

THE
ALTERNATES
AN ORPHANS STORY

SCRIPT BY
STEPAN CHERNYSHEV

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
ZACHARY FORTAIS-GOMM
JAMES BARBAROSSA

WILD TALES BY
ZACHARY FORTAIS-GOMM

WILD TALES

ALLIANCE INTELLIGENCE TRANSCRIPTION UNDERGROUND BROADCAST - "WILD TALES: THE ALTERNATES"

::BEGIN TRANSCRIPTION::

[[INSIDE - QUIET ROOM]]

[[RADIO EQUIPMENT SCANNING FREQUENCIES]]

[[WILD TALES IS PICKED UP]]

[[SPACE LOUNGE MUSIC PLAYING]]

Baz Goodrich: Hello Wild Space! Good morning, afternoon, and night, to all you lazy old natural borns.

Charles Pritchett: And joyous freedom to all your industrious clones out there making your way in the cold nothingness of space.

BG: I'm Baz Goodrich.

CP: And I'm Charles Pritchett, welcoming you-

BOTH: ...to Wild Tales!

[[BOTH LAUGH]]

BG: This is the only Wild Space broadcast where you can get the latest and greatest stories from around the galaxy.

CP: Whether they be Alliance or Collective, fact or fiction, they are sure to thrill and delight!

BG: What have we got in store for our dear listeners this week, Charles?

CP: Oh, well! Let me tell you! Ahh... this one has been dug deep out of the ancient collective archives for your listening pleasure.

BG: Ooh, yes it has! We all think we know the story of how clones are made, but do we really? Haven't you always wondered just how the proverbial sausage is made?

CP: Find out in: The Alternates, submitted by Stepan Chernyshev!

BG: Ooh, I just can't wait.

CP: Enjoy!

EPISODE ONE: THE ALTERNATES

[[WILD TALES FADES OUT]]

[[COMPUTER FIRING UP AND INPUTTING CODE]]

[[CONFIRMING BEEP]]

Computer: Access... Report Number Eight-Zero-Three-Two-One-One. The report date... is... REDACTED... and is by... Head Engineer... Olivia Platon. Play report.

[[REPORT BLEEPS]]

Olivia Platon: This is Olivia Platon, Head Engineer on Project Exchange. After a series of incidents at remote sites, as a result of which the representatives of certain strains were seriously injured or destroyed, Command has instructed us to develop a solution that allows some abilities of one clone strain... to be activated in another, before full replacements arrive.

[[PAUSING]]

OP: Our first goal... is to transplant the basic skills and knowledge of one strain's genome... into another. We'll begin with Noras and Bazes. It is assumed that the secondary skill will be awakened using a specially designed serum which will stimulate certain areas of the brain, and temporarily unlock the relevant knowledge. At the moment it's difficult to predict about the possible negative consequences... but if the experiment is successful we can consider modifying all of the current strains.

[[RECORDING DEVICE BLEEPS]]

OP (recording): State your clone strain name.

Nora (recording): Uh- gah- um... N- Nora...

OP: How're you feeling?

N: I've g- I've got a headache... bad one...

OP: Hmm...

[[PAUSING]]

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OP: And any other symptoms?

N: Um... W- yeah, I feel dizzy, the... the more I try to focus- oof- um... the worse it gets.

OP: Interesting... But I have you ask you to concentrate for a little while longer. What's your strain's specialty?

[[NORA'S WINCING AND STRAINING TO SPEAK INCREASES]]

N: Uh... yeah... um... We can, uh, effectively manage small teams... uh, execute orders... nng, get... get things done.

OP: Excellent. Do you have any other specialist skills?

[[NORA STIFLES A CRY IN PAIN]]

N: I uh, I- I... I know basic tactics and- argh! Guh...

OP: And what?

N: Please, can we, can we stop? I feel really sick...

OP: Nora. Concentration. What other abilities do you have?

[[NORA GETS ANGRY]]

N: I'm not sure! I... I think I... I can... program Reasoning Units, and uh... ah... please, pl- please, it hurts!

OP: How do you program a Reasoning Unit, Nora?

N: I don't know, it's hazy!

OP: Concentrate!

N: You have to have... uh... uh... ah!

[[NORA SCREAMS IN PAIN]]

[[RECORDING ENDS]]

[[OLIVIA SIGHING]]

OP: I've spoken with some other subjects and these results are consistent across the entire test group.

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[[SIGHING]]

OP: Common symptoms were: Nose bleeds, nausea, and complete loss of orientation. Apparently...due to the increased amount of information, they are having difficulty with its assimilation.

[[OLIVIA TAKES A DEEP BREATH]]

OP: There is... some hope, however, as all strains showed, at least, a base level of retention. The problem lies in mitigating the side effects. It was decided to increase the duration of induction, and begin expanding our remit to more strains.

[[RESETTING HER THOUGHTS]]

OP: This will allow us to test their resilience. The... failed batch... was liquidated, due to their inability to maintain a stable state.

[[RECORDING DEVICE BLEEPS]]

OP (recording): State your clone strain name.

William (recording): William.

OP: How're you feeling, William? Have you experienced any headaches or dizziness since we injected you?

W: Uh, no ma'am! I'm feeling A-OK! I mean... I'm a little nervous, since it's my first cycle, so yeah... uh.. but no. No no no, I'm alright otherwise.

OP: Good... that's good... so! Tell me! What's your strain's speciality?

W: Ah, well, Williams are the beating heart of ground combat, foot soldiers... we're the brawn behind the Collective brain! I'm good with weapons, I've hand-to-hand combat skills, and as you can see, I'm... ah-hah... physically... bigger, and more... sturdy... than the other clones.

[[WILLIAM LAUGHS SUGGESTIVELY]]

[[OLIVIA REACTS COLDLY]]

OP: Yes. I see.

W: Ah, fuckinell.

OP: Are you able to take command of a group?

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W: I'm sorry ma'am, I'm afraid you must have be confused with a Nora Unit.

OP: No, I mean hypothetically.

W: Uh...

OP: Let's assume that your squad was left without officers. D'you think you'd be able to temporarily lead a group?

W: I mean... I'll do my best, ma'am, but in such a situation it would be reasonable to choose a Diana, or even an Olivia, to be temporary leader, not a William, not... not me!

[[RECORDING ENDS]]

OP: We were never able to fully solve this one... the results varied drastically. Some units saw no tangible difference from their control group counterparts, and others had a short burst of recall, which was quickly accompanied by the same negative side effects.

[[PAUSING]]

OP: I can conclude that the refinement of existing strains, is an impossibility... however, Project Exchange has been debriefed about developing a new clone strain... one with a wide range of general skills from all existing strains. Of course, this new unit will not become a universal solution, but in urgent circumstances take on some of the functions of other units...

[[SIGHING, NONPLUSSED]]

OP: It was at this point that... Command... became very interested in our work, and we were... "fortunate enough" to have a natural born, named "[REDACTED BEEP]-t" join our team, in a... "leadership position." A new strain is a much more attractive prospect than simple genetic modification.

[[SIGHING]]

OP: Charleses showed the best ability to retain secondary knowledge. So... it was decided that their genome would be the basis for this new strain. On the other hand, we noticed female strains withstood the secondary side effects easier, so it was decided to change the sex of the strain to female. There were... several problems to overcome.

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[[SIGHING, ANNOYED]]

OP: "Fortunately", the natural born [[REDACTED BEEP]]-t was well versed in the process of strain creation, and could "guide" the team through the process. Our work was finally rewarded when we were presented with a new strain. It was decided to name the new strain using the same first letter as the strain whose genome they were based on. The name "Cordelia" was chosen. The following... is an excerpt from the first ever interview with the first new strain.

[[RECORDING DEVICE BLEEPS]]

OP (recording): State your clone strain name.

Cordelia (recording): You know my name.

OP: I beg your pardon?

C: I'm a Cordelia.

OP: Next time, watch your tongue. I am your rank superior, don't forget that.

C: Why does it matter? You're an Olivia, yes?

[[OLIVIA IS STRUCK SILENT]]

C: I have all your abilities, and more.

OP: I'm not just "an Olivia". My name is Olivia Platon.

[[CORDELIA SCOFFS AND CHUCKLES]]

OP: Your skills are basic. You could never reach my skill level. You are designed to be limited.

[[CORDELIA MOCKS IN A SING-SONG TONE]]

C: Can you handle a blaster? No? I can. Can you reprogram an Attack Drone? No? Heh... I can. Pfft... you're the one who's limited.

OP: Don't be under any illusions, you will only be what the Collective sees fit, the same as the rest of us.

C:... we'll see.

WILD TALES

[[RECORDING AND REPORT ENDS]]

Computer: End... Report Number... Eight-Zero-Three-Two-One-One.

[[WILD TALES MUSIC FADES BACK IN]]

BG: Phwoar! What an ending!

*CP: I'll say, really sent the... hairs on the back of my neck straight up!
How interesting to learn about the origins of our versatile Cordelias!*

*BG: Hah, who knows that they were based on the Charles strain? You'd
never have known... Cordelias are nowhere near as thick!*

CP: Hahaha, easy there, Code-For-Brains.

[[BOTH CHUCKLE]]

BG: Thank you for tuning in!

CP: Be sure to keep safe out there in the void!

BG: Until next week... this is Wild Outpost One... signing off!

BOTH: Goodbye!

::END TRANSCRIPTION::

::AUTOMATIC FORWARD TO - CMDR. X TEMUARA::