
Tom Wreke has half undone his orange jumpsuit, tying the arms around his waist. He's got grease and oil smeared across the bridge of his nose and the side of his face, as he rubs the back of his arm against his forehead, sending sweat droplets splattering to the floor of the generator room.

He leans back on his haunches, letting out a sigh of relief- before he jolts at the touch of a cool hand against his shoulder.

TOM WREKE

Jesus Christ!

RACHAEL RUNNING

There's no need to take the Lord's name in vain.

Her tone is a curious mix between haughty and amused, as she pulls her hand away to let Tom turnaround properly. He's undoing the tied arms of his jumpsuit from his waist, pulling them free.

Rachael watches him do so silently.

TOM WREKE

My apologies, ma'am- you took me by surprise, that's all.

Rachael rolls her eyes.

Tom is having a little difficulty shimmying back into his uniform, searching for the other arm like a child trying to slip on his winter coat.

RACHAEL RUNNING

You don't need to bother covering up.

Tom looks up then, eyebrows furrowed in confusion, head drawing back and to the side slightly as he looks at her questioningly. He pauses, one arm halfway shoved through its corresponding sleeve.

The red lighting of the generator room glints off of a shiny golden crucifix around Rachael's neck.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Not when you've already done what you have. I heard what you and Miranda were doing last Sunday.

Tom freezes then, eyes wide- deer caught in the headlights. He lets the sleeve drop as his fingers go slack, mouth opening as if to explain himself.

Rachael cuts him off before he has the chance to.

RACHAEL RUNNING

In the chapel, really?

Rachael is approaching Tom, her boots tread heavy on the floor.

For every step forward she takes, Tom staggers one backwards, hands held in front of himself near placatingly.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Some might call that desecration.

Tom's back hits a wall, and he's hyperventilating. The vent overhead blows down cool air over the two of them, flicking Rachael's bright blonde hair over her shoulder. The shadows it casts are serpentine.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Sacrilegious, even.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Certainly, it ruins the sanctum of marriage.

Her finger raises to press against his sternum, and Tom swallows dryly, eyes flickering from looking at her face and the finger jabbing against his chest.

He's holding his breath, afraid to move to breathe.

RACHAEL RUNNING

You're lucky I won't write you up for it.

Her hand curls around the back of Tom's neck- pressing hard over his carotid. Tom gasps, and she squeezes, crushing the noise down.

RACHAEL RUNNING

That is- if you do me a favour.

Tom nods mutely, pupils blown as adrenaline courses through his body- leaving him shaky, sweaty. The heat of the generator room doesn't help. His legs tremble slightly.

RACHAEL RUNNING

You're going to obtain Specialist Maxwell's spare harddrive.

She's leaning in close to Tom, nearly whispering her lines. Her voice is venomous, barely tempering her hatred.

RACHAEL RUNNING

You're going to bring it to me- to take care of some loose ends.

Her nails dig into his skin, leaving raised red lines in their wake. Tom chokes out a gurgled noise that might be assent.

RACHAEL RUNNING

And you're going to tell no one of anything that's transpired in this room- not even Dr. Laurel Scoresby, do you understand me?

Tom nods mutely, best he can- range of motion limited by her grip around his neck.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Good.

She drops him abruptly, and Tom gasps for air, hands going to his neck, as she sneers down the bridge of her nose at him, crumpled up in a heap against the ground as his back slides against the hot metal to sit, sniffing and choking.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Get out of my sight. Consider yourself *lucky* I haven't told your wife that you were conducting yourself shamelessly before the altar.

Tom swallows half of a hysterical laugh that sounds like a sob- and he's grabbing his toolbox blindly, shovelling spare wrenches and rulers back into the container, and a nail gun that he nearly chips a nail on, before running out of the room.

Rachael Running's blonde hair is still immaculately flaxen, years later- but there are smile lines etched at the corner of her mouth that betray her age. She gestures broadly around the room with one arm.

RACHAEL RUNNING

These are your personal quarters- near to the main control complex for the onboard A.I, of course.

Dave's mouth is wide open, eyes bright as he stares around. It's luxurious, if impersonal- white and silvered steel dominating the space.

DAVE FENNE

Everything on board has been so- *impressive*, thus far.

RACHAEL RUNNING

We try our best, on the ISS Pathfinder.

She flashes him an insincere smile. Dave is too busy examining a tall wall of plaques near a white dresser to catch it, squinting at the names etched in tiny print.

DAVE FENNE

Who- held this position before me?

RACHAEL RUNNING

A Mr. Lloyd Maxwell. He was dismissed summarily, due to... unorthodox views on how to handle A.I development.

Rachael looks at Dave expectantly, mouth scrunches up in a moue of distaste.

RACHAEL RUNNING

But I don't think that we'll run into any of those difficulties this time around, will we?

Dave falters for a moment, before shaking his head enthusiastically no.

DAVE FENNE

Of course not! It's- a pleasure to serve. To put to good use my- God given affinity for computer science- and further our scientific understanding of the universe's oddities.

He flashes a bright grin, and Rachael mirrors it.

RACHAEL RUNNING

I think you'll find yourself among similarly inclined individuals on board, Specialist Fenne.

RACHAEL RUNNING

Don't disappoint.

As she exits the room, boots tread still loud against the ground- Dave closes the door behind her. He waits until he can no longer hear her steps- and then, mouthing the words inaudibly:

DAVE FENNE

I'm going to make every last one of you *pay*.
