

"Your Place or Mine?" (2011) [ADULT CONTENT] R: AS, AL, X, Het

A UFO story – Will the true purpose of the strange alien device finally be revealed? And will our intrepid adventurers be cured of their gender change? Maybe, maybe not.

The conclusion of the story line started in "*What the Hey?*" and continued in "*Please Pinch Me*".

"Your Place or Mine?"

A UFO Story
by Yuchtar

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Author's Note:

Usual Disclaimer - they're not mine, I'm just
borrowing them.

(And can't blame Matt for this one - this one is
all my own fault)

ADULT CONTENT

"Six months. It's been six months since I turned into a woman and there's no cure in sight."

"Relax, Marcia. They'll figure it out."

Lieutenants Marcia Bradley and Gay Ellis were seated together in the leisure sphere of Moonbase; huddled close, their voices low.

"You don't know what it's been like for me," Bradley groused. "I'm the only female Interceptor pilot. And this goddamned purple wig *itches*."

"Tell me about it." Ellis adjusted her own wig.

"None of the blokes want anything to do with me cause I'm some sort of *freak*, I guess. And none of the gals want to deal with me cause they think I'll be changed back and they don't want some bloke to know all their private secrets!"

"You've got me, darling." She reached across the table top and found the other woman's hand, entwined their fingers.

"And I'm glad of that, but it would be nice to have some *friends*."

"Well, I could have a word with some of the gals, but I really don't think it would do much good, I'm afraid."

"Look, I can't blame them, okay? It just sucks is all."

"Sorry, darling."

Bradley sighed heavily and sipped her tea.

* * *

Colonels Paul Foster and Vinny Lake carried their trays to a table at the Harlington-Straker Studio canteen and sat down.

"Damn it," hissed Lake as he partially stood and readjusted himself before sitting back down.

"What was that about?" Foster wanted to know.

"I sat on my damned balls. Again. How do you stand it?"

Foster snickered. "I don't sit on mine."

"As a woman, I didn't have to worry about that."

"No, you just had to worry about putting an eye out with a nipple."

Lake had just taken a sip of tea, which he now spit all over the table. With a chuckle, he wiped his face with the back of one hand and said, "Damn it, Paul - you made me snort tea out my nose."

"Sorry." Foster grinned, but it was obvious he was not sorry at all. "Any news on that strange object?"

Lake knew which strange object Foster was referring to - it had been on his mind almost 24/7 for the past six months. "No, damn it. Have you heard anything?"

"Nah, don't think they'd tell *me* anything they wouldn't tell *you* first."

"They just *have* to figure it out, Paul. I don't want to stay a man forever."

"Is it that bad?"

"I dunno." He sighed. "My friends don't treat me the same way. And there's all the stares and snickers behind my back. It just sucks."

"Well, have you, uh, picked up any ladies? Or gents, if that's what you prefer."

"Really, Paul? Is that the only road you know?"

"Like it or not, *you* are a guy now. We need it regularly, or we get wound up so tight we can explode. You and I have not been ... *engaging*, so have you found someone else? Or at the very least, have you been, ya know, going solo?"

Lake blinked a few times. "Are you serious?" he finally said.

"Absolutely."

Lake stared hard at him a moment, but he certainly seemed sincere. "Oh, for crying out loud," he finally said. "So, I have to get laid?"

Foster grinned. "Yep."

Lake knew Foster was trying to finagle *himself* into bed, but he was just going to be disappointed. "Okay, I'll see what I can do."

Foster wasn't really all that disappointed that Lake had avoided the bait, but he was curious. What was his friend going to do? Oh, but to be a fly on *that* wall. He sat back and grinned as Lake walked away.

* * *

"Report!"

Chief Wilson was startled by the unexpected demand and banged his head on the underside of the device. "Damn it, Straker, do you have to do that?" he exclaimed, rubbing his sore head.

"What was that, Chief?"

"I ... what now, sir?"

Straker was in a bit of a bad mood, but he had to grin. He softened and asked, "Anything new, Drew?"

The man stood and wiped his brow with a big colorful handkerchief. A big man, he towered over the SHADO Commander. "Well, sir, it is most definitely a time distortion device of some kind. Keely insists it is supposed to slow time like the Timelash device did, but since that one worked *without* altering anyone's gender, *I* think it's primary function is time travel." He placed his huge hands on his hips and added, "I can't figure out how it would alter anyone's gender, though. You know, sir, I think we should try it and see what happens."

"A bit reckless, don't you think?"

Wilson shrugged. "Maybe. But it might be the only way, sir."

Straker crossed his arms and chewed his bottom lip a moment in thoughtful contemplation. "Have we any idea what range this thing has? I mean, I don't want all of

SHADO HQ changing gender. Or the Studio either, for that matter. Hell, it could effect all of freaking Britain for all we know!"

Hands on hips, Wilson agreed. "Has Moonbase been able to determine how close the Lunar Shuttle came to the device when it was activated?"

"Not with any degree of accuracy. Have *you* been able to determine if it really works or not? Did they actually manage to travel back in time?"

"Well ... That is ... Well, no, sir - how the hell am I supposed to figure that out?"

"It's what you do, Chief." Straker reached up and gently squeezed the big man's beefy shoulder. "Get back to it."

He didn't permit himself a grin until he had turned his back on the engineer. A little needling never hurt anyone.

Andrew Wilson still stood with hands on hips as he watched the slender form of his Commander glide away. Once the door had shut behind the other man, Wilson shook his head and ran a hand through his tangle of brown curls. "Son of a bitch," he mumbled, but he was grinning when he said it.

* * *

Colonel Lake and Lieutenant Bradley were seated uncomfortably in Straker's outer office. They could both hear loud voices on the other side of the door, but couldn't make out what was being said. They glanced at each other and then at Miss Ealand, who smiled tightly.

"What did they say to you, Colonel?" Bradley whispered.

"Not a damned thing," Lake whispered back.

They didn't need to whisper, but it just seemed like the thing to do.

"Well, it *must* have something to do with, ya know, our *condition*. Right?"

Lake sighed and ran the fingers of one hand through his short blond hair. "I dunno, Marcia. I'm beginning to think we'll never get turned back."

"Don't say that, Vin. I don't know about you, but I've been miserable."

"Hasn't really been a picnic for me either."

They both sighed. There was silence a moment - on both sides of the door. The door didn't open, though, so Lake asked, "So, how's your, ya know - sex life?"

"Okay. Yours?"

"Eh."

"Not good?"

"Oh, no - pretty great, actually, just, ya know, not ... *often*."

"Heh, Gay wants it every night."

Lake smiled. "Must be tough, then, now that you're separated."

"Little bit. I don't exactly have a lot of friends to talk to. But she has her job up on Moonbase and I wouldn't want to stand in the way of that."

"Hmm, not a whole lot of empathy for a situation like this, huh?"

"So ... you, uh ... you been with a woman?"

"No. You been with a man?"

"No."

Another moment of silence, but this time, the heavy door swung silently open before they could delve more deeply into their current train of thought.

The open door was an invitation, so they both stood, both squared their shoulders, and both tried to enter at once - got stuck in the doorway until Lake stumbled forward into the office.

Ed Straker raised a fine blond eyebrow, Alec Freeman tried to suppress a smirk and Paul Foster actually barked a laugh before he could stop himself. Lake and Bradley had a brief and heated whispered conversation before they both turned towards the man behind the desk.

"You wanted to see us, sir?" Lake said.

Straker allowed himself to grin now. "Yes, I did. Have a seat, please."

Foster was sprawled over one of the cushioned chairs and Freeman was leaning against the drinks dispenser with what looked like a tumbler full of single malt in his hand. There were a couple hard chairs to the side of the office and the sofa. Lake and Bradley sat side by side on the sofa.

"I'm sure you're wondering why I asked you both in here today," Straker began. "And yes, it does have to do with the alien device and your current condition. We don't have a whole lot of answers, though, unfortunately."

He leaned his elbows on the desk and frowned. "Okay, here's the situation. There was a sort of journal in the crashed ufoe and it has finally been deciphered. The device is some sort of time travel facilitator and two aliens have gone

back in time - evidently in an effort to murder my ancestor as a way of getting rid of me."

There was a moment of shocked silence before Lake piped up with, "You have *got* to be bull-shitting me."

Foster laughed. "Honestly, Vinny, you have become *such* a bloke!"

Lake blushed furiously. "I'm sorry, but I can't help it sometimes. But, Ed - do they *really* hate you *that* much?"

Foster squirmed noticeably in his seat but said nothing.

Straker leaned back in his chair again and said, "I think you know the answer to that question as well as I do, Colonel." He picked up a pen and began fiddling with it - something he rarely did and which demonstrated to anyone who knew him

well just how uptight he really was about this situation.

"Now, our guys down in R&D say they think they can reactivate the device. They haven't messed with the controls, so it should be able to send someone back to the same time and place."

When the Commander paused, Bradley spoke up. "Sir? Do you think it will send someone to the exact same time so that the aliens can be dispatched immediately? Or, um, several months later - *after* they've already managed to kill your ancestor?"

"Good question." It was Freeman who spoke up now and he had an edge to his voice that made both Lake and Bradley turn to look at him. He just gestured with his half empty glass and took another gulp.

Lake and Bradley glanced at each other on their way back to face forward again. They figured

the raised voices they'd heard had something to do with the Colonel's attitude.

Straker frowned, but continued. "Probably months later, but they obviously have not found my ancestor yet because ... I'm ... still ... here. And no, we won't have to find my ancestor - we'll just have to find the aliens."

"*We*, sir?"

"Another good question, Lieutenant." Freeman finished the drink and slammed the glass down, walked closer. "You are in top form today, Bradley. Yes, explain to them just what you mean by *we*, Commander."

"Alec," Straker said, the effort to control himself clearly evident in the set of his jaw. "Do you really *want* me to kick your ass?"

Freeman walked over to the desk and leaned down, getting right into the other man's face. "I

really *want* you to snap out of it and forget this crazy scheme of yours."

Straker slowly stood and they both stared at one another for a long moment before Freeman backed down. "I'll just go get another drink, shall I?" he said as he slunk back to the drink dispenser.

Straker tugged on his tunic to remove a non-existent wrinkle and sat down again. "As I was saying," he continued. "Colonel Foster and myself will be making the trip back in time to rescue my ancestor." Before anyone could speak, Straker waved any protest down and continued. "It is my life on the line and if we fail, I'll cease to exist anyway, so I'll have no further argument.

"Now, Keely and Wilson think they can repair the, uh, glitch that causes a gender change, but they are not sure how often this device can be reactivated, so we will be making the journey at

the same time you two will hopefully be changed back."

"Which means," Foster said jovially. "*We* just might arrive back in time as *women*."

Straker sighed. "Yes, well, it's a risk I'm willing to take."

"And since we most likely will be stranded back in time, I don't guess it matters to me if I'm male or female."

Lake stared at Foster a moment. "Well, you seem pretty blasé about all this, Paul."

"Laugh or cry, Vinny. Laugh or cry." He grinned winningly and Lake had to grin back.

"But ..." Lake began, but wasn't sure how to word his question.

"But," Bradley continued. "What is to prevent us from traveling through time along with you and what will prevent everyone else at HQ - or maybe even in all of London - from ... well, changing sex?"

"Thank you, Lieutenant," Lake said.

"Yes, well ..." Straker ran his hands over his face and continued. "A chamber has been constructed similar to the one on the ship in which the device was found. That one was shattered when the ship crashed or we could have just used that one. The theory is, whoever is *inside* the chamber with the device will be transported and those just outside will be ... *altered*. Since we don't know for certain what can be considered a safe distance, we will be transporting everything to a remote location before activation."

There was a moment of silence and Lake ran a hand through his hair. "This all sounds so insane, Ed, but *when* is all this to take place?"

"Next week. We think we have everything ready to go, but we're waiting for a, uh, *linguist* I'm borrowing from another agency. We don't know where or when we'll end up and this guy is supposed to be a linguistic genius. He's the one who translated the journal, by the way - we never would have gotten through it ourselves. He has the necessary clearance, so security won't be a problem. I wanted to give the two of you a heads up so you could ... you know, get your affairs in order. If everything works out as planned, you will both be back to normal next week."

"But you and Paul may be gone forever."

Foster stood and walked over to the drinks dispenser where Freeman handed him a glass.

"Maybe, maybe not," Straker continued. "The aliens may have a way to travel back. But if I cease to exist, considering the role I played in

getting SHADO off the ground, there may never be a SHADO at all, so I'm willing to risk it and so is Paul."

"Slianté," Paul said as he saluted with the glass and took a hefty swig.

* * *

Later that evening, Colonel Lake and Lieutenant Bradley sat together at the local pub, whispering conspiratorially at a corner booth. "Are you gonna try to pick up a guy here?" Lake asked.

"I dunno, you gonna try to pick up a woman?"

Lake shrugged. "It feels weird."

"It might be the last chance we have to experiment."

"Yeah, but ... picking someone up in a bar for a one-night stand? Just doesn't seem right."

They both sighed and sipped their drinks.

"Well," Lake said. "There is the obvious solution."

"Which is?"

"We go home together."

Bradley blinked. "You mean ... the two of us ... together?"

Lake shrugged and grinned.

"Oh, but ... Well ... would you respect me in the morning, Colonel?"

Lake laughed.

They finished their drinks in silence and then went out to Lake's car.

"Your place or mine?" Lake asked.

Bradley laughed. "Mine is closer."

"Yours it is, then."

* * *

Marcia Bradley dropped her keys as she tried to unlock her front door and then fumbled for the light switch once inside. She timidly glanced back and found Vinny Lake smirking. Bradley blushed and Lake laughed.

"I'm a little nervous," Bradley admitted.

"Well, so am I, hon," Lake concurred.

They made their way into the bed room and sat on the bed facing each other.

"Look," Lake said, placing a hand on Bradley's shoulder. "If you're really uncomfortable with

this, I can just go home. I can understand if you don't want to cheat on *Gay*."

"I don't really think *Gay* would mind - she's a, uh, bit of a free spirit, that one." She grinned. "And I am curious and I certainly find you attractive, but ... I need another drink." She rose and went into the next room, returned quickly with two drinks in hand.

Lake took the proffered glass. "Seriously, Marc - er, Marcia - we can just watch TV. I think *Doctor Who* is on tonight, isn't it?"

"Oh, I love *Doctor Who*!" She smiled. "But, stop, darn it."

Lake laughed.

Bradley shoved the Colonel playfully. "We've got time to have mad monkey sex and then some snuggling before *The Doctor* comes on - just take it slow, please." She sipped her drink.

Lake downed his drink in one go, set the glass down on the night table. Then he plucked Bradley's glass from her hand and set it down next to the first one. He ran his hands up from Bradley's breasts to her shoulders, gave a gentle shove and pushed her back onto the bed. He gently pulled her legs up onto the bed and then straddled her waist.

"You have always had a nice tight body, Lieutenant."

"And the consensus around the water cooler, Colonel, has always been that you're hot."

"Really?" Lake chuckled. "Around the water cooler, huh?"

Bradley nodded as Lake slowly pulled off clothing. First a piece of Bradley's clothing and then a piece of his own, alternating until they

were both naked. Then they stared at each other, unsure of what to do next.

"Awkward," Bradley said.

"Yes, just a bit," Lake agreed.

"You are a good looking man, Colonel."

"And you're definitely a good looking woman, Lieutenant. Problem is, I've never been especially attracted to women."

"Nor I men."

"So ... uh ... what should we do now?"

"Well ... we really won't have this opportunity again. I mean, assuming all goes well next week, so, um ... I'm game. You know, if you are."

Lake grinned. "Okay, well, I guess I'll try what ... you know ... what *I* like and see how that goes."

"Ooooh, does that mean I have to try cocksucking?"

"Not if you don't want to."

"Does Paul ...?"

"I don't kiss and tell, Marcia."

They both laughed.

Lake reached down and caressed Bradley's breasts. Gently at first, but then he began to knead. He leaned down and began licking, sucking, gnawing on one nipple and then the other.

Bradley squirmed and moaned and eventually reached out to rake her nails down Lake's back.

Lake arched his back and groaned, growled, bit a little harder, which made Bradley yelp. Lake

grinned and moved slowly down Bradley's body - licking, kissing, kneading. When he got to her crotch, he paused to admire.

"Wow," he said. "Gay really did a good job down here. Wish I could have seen that happening."

Bradley grinned. "First time she did it, I fell asleep."

Lake laughed and then plunged in. Fingers and tongue - and occasionally teeth - exploring territory at once familiar and yet so foreign. He got so lost in the experience - the scent, the feel, the taste, the whole imagining what this had felt like when he was a woman - that he didn't notice the increasing violence of the thrashing beneath him or the rising decibels of the moans from his partner. He was surprised when Bradley let out a bit of a squeal and actually squirted down his throat.

He coughed a bit in surprise and then sat up on his haunches at the foot of the bed.

Once Bradley could breathe properly, she grinned up at Lake.

"What?" Lake wanted to know.

Bradley pointed. "You're, uh ... dripping a bit. There, on your chin."

Lake wiped the back of one hand across his face and grinned wolfishly. "That was unexpected," he said.

"Wouldn't have been if you had bothered to pay attention to me."

"Oh, *sorr-eee*. It's all a bit new to me. Forgive me if I get lost in the sensations."

With a growl, Bradley got up and shoved Lake down onto the bed, straddled him the way he

had done to her. "My turn now," she said. She started much as Lake had - with the breasts. Lake had solid pecs - not much give, so she attacked the little nubs of nipples.

Lake twitched and moaned, reached up and tried to play with Bradley's breasts at the same time, but she flattened herself against his body and trapped the lovely orbs between them.

After a while, Bradley got bored with the now hardened nips and began moving down the well-muscled torso, drooling all over the line of pale hair that led straight down. Down and down to the thick patch of pubic hair. Lake was well and truly hard. Bradley fingered the heavy scrotum as she pondered the proudly erect penis.

"Admiring the view?" Lake asked.

Bradley looked up to find Lake grinning at her. "Not all together sure what to do with this."

"I think you know *exactly* what to do with it, but if you don't want to, I could just *plow* you right now."

"*Plow* me?" She was incredulous. "Did you *really* just say that?"

"Hey, I'm a bloke now - it's expected of me."

"You ..." Bradley smirked, shook her head and growled, attacked the stiff pole of flesh. She planted her lips over the crown and kissed, slowly forcing the tip of her tongue into the drooling piss slit. Lake moaned and squirmed beneath her. She began to swallow, forcing more and more of the throbbing organ down her throat, but she couldn't make it. She gagged and choked and had to pull off to catch a breath.

"Whoo, can't seem to deep throat."

"That's okay. Are you interested in swallowing?"

"I couldn't - oh, you mean ... no, not really."

Lake grabbed her by the hand and tugged her down. "Then come down here and let's do this thing, huh?" He climbed on top of her again and kissed her. She tasted of scotch. Pretty good scotch - with a little of his own juices thrown in. He got her positioned just right and then eased his cock between her legs. She was still good and wet. He took aim and thrust. And then sort of squirmed around and thrust. And then scooted over a bit and ...

"Um, if you don't mind my asking, what are you doing?"

"Well, I'm *trying* to fuck you."

"You're not quite hitting the mark, are you?"

Lake sighed. Then they both giggled.

Finally, Bradley said, "Here, let me help," and guided Lake's rock hard cock to the correct spot. She then thrust herself up and engulfed the turgid pole herself.

"Whoa," Lake murmured. "You've had practice."

"Gay has a ..."

"No need to elaborate." Lake didn't think he wanted to know what Gay had in her private collection, but he could imagine and he was trying hard not to right now. After a few thrusts, though, the imagination switched off and the purely physical took over.

Bradley moaned with each thrust. This was so different from the mutual writhing with Gay. Lake was much more solid than Gay and each plunge was more forceful than the last. She started out caressing Lake as they thrashed about, but ended up gripping the headboard behind her and hanging on for the ride.

Lake drove himself into Bradley's yielding body over and over. This was certainly different from anal sex. Not better, not worse - just different. Bradley was gouging his back again and Lake growled with the pain. He knew it hurt, but it didn't really register as pain. What it did was spur him on to harder, faster, deeper thrusts. Eventually, Bradley gave up with the back scratching and Lake lost himself in the drive to make her come. He was already about to burst, but he was trying not to come till he felt Bradley go over the edge. He never realized how much effort it took to get a woman off - he wasn't sure he could hold back much longer.

Suddenly, Bradley wrapped long legs around Lake's waist and squeezed. "What the ...?" Lake began to ask, but then Bradley's vaginal walls began undulating and her legs clamped tighter and he found himself caught in a vise. His balls were already drawn up into his gut, so with a whoop, Lake went ahead and emptied them into

his constricting partner. Once spent, he collapsed across Bradley's body, but she wasn't letting up.

Bradley was having the most intense orgasm she had ever experienced and had clenched everything to ride out the wave. Eventually, she heard a groan from her partner, followed by a muted plea to, "Let up, will ya? I can't bloody breathe."

"Sorry," she said and then relaxed her legs.

"Oh, God, thanks." Lake rolled off and sprawled next to her. "I seriously think you almost killed me."

"Sorry - got a bit intense."

"Oh yeah, got that right. I could absolutely pass out now."

"We still have to watch The Doctor."

"Oh, sod The Doctor - scoot over here and cuddle."

Bradley settled into Lake's embrace and they fell asleep like that, both utterly spent and contented.

* * *

The next morning at SHADO HQ, they both tried to act like nothing had happened, but they both couldn't help a tiny smirk whenever one caught the other's eye. When they found themselves sitting together outside Straker's office again, they giggled briefly, but then sobered up.

"So, what do you think it's about this time?" Bradley asked.

Lake shrugged. "What else could it be? Maybe they've called off the activation. Or postponed it indefinitely."

"Or maybe I'm about to be court-martialed for fraternizing with a superior officer."

Lake snorted and then chuckled with embarrassment. "Quit it."

"Okay, okay. I'll be good."

They waited another few moments in silence until the door hissed open and they were invited to enter.

Straker was alone this time. Lake and Bradley stood before the big desk and said, "Commander," in unison - both resisted the urge to smirk because Straker did not look to be in a jovial mood.

"Have a seat," Straker said. Once they were seated side by side on the sofa, he continued. "Chief Wilson and Doctor Keely have put the finishing touches on the alien device and it's being loaded aboard a SHADAIR transport as we speak."

When Lake made a motion to speak, Straker waved him back down. "No, Colonel, I have been guaranteed a massive energy source to power the machine as often as needed, so we're going to attempt your transformation today. Is there any reason either of you would rather not make the attempt today?"

The two subordinates looked at each other and then both answered in the negative.

"But where are you going to get the power, sir?" Lake asked.

Straker leaned back in his chair. "From the agency that provided the log translation. They

have assured me they have a powerful reactor that can run the device."

"And you trust them, sir?" Bradley's turn to enquire.

"Oh yes, Lieutenant - they are trustworthy. The President of the United States himself vouches for them. I have worked with them before, but we don't interact much as a rule. And before you ask, I have not yet met the linguist who will accompany Foster and myself back in time, but I've heard nothing but good things about him.

"In any case, Foster - and myself as well, if I'm being truthful - will feel more at ease with the journey if we don't also have to worry about arriving as women."

Lake smirked. "This linguist guy absolutely refused to go if the gender-bending effect wasn't fixed first, didn't he?"

"Yes, he did." An actual smile crept across Straker's face, making his blue eyes sparkle. "Can't say I blame him, though."

The phone buzzed and Straker slapped the speaker button. "Yes?"

"All set, Commander," announced the tinny voice.

"On my way," replied Straker before snapping off the phone. He stood and started pulling on his jacket. "Shall we go?"

"Just like that?" Lake suddenly felt a bit of a panic.

"Is there a problem, Colonel?"

"Well, where are we going?"

"A research facility out on one of the Orkney Islands. We'll be housing the device there for the time being."

Bradley was standing and ready to go - eager to get back to his normal life. Lake looked from one to the other, took a deep breath and stood. "Okay, then, let's get this done."

* * *

The flight seemed to take forever, but it was only a short hop. Then they had some time to kill while the device was installed at the facility. The three of them were waiting in a sort of lounge. Straker seemed relaxed as he sat casually reading a newspaper with his long legs crossed. Lake was pacing the length of the room while Bradley was drumming her manicured nails on a table top.

"Will you STOP that?" Lake finally screamed.

Bradley languidly looked up at the Colonel. She was about to launch into bit of a tirade - it was all over her face - but Straker interrupted.

"Colonel?" he said, just a hint of warning in his voice. He neatly folded the newspaper and set it down, stood, stretched and smoothed the front of his jacket down. "Come with me."

Lake scowled down at Bradley, who mouthed a kiss and grinned, continued to drum her fingers on the table. Lake rolled his eyes and followed the Commander out of the room.

Out in the hall, Straker said, "You need your ass kicked, Colonel."

"Oh?" Lake chuckled.

"I am so looking forward to having you back to normal, Ginny."

"Vinny."

"Vinny, sorry."

"Am I that bad?"

"You're like an adolescent on steroids." He stopped at a door and pushed it open. "Here we are," he announced.

Lake peeked through the door and saw a fully equipped gym. "What the hell?"

"What better place to get your ass kicked than a gym, Colonel?"

"Oh, you are so in for it, sir."

Lake walked past the Commander, who followed behind - both removing their jackets on the way. There was a wrestling mat in the middle of the room and they both headed for it. Tossing the jackets aside, they both pushed up the sleeves of their pull-over shirts.

"Shoes too, Commander," Lake said. "I don't want to be kicked by those steel-toed boots."

Straker just smirked as they both kicked off their shoes and removed their socks.

They circled each other, loosening limbs and popping joints. Lake lunged first, but Straker deftly side-stepped out of the way. Lake caught himself before sprawling onto his face and turned back quickly.

Straker smirked and Lake grinned back. Lake feinted left and dove right, knelt and swept a leg in an effort to fell the Commander, but Straker hopped over the leg and moved out of range.

"You really must do better than that, Colonel," Straker taunted.

"You're quick," Lake observed.

"Uh-huh."

Lake charged again and this time, Straker got a solid hold of his arm and flipped him over.

"Damn," Lake huffed from his position flat on the mat. When he'd caught his breath, he got to his feet again. A little more wary now, Lake walked around his target, trying to find an opening.

When they clashed again, Lake got the upper hand and slammed Straker down on the mat, straddled his chest and leaned on his arms to keep him down, grinned down at his Commander.

Straker raised an eyebrow, but continued to smirk. "You *think* you've got the upper hand, don't you?" he asked.

Lake nodded, but before he could actually say anything, Straker bucked him off and flipped him over ass-backwards onto the mat.

They both lay there a moment - breathing. "This is embarrassing," Lake said.

"Not for me."

Lake laughed and sat up, glanced over at the older man. "No, it wouldn't be."

Straker sat up too and studied his friend.

Lake withstood the scrutiny for a moment, but then he had to come clean. "What if this thing doesn't work, Ed?"

"If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. You are perfectly capable of getting by as a man - it wouldn't be the end of the world."

"Maybe not, but, you know, I had always thought I might have a child some day."

"Men father children all the time, Vinny."

Lake grinned. "Not the same."

"No, but just as wonderful."

Lake smiled. "Thanks, Ed."

"Any time, Ginny."

"Vinny."

Straker stood and extended a hand. "You'll always be Ginny to me, hon."

Lake took the proffered hand and pulled himself up. They collected their shoes and jackets and re-dressed in silence. At the door, Lake stopped Straker with a hand on his arm and asked, "Is there really a possibility you and Paul can be lost back in time?"

"Yes, but it can't be helped - I have to take the risk, but Paul - well, Paul can back out, but we both know Paul, don't we?"

Lake nodded grimly.

"He'll be okay, though - he's nothing if not adaptable."

"And you?"

"Well, like I said - I haven't got a choice. Might be nice to retire, anyway. Unless it's the Dark Ages - that would not be good."

Lake laughed.

* * *

"Okay, to travel through time, the subject - or subjects - would stand - or sit - inside this shielded compartment, but you won't be traveling through time today, will you? So, the two of you will make yourselves comfortable out here while the machine is activated ... um ... from

... here ...” Doctor Evan Keely frowned, ran a large hand over his shaved head. “Um ...”

“What the good doctor is only now realizing is that whoever activates the machine will be affected by the gender changing side-effect, which is why one of you will be flipping the switch.” Andrew Wilson was smirking as he said this - it always amazed him how a so-called genius could figure out the most obscure things and still fail to grasp the obvious.

“But what if there are complications?”

“It’s a switch, Keely - up and down - what could go wrong?”

Straker was grinning, but this was a serious situation, so he didn’t want to make it so obvious. He cleared his throat and tried to look stern before speaking. “The rest of the island has already been evacuated to the mainland and we will leave shortly. One hour after that, one

of you will flip that switch. The machine will be activated and will shut down automatically when it's done. If it doesn't, you will use that radio to call us and we'll take it from there. Any questions?"

Lake and Bradley looked at each other and gawped.

"Um, no," Lake said.

Bradley shook her head. What was there to ask? Either it would work or it wouldn't. Maybe it would explode. Maybe it would alter everyone in a 1000 mile radius. Maybe it would change them back, but the strain would be too much and they would die. Maybe, maybe, maybe - nothing to do but sit back and wait to see.

Straker stood straighter and looked them both in the eye. "Colonel, Lieutenant - good luck."

"Thank you, sir," they replied in unison.

Keely wanted to fuss some more, but Wilson ushered him towards the door. "Good luck, guys," he said over his shoulder.

When they were gone, Lake checked his watch and set his alarm for one hour. They both sighed. Silence.

"So," Bradley said to break the silence. "Did you and Commander Straker ... you know ... do it?"

"What?"

"When he dragged you out of here - did he ravish you?"

"Ohmygawd, no, why would you even ...? You don't think he would ...? Oh, crap, I didn't even think of trying anything."

There was a momentary silence and then they both snickered.

"Life is filled with missed opportunities,"
Bradley mused.

"Oh, he would never have gone for that anyway.
Odd that I didn't even think of trying, though."

"You ready for this?"

"I guess, although, did you hear anything about
them returning for us?"

Bradley laughed. "No, I didn't."

"I guess you could fly us home if it came to
that."

"Yep."

"You think it'll work?"

Bradley sighed. "I dunno - any number of things could go wrong, but ... well, things usually work out, right?"

"Except when they don't."

"Yeah."

They sat in silence - both lost in their own thoughts - until Lake's alarm went off.

Lake shut the ringer off and stood, smoothed down his jacket, took a deep breath. "Here goes." He walked over to the little switch, placed two fingers on it and flicked it up.

Nothing happened.

He frowned, looked to Bradley, who shrugged. "What the ..."

There was a sudden flash of light from inside the compartment, accompanied by a slight

wailing sound and then the whole building shook as if a small earthquake had hit. Lake gripped a nearby counter top to steady himself till it passed.

Soon, the light, the noise and the quake subsided and all was silent again. Lake and Bradley stared at each other a moment.

"Holy shit," Lake said.

Bradley laughed and agreed, "Yeah, right?"

"What do we do now?" Lake was still gripping the counter.

Bradley stood. "I don't know about you, but the stress of this day has just about killed me and since last time this thing didn't do it's thing until we went to sleep - I'm hittin' the hay."

"You can *sleep* now?!"

"Can't you?"

Lake thought a moment, released the counter and shrugged. "Yeah, maybe."

"C'mon, crew quarters are this way."

Lake followed. "How do you know where the crew quarters are?"

"I've been here before - had to fly several transports here a couple years ago."

They found a room with a nice large bed. "Shall we snuggle?" Lake asked.

"Oh yeah, so long as that's all we do - I really am beat."

"Me too, actually. I wasn't really before, but now - man, I'm dead on my feet."

The both collapsed onto the bed and more or less passed out in each other's arms, hopeful that the morning would find them both put to rights.

END