

## Test Chapter 1: Lab Rat

Daniel woke up with a start as a Rojovian woman was adjusting equipment beside his bed. His breath caught and his hands clenched at the sight of her, but she wore a nurse's coveralls. A hospital? Daniel saw the IV lines plugged into his left arm, his right in a cast, and a line running directly to his chest. A military hospital? If so, he was in some type of isolation, at least judging by the opaque mnemonic curtain surrounding his bed and instruments. He could hear others talking on his right side and across a short distance.

The Rojovian turned and saw him looking at her. She looked like an aide or technician. *Not the enemy.*

"Sorry, sir. I hope I didn't wake you, lieutenant." She had green eyes surrounded by the red-and-yellow scales that covered her bald head and body. Pretty, gentle eyes – rounded pupils, which strangely made them look more out of place surrounded by her facial scales.

Daniel shook his head. By now, snatches from his dream floated away, leaving him anxious and fascinated.

"Nah, I'm fine." His voice was muddled and he realized he was wearing a mask blowing air into his lungs. He took it off and noticed her nametag – 'Meharabaan'. He thought that translated as "kind" or something similar.

"No, no," she said, reaching to take his mask. "You have to keep wearing it."

Daniel took a deep breath, feeling no discomfort or difficulty. "Really, I'm fine, thank you." He pointed to his chest and the line running to it. "Any idea how this happened?"

Meharabaan shook her head, her eyes widening for a moment before looking away. She pressed a button beside his bed. "I don't know anything. But you don't remember?"

**Commented [TLL1]:** Nice chapter name if you actually choose to display them :D  
I'm immediately intrigued.

**Commented [TLL2]:** Word check. This is like a memory rubric.

**Commented [TLL3]:** If this is the beginning of the book and this is the first alien we're seeing, then we need more description than this. It's good that we see Daniel at first think she's the enemy, then realizes she isn't. That gives us some clues about tensions between the species. But some more description would be nice.

**Commented [TLL4]:** How many fingers does she have? Are they scaled, too? Red or yellow or both?

**Commented [TLL5]:** With her thumb? does she have a thumb? Does she have two thumbs?

