

Sample #2 from *The Dead Kind*

Luger broke the silence. "Do any of you have any idea how this could have happened?" His strong frame with folded arms and brown bearded face looked around at the bewildered expressions. He was no-nonsense with hard eyes under a shaggy head of hair. "Who set the coordinates when Felix got jettisoned?" No one responded. Glances wandered from face to floor. "No one's getting busted; we're the only ones who know he got sent out. It's as much my skin as anyone's. We broke protocol, and I'm running this dig."

Trevor mumbled, "We never should have shot him out, man." He was long and his dark, slightly curly hair thinned near the back and around the hairline.

Stan sat backward in his seat leaning forward with his arms crossed over the backrest. "It's what he wanted. The man had no family or next of kin."

"So, we shot him out like trash?" Trevor's tone became heated.

"Come on, how many times did he say it was the ultimate way to go?" countered Stan.

Ramon drew a finger along the tabletop. Without looking up he said, "Felix loved it out there. It's like he was *from* outer space."

"Never mind all that," said Carl, itching his closely cropped black hair. "The issue is we went against regulations on what to do with a dead crew member -"

"We're talking about a dead man's last wish, Carl," argued Stan.

"If we took him back, none of this would be an issue," said Carl.

"You mean besides the other non-regulation stuff we've been up to," said Stan.

"Oi," said Alexei, with his hands raised, "we're taking advantage of all the same loopholes as all the other crews."

Carl raised his arm indicating the outside. "They're not shucking bodies -"

"Hey, hey, hey," shouted Luger with his palms up. "We did what we did, whether regulations say we did it wrong or not. What's throwing me here is how he ended up at our dig site when we shot him out 60 degrees the other way over a month ago."