.

"As far as I can tell, him and his crew left a planet about fifteen days ago. They were all fine until about five days ago when they started to die one at a time. I've checked him over several times and didn't find anything. It looks like some kind of virus, I'm still running checks. His whole body is swollen almost two times the normal size. I'm going to do an autopsy on the others as soon as I get back. Sorry I don't have much information for you Admiral. But this one even has me puzzled,"

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Goodfellow replied.

"Thank you doctor. Keep me posted on what you find," the Admiral said.

The doctor stood and walked out of the room. Buck sat there and watched the Admiral rub his fingers through his hair.

"The doctor is puzzled?" Buck asked.

"Yes, I don't understand it either Buck. He's never been puzzled in all the time I've known him. Do me a favor? Stay away from the isolation room. If this thing is contagious, I don't want anyone near it. I don't want you become ill," Asimov said with concern.

"I promise Admiral. But I would like to check out the ship," Buck asked.

"As soon as I get the all clear from the contamination crew, I'll let you in. But not until then, understood?" Asimov asked.

"Understood, thank you Admiral," Buck said as he stood to walk out of the meeting room.

"Oh Buck, not a word of this to anyone, all right?" Asimov asked.

Buck nodded and left. A few days later the lone survivor died. Dr. Goodfellow was even more confused. Dr. Goodfellow reported to the Admiral in the bridge meeting room.

"I don't know what happened. At first the medication seem to be working. He was getting better, he was responding to our voices. He even started to open his eyes. But, this morning he went in to convulsions. Before we could even get across the room, he was gone," Dr. Goodfellow said lowering and shaking his head.

"Doctor, you did all you could. Did you ever find out what might have killed them?" Asimov asked.

"No, nothing. That's what's confusing. They should all be alive. I'm going to start the autopsy on him as soon as I get back to the isolation room. Maybe this mysterious virus dies when the host dies," Goodfellow said pacing the floor in the bridge meeting room.

"Do you think the ship was contaminated with something?" the Admiral asked.

"No, the crew said the ship was clean. It only infected the crew," he said getting even more frustrated.

"In your opinion, do you think the ship is safe to enter without contamination gear?" Asimov asked.

"Oh yes. The crew checked and cleaned the whole ship. If there was any disease or contamination in there, it's been sterilized," Goodfellow replied.

"Good, Buck has been wanting to check out the ship. So I guess I can give him the go ahead now," the Admiral said.

Goodfellow nodded.

"Doctor, I'm going to see about getting you some help. At least to help you find out what killed these people," the Admiral said.

"That would be greatly appreciated Admiral, thank you. If you'd excuse me now, I'd like to go start on the last one. Maybe with him, I might be able to find out what killed him and his companions," the doctor said as he left the meeting room.

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Asimov waited till the doctor was completely out of meeting room. Asimov switched on the intercom.

"Put a call through to Acklon. When they respond put it through to in here. Then after you do that have Buck report to the bridge. I want to talk to him," Asimov ordered.

"Yes sir," communications replied.

"Capt. Rogers, report to the bridge."

Buck was just outside the door of the bridge when he got the summons. The door opened and he entered.

"The Admiral is waiting for you in the meeting room Captain," communications informed him.

"Thank you," Buck replied.

He gently knocked on the door. "Enter," Asimov replied.

"Did you want to see me Admiral?" Buck asked.

"Yes Buck, I got the all clear from the cleaning crew on the ship," Asimov replied motioning for Buck to sit.

Buck sat down across from the Admiral. "Did they find anything?" he asked.

"No. The doctor said it could have been some kind of virus that dies if its host dies. The cleaning crew and Goodfellow believe that the disease has been destroyed. So you may examine the vessel if you like," Asimov said.

"Thank you Admiral." Buck stood. "Is there anything else Admiral?" Buck asked.

"Yes, just be careful. If you see or notice anything that looks out of place, get out of there," Asimov replied.

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## Chapter 2

Communications interrupted their conversation. "Admiral, that call you ordered is coming through right now," communications said.

"Call sir?" Buck asked.

"Yes, I'm trying to find Goodfellow some help on finding out why those people died," Asimov replied.

Buck nodded and left the meeting room.

"Put that call through," the Admiral ordered.

"Yes sir."

Asimov received his call. He stood up and walked out on to the bridge. "Set co-ordination for Acklon," he ordered.

"Acklon sir?" Wilma asked.

"Yes, we're going to take on a couple of doctors from there to help Dr. Goodfellow with his research on why those people died," he replied with a smile.

"Yes sir," communications replied with a smile.

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"Does Buck know sir?" Wilma asked.

"No, let's make it a surprise," Asimov replied smiling.

Wilma smiled back.

Buck made his way down to the ship that carried the doomed crew. He opened the door to the isolation hanger and entered. The guards looked on as he entered the ship. He walked around looking at everything. He then entered the cargo area of the ship. Again, nothing there. He turned and started to walk back to the helm. Done looking over the entire ship Buck was about to leave when he heard a very light buzzing noise.

Almost like the buzzing noise he had in his ears when he got that fever a couple years ago. Thinking nothing of it he continued. He felt a very light stinging sensation on his neck. It wasn't pain, like a bee sting, more like a little prick from a very sharp needle. Thinking it might have been just a small crick in his neck he began his exit from the ship.

He was just about to the door, when he started to feel very weak. He held on to the door frame to steady himself. The room started spinning, he started to sweat. Soon he was barely able to walk.

"Got to get out," he thought to himself. He started to stagger down the ramp about half way down he clasped. The guards still standing in front of the entrance door entered and ran over to Buck.

"Captain Rogers, are you all right"? one asked. But Buck didn't hear him, he was unconscious.

One of the guards pulled Buck to safety on the other side of the isolation doors. The other closed the door to the ship then followed. Outside the room, one of the guards called for help.

Within minutes Dr. Goodfellow and a couple of staff were there.

"What happened?" Goodfellow asked.

"He was coming down the ramp, then he just clasped," one guard replied.

"Don't let anyone in there with out an isolation suit," Goodfellow ordered.

"Yes doctor."

They loaded Buck on to a gurney and swiftly took him to the isolation chamber. By the time they got there Buck's face and neck was starting to swell. Goodfellow quickly walked over to the intercom and summoned the Admiral to report to sick bay. The Admiral asked what it was about.

"Buck." was all he said before the Admiral was on his way with Wilma beside him. The Admiral and Wilma entered the sick bay and walked over to the isolation chamber doors and watched as Goodfellow and the staff tended to Buck. Goodfellow saw that the Admiral had arrived and ordered test to be done immediately. He walked over to the intercom that connected the two rooms.

"How is he doctor?" Asimov asked.

"I don't know Admiral. Right now his face and neck is swelled like the others were. Admiral, get rid of that vessel. It seems to be carrying something. If we let it sit in the landing bay to long it might infect someone else," Goodfellow said.

The Admiral walked over to the ship's intercom. "This is the Admiral, blow that ship out of the Searcher and destroy it immediately," he ordered.

"Yes sir," helm replied.

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With in seconds the outer doors were opened and the gravity pulled the ship out of the Searcher. After it had drifted off a few hundred yards the order was given to destroy it. They fired and with in seconds the ship disappeared.

"Ship destroyed Admiral. What are your orders?" helm asked.

"Are we still on course back to Acklon?" Asimov asked.

"Yes sir. We should reach Acklon with in ten days," helm replied.

"Understood," Asimov replied.

"Did you say we were on course for Acklon?" Goodfellow asked.

"Yes, I told you earlier I was going to find you some help. I don't know of any better doctors in this quadrant than Karri and Saleena. Can you think of any better doctors that might be able to help you save Buck's life?" Asimov asked.

Goodfellow shook his head. "I just don't want them to get ill."

"They shouldn't. Hopefully what ever it was that infected Buck was destroyed with that ship. Have you found what caused him to collapse?" Asimov asked with concern.

"No, I just now got him stabilized a little. I'm going to run a scan on him now and see if it's an infection or some kind of disease. I'll keep you posted," Goodfellow said as he turned to walk back over to Buck.

"Admiral, with your permission. I'd like to stay here for a while?" Wilma requested.

Asimov nodded. "Keep me up dated," he said as he left sick bay.

"Yes sir," Wilma replied watching the doctor through the safety glass. "Come on Buck, you have to pull through. What would I do without you?" she whispered to herself.

Dr. Goodfellow inside the isolation chamber was starting to notice that Buck' fever was rising.

"Hang on dear boy," he said softly.

The nurse was taking Buck's pulse again when he saw what appeared to be a small bite mark. "Doctor, look at this," he said gently pointing out the small sting like bite.

Goodfellow glanced over at it and saw what looked like a sting, similar to a bee or mosquito bite. "Keep checking his BP and heart every two to three minutes. And keep trying to bring his fever down. I'm going to check those others to see if they might have the same mark on them," Goodfellow said as he quickly walked to the back of the isolation chamber.

The nurse nodded and had another one of the nurses check Buck's BP. Doctor Goodfellow rushed over to the others that were in an adjoining room in the isolation chamber. He unwrapped the first person and gently turned his head to one side then the other. Right up at the base of the skull was a small mark. He swiftly walked over to the others and examined their necks as well. All of them had a small bite like sting near the base of the skull. He quickly walked back over to Buck.

"It's the same on all the others." Goodfellow rubbed his chin with his hand. "Stay with him at all times. I want to check on the insect species in this quadrant. Call me if there's any change," he ordered as he left the isolation chamber to disinfect himself. He quickly started to look in the archives and any books that he could find about insects.

Wilma sat quietly at the door and watched Buck laying helpless on the gurney. She

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stood and slowly started to walk towards Goodfellow. "Is there any change doctor?" she asked.

"No my dear. But now we know what might have caused the death of those others on the ship and Buck's ailment now. One of the nurses found what looks like a small needle mark at the base of Buck's neck. I check the others and they too have the same mark. Which leads me to believe a very small insect did this," he replied with his nose still buried in the book.

"An insect? But how did an insect get in to his contamination suit?" Wilma asked.

Goodfellow looked up at Wilma. "I cleared the ship from isolation. Buck wasn't wearing a contamination suit," he replied with sorrow in his voice.

She lowered her head and walked back over and sat down again on the stool she had placed there earlier. "What's going to happen to Buck?" she asked watching Buck and the nurses inside.

Goodfellow put the book down and walked slowly over to her. "He's going to be fine, I promise," he replied placing his hands on her shoulders. They stood by the small window and watched the nurses tend to Buck.

The next day Buck's fever had gotten higher, his body trembled from the fever. His body had almost doubled in size from the swelling. His eyes were swelled close.

"There has to be a cure for what bit him," Goodfellow said to himself as he scanned through another book.

The door opened and Wilma entered. She walked immediately over to the isolation door and looked in. "How is he?" she asked.

"He has gotten worst. I can't find any information on what kind of insect has this kind of reaction," Goodfellow replied with frustration in his voice.

"The Admiral has sent word to Hawk about Buck's condition." Wilma placed her hand against the glass. "Doctor, you have to help him," she said with tears forming in her eyes.

"I'm doing all I can my dear. There has to be something in these archives about the insects from this quadrant," Goodfellow said slamming the book down on the table.

Wilma glanced over her shoulder and could see the anger in Goodfellow's eyes. She slowly walked over and placed her hand on his. "I know you're doing all you can. Maybe the computer might have an update on the insects around here. I'll go check and get back to you if I find anything." She hesitated for a moment. "In the mean time...try to get some rest. You look exhausted," she said.

Goodfellow placed his other hand on top of hers. "I'll be okay. My main concern right now is Buck. I wish Karri were here, she might be able to find out what is going on inside Buck's body," Goodfellow replied.

Inside the isolation chamber Buck laid helpless on the gurney. Hearing all the familiar voices but unable to speak or open his eyes. Soon the fever took its toll again. He fell in to another deep sleep. His mind struck with the fever started to wander.

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### Chapter 3

In a dark room Buck started to move his head slowly from side to side, he moaned. The nurse that was tending to him quickly ran out and approached a doctor standing at the nurse's station. "He's coming to doctor," she said softly.

They quickly walked back in to Buck's room. Buck placed his hand on his head as if



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trying to stop the aching pain coming from it.

"How do you feel?" the doctor asked softly.

"Like I was hit with a sledge hammer," Buck replied trying to joke. He opened his eyes and saw nothing but darkness. "I can't see," Buck said trying to grab what ever was blocking his eye sight.

"That should go away with in a day or so," the doctor informed him.

Buck turned his head in the direction the voice was coming from.

"Where's Dr. Goodfellow? I know all the medical staff. You sound different, are you new?" Buck asked.

The doctor and nurse glanced at one another. "There is no Dr. Goodfellow here Captain Rogers," the doctor replied.

Buck tried to sit up but was unable to move. "Why can't I move or sit up?" he asked.

"Your body still hasn't got all its functions back yet. They should return with your eye sight," the doctor said. The intercom went off ... "Dr. Lockett please report to ER stat."

Buck listening to all the strange sounds returned his attention back to this man who he believes to be a doctor. "I take it you're a doctor. What's your name?" Buck asked.

"My name is Doctor James Wolcott. I've been your doctor since they brought you in," he replied.

"They? Who are they?" Buck asked.

The nurse and doctor smiled. "NASA. Who do you think brought you here?" Dr. Wolcott asked.

"NASA? Where am I?" Buck asked.

"You're in the Catalonia Hospital," the doctor replied.

"The Catalonia Hospital? When did they rebuild it?" Buck asked with confusion in his voice.

The nurse chuckled. "What do you mean, rebuild it? They remodeled it a bit but not that much," the doctor replied.

Buck becoming more confused. "What year is this?"

"It's 1989 Captain. why? What year did you think it was?" the doctor asked.

"I've only been gone two years?" Buck said softly to himself.

"Captain, there are some people here to talk to you. Do you feel well enough for some visitors?" the doctor asked.

Buck nodded. "Sure, why not. Next you'll be telling me it's my mother," Buck said sarcastically.

"Captain Rogers, my name is Admiral Kestren, and with me is Captain Lomar. We'd like you to tell us what happened." The Admiral hesitated for a moment. "Do you remember what happened?" Admiral Kestren asked.

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Buck turned his head suddenly in the direction the voice came from. "Sorry Admiral. Yes sir, all I remember is trying to push the ship to the limit. The next thing I know, I'm waking up here," Buck replied.

The doctor was standing off to the side watching Buck's reaction to the question. He could tell Buck was getting nervous for some reason. They asked him over and over again what happened. Over and over again Buck told them the same story. Finally Buck snapped. "No disrespect sir. But how many times do you want me to tell you the same story? I pushed my ship too hard. That's the last I remember," Buck said loudly.

"I'm sorry gentlemen, but he needs his rest," Dr. Wolcott said interrupting.

"All right doctor, we'll be back again later," they replied as they walked out.

"Get some rest Captain. I'll check on you again later," Wolcott said as he left the room.

Buck laid there wondering if the Searcher and everyone on it was real or was it just a dream. He'd only been gone for two years. "The Earth was still here and in one piece. No signs of an impending nuclear holocaust. And these people don't know about the Searcher. What if it was all a dream?" Buck thought to himself. He laid there for hours thinking.

That evening Dr. Wolcott re-entered Buck's room. "I wanted to check on you before I left for the evening. How are you feeling?" he asked looking over Buck's chart.

"Confused, you said it was 1989 right? That means I've only been gone for two years. But it seems much longer," Buck said.

"You sound a little disappointed. You talked a lot in your sleep Captain Rogers. You spoke of a Wilma and of an Admiral Asimov. Are they people you know, or just people you made up during your extended sleep?" Dr. Wolcott asked.

"I really don't know. I thought I knew them," Buck replied.

"Well, we'll talk again tomorrow. If you need anything just call for the nurse, she's been instructed to get you what ever you need. Good night Captain Rogers," Wolcott said as he turned to leave Buck's room.

"Good night doctor," Buck replied.

Buck laid down, turned over and closed his eyes. When he did, he would see Wilma's face. He turned over to his other side and would see Hawk's face. He sat up and placed his hands over his eyes as if trying to block the images from his view. "I don't know what to believe. Were they real or were they just a dream?" Buck said softly to himself. He sat up most of the night going over in his head everything that happened from the time he left Earth for the test until now. "Nothing makes sense. I know I was on the Searcher. I know Hawk, Wilma and Asimov are somewhere, but where? Why did they leave me here?" Buck thought to himself as he laid down and closed his eyes again. The visions returned, this time he kept his eyes closed. Hoping to see if they would say anything. But only their images would appear. Finally at daybreak, Buck finally fell in to a light sleep.

The door to Buck's room opened slowly and quietly. The nurse walked in and placed a single red rose on the stand next to his bed, and as quietly as she entered..she left. Buck slept the rest of that day. Not knowing that the Dr. Wolcott had entered and was informed of Buck being up all night. He smiled, turned to the nurses and told them under no circumstances was Buck to be awoken, by any one.

"If he wakes before I leave this evening, notify me," he said as he turned to walk away.

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"Doctor, there were two people here earlier, demanding to see him, two women," the nurse said.

The doctor turned around and faced the nurse. "My orders stand.. no one is to enter his room with out my consent. Do you understand?" he asked the nurse.

"Yes doctor," the head nurse replied with a smile.

Buck opened his eyes the next morning to find that his vision had started to return. Instead of total darkness, he was able to make out the outline of items around his room. He looked towards what he believed to be the windows and could see a dim eliminating light coming from it, he smiled. He heard a soft knock at the door. "Enter," he replied with out thinking.

"Enter? That's different. Usually someone answers come in or who is it?" a voice said with a light chuckle.

Buck looked over in the direction that the voice came from. He could make out an of someone walking towards him. "Dr. Wolcott?" Buck asked.

"Yes Captain Rogers. How are you feeling today?" the doctor asked.

"Well, I can see outlines of things and a dim light. I can also see a gray outline of you," Buck replied with a smile.

"That's good to hear. I'm going to run a test on your eyes to see if there is any damage," Wolcott said as he closed the door and shut off the over head light.

Buck sat straight up in bed when the light went out. He thought he had lost what little sight he had.

"Doctor! I can't see anymore. What's happening to me?" Buck shouted in a concerned voice.

"It's all right Captain Rogers. That was my fault, I should have informed you that I was turning off the over head light, my apologies," Wolcott replied.

Buck leaned back again after being reassured by the doctor.

"Now, let's see how much of your sight has been restored. I'll also check your eyes for any damage that might have been done during your sudden freezing and your long sleep," Dr. Wolcott said.

Buck sat up and swung his legs over so he was sitting on the edge of the bed. Dr. Wolcott stood on the left side of Buck's legs. "Okay, I want you to close your eyes and keep them closed until I tell you to open them. Then open them slowly and look straight ahead. When I shine the light in to your eyes, tell me if the light is bright or dim," Wolcott explained.

Buck nodded then close his eyes. A few moments later the doctor gave the order to open them. Buck did what he was asked to do and started to open his eyes slowly. Wolcott turned on the small pin light and looked in to Buck's left eye.

"Is it bright or dim?" he asked.

"It's kind of bright, Buck replied.

Dr. Wolcott walked over to Buck's right side and shined the light in to his right eye. "How's that," he asked.

"About the same," Buck replied.

Dr. Wolcott backed away. "Now, close your eyes again and wait until I tell you to open them again," Wolcott said.

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Buck closed his eyes again.

"Now open them both at the same time and tell me what you see," Wolcott said.

Buck opened both of his eyes at the same time as he was instructed to do. "It's still a little fuzzy. But it hasn't got worse," Buck replied.

"All right then, everything looks fine. I'm going to be leaving early this evening, but if you need anything just let the nurse know," Wolcott said.

"All right doctor. When do you think I'll be able to leave?" Buck asked.

"Not for a while. We have to make sure you'll have no after effects," Wolcott replied.

After the doctor left Buck closed his eyes to relax but fell asleep. That evening Buck slowly opened his eyes. He was happy to see his eye sight had returned. He gazed out the window and wondered where everyone was at, the Admiral, Hawk, Wilma. "I thought I might be happy to return. But..all I feel is lost," Buck said softly as he turned his gaze away from the window. He noticed that the door was starting to open slowly.

"You can come in. I'm awake," Buck said.

The door opened the rest of the way and the nurse entered. "I didn't wake you did I?" she asked.

"No. I've been awake now for some time. I wish I could go back to sleep," Buck replied.

"I can give you a shot to help you sleep, if you need one," she said.

"Only if it lets me sleep for another 2 years," Buck replied looking away.

"Now why would you want to do that?" she asked jokingly.

Buck turned his gaze back to the nurse. "I was happier when I was asleep," he replied.

The nurse started to take his vitals. "Are you hungry?" she asked.

"No, not really. Is Dr. Wolcott here?" Buck asked.

"Yes. He gave me orders to let him know when you woke up. Let me get your vitals first and I'll have him paged," she replied. She looked at Buck's expression and could see he wasn't happy. She didn't know if it was from being in the hospital or something else.

"Okay. I'll have him paged," she said as she walked out the door.

A few moments later the hospital intercom went off. "Dr. Wolcott... please report to second floor station."

Buck after hearing the page sat up and slowly swung his legs over the side of the bed. Not knowing if his legs were in working order yet or not he slowly rose to his feet. The floor was cold, but felt good on his feet. He held on to the bed rail and started to place more weight on his legs. After standing for a moment or two he lifted his left foot and placed it out in front of himself a few inches, putting more weight on it. He slowly released the bed rail and took another small step, he smiled. There was some light amount of pain in his legs at first but it subsided after a while. He carefully took his second step with out hanging on to the bed rail. He made his way over to the window. The first thing that caught his eye was the ocean. As he looked around he could see people walking around and cars stopped

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at signal lights.

"They don't have the slightest idea of what's going to happen," he whispered to himself.

"What is going to happen Captain Rogers?" a voice said behind him.

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### Chapter 4

Buck spun around and saw Dr. Wolcott standing just a few inches behind him.

"Huh .. nothing. They have no idea of what they'll be missing if they go to work today. It's a beautiful day and they have to spend it inside," Buck replied trying to cover up the comment he made a few seconds earlier.

Wolcott walked back over to the door and closed it then walked back over and stood by Buck's side. "It is a beautiful view, isn't it?" he asked.

Buck took a deep breath. "Yes, it is. It's a lot better than looking at the ceiling," he replied with a chuckle.

"Captain Rogers, have you had any more of your dreams lately?" Wolcott asked looking at Buck.

"What dreams are you talking about doctor?" Buck said turning to walk back to his bed.

Dr. Wolcott reached in to the pocket of his white coat and pulled out a cassette tape. "When they first brought you in, you were talking in your sleep. NASA, wanted me to record any thing you said." Wolcott placed the tape down in front of Buck. Buck picked up the cassette tape, looked up at Wolcott and then placed it back down on to the small table next to his bed.

"Did you or they find anything interesting?" Buck asked swinging his legs back on to the bed.

"Well, NASA didn't find any thing too interesting, but I did," he said with a smile as he sat down next to Buck's bed.

Buck looked at the doctor with a concerned look on his face. "What do you mean by that?" Buck asked.

"Maybe I should let you listen to the tape first. You kept talking about a Col. Wilma Deering, an Admiral Asimov and this one had me a little confused. You spoke about a person or a thing called Hawk," Dr. Wolcott said.

Buck turned away.

"Captain Rogers, is there any thing you want to talk about? You talked as if these people were real," Wolcott said as he pulled up a chair and sat down next to Buck's bed.

"Doctor, you wouldn't believe me if I told you." Buck hesitated for a few moments then turned back around and faced Dr. Wolcott. "When I was frozen I could have sworn I was.." Buck stopped and turned his eyes away then turned his gaze back on to the doctor. "I was on board another ship, from the future," Buck said lowering his head.

Wolcott looked at Buck's expression for a moment then turned away.

"Buck, do you really believe you were on a ship from the future?" Wolcott asked.

"I don't know what to believe anymore. I'm in this hospital, it's 1989 and everything is normal," Buck replied.

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"Why don't you tell me everything, that you believe happened," Wolcott said.

"That will take a long time doctor. In reality I was gone for two years. But in my dream, I was five hundred years in to the future," Buck replied.

"Buck, I only want to help you. I believe you don't belong here either. The Captain William "Buck" Rogers that was lost in space was declared dead a year ago. Tell me what you last remember about this ship from the future. What were you doing? Anything you can remember," Wolcott asked.

"I was declared dead?" Buck asked.

"Yes. That's why the government wanted to talk to you. To make sure you were the real Captain Rogers and not a impostor."

Buck got up out of bed again and walked over to the window and gazed out. "Is my mother still alive?" Buck asked.

"Yes. She and a young woman by the name of Jennifer has been coming here everyday to see you. But, I left strict orders for you not to be disturbed," Wolcott said.

Buck turned around quickly and walked back over to the doctor. "What gives you the right to stop my mother from seeing me?" Buck yelled as he walked back and forth a long side his bed.

"Buck, you have to understand. I wanted to make sure she was your real mother first. Plus, I wanted to talk to you privately about your dreams," Wolcott replied.

"That still doesn't give you the right to keep her from me," Buck said with anger in his voice.

"Captain Rogers, I want to help you. I didn't want any one or anything to interfere with me helping you to return to this space ship from the future, if it's real. Like I said before, I don't believe you belong here. I just want to help you go back where ever it is you came from, past or future," Wolcott replied in his defense.

Buck looked at the doctor's face and could see he was being sincere about what he said.

"That's why I asked about what happened to you," Wolcott said.

Buck sat back down on the bed. He placed his hands over his eyes as if trying to remember everything that had happened on the Searcher.

"I remember we had just retrieved a unknown ship that was adrift. Inside was one person that was still alive, barely. After the doctor gave me the okay to enter the ship with out a contamination suit on. I went on board and was looking around when I got this stinging sensation on my neck. It felt all most like a bee sting, but not as painful. I remember I started to feel weak and dizzy and knew I had to get out of the ship. As I was walking towards the door, I was thinking of my mother and Jennifer and how I would like to be back home, then I guess I passed out. When I woke up, I was here," Buck said looking up at the doctor.

"A bee sting?" Wolcott asked as he stood and walked over to Buck's side. "I want to look at your neck," Wolcott said. Wolcott looked carefully at Buck's neck. On the left side of his neck was a small red mark, similar to a sting mark. "Buck, do you remember any thing else?" Wolcott asked.

"That's all I remember. Why?" Buck replied.

"I found what appears to be a small needle like mark on your neck. I know we never gave you any shots there." Wolcott walked around and stood in front of Buck. "Tell me, who are Wilma, Asimov and this Hawk?" Wolcott asked.

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"Col. Wilma Deering is the head of security on the Searcher. Admiral Asimov is in charge of the Searcher, and Hawk.. well. Hawk is a long story. Basically, he's my best friend," Buck replied.

"On the Searcher?" Wolcott asked.

Buck nodded and smiled.

"How advanced is this Searcher on medicine?" Wolcott asked.

Buck thought for a moment. "They are well ahead of our technology in both medical and space," Buck replied.

Wolcott walked over to the window and gazed out over the city. "Then there's a good possibility that what you say is true. That the planet Earth, as we know it. Will be destroyed?" Wolcott asked as he turned to face Buck.

Buck stood up and walked over to the doctor and gazed out the window with him. "Yes," Buck replied with sorrow in his voice. "But, some will survive. Some make it out in to space and start new homes for themselves and others on other planets."

Wolcott looked over at Buck. "Would you like me to have those two women come in? Or would you rather wait and talk some more about this dream of yours?" Wolcott asked.

Buck knew inside he wanted to see his mother and Jennifer. But deeper down inside was the urge to go home. The home he's known for several years. "Can they wait a few more days?" Buck asked.

Wolcott nodded. "I'll go and tell them you're not quite ready for visitors. That there's still some test to be ran and that you're still not coherent enough for visitors," Wolcott said as he started to walk towards the door.

"Doctor, before you do that. Is there some way I could at least see them with out them seeing me?" Buck asked.

Wolcott thought for a second. "I'll have their backs toward the door. There's a mirror behind the nurse's station. You can look quickly in to that to see their faces. But only for a moment, we don't want them to see you looking out the door," Wolcott said.

Buck nodded. "Thank you."

Wolcott opened the door and slipped out before the two women could look in side.

"I want to see my son!" the older woman shouted.

"I'm sorry mame. But he's still a little out of it and we have a lot more test to run on him before he can have any visitors," the doctor explained.

Buck slowly and quietly opened the door a crack and peeked out. In the mirror he could see the reflection of the older woman and the woman that told the nurses and doctor that her name was Jennifer. He stood and watched as the woman was giving the doctor a lecture about wanting to see her son and that he had no right to keep him from her. Dr. Wolcott again explained the situation about the test and that Buck was not up to visitors.

"When will we be able to see him?" she asked loudly.

"I'd say in a day or so. Now, if you'd excuse me. I have rounds to make," Wolcott said as he turned towards the nurses station. The two women walked off.

"Under no circumstances are they to enter that room," the doctor ordered.  
"But doctor, they're his mother and fiance," the nurse replied.

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"My orders stand!" the doctor said as he walked off.

"Yes doctor."

Buck closed the door and walked back over to the window. "They looked like my mother and Jennifer. But, something was different about them. Something strange," Buck thought to himself.

Buck walked back over to his bed and sat down. He sat there for a moment then swung his legs back on to the bed and pulled the covers up. He laid back and rested his head on his hands, looking up at the ceiling once again. He closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep.

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### Chapter 5

"Doctor!" the nurse called out.

Goodfellow quickly walked over to Buck's bed side. "What is it?" Goodfellow asked.

"His vitals keep jumping. One minute their normal, the next minute they drop dangerously low," the nurse replied.

"Keep an eye on them. I'm going to go through the archives again. There has to be an insect in there that can cause this," Goodfellow said as he left the isolation chamber. Goodfellow made his way to the desk and was about to seat himself when the sick bay door opened with a whoosh.

"Doctor? Is there any changes?" Wilma asked as she entered.

"No my dear." Goodfellow looked up at Wilma with a concerned expression on his face. "Did you find anything in the computer database?" he asked.

"I found two kinds of insects that can cause that kind of swelling and death. One of them we would have been able to see with no problem. But the other is a small flying insect. It's no bigger than the Madi Fly we found on Volen," Wilma replied as she handed Goodfellow a viewing disk.

They quickly walked over to the computer and inserted the disk in to the computer. Together they viewed on the screen what appeared to be a very small two winged insect.

"Did it say anything about a cure?" Goodfellow asked.

Wilma hung her head. "No. But, I also looked in to the old Earth archives and found that same insect. It said that most people didn't die from its bite. But, there was a time when it carried some kind of disease that claimed the lives of about two hundred people," Wilma said as she handed Goodfellow another viewing disk.

He inserted the disk and read that back in the 20th century that same small flying insect took the lives of a lot of people.

"What is the name of this insect?" he asked as he viewed the screen.

"They called it a mosquito," Wilma replied.

"Wilma? Could you do me a favor? Go check in the old Earth archives and find out everything you possibly can about these mosquitoes. Have Criton assist you. If we have any chance at all of saving Buck, the antidote has to be in there some place," Goodfellow said.

"Of course doctor," Wilma said as she left the sick bay.

Goodfellow walked over to the window of the isolation chamber and looked in. The



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nurses were again taking Buck's vitals. "Hang on dear boy. You must hang on for a while longer," Goodfellow said softly to himself.

He turned and walked back over to the ship's intercom. "Sick bay to bridge."

"Bridge here doctor. How's Buck?" the Admiral asked.

"Not well Admiral. I've asked Col. Deering to go through the old Earth archives and see if she can find anything about these insects that were on Earth in the 20th century. I'm requesting that Criton assist her," Goodfellow said.

"Criton? Doctor, you know Criton and I don't see eye to eye about anything. That bucket of bolts," Asimov said softly.

"I'm aware of that Admiral. But Criton is well aware of the old Earth history. We need all the help we can get," Goodfellow replied smiling for the first time since Buck was brought in.

"Understood.... Bridge out."

Goodfellow walked back over to his desk, sat down and started to read every book and scanned every disk he could find that might have this insect in it. Hours later the doors to sick bay opened and Wilma entered with a smile.

"We found it!" she said with excitement in her voice.

Goodfellow rushed over to her. She handed him the disk.

"Criton was a great help doctor. He knew just where to look. It did take some time to locate the right insect, but he found it," Wilma said with a smile still on her face.

Goodfellow inserted the disk in to the computer and started to view what was on it. "Did you find an antidote in it?" he asked.

"Yes. Criton found what happened and an antidote. It turns out that this flying insect fed on both humans and animals. They transmitted the disease that way. At first the people showed symptoms identical to the common flu. When they got worse even after their physicians gave them antibiotics. Then when they found the cause about half of the people all ready died. They started to try to find a cure. They finally discovered it about five years later," Wilma informed the doctor.

"What was the name of this disease that this small mosquito caused?" Goodfellow asked.

"They called it, west Niles," Wilma replied.

"Now, all we have to do is prepare the serum and try to figure out how much to administer to Buck. If we give him too much, we could lose him. But if we don't give him enough, the disease will kill him. Did it give the dose measurements?" Goodfellow asked.

"I didn't see any. But it was Criton who found it. He might have seen it," Wilma replied.

Goodfellow walked quickly over to the ship's intercom once again. "Criton, report to the sick bay."

Goodfellow turned and glanced at Wilma for a moment then sat and started to look through the disk again.

Criton entered the sick bay. "Now what is it? Must I do everything around here?" he said in his sarcastic voice.

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"Criton, when you found the antidote, did you find the proper amount we should administer?" Goodfellow asked.

"Good grief, all you have to do is read my notes and you would have seen the proper amount that you should administer to Capt. Rogers. You humans can't seem to think for yourselves at all, can you? And you try to tell me that a human created me?" Criton replied in his usual sarcastic voice.

"I didn't see any notes Criton. Where did you place them?" Goodfellow asked.

Criton made his way over to the doctor and scanned the viewing disk. "Right there," he replied pointing to some small numeral print.

"No wonder I didn't see it. Criton, couldn't you have made it a little bigger?" Goodfellow asked.

"Really doctor.. I can't help if you humans lose your eye sight when you get old," Criton replied as he turned and rolled out of sick bay.

Wilma glanced over at Goodfellow. "He'll never believe that a human created him , will he?" she asked.

Goodfellow glanced up at Wilma and shook his head in a negative way. "I hope this serum works. We don't have too much longer before we lose Buck," Goodfellow replied.

"Do you think it'll work?" Wilma asked with a worried tone in her voice.

"I hope it does my dear. It has to," Goodfellow replied as he started to mix the serum.

Wilma stood and watched every thing Goodfellow did, from picking out the right medication to placing it in to a small isolation dish for testing. After several hours of testing and waiting.

"All right, it's ready. Let's just hope it saves Buck and it doesn't kill him," Goodfellow said as he started to walk towards the isolation chamber. He entered and asked the nurses to wrap Buck in restraints for his own safety. Goodfellow cleaned an area on the arm for the injection and slowly injected the serum.

"Now all we can do is watch and hope it works," he said.

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## Chapter 6

That next morning Buck opened his eyes and looked around. "I'm still here?" he said softly to himself. He felt a stinging sensation in his arm. He looked down and saw a small trickle of blood.

The door opened and the nurse entered. "Well Captain Rogers, how are you feeling today?" she asked as she opened the curtains.

"Okay, I guess. You nurses are great at giving shots. I didn't even feel this last one," Buck said.

"Captain? We haven't given you a shot for several days now," the nurse replied with a confused look on her face.

"Well if you didn't, who did?" Buck asked looking at the blood slowly trickling down his arms.

The nurse looked and saw what appeared to be a small needle mark on Buck's arm. "I'm going to call the doctor. Maybe he ordered a blood draw," she said as she walked out

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of Buck's room quickly.

Buck wiped away the small trickle of blood and threw the covers off and sat up. Just as he stood a strange sensation came over him. It was almost like the sensation he felt before he passed out. He quickly grabbed the side of the bed and sat back down.

"What's wrong with me?" he asked himself. He tried to focus on an object in the room but couldn't. His eye sight was becoming blurry, he started to sweat. The door opened and Dr. Wolcott walked in.

"Buck? What's wrong?" he asked.

Buck turned his head to try to see the doctor. "I don't know. I found a small trickle of blood on my arm. Like a needle mark after a shot. I tried to stand but got very weak, my sight has become blurry and now I'm sweating." Buck laid down. "What's happening to me doctor?" he asked.

Doctor Wolcott ran to Buck's side and examined the mark.

"Buck? Do you still believe you were on another space ship?" Wolcott asked.

Buck nodded. "Yes, I do."

"Buck, it looks like an injection spot. I believe what you said about another space ship. Buck, they're trying to help you. Don't fight it. You belong there, not here. This is not where your true desires lie. Think of those people on that ship, Wilma, the Admiral and Hawk. They are fighting to bring you back," Wolcott said.

"But my mother, Jennifer..I can't leave them again.."

"Good bye Captain Rogers. When you awaken again, you will be back where you belong. That is your true desires," Wolcott said.

Buck only hear the part about being back on the Searcher and that it was his true desires.

"Doctor! Captain Rogers is moving!" one of the nurse yelled out.

Goodfellow ran in to the isolation chamber and checked Buck's pulse.

"How is his fever?" he asked.

The nurse took Buck's fever again. "According to the last time we took it, it's dropped two degrees," he said with a smile.

Goodfellow ran back out of the isolation chamber to the sick bay's intercom. "Sick bay to bridge."

"Yes doctor, what is it?" Asimov asked.

"Buck.." was all he could say when the Admiral announced he was on his way. "I wish they wouldn't do that," he said jokingly to himself. He was just about to enter the isolation chamber when the door opened and the Admiral and Wilma walked in.

"What's wrong with Buck?" Wilma asked almost in tears.

"Nothing my dear. In fact, the reason why I called was to let you know that he's moving around and his fever is dropping," Goodfellow replied with a smile.

"He's going to be all right?" she asked.

"Yes, I believe so. He might have to take that antidote for a while. But, I'd say

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he's going to make a full recovery," Goodfellow replied.

"Doctor?" the nurse inside called out.

Goodfellow walked back into the isolation chamber. "What is it?" he asked.

The nurse smiled and looked down at Buck.

"Can you take these things off me?" Buck asked in a weak voice.

Goodfellow started to laugh and told the nurse to release Buck's restraints. "How do you feel dear boy?" Goodfellow asked.

"I feel like I was hit with a sledge hammer. What happened?" Buck asked.

"You don't remember anything?" Goodfellow asked.

"I remember going in to that ship and on my way out I was feeling dizzy and light headed. When I started to come out, I remember I was thinking about my mother and Jennifer. Wait.. I do remember I was back on Earth," Buck said trying to sit up.

Goodfellow and the nurse gently pushed him back down.

"You're not going to sit up or get out of this bed for at least three days. Then you'll be on complete bed rest in your own quarters until I say you're well enough to start your duties again. Is that understood?" Goodfellow asked.

Buck smiled. "Yes doctor."

"In the mean time, there are a few visitors outside wanting to see you. Do you think you're up to it?" the doctor asked.

Buck nodded.

Goodfellow walked out of the isolation chamber and motioned for the Admiral and Wilma to enter. "Make it a short visit. He needs his rest," Goodfellow said smiling.

The Admiral and Wilma nodded and entered the chamber.

Wilma threw her arms around Buck's neck. "I was afraid I'd lost you," she said softly weeping.

Buck smiled and placed his arms around her. "You'll never lose me," he whispered in her ear.

"Bridge to Admiral Asimov."

The Admiral walked back out of the chamber. "Asimov here."

"Sir, we're setting up orbit around Acklon. Do you wish to send that message to Hawk sir?"

"Yes, but inform him that Karri and Saleena will not be needed. Capt. Rogers is alive and doing well."

"Yes sir."

The Admiral entered the isolation chamber again and informed Buck that he'll be having another visitor soon.

"Who Admiral?" he asked.

Asimov just smiled and patted Buck on his shoulder. "Get some rest. I'll stop by

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again later."

Buck looked at Wilma. "Who is he talking about?" he asked with a confused look on his face.

"You'll see soon enough," Wilma replied as she kissed him gently on his cheek and left the chamber.

"All right, that's enough visiting for a while. Buck, you need your rest. I'll be giving you another injection in about four hours. Sleep now," Goodfellow said as he escorted Wilma the rest of the way out of the chamber.

Buck looked at the nurses. "Do you know who this other visitor is?" he asked.

"No Captain, sorry," they replied.

Buck closed his eyes but couldn't go to sleep. "Was I really on Earth? Was there really a doctor Wolcott?" Buck thought to himself.

Finally he slipped in to a restful slumber.

A few hours later he was awakened by a very familiar voice. He opened his eyes to see Hawk standing over him with a smile on his face. Buck closed his eyes again thinking he was seeing things or having another dream.

"Hawk?" he asked.

"I remember once a friend told me not to take any more vacations without telling someone first. And here you do the same thing," Hawk said chuckling.

Buck laughed for the first time in a long time.

"How are you feeling?" Hawk asked.

"Okay now.. Before I wasn't sure where I belonged. But after seeing you, Wilma, Goodfellow and the Admiral. I know where I belong. This ship, you, Wilma, the Admiral and Dr. Goodfellow is my one true desire."

The end