The very instant the door clashed shut behind him, he knew this was a serious mistake—in capital letters and flashing neon signs. Air so thick he could hardly breathe, he concentrated on his ‘tough guy’ pose: swagger, mouth in a firm, straight line, chin out, eyes slightly narrowed. If coming in here had been a serious tactical error in the game of keeping one’s head attached to one’s shoulders, then leaving would be an engraved invitation to a danse macabre, with Riker the main attraction. So, he puffed his chest out, clasped his courage in both hands, and strode up to the bar. Or at least, the part that most closely resembled a bar. There was a long table, dominating one slate wall, sigils and brands above, bottles and tumblers in cluttered profusion below, and a grizzled old woman presiding over all. In her hands she held a double-fisted jug of jo’hach to’lac, the smoke curling around her hag’s face as evil brews of old. Candles flickered and flared, dots of light dancing brightness amidst the subversive illumination of modern man. Everywhere was the smell of the candles, reminders of death and just as inescapable. Sweet in the sourness rose the smell of hot ts’cheh mingling with the acrid tang of sweat and grit and ozone, the familiar stew of docks the Galaxy over—even Klingon docks, it seemed. And threading through it all had been a insouciant ease, was the smell Riker most wanted: sex, as omnipresent below the surface as violence in this warrior-band society. It was what had drawn him here in the first place, his obsessive libido and his insatiable curiosity, both leading him by the nose into utter folly. Even the old hag presiding over the table was bigger than he and she had more beard. Riker was beginning to feel very much like the dumb ox at a festival.

Sacrificial lamb, more likely.

“So, human, you have a taste for all things Klingon?”

Now how the hell was he supposed to answer that without being killed for insulting an entire race or raped by a horde of horny Klingons? “I have a taste for all things of honor that are Klingon.”

Well, that satisfied that one. For the time being. One drink, just one drink, and then it would be safe to leave. One drink, if he could survive it. “A jug of your finest jo’hach to’lac.”

Sullenness elevated to art form, she handed him the mug, being careful to slop some over his hand, stinging him. He grinned at her, all feral charm, and licked his wrist clean, never once taking his eyes off her. That was his second mistake. A very large hand was busy attaching itself to his rump.

“Get your hands off me!” He stopped right there, gulping, craning his neck to look up. Fantasy was all very fine and dandy, but being buggered by a behemoth like this was more like suicide.

“Why?” the monstrosity growled, revealing his beautiful sharp filed brown teeth. “Are you not man enough to join in the pursuits of men?”

*Tails you win, heads I lose,* Riker thought with something akin to panic. *To seek out new life and new civilizations. But no one ever said anything about this kind of going where no man has ever gone before.* Well, to be scrupulously fair, it wasn’t even close to ‘no man,’ but certainly no Klingon and absolutely not, never, no way anything as big as the lump that codpiece was hiding. Riker kept on staring, an expression of malice perched, forgotten, on his face as his mind raced for ways to get him out of the stupid situation his balls had gotten him into.

“So. Not only beardless, but ball-less too!” the Warrior roared, one great meat-hook paw coming out to grab at Riker’s unarmored
crotch.

A quick slash of his hand, and the behemoth was stopped, just in time. “I’m man enough. I’m man enough to choose who, and when.”

A rumble went through the bar, a verbal closing in of ranks, and then the chairs began to grate across the floor as Warrior after Warrior rose to the challenge of the soft-bellied Human. This, some of the faces said, was going to be fun. This, some of the faces said, was going to be dinner.

Riker propped himself up against the bar with his habitual easeful slouch, sipping with manufactured unconcern at a drink that was burning a hole in his stomach, right beside the one that fear was gnawing in him. Now he knew why Starfleet so strongly refused Humans permission to wander amidst the nether regions of the Klingon city. Here, they were barely tolerated, and then only for amusement value. And so ignorant, they were nothing more than fresh meat for a culture that demanded rituals of pain to aver manhood. A culture, where the marriage bed meant public consummation, another in their many rituals of blood. Tonight, Riker thought, he just might be another…

“He is ugly, that is certain, but he is softer than a woman, soft as a bedroom pet. He is not a real man, for he has no beard, but it would be…” air hissed through spear-head teeth, “interesting to see if he could hold a man.”

A tremble through the room, a ripple, twenty Klingon warriors rousing to attention, and Riker felt as if every cock in the room was aimed at him.

“It would be more interesting still to see how many men he could hold.”

A wave of anticipation undulated through the crowd and they drew closer, entombing Riker in a semi-circle of wall-to-wall Klingons. Surrupetiuously, he tried to see out of the corner of his eye if he could escape over the table. The old woman, eyes aflame, had a double-bladed knife poised at the exposed nape of his neck. He turned back to face the crowd. This really was not quite what he’d had in mind for this particular adventure…

“I am senior here. He is mine first. He is small to my largeness and I want to feel his soft human flesh split for me.”

“His blood will ease your pleasure.”

Riker could have killed whoever came up with that bright idea. When Security found his body, Picard was going to kill him.

“And then I shall have him.”

“And I shall taste his flesh.”

“NO! Desist.”

“Human lover!”

“Suckled by humans—is that why you protect their weaknesses? Are you weakened by them too?”

“Have they demanned you, Worf, that you come to the aid of a beardless ‘cho`më?”

Riker stared with unfeigned relief as his shipmate strode forward, shoving warriors out of his way. Toe to toe with the leader of this little salon, Worf stopped, snarling his words up into the face glowering at him. “You may not do this to him for…”

“For what reason? Are you going to stop us? Are you going to stop all of us? All by yourself? Or will your…” he reached out to scrape one horned glove down Riker’s face, a welt of blood beading behind, “’cho`më come storming to your assistance?”

Riker might have been stupidly naïve to come here, but he was not a fool. He took one long, sobering look around the group of warriors, at the blades glinting so prettily and deadly in the lights, and knew that it would be death for both of them. And there was no way out. The Klingons would not let them go, not now, not since challenge had been taken, and even if they were willing to do so, Worf could not back down, not and still be able to think of himself as a Klingon. Riker cursed himself to hell and back.

“This was not what he had planned on, not at all… He opened his mouth to speak, but Worf forestalled him.

“You cannot, for I have claimed him as kah’zhai.”
The silence dropped like a stone in a bucket, rippling out to cover every being in the room.

“He is kah’zhai?”
“He is my kah’zhai.”
“Human lover.”
“NO! But this is my kah’zhai, not the spoils of war and I have claimed him to me. No challenge for possession can be issued.”

“I would never question your…” the pause was insulting, “honor. I would never, for instance, think that you were lying to save a man who serves on the same ship as you. Crew loyalty is a wonderful thing. Except when it unmans a Warrior!”

Worf’s hand went to the hilt of his dagger, an incipient threat. “Retract your words, or I shall retract the tongue that spoke them.”

“But I have said nothing to give offense. To a Warrior. You claim you are still a Warrior even though you wear the pretty yellow clothes of a human. Prove it! We demand you prove your claim, or give him up to us. As our prize.”

There was a moment, stretching into infinity, and then over all in a breath when understanding hit Riker. Worf. Worf would ‘claim’ him here, in front of a pride of Klingon Warriors, Worf would take all the responsibilities upon himself, would make all the the decisions, would play the rôle of ‘man’ for him. He would be protected, molded, by another man, someone bigger than himself, someone who could give him respite from the pressure of machismo. And just the two of them, sex, with someone he knew he could trust. Any pain would be minimal, the kind of small change one pays as price for malesex. And he would have Worf. He would have a Klingon Warrior, and the Warrior would have him. He would belong, instead of having to be the one to make the belonging happen. A great weight was sloughed from his shoulders and he straightened up, displaying just enough pride to honor Worf in the eyes of his fellow Warriors, just enough to leave his own manhood intact.

In the crowded hall, with its banners and becloaked men, with the glint of sigil and shimmer of chain mail sashes, a restlessness rustled through, wind on the bough, until into it, stepped Worf. Face impassive, only his eyes betraying life and feeling, Worf moved forward to confront Riker, who read in that black expression what needed to be done. With a smile, a genuine, supplicant smile, Riker steadied himself into the luxury of obedience.

“Humans have no honor. Let him strip, so that he can’t trick us.”

Worf ignored the call of the Captain of the Guard, discrediting with contempt where he could not hope to defeat by physique. He paced forward evenly, until he filled Riker’s eyes, until he was all that Riker could see, bloting out the very real threat of aroused Warrior.

Neither of the Enterprise men could ignore the call, however, when it was taken up en masse, dagger hilts pounding on wrist guards. There was danger there, a hostility that would be ameliorated by little less than blood, but perhaps the spilling of lifeseed would sate the slavering beast. Riker understood this group, understood the herd mentality and the herd sexuality, for he had studied warrior societies from neo-adolescence, when first he had deciphered his father’s parental-lock codings. Oh, yes, he knew all about the warrior bands, men fighting together, men playing together, men bonding together, through the chains forged in battle and in the intense mental practice of martial arts. He knew precisely what he had to do, to every last detail: he had to sit back, relax, and follow orders. Allow the relief from decisiveness wash over him, give up control, accept a strong arm to lean on. At the thought, he smiled.

“Strip.”

One word, but it shivered through every man there, and made the old woman lower her blade as every man in the room’s blade rose to stand straight in anticipation. Slowly, Riker took off his boots, shed his uniform, revealing the contrasts of his body.

“Look at how white he is! Like a m’rha’zhak worm.”
“How could a warrior want a thing like
that?”

“But look at the artistry of the black hair
and those little pink dots on his chest. Soft all
over, too. A good bed-pillow for a real man.”

“And his cock. It’s all pale and pink and
small. No threat to a real man there, hah!”

Riker simply stood there, not letting any
of it worry him. There were few enough in the
Galaxy like him, unbound by cultural notions of
beauty. And here, amidst these men, he could
understand his own appeal to them, for it was the
perfect counterbalance to their appeal to him. It
was nice, just once in a while, not to be all big and
butch and macho, but to be on the receiving end
of all that masculinity. As Worf took the last step
towards him, making Riker tilt his head back to
look up into his eyes, he thought, After all, why
the hell should women have all the fun?

Worf’s hands were very deliberate in
their movements as he dropped his clothing at
his feet, showing calculated disregard for his
human uniform, here, surrounded by a band of
Warriors waiting for him to prove his manhood
and his claim upon this little human.

“So soft. Look at that, look at his spine!
There’s not a ridge on it!”

“And at his hips. Where’s a man to find
something to grab onto when he’s riding, tell me
that!”

“But he is exotic, like that bed-pet Krol
bought last year. White all over.”

“Turn him around, let us see if he has a
hole worthy of a man.”

“Do not listen to them, sir,” Worf’s voice
rumbled low and reassuring between them,
under cover of the heckling calls, the more
traditional bedroom banter only now beginning
as the strangeness of the kah’zhai wore off. “Do
not even hear them. I will harm you as little as
possible, and if you follow my lead to the letter,
I will get us both out of this alive.”

Riker lowered his eyes, not only in an
acquiescence that thrilled him as much as his
audience, but also in curiosity and hunger. He
had seen many different races nude, but never a
Klingon, and never one under these circum-
stances. Worf was big, yet in proportion to the
rest of his body. His cock was ebon, long and
straight, framed by tight black curls. Nipples
geamed dark on the warm brown of his chest,
the lights casting shadows to make the planes of
muscle and bone into art. Thick muscles corded
his thighs and hair dusted there also, softening
the military sharpness of his beauty. Riker ached
to touch, to feel the undiluted masculinity of the
man, but he held himself in check, only his cock
betraying him, filling with blood and rising
away from his body to reach out to touch what
his mind wanted so much.

There was a low murmur through the
crowd, a jockeying for position, and then silence
once more as everyone waited.

“Kneel.”

The deep voice rippled through him and
he obeyed, a deep satisfaction settling into his
very bones. This was what he had been after
when he had stepped through that door, the
titillation of danger mollycoddled into sex with
a friend. Or rather, sex with a man he would have
as friend, if only Worf would allow him. No!
Close that dream out. Stifle it. Make it stillborn.
Give it up before it could shackle him. Never
dream of a shipmate like that, not even so pos-
sible a partner as Deanna. Worf would never
allow it, leave it at that, let it die, take the moment
that was offered…

“Take me in your mouth.”

He obeyed, taking his time, lingering
over it, drawing the moment out. Head leaning
on muscle-ribbed abdomen, he steadied his
hands on hard, rounded buttocks, the heat from
the body going through him like passion itself,
all hot satin shivers. The smell was new, but not
entirely unfamiliar, hinted at in wrestling ses-
sions in the gym when first this hunger for
Klingon was born. Now it was there in its glory,
full and rich and filling his mind. For a moment
he stared at the cock he was about to take into
himself, engraving it in his memory. Not so
different from a human, save in the pattern of
veins and the size, being slightly larger than
Riker had come across before. Foreskin thicker, darker, but it moved as sweetly, uncovered a head as velvet, a ridge as deeply sensitive. Riker closed his eyes as he absorbed Worf, inhaling him, tasting him, becoming addicted with that single touch. He opened his mouth and throat, swallowing, filling himself up on this feast of cock, stretching himself to take it all in, his own cock pressing damply against a muscular shin, the hard heat a welcome echo. He put his whole being into this pleasure he was giving, receiving pleasure in return as huge hands came to rest with unexpected gentleness upon his nape, fingers tingling through his hair as he was pushed farther onto Worf’s cock.

A jolt ran through the body he was worshipping as a crash went through the room. A cacophony of clinking, then the shattering of glass and the clash of pottery breaking, and then the silence again as the Captain of the Guard stepped back, table cleared. Riker felt himself pushed away and he reluctantly gave in, letting the hardness slip free of him. He was maneuvered onto the table, pushed and pulled this way and that, until he lay on his back, cock standing up straight in the air, a declaration of his lust. Now he was lying lengthwise down the center of the table, on display, as the clearing of the table had insisted. Worf, ponderous and balls pendulous, climbed up over him, kneeling down to shove his cock back into Riker’s mouth, deep into him, pubic hair scratching into Riker’s chin, balls pressing down over his nose, completely enveloping him in Worf’s manhood. Down, and then up, the weight rose over and in Riker, him willingly helpless beneath the other man’s strength. He could feel Worf’s hands upon him, softness of palm, roughness of fingers, ravenously exploring all the softness that was so alien to the Klingon. Those hands came to his cock at last, lifting his balls, playing with them, thumb running up the center to press exquisitely on his cock. All around him, there were men, their breathing united, linked, with their heartbeats, to form a single pulse of life, and he was the heart of it all. He was the core, he was the center, and he was the receptacle, not the one who filled. It was glorious, fantasies made live.

His legs were lifted, bent, his ass exposed, a rough hand rubbing him there, wetting him with spittle, fingers pressing against him but never entering: Worf, keeping his promise not to hurt him too much. No Klingon Warrior kept his nails completely short and blunt… Even without a finger in him, his body opened in its enthusiasm, experience reminding the muscle how good this was going to feel, the pressure of hand on him a thrilling echo of one particularly wild and wonderful night in the past. He groaned and he felt it shudder through Worf, felt the arousal surge in the cock fucking his face. But he was empty, so horribly empty, despite the hardness. It wasn’t where he wanted it to be, it wasn’t where he needed it to be. Wasn’t where it had to be to satisfy the feral growl of the crowd. It grew around them, inundating them, a subvocal demand that it be consummated, that it be complete. They wanted to see it, nothing else would do. Penetration. Ownership. Man over man. Warrior over kah’zhai.

And then Worf was gone and he was being hauled roughly around, until the small of his back was pressed into the edge of the table, his backside suspended in the heat of the air, legs hooked over bulky shoulders, the sharpness of clavicle digging into the back of his knees. Worf was over him, the mountain coming to Mohammed, the only man big enough to make Riker secure enough to feel small and protected. Not cherished, no, not yet, and that fond dream would never be filled, but for now, he was cradled in muscular arms that held him secure, thick torso bearing him down, turgid cock sliding voluptuously up between his cheeks and along the length of his cock, setting him on fire with its heat. Riker let his head fall back, filling his eyes with the brute masculinity of the sigils upon the wall, the weapons phallic and potent, encircling him. He looked back at Worf, seeing the sheen of sweat that matched his own, the darkness of his skin as he flushed with arousal, almost black against Riker’s pinkness.
And then it was there and thought was
gone, driven from his head by the big cock
plunging into him, hot steel tempered in the
coolness of his body. A scream of unadulterated
joy burst from him, and he arched up, reaching
with his hands to grip Worf, curling himself up
until Worf held him close, cock buried deep in
Riker’s body, Riker’s cock nudging at rippled
belly. Riker was close enough to kiss, but dared
not, settling instead for open-mouth licking of
the sculpted face, rubbing against the bristle of
beard, sucking in the tip of a mustache, letting it
go, instinctively avoiding the ear and stretching
up to reach the forehead ridges. A collective
moan issued from the crowd, Worfs own reac-
tion voiced for him. And then Riker’s tongue
was skiing over the ridges, hands ruffling hair,
freeing it from the confines of neatness to wave
and curl around his fingers. All the while, Worf
plunged in and out of him, plundering him for
their pleasure, all of it cycling through them and
through them. Riker felt his own arousal
threaten annihilation, collapsing back onto the
table, lifting his head only far enough to see
Worf’s black hardness disappear into his own
flesh, the whiteness pinked under the unre-
strained thrusting of Worfs body. He was so
huge, now, holding Worfs within, and Worf was
huge and the pleasure kept building, building,
and the sweat was dripping off him to pool on the
table and Worf’s sweat was dripping onto him,
to pool in the middle of his chest. Riker dabbled
a finger in the wetness, sucking on it, the sugar-
sweet taste delighting him. He wondered how
Worf’s cum would taste… Another buck up his
ass, massaging him and Worf was coming, fill-
ing Riker to overflowing, the quiver of cock
triggering him and sending him over the edge,
his white cum leaping from him to linger, shock-
ingsly pale, on Worf’s chest.

And then it was over, and he was lying
there sated, the afterglow fading before it had
begun, melancholy harrying it from him, a
bucket of cold water thrown over a rutting ani-
mal.

He pushed Worf aside and rose to his
feet, his eyes growing haunted. “Holodeck off.
Erase program. Repeat, erase program. Com-
mand override—no record of this program is to
be kept.”

Worf disintegrated before his eyes,
bleeding into the bar, the entirety of his fantasy
dissolving into black and yellow.

“Program erased. No record retained.”

Riker picked his clothes up from their
heap on the floor, beside where his version of
Worf had dropped his own uniform and re-
dressed, very slowly, very methodically. A
shower first, then to the gym, for his daily
session of torture: wrestling with Worf without
once betraying the least bit of desire. No frater-
nizing with those crew directly in an officer’s
command. And no fraternizing with a Klingon
who would see it as being made nothing more
than kah’zhai—pleasure purchase.

Riker paused, tugged his tunic down
firmly, straightened his spine and walked forth
into the utopian brightness of the Enterprise, his
dark secrets once more behind closed doors.