Ocean Blue

by Child_of_the_Fae

Summary

The Blue Paladin before Lance was a Gem by the name of Lapis Lazuli, who Zarkon treated as a daughter before he turned against the Paladins and began conquering the universe, forcing Lazuli to flee to Earth with other Gems. Lance keeps it a secret that he is the son of that Lapis Lazuli, a half-Gem hybrid with his mother's Gem. But it doesn't stay secret for long and he ends up with both the Galra and the Gem race after him.

Notes

I’ve seen a lot of Gem AUs for Voltron, but they’re usually ones where all of the characters are Gems themselves, but I thought it might be interesting if the Gem race just existed in the Voltron universe without being combined with the characters, maybe even as an opposing force to the Galra. I’ve already made a story with that sort of idea called ‘Broken Programming’, where the Galra created the Gems only to have the Gems turn on them, but this story won’t be in the same setting as the Gems aren’t going to be a creation of the Galra for story reasons. I’ve also seen some ‘secret alien Lance’ AUs in the fandom as well which I enjoy, so I’ve decided to combine these ideas into a story. The Lapis Lazuli in this story and other Gem who share character names are not the same one as from Steven Universe, to avoid confusion, her shorted name will be Lazuli instead of Lapis.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Lapis Lazuli gripped her bayard tightly as she shot at the incoming enemy, her quintessence-fuelled arrows piercing straight through their armour, delivering a shot that would permanently incapacitate them but not kill them, she was too well trained to let that happen. Behind her, a Blue Pearl, her Pearl, helped as many people load into the Blue Lion as could fit while Lazuli stood guard. Elsewhere on the battlefield, Lazuli spotted the other Gems who followed her lead, herding the remaining people onto ships to escape the oncoming destruction, while others protected them like Lazuli was doing.

“How are we doing?” Lazuli asked into the com in her helmet.

“We’re almost there.” Came the reply. “Everyone in the city is almost on the ships.”

“Some of us are already full, we need to lift off now, otherwise we might not be able to.” Came another voice.

“Negative, Peridot.” Lazuli commanded as she shot down another soldier. “If you lift off now, you’ll just get shot down by fighter ships, we stand a better chance making a brake through their forces as one, with my Lion’s weapons.”

“Then get on you Lion and let’s get out of here.” Peridot said, desperation clear in her voice.

A distant rumble gave clue as to the cause of her worry.

“We haven’t got everyone onto ships yet.” Another Gem, Carnelian, argued through the coms. “They’ll perish if we leave them.”

“We’ll all perish, including those already on the ships, if we don’t leave now. My probes say he’s coming.” Peridot stressed.

“No being left behind, that’s one of the first things Zarkon taught me.” Lazuli managed to keep her voice steady.

“May I remind you, that Zarkon is the cause of all this!” Peridot yelled.

“Citrine?” Lapis asked through the coms.

“Just a few more left, then we can take off.” The Gem replied.

“Just a few more ticks then, we can manage that.” Lazuli said confidently.

“I don’t think we have a few more ticks.” The voice of her Pearl said through the coms gravely.

Lazuli looked over to her Pearl, who was standing at the entrance to her Lion, but Pearl wasn’t looking at her, she was looking at something behind her. So, Lazuli swung around to face whatever threat her Pearl saw.

If Lazuli had a heart, it would have stopped when she saw the imposing figure striding through the dust and smoke of the battlefield towards her, giving no mind to the chaos going on around him, and the multiple failed attempts on his life that were staved off by his soldiers that followed him.

“Not one step closer, traitor!” Lazuli commanded, voice full of rage.
Lazuli put her hand to her Gem on her thigh and pulled out an arrow, this one much different to the ones her bayard produced automatically, and notched it in her bow, aiming it directly at Zarkon.

“Traitor?” Zarkon asked as if they weren’t in the middle of a battle. “You’re the one pointing your weapon at your leader.”

“You’re not my leader anymore.” Lazuli hissed. “Not after you turned on us, went against the Paladin’s code, something you taught me back when I thought it meant something to you. Not after what you did to the others.”

“I gave them their chance, but they wasted it and so suffered the consequences.” Zarkon replied without remorse.

“Is that what you’ve come to do to me, then?” Lazuli asked, struggling to keep her voice even. “I’ve already wasted my ‘chance’ after all.”

“You are my daughter, Lazuli, we do not have to fight.” Zarkon told her.

“Do not call me that!” Lazuli cried, tears falling from her eyes unbidden. “You’ve lost the right to call me that. You’re not that man I thought worthy of that name! I wonder if you ever were.”

“I will not fight you, daughter.” Zarkon insisted. “But I will not let you get in my way either. Turn over your Lion!” He took a step towards her.

“Stay back!” Lazuli demanded, drawing the string of her bow tight and stepping back. “I will use this.” Her voice shook.

“If you think you can, then do it, prove your worth.” Zarkon said, continuing to move forward.

Lazuli aimed right at Zarkon’s head, a sure kill shot, and she never missed. But her hands shook and kept tight hold of the arrow, not letting it fly towards the one who taught her the meaning of the word father and then became it.

“Lazuli! What are you waiting for? Shoot him! He’ll shatter you!” A voice yelled at her, similar statements echoing it.

But Lazuli only continued to walk backwards, closer and closer to her Lion, instead of firing her arrow at Zarkon, even though he was giving her a clear shot

Then, another voice came. “Everyone’s on the ships! Let’s get out of here!”

This snapped Lapis to life. She still couldn’t find the will to kill Zarkon, but she had to do something. So, the quickly switched her aim to right at his feet and let the arrow fly, it impacted against the ground in front of Zarkon and ground flew everywhere.

With Zarkon distracted, Lazuli quickly turned around and ran the rest of the way back to the Blue Lion, running into the cramped cockpit and grabbing hold of the controls.

“Okay, let’s get out of here!” Lazuli commanded the Gems at the helm of the other ships.

“Aye, aye, captain!” Citrine replied jovially.

“About time.” Peridot said in relief.

With a roar, the Blue Lion took to the skies, the other ships following it in a V-formation. From the falling dust, Zarkon watched the blue lion fly with a frown.
“So be it.” He said.

It took considerable force to break through the blockade the Galra had set around the planet, many of the ships were heavily damaged in the process, but they eventually got through. But the Galra were still on their tails.

“King Alfor, this is Lapis Lazuli, do you read.” Lazuli spoke into her helmet.

“I am here, Blue Paladin.” King Alfor replied tiredly. “You-”

“We need a wormhole back to Altea right away.” Lazuli felt bad for interrupting the king, but she was running on high emotions and it was urgent. “We’ve got Galra on our tail and many injured.”

“I’m afraid I can’t do that, Lazuli.” The king replied.

Lazuli’s eyes widened, the king almost never addressed her informally, even at her insistence.

“What do you mean?” Lazuli asked.

“Altea...” The king paused. “Altea has fallen.”

“What?” Lazuli cried. “Why did you not call on me?”

“It was already too late.” Alfor informed her. “Without the other Paladins, Voltron would be useless against Zarkon.”

“My crew could be stand-ins for the other Paladins, we can still form Voltron.” Lazuli insisted.

Her Gems wouldn’t be as good as the real Paladin, but it was better in nothing in her eyes.

“No, we cannot beat Zarkon.” King Alfor told her. “And if we continue to fight with the Lions, they will only fall into Zarkon’s hands. I have already sent the other Lions away, and as you king, I order you to take the Blue Lion somewhere safe.”

“What part of ‘Galra on our tail’ don’t you understand.” Lazuli’s training stopped her from falling into hysterics.

“The Blue Lion has its own teluduv, it will take you to safety.” Alfor reminded her.

“But that would mean-”

“You have your orders, protect the Blue Lion at all costs.”

Communication then cut out.

“Are you really going to leave them behind?” Pearl asked Lazuli.

Lazuli looked at her, and then at the other aliens stuffed into the cockpit with her, who looked back at her with worry, having overheard the conversation.

Lazuli closed her eyes, calming herself.

“No.” She said with determination, opening her eyes. “No being left behind.” She changed her com signal back to the other ships. “Peridot, it’s a no go on the wormhole. We need another way to outrun these Galra.”
“I’ll see what I can do.” Peridot replied.

Lazuli sighed as the Blue Lion and the other ships finally touched down on a planet, thanks to Peridot’s quick thinking, they had escaped the Galra for the moment. But Lazuli knew Zarkon, and knew their safety on this planet was only temporary.

Lazuli opened up the Blue Lion and everyone inside filed out, including herself, the aliens she had rescue ran out to meet the other aliens as they ran out of their own ships. Lazuli’s Gems walked out of the ships and went over to her.

“So, what are we going to do?” Citrine asked.

“Altea has fallen and I’ve been ordered to take the Blue Lion out of Zarkon’s reach.” Lazuli explained to them. “King Alfor’s already sent away the other Lions.”

“What? But Volton is the best way to defeat Zarkon!” Exclaimed Carnelian.

“The other lions don’t have pilots anymore.” Peridot reminded the larger Gem. “Uh, sorry.” She said to Lazuli.

“It’s alright.” Lazuli told her. “I don’t know why the king sent the Lions away rather than finding new pilots, but what’s done is done, Voltron can no longer be formed.”

“What are you going to do with your Lion?” Pearl asked.

“Without the other Lions, she won’t stand much of a chance against the Galra, who will be looking for her. I guess I’ll have no choice but to follow orders and hide her away.” Lazuli said sadly.

“And what of you?” Asked, the usually silent, Onyx.

“I’m not going to stop fighting, Lion or no Lion.” Lazuli promised. “But, even without my Lion, Zarkon’s going to be after me, and anyone helping me.” She warned.

“I’m with you, no matter the consequences, I always have been.” Blue Pearl told her.

“We’ve been through so much together, we’re not going to run while you face Zarkon.” Citrine said.

“There isn’t nothing Zarkon can do that the Diamonds wouldn’t already do to us.” Carnelian said with a shrug. “So, what’s the point in being scared?”

Howlite nodded in agreement.

“I’m more likely to be shattered on my own anyway, so I’ll stay with the team.” Peridot said.

Lazuli sighed. “Thank you.” She said.

“So, what’s the plan?” Citrine asked again.

“First, I’ll need to make the Blue Lion be spotted on purpose to lead the Galra away from finding this planet, then I’ll need to hide it on a planet far out of the Galra’s reach.” Lazuli formulated.

“Already on it.” Peridot said, bringing out her star maps.
“Good.” Lazuli said. “We can work out what to do next once the Lion is hidden.”

“I think I’ve found a place.” Peridot said after a while of searching. “It’s far away and right smack in the middle of a dead zone.”

“Perfect.” Lazuli said. “Let’s go.”

Lazuli and her crew made their way back towards the Blue Lion.

“Wait! Blue Paladin!” A voice called out.

Lazuli and her crew turned around to see the king of the aliens they had rescued rushing towards them.

“I cannot thank all of you enough for what you have done for my people.” The king said. “But please, take these gifts as a token of our gratitude, and know that will always have a place with us.”

Another of the aliens came forward and presented each of the Gems with necklaces carved with incredible detail.

“Thank you.” Lazuli said with a bow. “We must leave now. I wish you luck with rebuilding your new home.”

“And I hope you find safety.” The king said in return.

The Gems filed into the small passenger area in the body of the Blue Lion while Lazuli settled into the cockpit, pushing the controls and taking off.

Lazuli sighed as she placed her helmet into the tube with the rest of her armour and closed the tube, sealing it away for when it was needed again, leaving her in the clothes her projected form provided her. She then went into the cockpit of her lion one final time and placed her bayard into a small compartment. She then left her Lion, who closed its mouth and sat up once she exited, and she heard a whine inside her mind.

“I know girl.” Lazuli looked up at her Lion. “I don’t want this either. But I can’t let him get his hands on you.”

The Blue Lion gave a final whine before going silent and putting up its particle barrier.

With that done, Lazuli turned to the body of water that was next to her Lion, with a wave of her hands, it formed into stairs that she used to climb out of the cave she had hidden her Lion in. Her team stood outside waiting for her.

“Howlite.” Lazuli said to the Gem.

Howlite nodded and waved her arms, and there was a rumble inside the caves as the path to the Blue Lion was sealed.

Lazuli sighed before turning to her crew. “How is progress going on our new home and the warp pad?” She asked.

“It’s slow.” Peridot answered. “We don’t have the usual resources, but I’m confident we can do it. Speaking of which, I need some help gathering some things.”
“Let’s go.” Carnelian said, following after Peridot.

Howlite and Citrine followed suit.

Lazuli decided to hang back and look over the scenery, sitting on the ledge of a cliff.

It had been a couple of quintants since they had arrived on the backwater planet where they were to hide the Blue Lion, which the Gems had also decided to make their new home planet, considering Altea was gone. Sentient life here was primitive, the natives having only just learnt to master the making of metals into weapons and lived in small communities, their forms of communication very simple. They were afraid of the Gems when they first arrived, but quickly accepted them when the Gems presented them with gifts, Citrine had joked that perhaps the natives view them as Gods, considering they descended from the stars in a giant lion of metal.

“Are you alright, Lazuli?” Blue Pearl asked, sitting beside her.

“I’m fine.” Was Lazuli’s automatic reply.

“Okay. Now, how about you tell me how you’re really feeling?” Blue Pearl said patiently.

“I-”

“I was literally created for you, Lazuli, I know you. There’s no way that you’re ‘fine’ after everything that’s happened.” Blue Pearl interrupted.

Lazuli sighed in defeat.

“Everything’s happened so fast that I haven’t really given myself time to fully come to terms with what’s happened.” She admitted. “Zarkon betrayed us, the other Paladins are gone, the Lions scattered, Altea has fallen, and we’re left hiding out on some planet in the middle of a dead zone.”

“Well, things are going to be slow here for a while. So, you’ll have time to catch up with everything. Anything you want to talk about now?” Blue Pearl asked.

“It’s just, I’m still having a hard time believing that Zarkon did all this, I feel like this is all some punishment from the Diamonds for abandoning them for the Paladins.” Lazuli explained to her Pearl. “Zarkon took me from them and taught me that there was more to life than just serving my Diamond, opened my eyes to things I never thought possible, and protected me when my Diamond sent Howlite and the others to ‘rescue’ me. And when I was chosen to be the Blue Paladin, he looked at me like he was the proudest being in the universe. I can’t believe that he, and the Zarkon that killed my teammates and slaughtered so many innocence for no reason, could possibly be the same person.”

Blue Pearl rubbed Lazuli’s back as she looked out into the distance.

“There were signs.” Blue Pearl admitted. “The way he just took you, when I finally found you again I was afraid he had shattered you. And you can’t tell me that Howlite and the others wouldn’t have ended up shattered if you hadn’t got in the way and managed to get them to join you.”

Lazuli reluctantly nodded her head.

“I guess you’re right, and the rest of us were just too blind to notice the signs until it was too late.” She said.

The two Gems sat there in silence and were eventually joined by the rest of their crew.
“Zarkon’s going to go after the Diamonds.” Lazuli mused. “They are going to be the biggest force opposing him.”

“If we’re lucky, they’ll wipe each other out.” Citrine said.

“And what if one side does win?” Carnelian asked.

“With no bias, we should hope that Diamonds triumph over Galra.” Peridot answered. “We may take over planets, but we do so in the name of expanding our race, the Galra seem to do it for senseless destruction.”

“Lesser of two evils.” Howlite agreed.

“No matter which, when the warp pad is working at we can reach into space again, we’ll be back to defending the universe, even if I’m not a Paladin anymore.” Lazuli said.

The others nodded in agreement.

“How long do you think it’ll take? Citrine asked.

Lazuli shrugged. “I guess we’ll just have to wait and see.

Lazuli just knew that she’d fight to stop Zarkon, even if it took the next 10,000 years.
Lullaby of memories

Chapter Summary

Lance's struggles with being half-Gem

Chapter Notes

Thank you all for your support, I’m glad so many people like my story already. Sorry for those hoping for character crossovers, but for simplicities sake, I’m going to say that the Gems never came to Earth apart from my characters. If you want, we can say that the rebellion and shattering of Pink Diamond still happened, just on another planet.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ever since he was a young child, Lance knew he was different, the gem imbedded in his right thigh was sort of a tip off, or maybe it was because many of his ‘aunts’ were multi-coloured women with gems also embedded on their bodies somewhere. And his family never tried to hide that he wasn’t an ordinary boy from him, he knew exactly where the gem in his thigh came from, and he knew the truth about his ‘aunts’; though, looking back at it now, he guessed he wasn’t told the entire truth about them, it was rare that they talked about what they did before finding their home on Earth.

But something his family did do was stress the importance of hiding who he truly was from others, they made it clear that many people wouldn’t understand and could possibly even be afraid of his half-human status, which was why his ‘aunts’ preferred to live in the middle of nowhere so they didn’t have to worry about people coming across them and getting freaked out.

So, Lance made sure to always make sure his gem was covered and told no one of its existence, not when he became best friends with Hunk, and not when a giant robot space cat took him and the others into space, not even when they all became like one big space family. Lance desperately wanted to tell them, and was going to, but he found out some information before he could that changed his mind.

Lance walked into the room of the castle-ship that had basically become the Paladin’s common room, the other Paladins were strewn about the room, wrapped up in their own activities, including Allura and Coran, resting after liberating another planet. He was very aware of his mother’s gem against his thigh as he sat down next to Hunk, trying to draw up enough courage to reveal that it was there.

Pidge spoke before Lance could.

“Hey, Allura.” Pidge called to the princess.

“Yes, Pidge?” Allura responded.
“I’ve been looking up at the history of the Galra from the computers I’ve hacked into, and it seems the reason the Galra haven’t conquered more of the universe than they already have is because of a race of aliens called the Gems.” Pidge told her.

Lance brightened up, this could be the perfect opportunity to mention that he was part-Gem, mention it casually as if it was no big deal, play it cool rather than blurring it out randomly.

“So, why haven’t we tried to ally ourselves with these Gems?” Pidge continued.

“It seems that you haven’t read enough about the Gems, Pidge.” Allura said with a frown. “The Gems are not something to be allied with, they’re just as bad as the Galra.”

Lance’s mood quickly dropped at hearing that.

“What do you mean?” Shiro asked.

“Gems are a parasitic species, the only reason they fight the Galra is because they want the universe as well.” Allura said, the same anger in her voice that she used when speaking of the Galra.

Lance couldn’t help but feel a little hurt.

“Don’t you think that’s a little harsh?” Lance asked, feeling the need to defend the Gems.

“I’m afraid it’s an apt description.” Coran said, siding with Allura. “Gem aren’t born like most species, they are created by sucking up the quintessence from a planet to form, if too many Gems are created from one planet, it can have disastrous effects on that planet.”

“And they have no care for what sort of life already exists on the planets they choose before they drain it dry.” Allura added.

This was something Lance was already aware of, Pearl and the others had tried to keep how their race came to be from him, but he eventually wore them down enough to tell him. It had made Lance depressed to hear how the only way Gems could be ‘born’ was at the expense of others.

“Can’t they use planets uninhabited by others?” Hunk asked.

Lance remembered Peridot telling him that the Gems did try to do this, though it was mostly out of not wanting to be met with any resistance rather than sparing inhabited planets. It was the reason Gems like his mother existed.

“They do that as well, can even terraform those planets.” Coran said.

“They don’t care if the planet’s inhabited or not, they just care about making more colonies.” Allura said. “They would have tried to take Altea if we didn’t have the power to fend them off. I suspect that we will one day get a distress call asking us to do the same for another planet in the sights of the Gems. So, I don’t think it wise to ally ourselves with something that we’ll inevitably fight.” Allura said with finality.

When Lance left the room, everyone was still none the wiser about the gem in his thigh.

Lance’s powers had emerged at a young age, as such, he didn’t have much memory of the exact moment, most of what he knew came second hand from the Gems, but some of what he did remember was the fear he saw on his papi’s face, quickly followed by relief, and then how proud the
Gems were of him.

From what he’d been told and what he remembered, they had been at the beach and Lance had gone for a swim, he’d been told not to go past some rocks that indicated where the shallows ended, but the adventurous young child that he was, he of course went past them.

Lance’s papi had told him many times of the dangers and cruelty of the ocean, often comparing it to Lance’s mother, it could look calm and serene on the surface, but just underneath there could be an angry current waiting to tear to you away from any sight of shore and into the deep depths of itself. And that’s what had happened to Lance.

He’d swam past the rocks and dove into the salty waters, playing happily, but when he had turned back to go to shore, he had found himself much further out than he realised, and no amount of swimming had seemed to bring him any closer. As he had tired, he’d begun to slip beneath the surface until he had finally been dragged down.

Lance’s memory of what happened next was slightly blurry, but he remembered not being scared as he sank beneath the waves, only finding beauty and peace in the water around him, not realising that he needed to be on the surface in the first place to breathe. He had wished to go back to shore and then felt himself being pushed by ocean currents. Next thing he knew, Lance was in his papi’s arms with his family and the Gems looking down at him with varying emotions. The Gem’s later explained that being the Gem hybrid of a Lapis Lazuli had given him control over water, including breathing in it, what followed after that was vigorous training in order to control those powers, a less pleasant memory.

When fighting the Galra, Lance was constantly fighting with himself as well on whether to use his powers. His powers would certainly make things easier, just summon some water from a nearby source and bash the enemy about with it, but it would give away who he was, his team would demand to know how he got his powers, forcing him to reveal his Gem, which he really didn’t want to do after Allura’s reaction towards the Gems. He also didn’t want any attention from the Galra on him, wanting to know why a human could control water.

So, as a compromise, Lance did his best to still use his powers, but in ways that wouldn’t be noticed. …

Lance held his back to the wall and his bayard in both hands, he peaked around the corner only to frown and almost swear when he saw the guards blocking the only escape route. He looked to his right at the prisoners he’d rescued and led through the ship, looking at him with fearful eyes, none of them fit to fight, he smiled at them to tell them it would be alright, even though he was as scared as them.

“Guys, I need a little help here.” Lance whispered into his com. “My way to Blue is blocked by too many guard for me to take by myself.”

“Take a number.” Hunk told him. “We’re all in a tight spot at the moment. Just hang on.”

“I don’t think we have enough time.” Lance said.

Lance looked around the corner and spotted some of the guards beginning to head their way.

As the guards got closer and closer to discovering Lance and the prisoners around the corner, Lance
looked desperately for anything that could help him fight the guards without injuring himself or the prisoners, the sounds from the other Paladins telling him that rescue by them was far off.

Just then, in the silence except for the clanking of the guards’ boots, Lance heard a dripping. Expanding his senses out, he could feel it, water. Looking for the source he spotted the leaking pipe on the ceiling, leading around the corner to where the guards were.

That was it!

Leaning his side against the wall with his back to the prisoners so they wouldn’t see, Lance held out his hand and made a slight twisting motion, and the pipes above their heads began to rattle.

“What was that?” One of the guards asked.

“Just the water pipes.” Responded another guard. “They need to be replaced.”

Lance made the twisting motion again and focused, the pipes groaning in protest.

“I don’t like the sound of that, I think they’re going to burst.” Said a guard.

“What, afraid of getting a little wet.” Another guard mocked.

“You’re going to get more than ‘a little wet.’” Lance thought with a grin.

Finally, the pipes could no longer withstand the force of the water and burst open above the Galra guards. But rather than just getting wet like they were expecting, the onslaught of water knocked them off their feet.

Not wasting any time, Lance whipped around the corner and fired off his bayard at the downed soldiers before they could recover, every time one of them tried to stand, they quickly found themselves pushed back down by the force of the water. The water from the pipes only slowed to a trickle once all of the guards lay on the floor, unmoving.

The prisoners came around to look at the scene with wide eyes.

“Well,” Lance said to them. “That was a stroke of luck.”

Lance quickly led them past the down guard and through the ship until they reach the Blue Lion, the Lion lowered its shield once Lance arrived and the prisoners filed into it. Once they were all on board, Lance went inside himself and took the controls, piloting the Blue Lion away from the Galra ship.

“I’m clear of the ship and everyone’s with me.” Lance told the other Paladins.

“What happened to you needing help?” Keith asked.

“I managed to defeat them with my sheer awesomeness.” Lance said proudly.

Lance got the groans he wanted from his teammates, hoping that it meant they wouldn’t look any deeper how Lance and the prisoners escaped.

Since Lance’s mother basically became him when he was born, Lance never got to meet her or have any memories of her. Lance wasn’t exactly lacking a mum, he still had his step-mother who he called
mama, both loving each other as if they were true mother and son. But, everything that he knew of real mother came from his papi and the Gems.

On nights when his papi was feeling particularly melancholic, Lance would sit next to him as he talked about the day he met Lazuli, something Lance had heard so many times but never got sick of hearing. His papi telling Lance about how Lazuli had saved him, causing his papi to follow her around like a love-sick puppy until she finally agreed to a date to get him off her back, only for her to have a pleasant evening with him. His papi would then launch into stories about how the two of they would sing and dance the nights away once they finally got together.

When Lance stayed over at the Gems’ home/temple, tales about his mother became his bedtime stories. Carnelian would tell Lance of the different battles Lazuli fought with them, and Citrine would rope the other Gems into acting out these battles for Lance. Peridot would tell Lance about how smart his mother was and the insane, but brilliant, strategies she came up with when they got into bad situations, Lance’s favourite story from Peridot was the one where she and his mother and some other of their friends were at the alien equivalent to a bar, with no money to pay for their drinks they had bought, so his mother had challenged a random alien to a drinking contest where the loser paid for all the drinks, the other alien not realising that Gems couldn’t get drunk and so losing the contest. Pearl would tell him about the gentleness and compassion his mother had always held, showing care for others even before leaving the authority of the Diamonds and making her own path, which Pearl gladly followed after. Onyx’s favourite story to tell Lance was about how Lazuli had taught them that there was more to life than following the Diamonds, they had been a retrieval crew sent to find Lazuli after she’d mysteriously disappeared, only to find her living a new life, and she’d convinced them to join her instead of returning her to her Diamond.

Unfortunately, as much as Lance loved hearing these stories about his mother, they made him question things more than once.

“Pearl?” A young Lance asked as the blue Gem tucked him into bed.

“Yes, Lance.” Pearl replied.

“Do you think mum would have been proud of me? Loved me if she was still here?” Lance exposed his insecurities.

“Oh, Lance.” Pearl said, gathering the child up in her arms. “Of course, she would. Where is this coming from?”

“It’s just…I always here about how great she was, how she helped defend people and was so strong. But I took that all away when I was born, including her.” Lance began to cry.

“Lance.” Pearl said resolutely. “When Lazuli found out she was having you, she could not keep quiet about her joy over it, and even when she realised that she’d have to give up her physical form to give you life, she still didn’t regret you for a second. And you are just a child.” Pearl added. “Gem’s might not have that concept ourselves, but I’ve been around long enough to know that you’ve only just began to grow. It is unfair to try and compare yourself to your mother when you’re still reaching your own potential.”

“Thanks, Pearl.” Lance said with a smile.

It seemed that the other Gems had overheard Lance’s talk with Pearl, because he soon found himself in the middle of a cuddle pile, the Gems reassuring him of their and his mother’s love for him.
Lance was a bit surprised he hadn’t figured it out sooner, but then again, he had been the only one not to realise Pidge was a girl on their own. The clues had been there, how the Gems told him about their adventures saving the universe on his mother’s special ship that she was chosen for, the Blue Lion being on hidden away on Earth, him being the one the Blue Lion chose as its pilot, the symbol of Voltron that seemed familiar when he first arrived on Arus but for reasons he couldn’t put his finger on, and only now remembered that he’d seen it in old pictures of him mum, and the Gems suddenly going quiet whenever he’d tried to ask them what prompted his mother to strike her own path.

It had been after the Paladins had been separated by the corrupted wormhole and then reunited, and after the startling revelation that Zarkon had been the previous Black Paladin. Interest sparked by the identity of one of the past Paladins, Pidge had gone digging to find out who the other Paladins were, dragging Hunk along with her in the search, until she finally emerged with a picture that she eagerly showed the rest of the Paladins.

“That’s what Zarkon used to look like?” Keith asked.

“Yeah, he looks less…evil. Though, not by much.” Hunk commented.

“I wonder who the other Paladins are, though.” Shiro said.

“I’m still looking for names.” Pidge told them.

Lance said nothing, he only stared at the person dressed in the Blue Paladin armour, complete with blue hair and skin to match.

“Mum?” Lance whispered.

“What?” Keith asked, not hearing what Lance had said.

“Uh, nothing.” Lance quickly dismissed.

“What are you looking at, Paladins?” Coran asked from behind them.

The Paladins cried out and jumped in surprise at the sudden appearance of Allura’s advisor.

“Don’t do that.” Hunk told him, clutching his chest.

“Oh.” Coran said, spotting the picture in Pidge’s hands. “The old Paladins.”

“Who were they?” Pidge asked.

“Well,” Coran said as he sat next to Pidge and took the picture off her. “The Yellow Paladin was Allura’s father, King Alfor.” His voice reminiscent.

“Oh.” The Paladins recognised the younger version of the king.

“It was sort of a surprise he ended up as yellow instead of black, everyone had expected the king to be the head of Voltron.” Coran said.

Coran then pointed to the Green Paladin. They had a tall and lanky figure that hunched, green skin with pointed ears and an elongated face.

“From what I remember, the Green Paladin was a rather strange fellow, a Merb from the planet
Atmos, he had a pessimistic approach to life and was more than a bit paranoid. But, despite that, he had quite a brilliant mind and eye for detail, and he was picked from one of the best defence teams on his planet.

Coran the pointed to the Red Paladin, a human-looking man with ridiculous hair that pointed up at the front, a gold band that curled at the front was wrapped around his head.

“The Red Paladin was a cyborg and had more of an attitude problem than number four.” Coran said, ignoring Keith’s displeasure at the remark. “He always preferred to do his own thing and hated listening to orders, it was a miracle he was allowed on the team. In fact, it took him just as long to accept the Red Lion as it took for the Red Lion to accept him, claiming that his personal space flier suited him just fine. The only one he ever respected enough to listen to was Zarkon. But he was an excellent fighter, and very unpredictable, it tended to get him into trouble, but also worked in defeating the enemy rather well.”

“His hair is worse than Keith’s.” Lance laughed uncontrollably after looking at the old Paladin. The others gave small laughs too, agreeing that the hairstyle was ridiculous.

Coran finally reached the Blue Paladin, who Lance had been waiting eagerly to hear about.

“The Blue Paladin was, perhaps still is, the most unexpected to become a Paladin of all of them.” Coran said. “She was a Gem, and she was incredibly loyal to the Diamond whose court she was under, to a point where even after she became a Paladin and changed her form, she refused to give up wearing the symbol of her Diamond, something Zarkon wasn’t very happy with.”

“What do you mean ‘perhaps still is’?” Shiro asked for all of them.

Coran sighed sadly, as if recalling something painful.

“When Zarkon turned on us, the first to feel his wrath were the other Paladins, but the Blue Paladin managed to escape despite him having the opportunity to shatter her, I’m guessing that there was still enough of his original self-inside him to spare her. She then went on the run at the king’s orders, and there’s no mention of her ever being shattered, so there’s still a chance she’s out there somewhere. Though I doubt it, number three wouldn’t be the Blue Lion pilot if she was.”

“Why wouldn’t Zarkon ‘shatter’ her?” Keith asked.

Coran sighed.

“No one really understood the exact dynamic between the Blue and Black Paladins, not even the other Paladins.” He explained. “But one thing was clear, Zarkon held a deep care for her, he was the reason she was chosen as the Blue Paladin to begin with, she essentially became his adopted daughter.”

This sent Lance’s mind into overdrive as he processed the new information, and he came to a rather disturbing conclusion. If Zarkon and Lazuli were father and daughter to each other, then as Lazuli’s son, that would make Lance Zarkon’s adopted grandson.

“Eww.” Lance said aloud at his internal revelation.

The other looked at him.

“Uh, the prospect of Zarkon having a daughter, even an adopted one.” Lance quickly made up.
The others seemingly bought it.

“So, the Blue Paladin was basically Zarkon’s daughter and it’s unknown whether she’s still around?” Pidge clarified. “You don’t think she…join him, do you?”

“No!” Lance exclaimed before Coran could answer, not wanting to hear anything bad about his mother. “I mean, we would have heard about her by now if she had.” Lance excused himself when the others looked at him again.

“Number three has a point.” Coran agreed. “The previous Blue Paladin had a strong connection to Zarkon, but she also pushed back against him when he turned on us, and kept the Blue Lion out of his hands.”

“That’s good.” Hunk said. “We wouldn’t want Lance getting kicked out of the Blue Lion the same way Shiro was. Uh, no offence.”

“It’s alright.” Shiro said.

Lance felt like he needed time to process the new information on his mum.

“I’m going to have an early night, all this stress lately has been messing with my complexion.” He said.

The others bid him a goodnight as he left.

Lance lay awake on his bed, his mind keeping him awake with thoughts. He wondered what Zarkon was like before to make his mother trust him, what his mother was like before becoming a Paladin, and why the other Gems didn’t tell him about Voltron and his mother being a Paladin. Then even more thoughts came, depressing thoughts.

Would Voltron have won against the Galra by now if Lance hadn’t been born and his mother was still the Blue Paladin?

How would the others react to him technically being his mother?

Would they hate him for not being his mother, a seasoned Paladin?

In times like these, when his depressing thoughts about himself and his mother became too much, there was only one thing that could make it better. Lance was just thankful it had been in his coat pocket the day the Blue Lion took him away from Earth.

Lance took the recorder out from its place in his bedside draw and popped on his headphones before pressing play.

“Lance.” A voice addressed him on the recording. “My dear, sweet, Lance. It pains me that I’ll never be able to hold you in my arms like the mothers I have seen on this planet, that we’ll never be able to truly meet. But to give you life, I must give my own, and I will do so knowing proudly that you will grow and change and experience things I never could. But, just because I will never be able to hold you in my arms and sing to you, doesn’t mean you cannot hear me sing to you. So, I created this, songs and lullabies I have learned throughout my travels, to carry you to sleep. I love you, my darling little star.”
“I love you too, mum.” Lance whispered back softly into the darkness of his room.

Lance was then surrounded by the sound of his mother’s singing, the music calming and allowing him to drift to sleep.

“~Idir ann is idir as
Idir thuaidh is idir theas
Idir thiar is idir thoir
Idir am is idir áit
Casann sí dhom
Amhrán na farraige
Suaimhneach nó ciúin
Ag cuardú go damanta
Mo ghrá
Idir gaoth is idir tonn
Idir tuilleadh is idir gann
Casann sí dhom
Amhrán na Farraige
Suaimhneach nó ciúin
Ag cuardú go damanta
Idir cósta, idir cléibh
Idir mé is idir mé féin
Tá mé i dtiúin~”

Chapter End Notes

Spot the references.
Other than a few plot points, I have no idea what I’m doing with this story, such as how long it should take me to get to each plot point, so feel free to send me ideas for me to fill in the spaces between the plot points.
For those wanting me to do Klance, I will only say this, I suck at romances, so if I do decide to go that route, you have been warned.
Zarkon sat in his private quarters, a place only he could enter, not even Haggar dared to step foot in his sacred domain. Zarkon rarely ever came here, he had no need to sleep when Quintessence revitalised him just as good as any sleep and left him more time to work, the bed in the room was purely ornamental at this point. The only reason Zarkon ever came here was when he felt the need to reflect on memories, or what little he had allowed to remain of them, the ones that he could never dare erase from his mind, his memories of her.

Zarkon pressed the button on a device and a hologram appeared above it, a blue figure smiled at him from the image.

“Lazuli.” Zarkon said with quiet longing, reaching out a claw to caress the hologram’s face.

It had been ten thousand years, but Zarkon could still remember her clearly, he was sure he did, he could never forget her. He could never forget the way she had looked up to him, her unwavering strength that could put the best of his Galra warriors to shame, and the first time she had called him father.

Zarkon pressed another button of the device and the hologram changed to another picture of Lazuli, standing alongside a proud-looking Galra that he could barely identify as himself, Lazuli was dressed in the Blue Paladin armour, holding her helmet and bayard before her triumphantly for the camera.

If Zarkon had the capability to smile, he might have as he looked at the picture of the day Lazuli was chosen to be the Blue Paladin.

Lazuli had been chosen out of many other candidates and against the expectations of many. After all, why would a Gem, even one supposedly ‘reformed’ by the Black Paladin himself, be chosen to defend the universe. But even before Lazuli had been chosen, Zarkon had known she would be his newest teammate, feeling it deep within his core.

Zarkon then growled as he thought of the Blue Lion, and how, as of present, it wasn’t being piloted by Lazuli, but by some pathetic human instead. A great many of his soldiers had suffered that day when he found out that Lazuli wasn’t the one piloting the Blue Lion, having the misfortune of being there when his anger had exploded. When Zarkon found Lazuli and got her to see sense, the human would be taken care of and his daughter restored to her rightful place alongside him when he took back the Black Lion.

And he would find her, because he knew she was still out there. His daughter was too strong to be shattered.

Zarkon moved onto the next picture, it was of Lazuli and her ‘crew’. How Zarkon wished he had
shattered them when he had the chance.

Zarkon was sure that if they hadn’t been around, his daughter would have come back to him after she had calmed down enough to see sense, but they had kept her fury and fear alive, keeping her from him. When he saw them next, he’d shatter them and send their remains to the druids.

Zarkon was suddenly brought out of his thoughts by his communicator going off, he scowled, his underlings knew better than to disturb him when he was here.

“I hope, for your sake, you have a good reason for contacting me.” Zarkon said.

“We have had another encounter with Gem forces, my lord.” Hagger spoke through the communicator. “Prisoners have been taken. Including a Lapis Lazuli.”

Zarkon stood and left his room without another word, striding through the hallways of his ship until he reached his throne room, Haggar and her Druids already stood waiting alongside some of his more trusted officers.

All but one of the Gems captured already had their physical forms destroyed, just Gems held in the druids’ hands, the Gem that remained was blue skinned.

It was a Lapis Lazuli, brought before him just as Zarkon ordered to be done with every Lapis Lazuli the Galra found.

“Face me!” Zarkon ordered them Gem, who had their head down.

Shaking, the Lapis Lazuli lifted her head to look at the emperor, who looked back down at her before frowning.

His Lazuli would never look at him with so much fear in her eyes, she would stare him down defiantly just as she had done on the quintant he had last saw her. And she would have already made an angry comment towards him by now.

Zarkon didn’t even need to look at the Lapis Lazuli’s gem placement to know that this wasn’t his Lazuli, it wasn’t his daughter.

The Galra in the room looked apprehensively at their emperor, they already knew that this wasn’t the Lapis Lazuli their emperor was looking for, they were just wondering what his judgement on the innocent Gem would be, it was usually one of two things.

Zarkon rose from his throne and walked towards the Lapis Lazuli, who was trying to tug her arms from the sentries holding her, but there was no nearby water source for her to summon to help her escape, the Galra had learned from that mistake over the years. Zarkon continued moving forward until he stood in front of the Lapis Lazuli, he then struck his hand out and grasped his hand around the gem stationed below her chest, the Gem only had enough time to shriek before her physical form disappeared.

With no remorse, Zarkon shattered the gem in his hands.

Some of the Galra officers couldn’t help with feel the smallest tinge of sympathy for the Gem. The emperor was obviously in a worse mood than usual, shattering the Gem for daring not to be his daughter, the Lapis Lazuli’s brought to him usually managed to survive because they looked so similar to his daughter, but every so often it would be the cause of their shattering.

“What of the other Gems, my lord.” Haggar was the only one who could feel safe enough to ask
without suffering the backlash of Zarkon’s wrath.

“Find out if they know anything.” Zarkon told her. “You then may do with them what you wish.”

“Yes. Thank you, my lord.” Haggar said.

Zarkon then left back to his private quarters with the order not to be disturbed any further.

Inside, Zarkon once again activated the hologram device to show Lazuli, this picture of her displaying her mastery over water, creating shapes from the liquid.

“I will bring you home.” He promised.

Chapter End Notes

A small chapter I just came up with while I’m trying to write the next chapter in the story.
I made some art. This is a concept drawing for Lazuli:
http://dreamvixen2511.deviantart.com/art/Lapis-Lazuli-OC-Gem-678380314
“Hunk! On your left!” Lance shouted as he dodged an attack himself.

The Yellow Lion managed to swing out of the way of an oncoming laser.

“Thanks, dude.” Hunk told Lance.

“No problem, buddy.” Lance replied.

The Paladins were currently defending a planet from Galra forces, who had come for the rare minerals unique to the planet. Unfortunately, the inhabitants of the planet were a peaceful and technologically underdeveloped species, meaning they didn’t have the right weapons to defend themselves from the Galra or even the ships to escape the planet. Leaving the Paladins to fight the invading Galra while also making sure they didn’t target the innocence on the planet.

“I don’t like this.” Keith voiced. “This is too easy.”

“Can’t you just appreciate that we’re winning?” Lance said, even though he saw Keith’s point.

Keith’s reply was a grunt.

“Keith’s right.” Shiro said. “We need to be on guard for a trap.”

It wasn’t long until the reason for the fight being too easy showed up.

“Something’s heading towards the planet’s surface!” Coran warned.

A visual was brought up on their screens and they all groaned when they recognised the familiar shape of a robeast container. The Paladins didn’t even notice that the rest of the Galra forces were withdrawing as they flew to where the container would land, wanting to make sure it wouldn’t harm those on the planet.

Before the container could hit the ground, it opened up to reveal the robeast inside.

At first, the robeast seemed small and rather round, but then then metal plates expanded out, connected to each other with bolts of purple energy, and at the centre seemed to be the power core that connected all of the pieces. The metal pieces continued to expand out until they formed a creature with two long, spindly legs, a long neck with an ugly mask for a face, and bat-like wings for arms, all formed from the metal pieces connected to each other and its core by the purple energy.

“Hell,” Lance said. “At least it has a visible weak spot.”

“I don’t think it’d be that easy, Lance.” Pidge told him.
The robeast flew at the Lions, forcing them to scatter, its metal plates functioning as both blades as they extended from its body and shields against the Lions’ attacks as they fired at it, the metal coming out unscathed from the attacks.

“Alright team!” Shiro called. “Form Voltron!”

It took a couple of attempts to form the legendary warrior, the robeast wasn’t exactly going to wait around to let them form and so they had to dodge a lot, but they eventually managed to come together and form Voltron.

As Pidge predicted, despite the robeast’s power-core being on full display, Voltron was unable to reach it, every time they struck out to damage it, the metal plates shifted to defend it from attack. And the metal shield-blades that made up the creature were lighting quick, defending and attacking faster than Voltron could keep up with. But despite that, Voltron wasn’t taking too much damage, which got the Paladins suspicious.

“This robeast doesn’t seem to be as strong at the others.” Keith said as he directed the sword to block some of the sharp metal plates from hitting Voltron as the robeast flew past. “Something’s up.”

“Maybe it was sent off the robeast assembly line too early.” Hunk suggested hopefully.

“I doubt the Galra would send something half-formed.” Shiro said. “Pidge, can you scan it?”

“Already on it.” Pidge said.

Voltron continued to attack the robeast without success until Pidge’s scan was finished.

“According to the data, the energy-core is increasing in power each time we his one of its panels, the energy from our attacks is traveling down those energy beams and into the core.” Pidge said.

“So, it’s using kentawhatic energy to power itself?” Lance asked.

“It’s kinetic, Lance, and yes.” Pidge corrected.

“But what’s it using that energy for?” Hunk questioned. “It doesn’t seem to be using it to get stronger.”

Hunk got his answer when the metal plates of the creature shifted away from the core and spun around it, the core itself glowing brightly.

“Hunk! Lance! Evasive manoeuvres!” Shiro ordered.

Moving quickly, Lance and Hunk quickly manage to move Voltron out of the direct path of the laser the robeast fired, but Voltron was still struck by the force coming from the blast as it past them by, knocking them out of control.

“What would have happened if that hit us?” Lance exclaimed.

“Nothing good.” Hunk answered.

“Scans say that the energy-core has gone back to normal, it expended its energy with that laser.” Pidge said.

“Okay,” Shiro said. “We need to be careful with our attacks, we can’t let it gather enough energy for another laser.”
“How are we supposed to defeat it then?” Hunk questioned. “It just blocks every time we try to go for the energy-core.”

“If the sword doesn’t work, maybe your cannon can.” Keith suggested.

“Or the robeast can just block it and absorb the force from it.” Lance stated.

“It’s worth a shot.” Shiro said. “Form shoulder cannon!”

Hunk took out his bayard and thrust it into the slot in his lion, Voltron withdrew its sword and the large shoulder cannon formed.

“Fire!”

The shoulder cannon shot out the multi-shot energy beam at the robeast, it did its best to dodge but was eventually hit and enveloped in a cloud of smoke.

“Did that do it?” Hunk asked.

The smoke faded away to reveal a ball of metal, the panels of metal then expanded outward again to reveal the robeast unscathed, and the energy-core with more charge.

“Its panels are too quick at defending its core, we need to slow it down somehow.” Pidge said.

“How?” Keith asked.

“How about we freeze them?” Lance suggested. “Stick it together and weigh it down with ice.”

“That’s actually a good idea.” Pidge said.

“You don’t need to sound so surprised.” Lance pouted.

“Alright, team, disassemble.” Shiro ordered.

Voltron split apart back into the five Lions.

“Pidge, Hunk, Keith and I will distract the robeast.” Shiro said. “When it collects its plates to defend against our attacks, Lance will freeze them together. We keep doing this until we can get a better shot at the core.”

“Right.” Everyone responded.

As planned, the four Paladins distracted the robeast with fake attacks, causing it to gather its metal plates to defend itself, and Lance would then hit them with ice, fusing them together, leaving the robeast with large gaps in its form where the metal plates couldn’t move back into place. The process repeated until there were many gaps in the robeast defence and it was significantly slower, but the robeast also got wise to their plan.

The Paladins didn’t have time to react as the robeast gathered the extra energy it had manged to gather from the force of the ice hitting it and shot it in a laser directly at the Blue Lion, the beam didn’t have the same destructive capabilities as the fully charged version, but it still did damage.

Lance screamed as he was hit, his Lion shutting down as it was blasted towards the planet’s surface.

“Come on, girl.” Lance said, frantically trying to use the controls, ignoring the pain he was feeling from the impact of the laser.
At the last possible second, the controls flickered back to life momentarily, allowing Lance to pull up just enough to avoid a disastrous meeting with the ground, but then they shut off again and the Blue Lion was still given a less than pleasant landing.

“Lance!” The Blue Paladin heard the call of concern through his helmet.

“I’m fine.” Lance groaned, feeling the impact from the blast and rough landing now that he had time to breath. “But Blue’s down for the count.”

“Stay put, I’m pretty sure we can take the rest from here.” Keith told him.

Lance frowned as he climbed out of his Lion and looked up into the sky where he saw the other Lions fighting the robeast.

“Stupid mullet.” He grumbled. “It’s like he’s saying I’m not needed.”

Lance looked around and noticed that he was at the edge of the city, not that far from the shore of the ocean. The citizens were coming from the city towards him and his fallen Lion.

“Blue Paladin, are you hurt?” One of them asked when they reached him.

“I’m fine, I was just knocked around a bit.” Lance answered with his usual smile in place.

Without the Blue Lion to form Voltron, the Paladins couldn’t go through with the plan to form the sword again, so they had to attack the robeast at a closer distance, the robeast could still use its panels to defend, but it was much slower. Eventually, Keith managed to get past the defences and attack the energy-core with the Red Lion’s jaw-blade.

Lance and the aliens around him cheered as the robeast stopped in the air and then fell towards the ocean. But just after the pieces of the robeast sank beneath the surface, the core suddenly exploded and a resulting, giant wave rose from the ocean, heading for the city.

“A wave of that magnitude will completely engulf the entire city!” One of the aliens exclaimed. “We won’t survive.

Lance looked desperately at Blue, reaching out through their connection, but the Lion remained still on the ground, still too damaged to move, let alone summon the energy to freeze the oncoming wave.

“Don’t worry, Lance, we’re coming!” Shiro told him.

Lance wondered what they could do to stop the wave from destroying the city and everyone along with it, but that thought was quickly cut short when he spotted something behind the Lions as they headed towards him.

“Guys, behind you!” He shouted.

The Galra ships that had fled had returned with even more forces, stopping the lions from moving any further as they were forced to fend them off. Help wouldn’t be coming for Lance and the aliens in time.

“You must save us.” One of the aliens begged as they took hold of Lance’s arm.

“What can I do?” Lance questioned. “Blue is too damaged to freeze anything.”

“We know that you have the capability, we can feel it.” The alien motioned towards Lance’s thigh, where his gem was covered.
Lance gasped and his hand went to his gem, there aliens somehow knew.

“How?” He asked.

The alien shook their head, signifying that now was not the time for that question.

“But… I don’t even know if I can control something that big.” Lance said, eyes wide. “I’ve heard that my mum could move oceans, but I’ve never even tried anything at that level. What if I don’t have the strength?”

“We will lend you our strength.” The alien said confidently, moving their hand to rest on his shoulder. “We are with you.”

The other aliens gather around Lance, resting their hands on his shoulders, or each other’s shoulders if they couldn’t reach him, forming a crescent around him, the space in front of him that faced the ocean left open. Trying to control the ocean, any ocean, was far different than trying to control normal water in Lance’s experience, it wouldn’t always listen, but Lance had to try.

Lance took a deep breath and looked at the giant wave that was almost upon them, he held out his arms and closed his eyes, searching for the feeling of the flowing water. Lance felt the power of the wave, it was strong and overpowering, not wanting to listen to him, but Lance remained insistent.

The wave was angry, the ocean was a powerful force and would not be stopped by Lance, something so small and simple compared to itself, it would claim the land as part of its own, as was its nature. But Lance begged it to listen, this was not the way to claim the land, this wave was not the cause of the forces of nature, and thus the land would not be fully claimed by the ocean as it should, the victory over land would be tainted. Instead, it should work with Lance and bring justice to those who sought to taint it.

The Paladins were struggling to get past the Galra to reach Lance and the aliens of the surface, but they already knew it was too late, even if the Galra suddenly disappeared, they wouldn’t reach Lance in time. They saw that the aliens were gather around Lance, their hands on each other, just as the wave crested over them. In the back of his mind, Keith wondered if they were praying.

But then the wave suddenly stopped just before it could be brought down upon the city, at first the Paladins wondered if time had stopped on the planet’s surface, but then they noticed that the water in the wave was still moving.

Keith felt a great amount of energy and brought up the view screen of his Lion, focusing it down on Lance and the group of aliens. Lance had his eyes shut and his arms out, looking strangely at peace. But then Lance’s eyes snapped open and his expression became fierce, his arms moving about in a pattern.

The Paladins watched in amazement as the giant wave suddenly morphed into a giant lion that looked like the Blue Lion, but made of water, it leapt into the air and slammed into the Galra ships with a silent growl, the water crushing the ships and sending them into the ocean. The water lion then returned to the ocean itself, the water becoming calm.

With both the treat of the giant wave and the Galra gone, the other Paladins quickly piloted their lions down to the surface, where Lance and the aliens were.

None of the noticed the singular ship that had managed to escape the water lion’s fury, flying away into space.
The four Paladins ran out of their Lions as soon as they landed, sprinting over to where Lance stood. The aliens that surrounded Lance let go of him and each other, each looking rather exhausted. But they were nothing compared to Lance as he turned around to face his teammates.

“Hey, guys.” He said, slightly slurred.

Lance was very pale and looked like a zombie, swaying on his feet with a drugged expression. A trail of blood was dripping down from his nose and onto his armour.

“Did you do that, Lance?” Keith asked, motioning towards the ocean.

Lance looked confused before realising Keith was talking about the wave.

“Oh, yeah. Didn’t know I had it in me.” Lance giggled drunkenly. “Okay, I’m gonna pass out now.”

Lance closed his eyes and his legs collapsed beneath him, but he was saved from hitting the floor by Shiro catching him.

“Let’s get back to the ship.” Shiro said, picking Lance up. “We can discuss this when Lance gets out of the healing pods.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all so much for your support so far, it really inspires a creator when she gets so much feedback on her work. With this chapter being the reveal of Lance to the Paladins, I wanted it to be longer, but this is just how it turned out, but I managed to keep to my rule of writing at least 2000 words for each chapter. For the references in chapter 2, people managed to spot that I used Stork from Storm Hawks as the former Green Paladin, or a different Merb with the same characteristics if you want, since the former Green Paladin is now dead.
Keith paced back on forth in the medical room, occasionally glancing at the pod that held a sleeping Lance inside before grumpily resuming his pacing. Shiro stood, leaning against the wall while he kept his eyes on everyone, but he mostly kept his eyes on Lance as if there’d be a sudden change in the Blue Paladin’s condition that he’d need to spot. Hunk was sat down, his hands fiddling with some small machine that Pidge had given him to keep his hands busy while he stared at the healing pod with worry. Pidge was stood with Coran around the controls for the healing pod with Allura standing behind them and watching, trying to figure out what was wrong with Lance and how he was able to control water.

“Keith, will you stop with the pacing?” Pidge finally snapped.

Keith glared back at her but did as told and flopped down onto the seat next to Hunk.

“Anything on Lance’s condition?” Shiro asked Coran.

“There’s nothing wrong with the boy.” Coran answered. “His energy has just been severely drained to the point that he’s gone into a sort of healing coma while his body recuperates.”

“A coma?!” The Paladins cried.

Coran looked surprised but quickly understood.

“Oh no, this isn’t like a usual coma.” Coran told them. “He’ll be out of it as soon as he has enough energy to function and sleep on his own without the risk of falling into an actual coma.”

The Paladins sighed in relief.

“I can’t say I blame the boy for falling into a healing coma, though.” Coran said. “Not only stopping a wave of that magnitude in its tracks, but then turning it into a lion and sending it back at the Galra ships. Even with all those Felbs helping him, it would have taken a considerable amount of power.”

“Why did he never tell us he could do that?” Keith asked no one in particular. “How is it even possible he could do that?”
“Is it something to do with the Lions?” Hunk asked.

“Deep connections and prolonged exposure to the Lions has been known to grant the Paladins extra abilities, but that was more of enhancing their senses or current abilities, nothing close to what Lance is capable of.” Allura answered.

“Meaning Lance had these powers before all of this happened?” Shiro said.

Allura nodded.

“And he knew that he had powers.” Pidge added, not looking up from the computer. “Lance knew what he was doing with that wave.”

“That still doesn’t answer the how.” Keith stated.

“Well, the pod doesn’t seem to know either.” Coran said, but then he suddenly noticed something. “Wait a minute, there is something, the computer is recommending a deep scan.”

“A deep scan?” Hunk asked.

“The pods only usually do a surface scan of those in them to gain knowledge of the person’s basic biology and injuries so it can heal them, deep scans are for finding out the layout of a person’s DNA, it’s usually for if someone has a disease of some sort.”

“Lance has a disease?” Hunk asked with worry.

“No.” Coran corrected. “At least, I hope not. But a deep scan may reveal something. It will take about a varga though.”

There were a few groans but no one moved to do something else during the wait.

Eventually, the scan was finished and everyone gather around the pod and computer to hear the results, even though they couldn’t read Altean.

“This is very strange.” Coran said, stroking his moustache.

“What?” The Paladins asked.

“According to these readings, number three is one-hundred percent human, but at the same time they are saying that half of his DNA is unreadable.” Coran answered.

“How is that possible?” Pidge asked.

“Whatever the other half is, its unreadable state means that the scan picks up number three’s human half as his entire DNA, reading him as full human.” Coran said.

“But he’s obviously not fully human.” Keith frowned.

“It appears so, but we don’t have much way of identifying what the other half is.” Corran said.

“We can always ask him when he comes out.” Hunk suggested.

“Wait a minute, what’s this?” Pidge pointed to the corner of the screen.

The screen displayed an outline of Lance, a red circle around the outline’s right thigh.
Coran hummed and had the computer focus on the point, it briefly flashed before showing a tear-drop shaped object, labels in Altean coming off of it.

“What is it?” Shiro asked.

“From what I can tell, some sort of rock.” Pidge replied, picking up some familiar Altean words from her lessons.

“It’s more than a rock.” Allura corrected. “This is saying that it’s full of quintessence, and linked directly into Lance’s, but the scans are unable to discern more than that. I believe we’ve found the source of Lance’s powers.”

Allura felt a degree of familiarity with what the screen was saying, but she couldn’t tell why, it was a constant niggling in her head.

“Wait a dobosh.” Coran suddenly said. “I recognise that. I’ve seen it on number three’s leg when I changed him into the healing suit.”

“Lance has something on his leg?” Hunk asked. “I don’t remember ever seeing something during our time at the Garrison.”

“Well, it looked like it was more embedded into his skin.” Coran said.

“Why did you mention this before?” Keith asked.

“I took it to just be a human thing and personal since he never showed it off.” Coran replied.

“Do you have a picture of it?” Shiro asked.

“For medical purposes, yes.” Coran answered.

Coran brought up a picture of a blue, tear-drop shaped, stone with flecks of brown.

“Oh, I recognise that.” Pidge said. “It’s a lapis lazuli, a type of gem from earth. What’s Lance doing with it embedded in his leg though?”

While the Paladins tried to think of answers, the pieces finally fell into place for Allura.

“He’s a Gem!” She exclaimed.

“I thought we already established that it was a Gem.” Hunk said, mishearing the princess.

“No, Lance is a Gem.” Allura said.

The Paladins were confused.

“But how can he be a Gem?” Coran asked Allura. “He’s flesh and blood, and the scans show that he’s at least half human. And Gems can’t reproduce, at least, I don’t think they can.”

“Wait, Gems, as in that alien species of rocks who are fighting the Galra?” Pidge asked.

“Yes.” Allura replied. “Gems are created, they aren’t meant to be able to reproduce, so Lance being half one should be impossible, but it fits too well.”

“Do you think…” Shiro said. “Do you think that Lance might have been…experimented on?”
“It’s a possible explanation, but I hope that’s not the case. To be forcefully bonded to a Gem, it’s a miracle Lance appears to be normal. Well, at least in his own way.” Allura said.

Shiro nodded in agreement, he hoped that Lance didn’t have to go through anything near what he went through during the Galra’s experiments on him.

“Number three is ready to be release, but he’ll still be asleep.” Coran alerted them.

“We can ask Lance questions once he’s properly rested.” Shiro said.

The pod opened and Lance fell out into Shiro’s arms, who picked him up and carried him to the Blue Paladin’s bedroom.

The remaining Paladins also left, but Coran and Allura remained behind.

“There’s something else, isn’t there?” Allura asked.

Coran nodded solemnly.

“The placement of the gem, the fact that it’s a lapis lazuli, and the shape number three’s wave took.” Coran said. “It’s all too familiar I’m afraid.”

Coran brought up a picture for the castle archives, showing the Blue Paladin before Lance, out of her armour.

“You really think that it’s the same Gem?” Allura asked worriedly.

“Like you said, princess, we have to hope it isn’t the result of experimentation.” Coran replied.

Lance was slow to waking up, and as he did, he wanted nothing more than to go back to sleep. But he was forced into the waking world and made forcefully aware of the heaviness of his entire body, as if his body hadn’t yet got the memo that Lance was awake.

“What hit me?” Lance groaned.

Memories of what happened slowly trickled back to Lance, and then in a flood. Lance then groaned again, having another reason to not want to get out of bed.

“Why me?” Lance moaned quietly to himself.

Still, Lance knew there was no use delaying the inevitable. His team would want answers, and he would have to give them. So, with a great amount of effort, Lance heaved himself out of bed and to his feet, swaying slightly but managing to stay upright, it was then that he became aware of his growling stomach and parched mouth.

“Food.” Lance mumbled. “Food, food, food.”

Lance shuffled his way to the kitchen, finding it empty, and fixed himself a plate of food goo, slumping down in a seat and eating it monotonously.

The other Paladins arrived as he was eating, but seeing the Blue Paladin’s zombie-like state, they decided to hold off on their questions until he looked more alive. Getting their own food and sitting down at the table as well.
Once Lance had eaten, he was more awake and feeling better. But then he became aware of the other Paladins and Alteans in the room with a start.

“Geeze, when’d you guys get here?” He said, hand over his rapidly beating heart.

“We’ve been here for a while, you just never noticed us.” Keith answered.

“Are you feeling alright?” Hunk asked him.

“Yeah.” Lance nodded. “Still a bit tired but I’ll be fine.”

“Good.” Pidge said. “Then you can tell us why you’ve got a gem in your leg, can control water, and why you never told us.”

Lance wondered briefly if he could play dumb and pretend to not know what she was talking about, but a look at his friends told him that it wouldn’t work, and that they also wanted answers.

“I don’t even know where I should begin.” Lance sighed.

“How about how you came to be part Gem?” Allura suggested.

Lance looked at her in surprise, he didn’t think they would have figured that much out by themselves.

“Was it…forced on you?” Allura continued, her voice going soft.

Lance shook his head. “I was born with my gem.” He answered, getting the others, Shiro most of all, to sigh in relief.

“I don’t really understand it all that much myself, even Pearl and the other admit they’d never heard of it before that point, but my mum was a Gem who then sort of became me after meeting my papi and becoming pregnant.” Lance elaborated.

“You’re mum became pregnant and then became you?” Shiro asked to clarify.

“Basically.” Lance confirmed.

“But, how is that possible?” Coran asked. “A Gem’s body is just a physical projection, they’re non-organic, they shouldn’t have the capability to become pregnant.”

“Like I said, I don’t understand the how, and neither do my family.” Lance said.

“Why did your mum have to become you?” Pidge quizzed. “Ooh, do you have any of her memories? Are you the same person just reborn into a biological body?”

Lance cut Pidge off before she could create a whole list of questions. “Like I said, we don’t know the exact reason why, only that to bring me into the world, she had to give up her physical form and become part of me, the Gem on my thigh to be precise. And no, I don’t have any of her memories, we’re two completely different people, just like with normal human births.”

The Paladins were able to pick up in Lance’s tone that he’d answered Pidge’s second question more than once.

“And since you have your mother’s gem, you have her powers?” Hunk asked.

Lance nodded and waved his hands, then the water in one of the juice packets floated out of its
contain and around the table in a glob at his command before emptying into the sink.

“Are you aware of who your mother was?” Coran asked gently.

Lance looked at the Altean and realised what he was talking about specifically. “I didn’t realise it myself until Pidge found that picture.” He answered. “But, she was the Blue Paladin before me, wasn’t she?”

Lance brought out his phone and showed Coran the picture of his mother he had on it.

“Yes.” Coran confirmed, looking at the picture. “That’s her. Lazuli, the Blue Paladin.”

Finally, Keith couldn’t hold it in anymore. “Why didn’t you tell us?!” He burst out angrily.

Everyone was startled but soon gave made sounds of agreement.

“Surely, you know you can trust us?” Hunk said, sounding slightly hurt.

Lance sighed. “I was planning on telling you all, but then Allura showed her ‘dislike’ of the Gem race and I didn’t know how she’d react towards me. I knew you’d all be accepting, but something always kept holding me back, and the Gems taught me my whole life to hide my gem from others.” He explained.

“The Gems?” Shiro asked.

“My aunts, they were my mum’s crew before they settled on Earth.” Lance answered.

“The Blue Valkyries?” Coran gasped. “They’re still alive?”

Lance nodded.

Coran sighed in relief. “I’m glad Zarkon did not get them.”

“Who?” Pidge asked.

“Sometimes, a Paladin can lead a small army separate of Voltron, made up of soldiers loyal to that Paladin. The last Blue Paladin had her own personal small army made up of Gems who also defected from their leaders, they were named the Blue Valkyries.” Allura answered.

There was then a pause of silence.

“So, are you guys mad?” Lance finally managed to ask.

The others remained silent.

“I guess we’re still a little hurt that you didn’t trust enough to tell us on your own.” Shiro answered. “But, at the same time, I can see why you didn’t say anything.”

“And why haven’t you used your powers before?” Allura asked in disappointment. “You could have done so much more if you used them.”

“I have been using them.” Lance defended. “Just in ways that wouldn’t be noticed.”

Allura hummed but seemed to accept his answer.

“Fine, but I expect you in the training room once you’ve recovered to test your true capabilities.” She
told him.

“I already have some ways to test his control of water.” Pidge said.

Lance groaned, not looking forward to the torture that no doubt awaited him in the training room.

“You brought this on yourself by keeping your silence.” Hunk said to Lance, patting him on the shoulder with a smile.

“Thank you for your sympathy.” Lance said sarcastically.

But Lance then laughed and Hunk soon joined him.

Shiro regarded the two, and then Allura, who was only looking at Lance with interest rather than the distrust she had showed when the half-alien status of a certain other Paladin had been discovered, happy that the team was still strong. Speaking of the Red Paladin though, Shiro looked around the room, but didn’t see him.

“Where’d Keith go?” Shiro asked.

The others looked around the room and then shrugged, having not realised Keith had left either.

“I’ll go find him.” Shiro sighed. “Lance, take it easy, you still look pale.”

“Yes, sir.” Lance answered with fake seriousness, saluting.

Hunk and Pidge laughed while the Alteans and Shiro smiled fondly.

Shiro found Keith in the training room, of course, beating up the training droids. From how aggressive Keith was in his fighting, Shiro could tell that the Red Paladin was angry, and he could guess why.

“Are you going to talk about it?” Shiro asked once Keith was done with the droid.

Keith called for another droid.

“He should have told us.” He grunted as he attacked.

“You know he was afraid of how we’d react.” Shiro said.

“But he still should have said something. But instead, he stayed quiet while I had to deal with finding out I’m part Galra and Allura’s treatment toward me. He let me think that I was the only one on the ship.” Keith complained.

Shiro sighed, knowing he couldn’t defend Lance on that front.

“Maybe you should try and talk it out with him now that you know.” Shiro suggested.

“Why should I?” Keith asked. “He’s the one who kept quiet. And why are you all so forgiving of him for lying for so long anyway? I don’t recall getting that treatment, and I found out the same time as everyone else.”

Shiro didn’t really know how to respond in a way that wouldn’t upset Keith, because the obvious
answer was that the Paladins had yet to encounter the Gems and so didn’t hold the same animosity towards the race as they did to the Galra.

“I am still disappointed in Lance for not coming forward when he should have.” Shiro answered. “And we still accepted you, we were just shocked over the sudden revelation. With Lance, we’ve had time to acclimate to the idea of Lance also being part alien while he’s been unconscious, that’s all.”

It was the best reason Shiro could come up with.

“I guess.” Keith accepted with a sigh. “But I still haven’t forgiven Lance yet. I get to be the one to face against him when testing his powers.”

‘As if Lance didn’t have enough with getting tested by Pidge and Allura.’ Shiro thought. ‘But, like Hunk said, he brought it on himself.’

“Sure, I’ll talk with Allura.” Shiro told Keith.

Zarkon regarded the trembling Galra before him with disgust.

“And tell me why you have returned with your invasion failed and your ships destroyed, yet you expect to live?” The Emperor told the Galra.

“My Lord.” Said the trembling Galra. “I would have been honoured to die in the name of the empire than run in shame. But my ships were not destroyed by Voltron or even its Lions. Well, I don’t think they were. It was as if the ocean itself rose up and attacked my ships.”

“The ocean?” Zarkon asked.

“We managed to capture some footage.” The Galra said.

Zarkon waved his hand and one of the sentries played the footage the surviving ship managed to capture showing a wave descending on a city only to stop and turning into a giant lion and attack the ships.

Zarkon’s eyes widened a fraction and he sat straighter, his millennia of self-control keeping these actions unnoticed by his followers, as he recognised the lion.

“I thought it best to report to you this finding than risk the information lost in attacking the Lions.” The Galra said.

“I see your point.” Zarkon told him. “And for this, you shall not be killed for the abandonment of your orders.”

The Galra sighed in relief.

“However, you still went against orders and that cannot be forgiven. Take him to the druids.” Zarkon said.

The Galra cried out in protest as he was dragged away.

“The rest of you, leave!” Zarkon ordered the remaining Galra.
They were quick to leave, not wishing to occur Zarkon’s wrath.

Once he was alone, Zarkon rewound the footage and then paused at the image of the large lion made of water just as if was attacking the ships.

There was only one being in the universe Zarkon knew that used that specific attack, who could bend an ocean to their will in such a way, in that magnitude, and not just in the shape of any lion, but the shape of the Blue Lion.

“Lazuli.” Zarkon whispered to himself.

There was no doubt, this had to be the work of his daughter. She was still with Voltron!

“But why is she not the Blue Paladin?” Zarkon asked himself quietly. “And Lazuli would have not remained hidden.”

Zarkon combed through the footage multiple times, trying to catch a glimpse of his daughter, until his eyes caught something at the edge of the city the wave-turned-lion have been approaching, enhancing the image he saw the people of the planet gathered together in a quarter circle. Zarkon was about to dismiss this as the locals gathering together in silly prayer when he caught sight of something in the middle of the gathering, enhancing further, he spotted the current Blue Paladin with his arms out. Suspicious, Zarkon replayed the footage, keeping it focused on the Blue Paladin as much as it could go, and watched as the Blue Paladin raised his arms and commanded the wave moving towards the city to stop before it transformed into the lion.

Zarkon paused, his daughter wasn’t the one to summon the water lion, this Blue Paladin was.

“Impossible.” Zarkon muttered.

From what Haggar had found out about humans from the Champion, they didn’t have any sort of magical powers, and the Lions didn’t grant such powerful changes in their Paladins, but here was the Blue Paladin commanding the giant wave that should have crushed him. Not only that, but he was using an attack special to his daughter, something that should be special to his daughter.

Zarkon needed answers.

He summoned some of his elite to his throne room.

“Bring to be the Blue Paladin!” Zarkon ordered them. “Alive!”

“Yes, my Lord.” They answered. “Vrepit Sa!”

“Vrepit Sa.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry if there wasn’t as much conflict between Lance and the other Paladins and Alteans as you wanted, but I’m not that good at doing that sort of stuff. But I’m going to try and have Lance’s half-Gem status still play some sort of conflict. I have received some really great ideas and have used them to create an over-view of the story in terms of what I’m going to write and the major plot-points, but please keep the ideas coming. But I have received two equally good suggestions for Zarkon’s reaction.
to Lance, one is that he believes Lance is his mother and tries to turn Lance to his side, and the other is that he reacts badly to Lance having Lazuli’s Gem and tries to separate it from him.
To tide you over

Chapter Summary

Not a chapter, but still something for you to read until I can post the next chapter

Sorry the next chapter is taking a bit long, but I’m currently in a rush to complete all of my Childcare course work (which is about 5 units worth) before the Wednesday deadline, which is also when I have an interview for the art course I plan on taking, so I also have to prepare for that as well. So, I haven’t been feeling like or even had the time to concentrate on the next chapter

But, to tide you over until the next chapter, I have created a story idea I thought up while writing this story that someone might be interested in picking up or just reading, and if no one picks it up, I might end up writing it after completing Ocean Blue. The story could branch off from Ocean Blue or be something completely separate it would depend on who would pick it up.

This story would be a species swap AU where each of the Paladins are different aliens. And it’s still a crossover with Steven Universe, though how much the Crystal Gems are featured in the story can be up to the author, which is none at all in my idea.

Lance is a Lapis Lazuli, he can either be a half-Gem like in Ocean Blue or formed with a defect that made him male instead female, either way, he doesn’t have a place in Homeworld. If you make Lance a half-Gem, you can give his mother the same backstory as in Ocean Blue or just a random Lapis Lazuli, and his other half doesn’t have to be human, it can be Altean, mermaid or some other alien. And if you do make Lance half-Gem, have his mother captured before she gives birth to him so that he ends up in the care of Blue Diamond. Defect or half-Gem, whichever you choose, Blue Diamond can’t find the will to shatter him, and so confines him to a planet that only she and a few of the most trusted members of her court know about, occasionally visiting him for Lance to entertain her with his control of water. No one else is meant to live on the planet with Lance other than the wildlife, Blue Diamond wanting to keep Lance isolated, but Lance does occasionally receive visitors from space that he keeps a secret from his Diamond.

Shiro is still human and gets abducted by the Galra, but instead of crashing on Earth after escaping, he crashes on Lance’s planet, who finds him and helps him recover.

Keith will be a Galra, and he can be a secret member of the Blade of Mamora or not, and will be the one to help Shiro escape, being on the escape shuttle that crashes on Lance’s planet with him since he outing himself as a traitor to rescue Shiro. Keith either recuing Shiro because he’s part of the Blade of Mamora and Shiro is a hope against Zarkon, or he’s one of the Galra in charge of guarding Shiro and forms a friendship with him until he can’t stand seeing Shiro tortured anymore. (Another idea is that Keith is the son, by adoption or by blood, of Zarkon, and the family dynamic being similar to Thanos with Gamora and Nebula from Marvel.)

Hunk and Pidge can be Balmerian and Olkari or different aliens altogether. The two travel around space together and either crash on Lance’s planet as well after a malfunction, or have already been to Lance’s planet and are just visiting him, around the same Shiro and Keith crash onto the planet.
After getting to know each other, Pidge picks up a Galra ship heading towards the planet, having followed Shiro and Keith. Depending on whether he and Pidge crashed or not, Hunk wants them all to leave in their ship before Pidge points out that their ship is barely big enough to support the two of them, let alone five people. But Lance has a solution to their problem and takes all of them into a deep cave, revealing the Blue Lion inside. Lance has already formed a bond with the dormant Lion but was never able to get her to wake up until now, since all of the Paladins are present, the Blue Lion always telling him to wait when he asked her when she would let him in. The Blue Lion lets them in and flies them off of the planet, Lance is reluctant to leave the only place he's known and because he fears what Blue Diamond would do to find him gone, but knows he has to.

The Blue Lions takes them to the castle of lions, where they wake up Allura and go to retrieve their own Lions and the story goes on to follow the storyline of the series, but with the changes having each of the Paladins as different aliens would make and well as how the additions of Gems would change the story.
Training and tests

Chapter Summary

Lance learns just how cruel Allura can be

Chapter Notes

I am free! Free baby! All my course work is finished and I’ve gotten my place for my next course. Which leaves me all the time I want to watch videos, play games, and, of course, write chapters for you guys.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

As Lance had expected, the tests Allura put him through were like cruel and unusual punishments. At first, they were simple, such as seeing how much water he could lift without it straining him or how well he could shape that water at certain volumes. But as the test went on, they started to get harder.

“Can I please stop now?” Lance begged, his arms straining.

“Just a little longer, I want these results as accurate as possible.” Allura responded, making Lance groan.

They were currently testing how much weight Lance could lift using water and for how long he could do it. This involved Lance suspending a large and heavy cube inside water up in the air, but it wasn’t just a matter of keeping the water in the air, Lance also had to shift the water upwards constantly to keep the cube afloat because of how heavy it was.

Finally, Lance couldn’t take it anymore and dropped his tired and sore arms, the water splashing to the floor and the cube landing with a heavy thunk.

“Three doboshes and thirty-four ticks.” Coran reported.

“No more.” Lance groaned. “I can’t take it.”

“Stop being so dramatic, Lance, we’ve barely started.” Allura told him.

“We’ve been at this for vargas.” Lance argued back.

“Lance is right, he needs a break.” Shiro told Allura.

“Fine.” Allura agreed.

Lance sighed in relief and dropped to the floor where he stood, not bothering to leave to room to rest. Hunk quickly arrived with some juice packets and a plate of food.

“You’re a saviour.” Lance told his friend.
Lance managed to summon enough energy to sit up and take the refreshments from the Yellow Paladin, consuming them with gusto.

“I’m guessing using your powers drains your energy then?” Hunk guessed as he sat down next to Lance, mindful of the water on the floor.

“Sort of.” Lance said. “I’ve never tried to test the limits of my powers before, never felt the need to, so I’ve almost never felt tired after using them. But this,” Lance indicated to the water and block on the floor. “Is exhausting me, but not how our usual training usually leaves me tired. It’s hard to explain, it’s more like…I’m emotionally tired.”

“Emotionally tired?” Hunk asked.

Unknown to Lance, those in the observation part of the training room were still listening in as he explained what he felt to his friend.

“When I usually use my powers, it is because I want to.” Lance told Hunk.

Lance stretched out his hand slightly and some of the water on the floor drew upwards and came over to him, weaving in and out of the boy’s fingers, taking on the vague shape of a stream of fish.

“Whether it’s because I need it to do something, or just for fun, I still want to do it. But…” Lance gestured around the room. “When I don’t want to do something, controlling the water becomes harder to do, becomes more of a strain, like it’s fighting me.”

“So, your powers are linked to your emotional state?” Allura asked.

Lance jumped, having forgot that the others were just next door.

“I guess.” Lance said, shrugging.

“Then it is even more important that we ensure you have proper control of your powers.” Allura concluded. “We don’t want something happening if you’re controlling water during a battle and get angry or upset.”

“Are you implying that I don’t have self-control when it comes to using my powers?” Lance asked, feeling slightly insulted.

No matter is Lance was angry or sad, he could still control water, it was his want to control water that made the difference.

“I didn’t mean it like that.” Allura said. “But we should make sure.”

“Besides, you’re not known for your self-control.” Pidge added. “Can you honestly tell me that you’ve never used your powers for self-gain, or for a prank?”

“Uh…” Lance trailed off, knowing he’d be caught lying.

“Exactly.” Pidge said.

“I think that’s enough testing of your strength for now.” Allura concluded as Lance finished off the juice packet and food and Hunk left the room.

“Thank god.” Lance sighed in relief.

“Time to move onto your combat capabilities.” Allura continued.
Lance whimpered. “Please tell me I’m going against a low-level training bot.” He begged.

“No.” Coran answered. “Number four has offered to be your opponent.”

Keith entered the room dressed in full Paladin armour, the look on his face told Lance that the Red Paladin would not be going easy on him.

“Great.” Lance mumbled sarcastically. “You know, I’ve never actually weaponised my water powers, right?” He said to Allura.

“According to records, Lazuli was able to make the water they controlled impact hard enough to knock enemies away. So, it stands to reason that you should be able to do the same.” Allura answered.

Lance frowned at her answer. “Yeah, but I’m not my mum.” He responded quietly.

Lance sighed but beckoned the water towards him regardless, which was all Keith need to start attacking.

All Lance wanted to do was collapse in his bed after Allura finally let him go, he hurt all over from fighting Keith, barely able to control his water enough to fend off some of the attacks.

“I don’t think I can use water to fight.” Lance had told Allura while he had been trying to get away from Keith.

“Just condense your water enough to block Keith’s attacks.” Allura advised as if she knew exactly what Lance needed to do.

“A little harder to do that than you might expect.” Lance had replied.

Lance did know how to condense water enough to make it have a solid impact, it was how he had summoned the water from the pipes and took out the guards back on that Galra ship when they were rescuing prisoners. But in an active fight, especially against Keith, who preferred to move unpredictably as he fought, Lance just didn’t have the time to concentrate and bend the water to his will.

“If your mother was able to do it, I believe you will be able to do it.” Lance know that Allura had meant it to sound encouraging, but it just made him feel compared to his mother again.

The comparison had made him falter enough for Keith to get a good hit in, sending him to the floor. Allura had decided to, mercifully, end training for Lance for the day shortly after.

But instead of going to his nice, soft bed, or at least running a nice, hot bath like his body was screaming at him to do, Lance’s feet took him to the Lion hanger. As he approached, the Blue Lion lowered its head and opened its mouth to let him inside, he walked into his lion and quickly collapsed on the pilot’s seat.

Lance didn’t have the same connection to his Lion as Shiro or Keith had with theirs, though he was working on making it stronger, his connection to Blue was more of a constant and comforting presence with the occasional impression on his mind or emotions that weren’t his, it was usually enough to be able to understand his Lion even if they couldn’t directly communicate. When Lance felt tired, a little fragile or was just having a bad day, all he found himself wanting was the
comforting presence of Blue, so he would station himself in his Lion as Blue chased away those bad feelings.

“I’m alright girl, just tired.” Lance told his Lion as he felt the presence wrap around become stronger, which usually meant the Blue Lion was trying to offer comfort.

As Lance sat in his Lion, he felt an increasingly annoying niggle in the back on his head.

“Stop it.” Lance said aloud.

The niggle continued, even getting more bothersome.

Lance sighed, knowing it wouldn’t stop into the Blue Lion got him to open up.

“Alright, fine.” Lance conceded. “I’m feeling a little tired because of what happened today. Allura kept comparing me to what my mum could do, as if I should be able to do it as well. This is why I kept quiet in the first place, I don’t need constant reminders that I’m never going to be as good as my mum.”

Lance felt sadness, but it wasn’t his own, he was feeling the sadness of someone towards him. He was feeling the Blue Lion.

Lance laughed. “Sorry, I didn’t mean to sound depressing.” He apologised to his Lion.

Lance closed his eyes, only intending to rest, but ended up falling asleep. As he slept, the Blue Lion influenced his dreams towards needed memories.

Lance stood on the sands of a beach, eyes closed as he listened to the ebb and flow of the sea, he lifted his arms and curled his fingers towards him. From pools of water in the sand left over from high tide, small ropes of water arose, twisting and swirling through the water, Lance opened his eyes and smiled at the display he was making.

“Very good, Lance, keep going.” A voice encouraged behind him.

Lance nodded and drew more water from the puddles, creating spirals and arcs of water that danced around him, Lance grinned wider at the way the water reflected the light of the sun.

“Now, shape it into something bigger.” The voice ordered.

Lance’s smile dropped slightly but his eyes flashed with determination. He brought all the water in front of him to join into one large blob, his arms starting to shake, but Lance wouldn’t give up and moved his fingers as the blob of water began to take shape, it grew vague arm and leg shapes but as Lance tried to add more it became too much and his control of the water faltered, sending most of it back onto the sand.

“Why can’t I do it?” Lance questioned sadly as he looked at the remaining water he was still able to keep in the air.

“Don’t push yourself.” He was told.

Onyx came over to him and put her hand on his shoulder.

“It will come to you in time.” She continued.
“But mum was able to do it, Pearl told me that she caused the water around her to bow when she first formed.” Lance said.

Onyx smiled at him, sitting down on the sand, pulling Lance gently to sit beside her.

“Remember that Pearl likes to exaggerate your mother’s accomplishments. But that is true. Only just out of the ground and already commanding the waves, it’s what made everyone take notice.” She said.

Onyx put her finger to Lance’s lips when he tried to speak.

“But,” She continued. “We Gem always come out fully formed, knowing what we are to be and what we can do. While you, you get to grow and change, you have so much to learn and explore about yourself. Lazuli once told me that she would envy you, Gems can never become more than they already are, our limits are set, but humans are able to change, continuous able to break through your limits.”

Lance wiped the tears from his eyes as Onyx spoke, smiling at her words.

“You may not be able to do much now, but Lazuli firmly believed that you would one day be able to surpass her, and I believe that too.” Onyx finished.

“Thanks.” Lance said, hugging the Gem, who hugged him back.

Lance then noticed that he still held some water in the air and waved his hand, forming it into the vague shape of him and Onyx in their hug.

Lance smiled as he awoke, the memory from all those years ago still lingering in his mind. But his smile quickly fell away as he became aware of all the aches in his body from his training as well as sleeping in his Lion’s pilot seat.

“Why does this happen to me?” He groaned, stretching in an attempt to rid himself of his aches.

Lance didn’t want to move, but eventually did at the constant nagging from his Lion, so, despite his soreness, he stood up and walked out of the Blue Lion.

Lance made it to the kitchen where he fixed himself a plate of food goo, he didn’t get long to enjoy it in peace before the others joined him.

“There you are.” Pidge said. “You just disappeared yesterday.”

Hunk nodded. “I figured you’d be exhausted, but when I went to check on you, you weren’t in your room.” He said.

“Sorry.” Lance replied. “I fell asleep in Blue and I’m paying for it along with what you all put me through yesterday.”

Lance rubbed his shoulder for emphasis.

“I don’t think I can do any of your test today.” Lance did his best to look like a wounded puppy.

“Lance, the best way to stop the pain is to keep exercising so your body gets used to the strain.” Shiro informed him.
“I don’t think that works for sleeping at odd angles.” Lance replied.

“Well, you’ll be glad to hear that we’re not doing physical tests today.” Pidge told him.

“That’s great.” Lance said, relieved. “I’m glad it’s over.”

“Oh, it’s not over by a long shot.” Pidge grinned.

“Huh? But you just said...”

“I said ‘physical’ tests.” Pidge said. “Today I want to see how different from being a human your Gem half makes you.”

Keith had to wince in sympathy for Lance, despite still feeling slight frustration over the Blue Paladin keeping secrets, because of Pidge’s choice of wording and lack of tact. He was glad Pidge wasn’t curious enough about his Galra blood to want to find out more, otherwise he would have been on the receiving end of similar words and lack of tact.

“Oh no!” Lance exclaimed, jumping to his feet. “You are not coming anywhere near me with needles or anything like that!”

“Don’t be a wuss, it’s only a little blood.” Pidge teased.

“No.” Lance repeated.

“Please Lance, we just want to understand more.” Allura said.

Lance faltered but then shook his head stubbornly.

In the end, they did get Lance to the medical room for some more tests, though he was still mostly there under protest, Keith guarding the door to prevent him from doing a runner. Shiro and Hunk had originally been on Lance’s side about the further tests since he was so against them, but the others had won them over by aiming straight at their caring nature, citing that something could happen to Lance and they wouldn’t know what to do because they didn’t know what Lance’s biology was. So, they had joined in coercing Lance to participate and were the main reason Lance had walked to the medical room instead of being dragged by the scruff of his neck by an impatient Allura.

Lance winced as blood was drawn from his arm and into a tube, the needle didn’t hurt, but it felt oddly heavy in his arm along with a creeping cold feeling emanating from the insertion point.

“That should be enough.” Coran said, gently sliding the needle out of Lance’s arm and spraying the hole with something instead of putting on a plaster.

The tube was placed in a machine which began to analyse what was inside, the results slowly appearing in Altean on a screen.

“Too bad we can’t scrape off some of Lance’s gem to get a better look at it.” Pidge said, trying her best to read the results.

Allura nodded in agreement. “From what I know of Gems, if they’re cracked, their form destabilises, and through Lance is a biological being, we don’t know what damaging his Gem, even in a small way, would do to him.”
“Cause me a butt load of pain.” Lance said, irritated.

“So, you can feel pain in it.” Allura asked, turning to him.

Normally, Lance would be happy about Allura giving him her focus, but right now he just felt uncomfortable.

“Not really, I’ve never damaged my gem to find out, but it does make me uncomfortable to cover it sometimes.” Lance said, quieter than usual.

“You should have said it made you uncomfortable, lad, I’d be happy to make some holes in your trousers for your gem.” Coran offered.

Lance smiled at the moustached man.

“Thanks, Coran.” He said, genuinely. “But I’m alright, it’s only sometimes.”

“Anything else you can tell us that makes you different other than your powers?” Allura asked.

“Uh, no. Other than that, I’m a completely normal human boy.” Lance answered.

Lance decided not to mention his slow pattern of aging that forced him to lie about his actual age in order to get into the Garrison without them questioning why he looked so young.

While they waited for Lance’s blood to be analysed, along with some of Hunks for a comparison, Lance was ordered onto a table and to take off his jeans so that they could get a closer look at his gem.

“Woah, Allura, shouldn’t this stuff be saved for the privacy of a bedroom.” Lance joked, not wanting to miss the golden opportunity presented to him.

Allura scowled at him in return, either not catching onto his joke or not thinking it was funny. Sometimes Lance wondered if Allura even had a sense of humour.

Lance took off his jeans without shame, not minding that the others were able to see his underwear, most of them tried to look away for decency’s sake but were soon drawn to stare at the tear-drop-shaped gem imbedded in Lance’s thigh.

“It doesn’t hurt or anything, right?” Hunk asked in concern.

“No, just feels like any other part of my body.” Lance answered.

Coran took out a scanner and placed it over Lance’s right thigh, another screen beginning to display a 3D model of his thigh and gem.

“This is fascinating.” Coran said as he examined the Gem.

In the end, the test ending up being mostly for nothing, the blood tests were only able to pick up the human half of Lance’s DNA and so read him as fully human, and all they had managed to find out from the scanner was that it would be very bad for Lance’s health if his gem was removed.

“Well, this was a waste of time.” Lance said as he pulled his jeans back on. “If you’re done treating me like a lab mouse, sorry guys.” Lance apologised to the mice. “I’ll be off.”

Lance quickly escaped before the others could try to call him back for more tests.
Chapter End Notes

Just a small thing, but I’ve gone back and changed who the previous Red Paladin was in my story to someone who’s a reference to another space-themed anime who would fit the Red Paladin role, the person to guess the character correctly gets a cookie.
(disclaimer: you will not actually get a cookie.)
Also, yay, I’ve gotten some fanart by the lovely Belletiger, including the cover image for this story. Find them at https://belletiger.tumblr.com/
“You’re hiding.” A voice startled Lance from where he was lying down.

Lance was startled and took a few seconds to regain his balance before glaring at Keith for giving him the fright in the first place.

“Whatever gave you that idea?” He tried to sound honest.

Keith raised an eyebrow and waved his arm to the rafters of the hanger where they were perched on.

“This isn’t exactly the best place to relax.” He deadpanned.

“Yes, I’m hiding.” Lance admitted in frustration. “What about it? You’d be hiding too if they were constantly prodding and poking at you and trying to make you tick! Acting like you’re suddenly different just because they found out you’re not entirely human!” Lance suddenly stopped his rant to look at Keith, realising what he’d said.

Keith looked pointedly away, but did move from where he was.

They stayed silent for a while, one not willing to speak the other not knowing where to start.

“I was going to tell everyone at one point.” Lance eventually managed to say, getting Keith’s gaze to shift to him. “But then Allura showed her opinion of Gem kind and I decided I didn’t want that reaction aimed at me. I guess I was overestimating her reaction towards me though.” Lance was aware he was repeating himself from the previous day.

“Why didn’t you say anything what it was aimed at me instead then?” Keith asked roughly.

“Habit, I guess.” Lance answered with a shrug. “All my life I’ve only been allowed to share who I am with my closest family, the Gems were always afraid of someone coming to cart me away I guess. Though, looking back, I think they feared those people coming from the stars rather than our governments. I’m so used to hiding it that I don’t really know how to tell anyone, I guess.”

Keith huffed, obviously not buying what Lance was saying.

Lance sighed, usually he would love to annoy Keith, but right now he just wanted the Red Paladin back on his side. He wanted to explain that he hadn’t just been afraid of their reaction to him, but also being compared to his mother, but he found he couldn’t part with such deep insecurities.

Lance opened his phone and found the picture of his mother.

“I never got the chance to meet my mum.” He said instead. “All I have are the stories from the Gems and her songs.”

“I can’t remember my mum either.” Keith said, pulling out his knife to look at it.
Lance wondered if Keith realised he’d said that out loud.

“She’s the reason I wanted to become a pilot, you know.” Lance laughed. “She had adventures amongst the stars, so I wanted to create my own, which I guess I finally am. Again, I only realise now while Pearl was so against me becoming a pilot, with Zarkon out there and all.”

Keith smiled slightly, unnoticed by Lance.

“I think I was the same.” He said quietly. “Dad always gave hints that she wasn’t exactly from Earth, and I wondered if I could meet her if I became a pilot.”

“Maybe you still will, you never know.” Lance said encouragingly.

They might have said more, if the alarms didn’t happen to go off.

“Paladins, we have a distress signal, get to your lions.” Allura announced.

The Lions were flying towards a large space station where the distress call was emanating from, the residents of said space station were apparently under attack from space pirates. Because, surprisingly, not every problem in the universe was cause by the Galra.

“I don’t like this, it’s too quiet.” Keith said suspiciously.

“It’s space, there’s not meant to be sound.” Lance said jokingly.

“Keith’s right, I don’t see any attacking ships. We need to be on guard.” Shiro said.

“Have they all boarded?” Hunk asked.

“It could be.” Allura offer. “I’m not getting any reply back from them.”

“We go in stealth.” Shiro decided. “Hunk, Lance, you hang back to provide cover fire if things go South. Pidge, Keith and I will do in and scope out the situation.”

“Right.” The other Paladins responded.

The Yellow and Blue Lions stationed themselves behind two asteroids some distance away from the base while the Green, Red and Black Lions flew closer before hiding while their Paladins flew the remaining distance to the station.

Shiro, Pidge and Keith quickly snuck their way onto the station, everything was completely dark so they had to turn on the flashlights in their helmets, the first thing they noticed was how messy everything was, scorch marks and cracks on the walls and everything over-turned.

“Looks like they already boarded.” Pidge commented.

Shiro frowned. “Something doesn’t feel right.” He said as he looked around.

“What?” Keith asked.

Shiro shook his head, unable to answer.

“Let’s see where the crew are.” Shiro said instead. “Pidge, do you think you can hack into the
cameras?"

“If we can find the surveillance room.” Pidge answered.

Pidge then brought up a hologram over her gauntlet.

“Based on the build of the station, I’d put it around here.” Pidge pointed to lower in the ship.
“Hopefully, we’ll find a map of directional arrows on the way there.”

“Okay, let’s go.” Shiro said.

Making sure to check around every corner and listen for any indication to switch off their lights, the three Paladins made their way through the pitch blackness of the station, their feet leaving footprints in the dust that caked the floor, finding a map along the way and finding out where the surveillance room was stationed. As they went further and further into the station, Shiro’s suspicions only grew stronger, they hadn’t seen hide nor hair of any crew member or space pirate since they arrived.

“I don’t like this, we should have come across someone by now.” Keith voiced Shiro’s suspicions.

“They might know we’re here and are waiting to spring a trap.” Shiro agreed.

“Well, we’re about to find out, we’re here.” Pidge said.

Whoever had created the station obviously hadn’t believed in everything being computer automated, as the doors could be opened manually and without the need for the station to be powered up, which was lucky for the Paladins considering the station didn’t seem to have any power.

“How are we going to use the cameras when there’s no power?” Keith questioned.

“I thought ahead.” Pidge announced proudly.

Pidge unstrapped the device from her back that she’d been carrying with her the entire time.

“After Green’s scan showed a lack of power, I brought this along, a portable power source.” She said.

Pidge plugged the device into the computer that controlled the cameras and they powered on, the screens flickering to life and showing the station in night-vision because there was still a lack of lights.

“Where is everyone?” Keith asked, frowning.

The three Paladins scanned the computer screens, but didn’t see anyone.

“Did the pirates manage to take everyone away before we arrived?” Pidge asked.

Shiro shook his head.

“There wasn’t that much time between the signal being sent out and our arrival.” He said.

Shiro’s eyes then widened in realisation, piecing together the lack of power, state of disrepair of the station, how everything was covered in dust. The station was likely invaded, but a long time before the signal was sent out.

“It is a trap!” He exclaimed.
The three Paladins quickly ran back the way they came, Pidge leaving behind her small power generator in favour of escaping the abandoned station quicker.

“Lance, Hunk, Princess! It’s a trap!” Shiro yelled into his coms as they ran.

Shiro received only static, Keith and Pidge got similar results.

“Something’s blocking us.” Pidge concluded.

“Then they must be in trouble.” Shiro said. “Hurry!”

“Quiznak!” Lance exclaimed as he swerved Blue out of the way of the lasers firing at him. “Shiro! Keith! Pidge! Come in! We need you out here!”

But just like Lance’s previous attempts, all he received was static.

Not long after Shiro, Keith and Pidge had entered the station, the attacking ships had suddenly appeared, having used some sort of holographic technology to cloak themselves as asteroids. And when Hunk and Lance had tried to contact the others on the station to warn them about what was happening, all they received was static.

“It’s no use, Lance, they’re blocking us!” Allura told him. “Focus your efforts on keeping them away from the Lions!”

Considering that the Black, Red and Green Lions were just floating there, pilotless and ripe for the picking, the enemy ships had of course targeted them, leaving Lance and Hunk to do their best to fend the ships off while also protecting the other Lions.

These guys weren’t Galra, but it was no secret that the Galra would reward generously for being given a Lion of Voltron.

“Ahh!” Lance cried out in pain as the Blue Lion was hit, causing him to be violently rocked.

It may just be from his point of view, but Lance felt like the enemy ships were targeting him more than Hunk.

Lance and Hunk took more of a beating before the three remaining Paladins finally manage to make it out of the station, having to blast the airlock open because of the lock that the enemy must have installed as part of their trap.

“Lance, Hunk?” Shiro questioned as he settled back into his Lion.

“Shiro!” Lance and Hunk cried in relief, happy to hear the voice of their leader again.

“What happened, where are the people from the station?” Hunk questioned.

“It was all a trap.” Pidge relayed. “The station was completely abandoned and has been for some time.”

“They must have been trying to catch us all on the station and then snatch away our Lions before we could do anything.” Keith said as he eagerly joined in the battle.

“Wow, lucky Hunk and I were here to protect your Lions from getting pinched.” Lance said
proudly.

“It was Shiro’s forethought to have you on guard outside, not you yourself, that protected our Lions.” Keith quickly shot him down.

“Yeah right, I bet if you were in my place, we’d be chasing our Lions down because you got too distracted by the fight to protect them.” Lance stated.

Before Keith could reply, Shiro interrupted before it could form into an argument.

“Sort this out later, once we’re not in the middle of battle.” He told them.

“What do we do, Captain?” One of the crew members turned to their leader.

The Captain frowned as he took in the situation.

It was meant to be a simple trap to lure the Paladins of Voltron and capture the Lions, the Paladins were meant to go into the abandoned space station they had come across and then set up for their trap, becoming stuck inside until it was too late and the Lions of Voltron were theirs, which they could then sell to the Galra for riches and immunity. But the Paladins had turned out to be wiser then the Captain had given them credit for and left two outside to stand guard, the Captain had tried to cut his losses and capture the three unmanned Lions but the remaining two had proved formidable enough to protect them until the others had returned. Against two Lions, his ships had the upper hand, but against all five and possible Voltron, they had no chance.

“Do we retreat?” Asked another crew member.

The Captain backhanded the crew member to the floor.

“A Carthan never retreats!” He spat. “We are not leaving this battle field without something to show for it!”

“Then what do we do?” Asked the navigator.

The Captain turned to his second in command.

“Which Lion would be the easiest and most valuable to focus on?” He asked.

The second in command held up a screen that showed the estimated bounty for the Voltron Lions.

“In terms of value, the Black Lion is by far the highest contender.” She reported. “However, it would also be the most difficult to take, considering its pilot is the previous Champion of the Galran battle ring.”

The Captain thought, but decided that while he wanted the money, the casualties just wouldn’t be worth it.

“Next.” He said.

“The easiest targets would be the Blue and Green Lions, as the Blue Lion seems to prefer long-range fighting and the Green Lion seems to be the lightest hitter, preferring to outsmart opponents. And it just so happens that the reward for both the Blue Lion and its Paladin have drastically gone up, with the Paladin required alive.” The second in command said.
“Well then, we have our target.” The Captain said. “All ships, focus on the capture of the Blue Lion and its Paladin, alive!”

It had been gradual, that’s why Lance hadn’t noticed it until Shiro called for them to form Voltron, only for Lance to realise he was far away from the other Lions. And now Lance was sure that he wasn’t imagining it, the ships were definitely targeting him more than the other Lions.

“Lance, get back over here.” Shiro called.

“I’m trying.” Lance responded.

But the ships surrounded the Blue Lion, blocking him off from the other Lions, and Lance did not want to risk damaging Blue by charging through them.

Just as Lance thought he saw a break in the blockade, he felt a looming presence behind his Lion, swinging around he saw a large ship almost as big as the Castle of the Lions, undoubtable the central command of all of the other ships.

“This isn’t good.” Lance mumbled to himself. “Guys!”

Lance tried to manoeuvre Blue out of the way, but with the other ships boxing him in like they were, it didn’t take long for the tractor beam to catch him.

“Guys, help!” Lance cried out, jerking fiercely at the controls that refused to respond anymore.

“Lance!” The other Paladins cried out.

The Paladins broke away from the ships they were currently attacking in favour of rescuing Lance.

“Captain, we have the Blue Lion, but the other Lions are fast approaching.” One of the pirates reported to the Captain. “If they reach us, we may not be able to escape.”

The Captain frowned but then took notice of the Castle of the Lions providing cover fire and defending against the few ships that were attacking it.

“All ships, focus fire on Voltron’s main ship!” The Captain ordered.

Responding quickly, the remaining ships focused their attacks on the castle, putting the shields under strain, for being pirates, their weapons were very strong. One of the weapons seemed to leach away the castle’s power.

“Paladins, we’re under attack, and the shields are rapidly draining!” Coran cried out.

“They’re trying to draw us away.” Keith grunted.

“But we can’t just ignore them, the castle is under attack.” Hunk said.

“Keith, Pidge, Hunk, you go and defend the castle, I’ll rescue Lance.” Shiro ordered.

“Right.” They responded.

Shiro continued to pursue the ship, which had already taken in the Blue Lion by now and was making its getaway.
“Captain, the Black Lion is still heading this way!” A crew member cried out.

“What do we have that could take it out?” The Captain asked his second in command.

“Well, there is that fancy EMP we have in cargo.” She suggested.

“Are you serious, do you know how much that took us to get, and how much it’s worth?” The Captain questioned.

“The ransom of the Blue Lion and its pilot will more than pay back for it. Besides, it’s our only chance.” She responded.

The captain sighed.

“Load the EMP into the canons and fire it at the Black Lion.” He ordered.

There were some complaints about the loss of the EMP, but the crew did as told.

The Black Lion raced through space, gaining on the fleeing ship, Shiro was determined to rescue Lance. The Black Paladin could still hear Lance through the coms, though the Blue Paladin was not at his Lion’s controls anymore, he was currently trying to defend himself and his Lion from the pirates inside the ship.

“Hang on, Lance!” Shiro shouted. “I’m coming!”

“Take your time.” Lance grunted, accompanied by the sound of blaster fire.

“Fire!” The Pirate Captain ordered.

The device fired was so small that Shiro didn’t notice it at first, and by the time he did it was too late, it attached to the side of the Black Lion as he tried to swerve past it. Shiro cried out as the Black Lion, and by extension himself, was shocked by some sort of energy, both the Black Lion and Shiro’s arm powering down.

“What was that?” Shiro panted as he recovered.

Shiro attempted to lift his right arm but found it unresponsive as his controls when he tried to move them with his left hand. Shiro was then struck with the ice-cold feeling of realisation.

“Lance?” He asked.

No response.

“Allura?”

No response.

“Keith, Pidge, Hunk?”

No response.

Shiro was dead in the proverbial water.

“Direct hit!” One of the crew reported. “The Black Lion can no longer chase us.”
“Do we go back for it?” Another crew member questioned.

The Captain thought but then shook his head.

“I don’t want to risk another Lion coming after us while we’re trying to retrieve it.” He answered. “It’s best if we leave now with what we have. Rang, get us out of here.” He ordered the ship’s pilot.

“Yes, Captain.” Rang replied.

The ship left the area at top speed.

“All ships, disband and regroup at later time!” The Captain ordered once he was satisfied the main ship was far enough way.

“Uh, Captain, we have a problem.” His second-in-command spoke up after looking at something on their screen.

“What, are we being followed?” The Captain asked.

“No. It seems that the Blue Paladin isn’t giving up without a fight. We’ve multiple men down in the holding bay. She reported.

The Captain sighed.

“Honestly.” He said. “If you want something done, do it yourself.”

The Captain left the brig and travelled down to the holding bay where the Blue Lion was being kept.

Lance was perched on top of the Blue Lion with his bayard out, shooting down any pirate that came too close while ducking out of the way of return fire. The floor was littered with the Captain’s men, none of them dead but most of them seriously wounded in some form or another.

“You seem to be good at making a mess.” The Captain commented to Lance.

“What’s you do to Shiro?” Lance demanded.

He knew something was off when communication with Shiro suddenly ceased.

“Who?” The Captain questioned. “Oh, the Black Paladin. Apologies, but he’s usually only know as the Champion.”

Lance bristled.

“Anyway, we just hit him with a little old EMP, so he’s not going to be coming to the rescue. Don’t worry though, I’m sure the rest of your teammates will eventually find him, the same can’t be said for you though.” The Captain continued.

“I’m pretty sure I can engineer my own escape.” Lance said confidently, not dropping his bayard for a second.

“Maybe if you got the chance.” The Captain agreed. “But we’re going to make sure you don’t get a chance.”

“I don’t know, I seem to be doing a pretty good job at taking out your men.” Lance said conversationally.
“My men, yes. My women, not so much. Evolution favoured the females of our species in some ways.”

“What?” Lance questioned.

Lance didn’t get to question much further as he suddenly felt something sharp enter his neck, he whipped around to see the Captain’s second-in-command standing behind him with a syringe in hand, who had used the Captain as a distraction to sneak up on Lance. Lance tried to aim his bayard at her, but quickly found his arms too heavy to lift, everything beginning to swim before his eyes.

“What…?” He tried to ask.

“Just something to keep you complaint until we deliver you to Zarkon.” She replied.

Lance only had a few seconds to feel shock and fear before he fell to the side out cold.

The Paladins and Alteans were suspicious when the attacking ships suddenly stopped their assault and flew off in so many random directions that it made it impossible to know which to follow.

“Shiro, did you get Lance?” Allura asked.

All she received was silence.

“Paladins, I’m not getting any response from Shiro.” She said to the remaining Paladins.

“Already on our way.” Pidge said as the Lions flew away from the castle and in the direction the main pirate ship and Black Lion went.

It didn’t take long for them to find the Black Lion, just floating there in space, unmoving without even the eye lights on.

“Shiro!” Keith shouted.

They still received no response.

“Let’s get him back to the castle.” Keith decided.

“What about Lance?” Hunk asked.

“Probably already gone.” Pidge said glumly. “That’s why the other ships left, they didn’t need to distract us anymore.”

“No.” Hunk said sadly.

“I’m afraid it’s true.” Allura confirmed from back at the castle. “The Blue Lion is now out of reach of the short-range scanner, and I have a feeling as to where they’re taking Lance.”

“Then we need to go after them before they get there.” Hunk said determinedly.

“With the castle shield low on power, only three active Lions, and not knowing if Shiro’s alright, I’m afraid we’re in no state to go after them. They could reach the Galra before we reach them, then it would be a losing battle.” Allura concluded.
Hunk looked longingly in the direction the ship had been heading.

“Fine.” He said in defeat.

The Yellow and Red Lions grabbed onto the inactive Black Lion and flew it back to the Castle of the Lions where they set it down gently.

Once inside, Pidge was quick to identify the problem.

“An EMP, that’s why Shiro isn’t responding.” Pidge said, prying the device off of the Black Lion.

“So, Shiro’s alright?” Keith asked.

“He should be.” Pidge said. “He’s just stuck in there because everything’s offline.

“Shouldn’t there be some sort of emergency release on the hatch for when something like this happens?” Hunk asked.

Hunk got his answer where the panel on top of the Black Lion’s head opened and Shiro stumbled out, his cyborg arm dangling limply at his side. The other Paladins helped him down to the ground.

“Sorry.” Shiro apologised. “I couldn’t save Lance.”

“Don’t worry, we’ll get him back.” Keith reassured.

“Right now, we need to fix what the EMP did to you and your Lion.” Pidge said.

“And then get Lance?” Shiro asked.

“Well, by the time we’ve undone the effects of the EMP, Lance could already be with Zarkon.” Allura said thoughtfully.

“We’re not just going to leave him.” Hunk protested.

“I’m not suggesting that.” Allura counted. “I’m just thinking, if we’re going to go to what will most likely be Zarkon’s main ship to retrieve Lance, then it will need to be part of our final strike.”

“Final strike, you mean finally take down Zarkon?” Hunk asked.

Allura nodded.

“Once the Black Lion and Shiro are fixed, I’ll contact the Blade of Mamora and we can decide on a course of action.” She said.

The other Paladins looked at each other and tried to smile reassuringly, not only were they going to rescue Lance, but they were finally going to take down Zarkon too.

Reality faded in and out for Lance, all he was ever aware of was lying down on a hard surface but being unwilling or unable to move, then a sharp pricking sensation and all awareness fading out again. This happened a few more times before reality started fading in again and he became aware of being dragged instead of lying down.

“Here you go, one Blue Paladin and his Lion, just like you ordered.” A semi-familiar voice made its
way through the thick haze in his mind.

Lance was dimly aware of something grabbing his chin and yanking his head up none to gently.

“Yeah, that’s him.” A voice grunted after a moment.

Lance was then dropped to the floor but wasn’t aware enough to be bothered by the pain.

“Pleasure doing business with you.” The first voice said.

There was then the sound of footsteps walking away.

“Pick him up.” The second voice ordered.

Lance was picked up again by both of his arms, his feet dragging on the floor.

“Let’s get him to Emperor Zarkon.” The second voice spoke again.

“Should we give him something to counter the drugs? I imagine Emperor Zarkon will want to question him immediately.” A new voice asked.

“Nah, it looks like they’re wearing off on their own, he should be sober enough by the time we get there.”

Then Lance was once again being dragged.

As he was being dragged, Lance became more aware. He heard the mechanical hum of the ship around him, the marching feet of the Galra holding him, he was eventually able to open his eyes and take in the mostly purple world around him. After that, Lance was able to start struggling weakly, not that it did much good considering he was still weak from the drugs and the Galra were much stronger than him.

Lance was so busy struggling, that he didn’t notice that he was no longer being dragged, until he was forced to stand fully on his feet despite his legs still feeling weak. He then became aware of where he was and looked up.

Into the eyes of Zarkon.
Just like her

Chapter Summary

Lance faces the wrath of Zarkon

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Being face to face with the very being that he’d been fighting against, the one who caused Shiro so much pain, took Allura and Coran’s planet and people for them, terrorised the universe for ten-thousand years, and who his mother fled from, Lance couldn’t even begin to describe the fear he felt.

“Blue Paladin.” Zarkon spoke, his voice commanding. “Do you know why you have been brought here?”

Lance swallowed and gathered his courage before Zarkon’s imposing presence could take it from him.

“I don’t know.” He answered back. “Beauty tips? You could certainly use some.”

Then, before Lance even had time to process it, the druid who’d been standing at Zarkon’s side suddenly teleported across the room, back-handing him so hard that he would have fallen over if not for the sentries holding him.

“Do not dare to speak to our emperor in such a manor!” Haggar ordered.

“You have been brought here because you hold information I find very valuable.” Zarkon continued as if Lance hadn’t talked-back and Haggar hadn’t slapped him.

Lance was tempted to talk-back again, but the warning look from Haggar accompanied by the harsh stinging pain and feeling of blood on his cheek, kept him silent.

“I will only give you once chance to give up this information freely, but if you choose to remain insolent, Haggar will make quick work of those thoughts and find what you know in a much more… excruciating way.” Zarkon said.

Haggar’s grin told Lance that she was hoping for his silence.

Lance stood straighter, without needing the sentries needing to support him, the drugs that had been given to him having finally worked their way out of his system. His eyes quickly scanned the room for signs of escape while he bought time for himself.

“Depends, what do you want to know?” Lance said calmly, trying to keep his care-free persona in place.

“Where is Lapis Lazuli?” Zarkon growled.

Lance broke away from his escape searching to look at the emperor in shock.
“What?”

“The previous Blue Paladin, who you have stolen from.” Zarkon elaborated with a frown.

“Uh…” Lance said.

Lance was at a loss, he had no idea how much Zarkon knew of the situation, what to say in response.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about.” He decided to plan dumb. “I found the Blue Lion in a cave and she chose me. I don’t know anything about a Lapis Lazuli.”

“There is truth in his statement, but he also lies.” Haggar hissed.

“Show him the consequence of lies.” Zarkon growled.

The sentries holding Lance let go, causing him confusion, but that feeling was quickly overcome by pure agony as Haggar attacked him with her magic, sending him to the floor, writhing him pain as the dark energy coursed through his body. After a couple of minutes that felt like hours to Lance, Haggar eventually stopped, leaving Lance twitching on the floor.

“You have used a power held only by the Lapis Lazuli who piloted the Blue Lion.” Zarkon stated. “How were you able to use this power?”

Lance grunted from where he lay on the floor, trying to gather his thoughts as well as the energy to support his body, able to support himself with his hands. Internally, he began to panic, he thought he’d destroyed all of the ships back then, but one must have escaped to learn about what he did, this made things substantially more difficult for him.

“I don’t know.” Lance gave the first response that came to his head.

Haggar shocked him again for his lie.

Lance was at a loss for what to do, Haggar could tell if he lied, but he couldn’t think up any half-truths that wouldn’t lead to more trouble, and telling Zarkon that it was because he had his mother’s Gem certainly wasn’t an option because there was no telling how Zarkon would react.

“Speak!” Zarkon ordered.

Lance chose instead to remain silent.

“If you will not speak, then the information shall be pried from you.” Zarkon concluded.

The two sentries picked Lance back up and made to drag him away again when Zarkon held up his hand to stop them.

“It shall be done here.” He ordered.

“Yes, my lord.” Haggar said. “Bring my tools!” She ordered her other Druid who was present.

The Druid bowed and then disappeared.

Lance fought through the pain-created fuzz in his mind to try and formulate and escape before the public torturing could begin. He managed to support himself on his two feet again, fighting off the numbness, but by the time he had, the Druids had returned with the tools for Lance’s torture.
Lance grew cold as he looked at each instrument, having no idea what they did other than to cause him pain. Haggar had a sick grin on her face as she looked over her tools, choosing which one to use first, she landed on a sharp-looking tool and picked it up.

“Something basic to start off with I think.” Haggar said. “From what I learned from the Champion, it does not take much to cause pain to your species.”

Lance looked at the sharp-looking tool in Haggar’s hands in fear as she approached. He struggled against the sentries holding him but their grip remained tight.

“Where is Lapis Lazuli? How do you command her power?” Haggar questioned, her arm already drawn back to strike like she was anticipating Lance not answering.

“I’m not telling you anything!” Lance declared as he struggled, realising that there was no point in playing dumb.

“You will.” Haggar promised before slashing the tool in her hand across Lance’s stomach where he was only protected by his flight suit.

Lance grunted as the tool slashed across his stomach, but it didn’t manage to cut through the thick material of his flight suit and the pain wasn’t much more than he’d catch his hip on the sharp edge of a table, leaving Lance to wonder if Haggar’s weapon was defective or if she was under the impression this amount of pain was meant to break him.

But then the burning pain started, like a paper cut but much, much worse, building until Lance had to grit his teeth to stop from screaming out. The weapon Haggar had chosen somehow caused pain without a wound. He crippled from the pain with only the sentries supporting him. Eventually, and thankfully, the pain decreased to a background level, still noticeable but allowing him to focus on his surroundings and stand on shaky feet again.

Haggar hummed as she took in Lance’s pale and sweaty complexion, unsatisfied by his lack of vocalising his pain. She placed back her weapon and picked up another.

“Remove his armour.” She ordered the sentries holding Lance, approaching with her new choice of torture.

The sentries loosened their grip on Lance and began to remove his Paladin armour, and Lance quickly took his chance. Using the grip the sentries still had on him, Lance kicked forward, knocking Haggar’s weapon out of her hand while using the motion from his kick to flip over the sentries’ heads, twisting himself free and sending them to the floor. Lance landed but them almost fell to the floor himself because of how weak all of the pain had left him feeling, he quickly recovered and used his stumble to pick up Haggar’s weapon from where it had fallen to the floor, holding it in front of himself defensively.

Lance had no idea as to how to use the weapon, but that didn’t mean he couldn’t pretend he did.

“You are foolish, Paladin.” Haggar told him. “There is no escape for you.”

“Maybe.” Lance agreed with a shrug. “But I’m not really the type to sit there and take it.”

Without need for command, the Galra in the room rushed forward to put Lance back under control, Lance dodged as best as he could and even figured out how to work the weapon to take a few Galra down, but he was eventually grabbed and subdued, forced to face Zarkon again.

“I can see why you were chosen as the Blue Paladin.” Zarkon told Lance, having remained seated
during Lance’s futile attempt at escape. “You hold much of your predecessor’s strength and defiance.”

Zarkon then stood and stepped down from his throne, striding over to Lance and grabbing hold of his neck and forcing the Blue Paladin to look straight at him. Lance chose to stare it him with the defiance the emperor had just commented on, holding back the fear he felt from the large hand around his neck.

“I can see much of her in you.” Zarkon commented further.

‘Does he know?’ Lance thought.

“Perhaps, when you give the information I require and my daughter is back in her rightful place, I shall let her decide your fate instead of killing you.” Zarkon said.

Lance didn’t know what made him do it, maybe it was Zarkon confirming that he viewed Lance’s mother as his daughter or maybe it was him insinuating that Lance had taken her ‘rightful place’, but whatever it was, Lance finally snapped and opened his mouth before he could think of the consequences.

“I don’t think that’s going to be possible considering she’s gone.” Lance spat.

The hand around Lance’s throat grew tighter and he was lifted off the ground more, the Galra who had been holding him letting him go.

“What?” Zarkon demanded.

“She’s gone, no more, dead! And has been for over twenty years.” Lance continued in anger, giving no mind to increasing lack of being able to breath.

Zarkon lifted Lance up into the air so that he really was choking, Lance grasped desperately at the emperor’s arms to try and support himself enough to be able to breath and futilely attempt to escape the hold.

“Lies.” Zarkon hissed.

Lance’s vision was becoming dark around the edges as his life was choked out of him by the infuriated emperor.

“My lord, we still need him for questioning.” Haggar said when she realised that Zarkon wasn’t going to stop.

Zarkon didn’t listen and only tightened his hold.

Lance was getting desperate as he struggled for the breath he wasn’t being allowed, he looked frantically around for something to escape with but there wasn’t any water anywhere in the room for him to control and there were no weapons in range for him to use. Well, almost no weapons.

‘But that’ll means they’ll find out.’ A part of Lance’s mind told him.

‘I don’t want to die!’ Lance cried back.

As Lance began to lose consciousness, he realised that he had no other choice, it was either this or death.

Fighting against preservation instincts, Lance let go of Zarkon’s arm with his right hand and reached
down to his leg, he managed to unlatch his leg armour which confused the Galra and Druids present, except for Zarkon who was still lost in his rage and desire to kill Lance. With his armour out of the way, Lance placed his hand over where his Gem was under his flight suit and concentrated with what was left of his consciousness, his Gem glowed and there was a ripping sound as something forced its way through his flight suit from his Gem.

Before the Druids or Galra could react or Zarkon could finally take notice, Lance grasped the shaft of the arrow that had emerged from his Gem, brought it up and plunged it into Zarkon’s arm with all his remaining strength.

Zarkon shouted in pain and let go of Lance, sending the Blue Paladin to the floor as he fought to get air back into his lungs, holding his throat protectively with his left hand while holding his arrow and supporting himself with his right.

Lance forced himself to sit up on his knees when he noticed that he was being approached, waving the arrow in his hand threateningly at them through blurred vision, unable to make out what was sentry, Galra or Druid, the only one he could distinguish was Zarkon because of his size.

Zarkon looked at the Blue Paladin, who was waving a very familiar arrow at anyone who got too close with clouded eyes, the same arrow that had just been plunged into his arm and forced him to release the Blue Paladin, though it was clear that if any of them made a serious attempt to get at the Blue Paladin that he wouldn’t be able to fend them off, the Galra were simply waiting for their emperor’s orders.

Haggar approached Zarkon and placed her hand over the wound, forcing her quintessence into him to heal it.

Once her emperor was healed, Haggar teleported over to Lance, the Blue Paladin tried to attack her but only ended up knocking himself out after pushing his body too far after what had been done to him, his weapon disappearing into light.

Zarkon approached the Blue Paladin and picked him up again, this time by his body instead of his neck. He turned the boy to look at the hole in the leg of his flight suit, eyes narrowing suspiciously as he placed a claw at the hole and ripped the suit to make it bigger.

Zarkon’s eyes went from suspicious to shocked when he saw what was underneath the flight suit. A tear-drop-shaped lapis lazuli gem.

Everything fell into place for Zarkon.

“Lazuli.” Zarkon said as he moved Lance to cradle him instead. “What has been done to you?”

Zarkon vowed that whoever did this to his daughter would pay dearly, the Princess, the Paladins, the Blue Valkyries, Homeworld, whoever it was would feel his wrath for what had been done to his daughter to make her have this form he held, to make her go against him, to declare herself dead.

Chapter End Notes

Considering that season 3 is so close, I’m going to hold off writing the next chapter until I’ve seen it so that I can integrate it into my story and see how much of my plans I’m
going to change to fit with the story, such as how the character of Lotor will interact with the Paladins.
Also, if Zarkon continues to believe Lance is Lazuli, should Lance go along with it or should he try and tell Zarkon that’s he’s Lazuli’s son only to not get listened to, or should Zarkon learn that Lance is only Lazuli’s son and not Lazuli and what should his reaction be to the news?
Lance came to awareness slowly, it felt as if he was drifting as his heavy eyelids stayed closed even as he became aware of his sleeping state. Distantly, he was aware that he should be feeling pain for some reason or at least be uncomfortable, but all he felt was softness all around him and no pain to be found. In his peaceful state, he wanted nothing more than to stay dozing in the softness of the bed he was most likely in, nothing like his bed in the castle.

Reality then came crashing down on Lance as he recalled the last thing to happen to him, Zarkon choking the life out of him only for Lance to stab him with an arrow and fall into darkness not long after. His eyes shot open and he sat up, now wide awake.

The room around Lance was dark, but a soft glow emanating from crystals that hung from the ceiling allowed him to see a basic outline of the room he was in as well as realise he was in a bed. Pulling the covers off of him, Lance shuffled to the edge of the bed before swinging his legs over, giving a small gasp when his bare feet met with the cold floor. Using the bed as support, Lance pushed himself to his feet and was relieved when he didn’t feel dizzy or faint, as if he’d woken up after a normal sleep rather than from being knocked out cold after a torture session.

‘Shouldn’t I be in a prison cell?’ Lance thought to himself.

The crystals or whatever powered them must have had motion sensors, because as soon as Lance took a few steps from the bed their glow increased to allow Lance to clearly make out the room around him. The walls of the room were coloured blue along with the floor, with one wall lined with bookcases and another wall with cabinets and shelves, figurines scattered about on them, there were a few fountains of varying sizes but no water was spouting out of them and Lance couldn’t feel any water in the pipes. On another wall Lance spotted his Paladin armour and bayard behind a glass case, along with a few other glass cases that displayed weapons, Lance rushed over to it but was unable to open any of the doors, and he had a feeling that the glass wouldn’t be easily breakable.

Lance continued to check around the room, noting that despite how everything seemed to be in pristine condition, it also seemed very old at the same time, like a room left untouched for years minus the dust. Lance eventually gave up his searching of the room, find no exit, no access to water, and everything of use locked away as if to mock him. He sat down on the bed he woke up on and sighed, staring down at his lap.

It was then that Lance took notice of what he was wearing.

Considering that his Paladin armour was on display, probably to mock him about its inaccessibility, it was obvious Lance had to be wearing something else, but he had been expecting clothes similar to what Shiro had been wearing when he arrived back on Earth. Instead, Lance wore a blue top with the symbol of the Galra printed in purple on the front, a matching blue skirt that was short on his
right leg to show off his Gem and then got longer as it went left and behind him until the skirt almost touched the floor, and blue arm and leg warmers.

Lance was not happy.

Not because of the skirt, he’d grown up playing dress up with his little sisters and cousins too much to be bothered by that, but because the style of the clothes was way too similar to what he’d seen pictures of his mother wearing to be a coincidence.

He also felt a slight panic because this meant that Zarkon knew about him having his mother’s Gem, but mostly annoyance because he was being dressed up like her.

“What is Zarkon playing at?” Lance asked himself aloud as he looked over himself.

There was the sound of something shifting and Lance turned towards one of the wall in time for a door shape to appear that then open, revealing the Galran emperor himself.

“I am glad to see you awake, Lazuli.” Zarkon said as he entered.

“Says the guy who knocked me unconscious in the first place.” Lance snarked back automatically, regardless of the danger that would come from doing so, before realising what Zarkon had called him. “And what did you just call me?”

“I am sorry for being so violent, if I had known it was you, I would have not caused you so much pain.” Zarkon said.

“That’s nice, but you seem to be confusing me for someone else.” Lance said, moving away as Zarkon came closer.

“I am not.” Zarkon said firmly. “I know it is you Lazuli, there is no need for you to continue this lie.”

“I am not Lapis Lazuli.” Lance insisted.

“I cannot be fooled, you act the same and you have the same Gem.” Zarkon said, grabbing onto Lance and forcing him to face him. “Or has whatever has been done to you to make you take on this form also taken your memory from you?”

Contrary to how Lance behaved, he was not stupid, he knew it’d be within his best interest to lie and going along with pretending to be his mother, something that would likely ensure his safety until he was rescued or could escape on his own, but pretending to be his mother was just not something Lance would do. And if Zarkon wouldn’t believe him, Lance would just have to tell the truth, omitting some details to protect those on Earth, obviously.

“Look, I was born from Lapis Lazuli, she became me but I am not her.” Lance told Zarkon.

“Is that what they made you believe?” Zarkon demanded.

“What who made me believe?” Lance asked, confused.

“Those who turned you into this, turned you against me. Who are they?”

“No one did this to me. I’m telling you that I’m not Lapis Lazuli, she’s my mother. And she was never with you!”

Lance yelled as the grip on his arm became painfully tight.
“Do not take that tone with me!” Zarkon growled. “You may be my daughter but I am still your emperor and I will not to be spoken to in such a way.”

“Let go.” Lance cried, trying to escape the painful grip. “I’m not your daughter!”

“Once you have been fixed, you will be again.” Zarkon promised. “Soon all will be as it rightly should. The Black Lion will be mine and you shall be at my side, and we shall squash out the remaining resistance to my rule together.”

Zarkon loosened his grip but still held onto Lance’s arm.

“You’re demented if you think I’ll ever join you.” Lance challenged.

“Once you have been returned to your correct mind, you will come to see sense.” Zarkon said.

Zarkon released his grip, causing Lance to fall to the ground at the unexpected slack after pulling against the grip.

“You should rest, you will need your energy.” Zarkon said as he turned to leave.

“Wait, what do you mean by that?” Lance asked as he stood.

Zarkon did answer, leaving through the door.

“Hey!” Lance exclaimed.

Lance tried to run over but the door had already closed behind Zarkon. Lance looked the door over but found no way to open the door himself, not even a lock to open it from the inside.

Lance sighed.

“Okay, Lance, there’s no need to worry about this.” He said to himself, walking around the room, trying to find an escape opportunity he’d missed. “The team will come and rescue you before Zarkon can do anything to you, they have to.” Lance’s face then fell. “But do they know where I am? I was taken by those space pirates, they may not know I was taken to Zarkon.” Lance shook his head. “No, they’ll find out I’m here, it’s obvious who I’d be sold to, and the Blade said they had Galra on the inside. I need to stop worrying.”

Lance sat on the side on the bed and looked the arm Zarkon had grabbed, he took off the arm warmer and rubbed his arm, trying to tell if it would end up bruising.

“Okay, so let’s try and gather all the facts. I’m captive in what has to be Zarkon’s main ship, meaning the team’s going to have a tough time when they come for me, even harder if it’s back at the centre of the empire, and Zarkon’s so in denial about mum being gone that he’s decided I’m her, and he’s going to do something to most likely brainwash me into believing I am my mum and joining his side.” Lance sighed again. “I’m hungry. And thirsty.”

Lance stood up and looked around again, trying to see if there was a fridge or a food cupboard of some sort in the room, but there wasn’t. It was obvious that this room was made with Lance’s mother in mind, and Gems didn’t need to eat, and as long as Lance showed rebellion he doubted the fountains would provide him with water to drink.

After a few more laps around the room and then sitting back on the bed, Lance’s head snapped up as he heard a sharp hissing sound, he looked up to as a gas emerging from points in the ceiling, he grabbed the discarded arm warmer and pressed it over his nose and mouth as he looked for a place to
escape the gas, but it was everywhere and he eventually began to cough as it made its way through the material of the arm warmer. The gas was fast acting and Lance collapsed down onto the bed, the arm warmer falling from his grip as he fought to keep his eye opened.

There was the sound of rushing air and the gas was vented from the room, too late for Lance though as everything began to get dark, before his eyes were forced closed, Lance saw the door open again and someone step through.

“Have all forms of liquid been removed from the area?” Haggar asked one of her Druids.

“Yes, lady Haggar.” Her Druid answered.

“Good.” Haggar said as she watched her other Druids carry out their task.

The other Druids were securing Lance to the table, activating the straps to ensure he stayed where he was when he woke up. Zarkon was close by, watching.

“Will this harm her?” Zarkon asked.

“We need to first research what has been done to your daughter to make her take this form, the tests should not cause any damage, but reverting her back to her original form most likely will.” Haggar informed him.

“My daughter is strong, she can put up with whatever pain is needed to return her to her original form.” Zarkon said.

Zarkon walked over to Lance and caressed his sleeping face.

“I would not have chosen her if she were otherwise.” He said.

There was the sound of shouting and struggling and Haggar and Zarkon turned to see two sentries dragging a purple woman through the door, the woman doing her best to escape while throwing insults, the gemstone on her lower left arm identified her as a Gem.

“Why is that here?” Zarkon asked.

“I needed something close to Lapis Lazuli’s original form to be able to analyse the differences, it is the closest thing we have since we have no other Lapis Lazulis as of current.” Haggar answered.

She didn’t mention that the reason there were no other Lapis Lazulis was because Zarkon had shattered the ones they did have captured in a fit of rage.

“Cease your foolish struggles! I can easily have you shattered and another to be used in your place.” Haggar ordered the struggling Gem.

The Gem scowled at Haggar but stopped struggling and went silent. The sentries then dragged her over to a large tube and pushed her inside, a glowing purple field enveloping the tube behind her.

“What the…?” The Gem looked at the purple field and reached out a hand.

“Unless you want to have to reform, you won’t touch that.” Haggar told her. “It has been reversed engineered from your destabilisers.”
The Gem gasped and drew back her hand, going back to scowling at everyone in the room.

“Begin analysing!” Haggar ordered.

A metal ring flipped up at either end of the table Lance was strapped to and began to move up and down the table as they glowed, scanning Lance’s body. Similarly, glowing rings moved up and down the tube the Gem was inside, still scowling but also trying to work out what was going on.

“It is clear that your daughter is now an organic being instead of her form being crafted from light, that is how she became so injured without destabilising and the sleep gas worked on her, that much is sure.” Haggar said. “We will find deeper information soon.”

“Inform me when you are done.” Zarkon said, turning to leave. “I will continue my search for the Black Lion.”

“Yes, sire.” Haggar said.

Zarkon left along with some Druids to help him in his search.

“Alert me when the scan is complete, I have other matters that require my attention.” Haggar said, leaving as well.

It wasn’t long after Haggar left that Lance began to stir. He groaned as he opened his eyes and looked around, quickly discovering that he was bound to a hard surface.

“I have got to stop waking up in weird places.” He said. “Uh, where am I?”

The Druid that was left in the room said nothing.

“Hello?” Lance tried again.

“You’re in one of the witch’s labs.” A voice answered.

Lance turned his head to look at the Gem trapped in the tube. She had purple hair that went to her chin at the front and was tied in a long thin braid at the back that went past her hips, both her skin and eyes were different shades of purple, she wore a purple turtle-neck jacked that went down to a point at the front and back with her right sleeve going down to her wrist and her left sleeve rolled half-way up her arm, a blue diamond was on the front of the jacket with the pointed end of the jacket making up one half with the top half going up the sides and ending just below her chest, and she wore what looked to be purple leggings that led into knee-high purple boots with blue diamonds on the knees.

“You’re a Gem.” Lance realised, spotting the purple gemstone on her arm.

“Astute observation.” The Gem commented. “And so are you.”

The Gem eyed Lance’s gem where it was uncovered by the skirt.

“Through, you don’t look like any Gem I’ve seen, maybe that’s why the witch is doing these tests. Hey, what’s this stuff about you being Zarkon’s daughter by the way? I certainly can’t see the resemblance.”

“I’m not Zarkon’s daughter.” Lance said, annoyed. “My mum was, but she became me when I was born, and Zarkon’s not listening when I tell him that I’m not my mum.”

“Became you, how did she become you? Who was she?” The Gem asked, curious.
“I don’t really understand it, she just did.” Lance answered. “She was a Gem and a Paladin of Voltron.”

“She was a Gem? But how is it possible that she is your mother, Gems can’t give birth, we’re an inorganic species?” The Gem said, shocked.

“I just said that I don’t understand it, she just did, but whatever happened meant she had to give up her physical form to become part of me, hence her Gem on my leg and all of the confusion.”

The Gem hummed. “My Diamond will be very interested in learning about this.” She said. “And you say Zarkon thinks you’re his daughter? And was a Paladin of Voltron? If I remember my history correctly, that would make the gem on your leg a Lapis Lazuli. My Diamond will definitely need to hear about this.”

“How are they going to hear about anything when you’re just as trapped as I am?” Lance asked.

The Gem smirked at him and tapped the side of her nose.

“So, Lapis Lazuli, are you still part of Voltron?” The Gem asked.

“Don’t call me that.” Lance protested. “My name is Lance.”


“And yes, I’m part of Voltron.”

Iolite nodded.

“Hey, are you just gathering information from me?” Lance realised.

“Well, it is my job.” Iolite answered in a ‘no duh’ tone.

“Well, I’m not going to give you anymore.” Lance said, looking away from her.

“Don’t be so sure about that.” Iolite said promisingly.

Lance and Iolite noticed when the glowing rings stopped passing over them and a screen appeared in front of the Druid that was still there.

“Scan complete, alerting Haggar now. Documenting information learned from conversation between the two Gems.” The Druid said aloud.

“Whoops, sorry.” Iolite apologised to Lance, not realising the information she learned had been handed over to the Druid.

“It’s fine.” Lance said. “I want them to know, to know that I’m not my mum.”

Iolite looked at him sceptically. “If you say so.” She said.

Haggar soon appeared and read over the information found during the scan and the Druid listening in on their conversation.

“Take the Iolite to a holding cell for now and keep her physical form intact, I do not want to wait for her to reform for when further tests are needed.” Haggar ordered.

Her Druid nodded and went over to Iolite’s holding tube.
“Try to escape and it will end very badly for you.” The Druid told Iolite.

Iolite held up her hands in surrender with a confident look on her face.

“I won’t.” She promised.

Iolite let the Druid take her out of the tube and secure her hands behind her back, leading her out of the room.

“These results are interesting.” Haggar said as she finished reading. “It opens up so many possibilities. But for now, there’s the matter of you.”

Haggar walked over to Lance.

“I’m not Lapis Lazuli.” Lance insisted before Haggar could say anything.

“I know you are not her.” Haggar said.

“I’m telling you, I’m... Wait, you believe me?” Lance looked at her, shocked.

“You are similar, but your quintessence is different, even in that gemstone of yours. The readings of the scan show that the hybrid nature you claim is possible, you truly are her son.” Haggar said.

“Then you can tell Zarkon that, right?” Lance smiled.

“No.” Haggar said.

“What, why?” Lance asked, frowning.

“My lord believes that he has his daughter back after ten-thousand years, I am not going to deny him this.” Haggar said.

“But I’m not my mum!” Lance exclaimed.

“You may not be, but some experimentation will change that.” Haggar said, promising darkly.

Lance gulped in fear.

“Take him to the waiting cell, I need to analyse this information for now.” Haggar ordered the druid, who had returned.

The straps were undone and the Druid grabbed Lance, unlike Iolite he put up a struggle, but was shocked by black energy by the druid until he went limp. The Druid carried Lance out of the lab and to a nearby room where he was thrown into one of the cells, the Druid closing the barred door behind him before leaving.

Lance grunted as he propped himself up on the wall, trying to recover from being shocked by the energy.

“Are you alright there?”

Lance turned to see Iolite in the cell opposite him, but instead of a door keeping her in the cell there was a purple field.

“I’m guessing you can’t just walk through that?” Lance asked.
Iolite shook her head.

“Gem destabilising energy barrier.” Iolite said, looking the field over. “Reverse engineered from Gem tech’. Yellow diamond is not going to be happy about this.”

“Is Yellow Diamond your leader?” Lance asked.

“She’s a leader, but not my Diamond, my Diamond is Blue Diamond.” Iolite said, a look of reverence on her face. “She’s your Diamond too, I think. You do have a Lapis Lazuli Gem, so you should, but you’re not a Gem yourself, are you?”

“I think we can settle on her not being my leader.” Lance said. “I’m my own man, I follow my rules, I’m cool like that.” He decided to switch on the charm.

Iolite raised and amused eyebrow.

“Well, you’re not the worst flirt I’ve come across, but you’re a little late on the pickup.” She said.

“Huh?” Lance dropped the charm in favour of being confused.

“I’ve been flirted with before, it unfortunately comes with the job.” Iolite said, still with an amused smile.

“What job?” Lance asked.

“Us Iolites are chroniclers, it’s our role to go out and explore the universe, gathering information for Homeworld such as on different species and planets. And while researching some species I end up getting flirted with occasionally.” Iolite elaborated.

“Oh, so that’s what you meant when you said gathering information was your job.” Lance said.

“A little slow on the uptake, aren’t you?” Iolite said teasingly.

“Hey!” Lance said.

Iolite laughed before switching to curiosity. “So, what’s the witch got planned for you?” She asked.

Lance shivered. “She knows I’m not my mum, but since Zarkon’s so adamant that I am, she’s going to do something to make me her.”

“I’m guessing I shouldn’t get to attached to you then.” Iolite said.

“Hey!” Lance exclaimed, not liking that the Gem had already expected him dead.

“I’m kidding.” Iolite held up her hands defensively.

Iolite leant against the non-destabilising wall and slid down until she was sitting like Lance was.

“What do you suppose the witch has planned for me.” She asked. “I’m here because they need a Gem to tell your differences, that much I know, but after that…”

“I don’t know.” Lance said. “But I’ll get out of here, my team will come for me, and when they do I’ll bring you with me.”

Iolite smiled. “Thanks.” She said.
Lance and Iolite spent the next few hours speaking with each other, telling each other stories about themselves to pass the time. Lance told Iolite about his time in the Garrison, training to be a fighter pilot, Iolite told Lance about a few of her missions to other planets, blending in with the local population and researching the planet and species. They were eventually disturbed by the door opening and a Druid entering.

“Haggar has decided what is to be done with you.” The Druid told Lance as he pulled the Blue Paladin out of his cell.

Lance grunted but didn’t fight beyond a small struggle, not wanting to be shocked again.

“Stay strong, Lance!” Iolite called after them.

The Druid dragged Lance back into the lab and strapped him down with the help of a sentry.

“What are you going to do to me?” Lance demanded as he struggled to escape his bonds.

The Druids didn’t answer.

Haggar walked around the table until she was standing at Lance’s head.

“Do not fight me, it will only cause you more pain.” She told him, placing her hands either side of Lance’s head.

“What-Ahhhh!”

Lance cried out in pain as black energy shot out of Haggar’s hands and into his head, his body convulsing as everything quickly went black.

Chapter End Notes

A chapter released to celebrate the arrival of season 3. And with season 3, certain things have come to light that may mean changes to the story, not big ones but they may come up. Trying not to give away spoilers for those yet to see season 3, but we get some back story on Zarkon and the previous Paladins, and they obviously aren’t the reference characters I put in there to fill the blanks or Lazuli. So, this is a question for those who have season 3, should I change the backstory of Ocean Blue to better fit the canon backstory? I don’t have to change the characters, but I mean stuff like how they came about to be Paladins, how Lazuli met Zarkon and stuff like that. There isn’t that much in Ocean Blue right now that contradicts the current canon backstory, so it wouldn’t take that much to rewrite. Concept art for Iolite: http://dreamvixen2511.deviantart.com/art/Iolite-679610572
Another idea to tide you over

Chapter Summary

I've hit another writer's block, so here's a story idea instead

Chapter Notes

Sorry that the next chapter is taking so long, but the words just aren't flowing as much as they usually do, hopefully I'll get past this writer's block soon. Anyway, to tide you over until the next chapter can be completed, another idea I had that hopefully someone will pick up and make their own.

I got the idea from a review on the Homeworld games I saw, the concept behind the character of Karan S'jet stuck with me and inspired this story as well as the Voltron Cryopod AU.

In an attack against the Galra, finally taking out Zarkon, Lotor and Haggar for good, but in the process Voltron is heavily damaged and torn apart, and then the castle ship and every Lion except for the Red Lion are attacked one last time by one of Haggar's creations before it dies, once again corrupting the wormhole as the castle ship attempts to escape and leaving the affected Lions damaged beyond repair. The broken Lions are taken to a planet owned by allies of the Blade of Mamora, but when Lance checks inside them he finds all of his fellow Paladins gone, not even any bodies.

The leaders of the Galra may be gone, but the Galra themselves are still around, and the power vacuum caused by the absence of their leaders still poses a threat to the universe, Voltron is still needed. But there's a problem, even if new Paladins could be chosen, the Lions themselves are too badly damaged to repair to how they originally were, especially without the knowledge of how exactly they were built, and Lance can feel his connection to the Lions getting weaker, suggesting that they are dying because of the damage done to them, Red is also this way despite not being as damaged. The leader of the allied planet then reveals that her kind has a strong grasp of quintessence and could take the remains of the Lions to construct new ones, saving the Lions and giving the universe back its greatest defender, but warns that it'll come at a great cost, especially to Lance since he will be an integral part in the reconstruction as the last remaining Paladin and person with a connection to the lions. Still dealing with the grief of losing his friends and potentially losing his bond to the Lions, and wanting to end the war with the Galra to honour them, Lance agrees to whatever needs to be done to bring back Voltron. Using the old Lions, some new tech, the capabilities of the allies and Lance, Voltron is brought back to defend the universe.

(Backstory on the allies who are reconstructing Voltron: They are not a single species themselves, but a mixture of different species from across the universe who were chosen to ascend and become them, gaining unique abilities and control of quintessence, like Druids but not evil. When Zarkon turned evil, they were quickly targeted as a threat to the empire, many being killed or corrupted to become Haggar's Druids, but a few managed to escape and remain in hiding, eventually establishing
themselves on a planet in secret that's to the Blade of Mamora.)

…

Many years later, a wormhole opens up and the castle ship flies out of it, on board are all Allura, Coran and the Paladins sans Lance, all of them still the same age as when they disappeared. From their point of view, it hasn't even been an hour since the last battle with the Galra, the Paladins somehow ending up on the ship after the blast from the dying Robeast, stuck in the corrupted wormhole until they managed to escape. From reports of Voltron saving a planet, the castle ship eventually tracks down Voltron, the Paladins confused as to why new Paladins were chosen so quickly. The Paladins and Alteans make contact with the Blade of Mamora who are surprised to see them and inform them that they have been missing for years.

The castle ship lands on the allied planet where the Lions of Voltron are kept when not used and meet with the leader of the allies who fills them in on all they've missed, including that Voltron had to be reconstructed and that Lance still remains to sole Paladin of the new Voltron. The team asks how it's possible to command Voltron on his own and demand to see him, worrying about him being on his own for the past few years as well. The allied leader is reluctant but receives a message from Lance telling them that it's okay and that he wants to see his team to, so the leader takes them to the Lions' hanger and into the Black Lion where the team sees what has become of Lance much to their shock and horror.

Lance is now a cyborg, his robotic body plugged into the Black Lion through various wires and tubes, quintessence flowing through him. The allied leader explains that this was the only way to repair Voltron and that Lance willingly went through with it. Lance was ascended to become the same as the allies and then the allies pumped him full of quintessence and their specialised magic during the accession ceremony so that he could fully bond with all of the Lions and bring them back to life, but since the human body couldn't withstand such a large amount of energy, his body was replaced with a cybernetic one, and to be able to control all of the Lions at once and form Voltron on his own, he was plugged into the Black Lion. The process also took the lives of many of the allies for Lance to be given the magical energies to bond with and control all of the Lions.

Despite being a cyborg and connected plugged into the Black Lion, Lance still has his own consciousness and is able to greet his friends and old teammates, though he isn't able to show as much emotion thanks to being a cyborg and isn't the same Lance they remember because of what he's been through, having a more apathetic attitude. Lance is also able to disconnect from the Black Lion when it's not in use, though he usually doesn't because he doesn't have much reason to, but he does for his friends so that he can walk around with them.

As they walk around, Lance further explains how things work for the new Voltron. All of the Lions, including the Black Lion still have pilots, though they are not the same as Paladins and can be interchangeable, just there so that Lance doesn't have his focus spread too thin when controlling the Lions and so there's still people who can go into places the Lions can't fit to rescue people, the allies or Blade of Mamora are usually the ones in the pilot seats, these Pilots also have no control when Voltron is forms, it is all Lance's doing.

Lance also says that since the team are back there is no more use for the pilots, they can take their places as Paladins again, saying that the Lions are excited to get their Paladins back. The team worry about being able to re-bond with their Lions since Lance has bonded with them all and controls Voltron on his own but Lance reassures that they still be able to bond and control their Lions, revealing that controlling all the Lions and Voltron on his own has been a strain for him despite his new body and all the power given to him. So the team are able to climb back inside and bond with their Lions, also forming a bond with Lance, who connects them all.
“Hey, Pidge, what are you doing?” Lance asked as he stepped into the hanger where the Green Paladin was hunched over her computer.

“Calculating the…” Lance quickly lost interest in exactly what Pidge was saying, already knowing that he wouldn’t understand.

“Sounds cool, anything I can do to help?” Lance asked.

“No offence, Lance, but I doubt you could help me out.” Pidge said in her usual tactless tone.

Lance didn’t take offence, he’d been around Pidge long enough not to.

“How do you know that.” Lance said, regardless, more to keep up a joke that he knew would be at his expense.

“Repeat back to me what I just said.” Pidge said, monotone.

“Uh…”

“Exactly.”

Lance sighed in defeat. “Fine he said. How about I get you some food goo instead, you’ve been down here a while?” He said, figuring a way to still be helpful.

Pidge turned slightly to smile at him. “I’d like some food, thanks.”

“Roger.” Lance turned to leave.

Lance soon returned with a plate of food goo and placed in next to Pidge.

“Make sure to eat that, I don’t want you passing out from hunger, though that would get you to sleep.” Lance said.

“I have surpassed the need to sleep.” Pidge replied jokingly.
“Sure you have, gremlin, just make sure you’re in bed before Hunk and I have to drag you there.” Lance said as he left.

Lance felt something hit his back and turned around to see a box of unknown contents on the floor.

“Don’t call me gremlin.” Pidge told him, not looking up from her computer.

“Gremlin!” Lance ducked out of the hanger before something else could be thrown at him.

(Stop! Rewind and modify!)

“Hey, Pidge, what are you doing?” Lance asked as he stepped into the hanger where the Green Paladin was hunched over her computer.

“Calculating the…” Lance quickly lost interest in exactly what Pidge was saying, already knowing that he wouldn’t understand.

“Sounds cool, anything I can do to help?” Lance asked.

“I doubt you could help me out.” Pidge said, her tone condescending.

Lance frowned slightly, he didn’t like it when he was talked down to like he was an idiot.

“How do you know that?” Lance asked defensively.

“Repeat back to me what I just said.” Pidge said, eying Lance through the reflection of her screen like she knew he couldn’t.

“Uh…” Lance trailed off.

“Exactly.” Pidge said, confirming what she already knew.

Lance sighed in defeat. “Fine he said. How about I get you some food goo instead, you’ve been down here a while?” He said, wanting to be helpful to Pidge in some way.

“Fine, get me some food.” Pidge said demandingly.

Still frowning, Lance left and soon returned with a plate of food goo and placed it next to Pidge.

“Make sure to eat that, I don’t want you passing out from hunger, though that would get you to sleep.” Lance said.

“I don’t need sleep.” Pidge scowled at him, not even offering a thank you.

“Sure you don’t, gremlin, just make sure you’re in bed before Hunk and I have to drag you there.” Lance said in joking tone as he left.

Lance felt something hit his back and felt the air momentarily leave his lungs from the harsh impact, he turned around to see what must have been a heavy box on the floor.

“Don’t call me gremlin.” Pidge said angrily, not looking at him.

Lance escaped the hanger before Pidge could throw another heavy object at him.

(Modification complete! Next memory!)
The Paladins were in the training room, practicing group combat.

“Keith, on your left!” Lance called, spotting a bot charging at Keith from the corner of his eye.

“I see it!” Keith called in response, swinging his sword to take out the bot.

Lance noticed something flying at him and turned to see lasers about to hit him, he was saved at the last moment by Shiro jumping in front of him and using his shield to block the lasers.


“Yes, sir.” Lance replied in pseudo-seriousness, giving a small salute.

Shiro just rolled his eyes but Lance caught a small look of amusement in them.

Switching to real seriousness, Lance eyes each of the drones and began to fire, relying on his fellow Paladins to keep him safe from the bots.

Keith let out a hiss as he was hit by a laser.

“Lance!” He shouted.

“Sorry, I’ve got it.” Lance replied, taking aim and firing.

Lance grunted in frustration when it took him a few shots to take down the drone, his frustration making it harder to concentrate and aim.

“Lance, watch you’re back!” Hunk warned.

Lance instinctively dove, managing to avoid a hit from a bot.

“Keith!” Lance cried out, the Red Paladin was the one who was meant to watch his back.

“Try staying aware of your own surroundings.” Keith told him.

“Then why don’t you defend yourself from the lasers?” Lance shot back.

“The bots are tougher than the drones.” Keith countered.

“Keith, Lance, focus!” Shiro ordered before the two could descend into further arguing.

Lance went back to shooting the drones while Keith returned to fighting the bots, the Red Paladin making sure that no more bots snuck past him to get at Lance again.

The training session eventually came to a close, Allura had finally learned that though they appeared similar, humans did not have the same endurance as Alteans, understanding that the new Paladins needed more breaks when training in order not to exhaust or injure themselves.

“I’m glad to say that you have all improves since when you first arrived, though you still have much to improve on.” Allura said as Coran handed out refreshments. “Pidge, you are still too solitary in your fighting, the Paladins of Voltron are meant to work together as one unit. Hunk, you need to improve your speed and awareness, you can’t always rely on your bulk to win fights. Keith and Lance, you need to stop your bickering in the middle of battle, it distracts everyone and leaves you open to attack.”

“Keith’s the one who starts it.” Lance defended.
“I do not.” Keith argued back. “You’re the one who always has to keep going.”

“Stop!” Allura ordered. “You’re both to blame. Lance usually does start it—”

“Hey!” Lance protested.

“And, Keith, you’re just as eager to continue it.” Allura finished.

Keith remained silent, but crossed his arms and tried not to pout.

(Stop! Rewind and modify!)

The Paladins were in the training room, practicing group combat.

“Keith, on your left!” Lance called, spotting a bot charging at Keith from the corner of his eye.

“I see it!” Keith called in response, like he didn’t need Lance’s input, swinging his sword to take out the bot.

Lance noticed something flying at him and turned to see lasers about to hit him, he was saved at the last moment by Shiro jumping in front of him and using his shield to block the lasers.


“Yes, sir.” Lance replied in pseudo-seriousness, giving a small salute.

Shiro just rolled his eyes but Lance caught the look of annoyance and anger in them, making his smile drop.

Switching to real seriousness, hoping to show Shiro that he could be, Lance eyes each of the drones and began to fire, relying on his fellow Paladins to keep him safe from the bots.

Keith let out a hiss as he was hit by a laser.

“Lance!” He shouted angrily, like it was all the Blue Paladin’s fault he got hit.

“Sorry, I’ve got it.” Lance replied, taking aim and firing.

Lance grunted in frustration when it took him a few shots to take down the drone, his frustration making it harder to concentrate and aim. With each miss, he could feel the judgemental eyes of his teammates grow stronger.

“Lance, watch you’re back!” Hunk warned, sounding annoyed that he had to watch Lance’s back.

Lance instinctively dove, managing to avoid a hit from a bot.

“Keith!” Lance cried out, the Red Paladin was the one who was meant to watch his back.

“Try staying aware of your own surroundings.” Keith told him, as if he didn’t care what happened to Lance.

“Then why don’t you defend yourself from the lasers?” Lance shot back.

“The bots are tougher than the drones.” Keith countered, stating that Lance wasn’t contributing as much as he was.

“Lance, focus!” Shiro ordered before Lance could cause further arguing.
Frustrated that he was the only one called out, Lance went back to shooting the drones while Keith returned to fighting the bots, the Blue Paladin kept aware of his surroundings this time, not trusting Keith to not let another bot slip by to attack him.

The training session eventually came to a close, Allura had finally learned that though they appeared similar, humans did not have the same endurance as Alteans, understanding that the new Paladins needed more breaks when training in order not to exhaust or injure themselves.

“I’m glad to say that you have all improved since when you first arrived, though you still have much to improve on.” Allura said as Coran handed out refreshments. “Pidge, you are still too solitary in your fighting, the Paladins of Voltron are meant to work together as one unit. Hunk, you need to improve your speed and awareness, you can’t always rely on your bulk to win fights. Lance, you need to stop your bickering in the middle of battle, it distracts everyone and leaves you open to attack.”

“Keith’s the one who starts it.” Lance defended.

“I do not.” Keith argued back. “You’re the one who always has to keep going.”

“Stop!” Allura ordered. “You’re to blame, Lance. You usually start it-”

“Hey!” Lance protested.

“And you’re just as eager to continue it.” Allura finished.

Lance looked away, not happy about how he got all the blame for what was Keith’s fault.

(Modification complete! Next memory!)

Lance’s unconscious body convulsed on the table, the straps keeping him from falling off, giving vocal groans of pain, but not waking until Haggar decided she was done.

“That is enough for now.” Haggar said as her hands stopped growing with quintessence and she took them away from Lance’s head. “Take him back to the cells.” She ordered the Druid. “I will return to my search for the traitor.”

The druid unbound Lance and carried him out of the room, depositing the unconscious Paladin back into the cell opposite Iolite’s.

“Lance!” Iolite cried out when she saw the state he was in. “What did you do to him?” She demanded the Druid.

“That is none of your concern.” The Druid answered, leaving.

Iolite scowled at the Druid as they left before turn back to Lance’s prone body in concern.

“Lance! Lance! Lance, please wake up!” Iolite tried to wake him.

Iolite held her metaphorical breath until she heard a quiet groan.

“Lance, come on, you need to wake up!” She kept going.

She was rewarded with Lance shifting slightly.
“Lance, you said we’d escape! You can’t do that if you don’t wake up!”

Finally, Lance forced his eyes open.

“Iolite?” He asked.

Well, Iolite guessed that was what he said, Lance’s words were so slurred that it was hard to say but it had sounded like her name.

“Yeah, it’s me. Can you move?” Iolite asked, relieved that Lance was awake.

Lance gave a loud groan in response but managed to shift until he was leaning against the wall, looking at Iolite blearily.

“What did they do to you?” Iolite asked.

“I don’t know.” Lance admitted. “Though my head feels like someone’s going at it with a sledgehammer.

“Are you going to be alright?”

“I have no idea.” Lance groaned. “Now, if you don’t mind, I’m going to have a nap.”

Lance slid down the wall he had been resting on until he was lying on the ground and closed his eyes, drifting off into sleep.

“Sure, just leave me on my own.” Iolite quietly to herself.

Iolite closed her own eyes, she didn’t sleep herself, but it was an effective way to pass the time.

A couple of vargas passed before Iolite heard the door open again, she opened her mouth to say something, probably a taunt, when she realised that it wasn’t a Druid who had entered and her mouth quickly clicked shut. Zarkon walked through the door and over to Lance’s cell, not paying Iolite any mind, not that she wanted his attention, and opened it, scooping up the boy from where he lay.

Iolite wanted to protest Zarkon touching her new friend, but she wasn’t suicidal as to mouth off to the emperor of the Galra empire.

Zarkon then took Lance out of the cell.

Iolite frowned as she stared after them.

“I need to find out what those Druids are up to.” She said to herself, unaware of a Galra standing near the door as it closed.

When Lance woke up, he was surprised to find himself in a bed rather than in his cell or back on the laboratory, looking around he recognised it as the room intended for his mother.

“Back here again.” Lance mumbled.

Lance groaned as he grabbed his head, the pain from what Haggar had done to him still remaining.

“I wonder what she did.” Lance wondered aloud. “I still know I’m not my mum, and I’m still not
inclined to join the Galra.”

Lance was left wondering.

“I hope the others come for me soon, before something does happen to me.” He said.

‘If they come for you.’ Said a lingering thought.

Lance shook his head to chase the nasty thought away.

“I can’t think like that.” He said. “They’ll come for me.”

‘But, why would they?’

“They came for Allura, and they’re my friends.”

Lance shook his head to stop any further negative thoughts from appearing and making him doubt himself.

“I can’t let myself think like that, not now.” He said.

Lance groaned, barely awake as he was unceremoniously dumped back into his cell after another session with Haggar.

“You still with me?” Iolite asked softly from her cell.

Lance grunted to reply, sure that if he spoke he would throw up.

Iolite looked at her recently made friend in concern, she didn’t like seeing him like this. To pass the time and hopefully make Lance feel better, she began to quietly sing.

Lance sighed as the song washed over him, the familiar lyrics bringing him comfort through his pain. Then Lance realised, he wasn’t listening to the song on his recorder, and it wasn’t his mother’s voice singing to him.

“How do you know that song?” Lance asked, his voice raspy.

Iolite stopped singing and thought.

“It’s one of the songs that I’ve learned along my travels.” She explained. “From an oceanic planet called Zennor if I remember correctly. About a lord of the sea falling in love with a maiden of the land and the lengths they go through to be together.”

Lance smiled as he went over the information in his head, he felt a sense of satisfaction at finally understanding one of the songs his mother chose to sing to him, his aunts were able to explain some of them but even they didn’t know which planets a few of the songs were from. He’d have to tell his aunts when he saw them again…if he saw them again.

Lance’s smile became bittersweet.

“Did you ever meet my mum, or any of the Blue Valkyries?” He asked Iolite.

Iolite went quiet.
“Once.” She eventually said. “I was on a planet, blending in with the locals when there was an attack, and then the Paladins of Voltron were there. Just as my group was about to be fired upon, Lapis Lazuli leapt in to defend us, she looked at me for a brief moment, like she could tell who I was. I was quickly recalled after the attack, so we didn’t get a chance to properly interact.”

“Can you tell me more about mum?” Lance asked further.

“Didn’t you have the Blue Valkyries to tell you?”

“I did, but they didn’t say much about her before leaving Homeworld, they didn’t even tell me that she was part of Voltron.”

“Ah.” Iolite said, thinking. “Well, let’s see, Lapis Lazuli. I guess that even before she became part of Voltron she was well known and it was rumoured that she was one of my Diamond’s favourites, I remember overhearing other Lapis Lazulis whispering about favouritism and jealousy.”

“Why, was she strong?” Lance asked.

Iolite shook her head but then shrugged. “She was strong, but only as strong as any other Lapis Lazuli. It was beauty that made her so regarded, I think anyway.”

“You think?”

“I remember hearing other Gems speaking about her beauty, but I never really understood what the fuss was about. But I think it was also the beauty of her creations that was regarded, she could take desolate planets and terraform them into magnificent works of art for our Diamond, maybe that’s what made my Diamond so fond of her, and willing to risk war with the Galra to get her back, and why Zarkon took her in the first place.” Iolite mused.

The two of them remained in silence until Lance spoke.

“What happened to make my mum leave Homeworld to join Voltron?” He asked.

Iolite shrugged. “What I know is only from my time on other planets. The Diamonds control all information, and your mother abandoning Homeworld is something they didn’t want every Gem to know. So, what I know is only speculation, some said that Zarkon kidnaped and managed to brainwash her, that her life was saved by the defenders of the universe and so she joined them to repay the debt, she was a sleeper agent sent in by the Diamonds, etc.”

Lance sighed, he guessed it was too much to think that a random Gem knew that much about his mother.

“So,” Iolite said after a few minutes of silence. “When’s this team of yours going to pick us up?”

Lance didn’t say anything.

“Lance?”

“Oh, uh. I don’t know.” Lance said unsurely. “We’re on Zarkon’s main ship and we barely escaped the last time we attack. So, it may take a long time.”

Iolite frowned, when Lance had spoken about his team before he had been so sure of their rescue.

“But they will come?” She asked.

“I guess. I mean, the Blue Lion’s here and they need her to form Voltron, so they’ll have to come for
“What about you?”

Lance shrugged. “Maybe, but the Blue Lion is more valuable than me, they could decide it would be easier to just rescue her and find a new Paladin.”

“Why wouldn’t they come for you?” Iolite asked, confused.

Lance shrugged again. “Everyone has something to contribute to the team, Pidge is the smart geek, Hunk’s an engineer and cooks delicious meals, Shiro’s the great leader, and Keith’s the badass fighter and ace pilot. But me? I thought I was the sharpshooter, but it doesn’t take much to learn how to point a gun. I guess I’m just a fifth wheel, seventh if you count Allura and Coran, what a lonely wheel to be.”

“Don’t put yourself down like that!” Iolite exclaimed. “What happened to that confident boy from when we first met?” Iolite paused and then her eyes widened. “…Oh.”

“What?” Lance asked.

“It’s the Witch!” Iolite shouted in realisation. “She’s the one doing this to you, making you doubt your team!”

Lance looked at her in surprise. “How do you know?” He asked.

Iolite quickly calmed down and adopted an ashamed look. “A Galra was talking about the Witch’s plans for you unusually loud right outside the door. She’s modifying your memories to turn you against Voltron.” She said, avoiding looking at the Blue Paladin.

“What?!” Lance exclaimed. “And you didn’t think to mention this earlier?”

“Sorry.” Iolite apologised desperately. “It slipped my mind until just now.”

“Unbelievable!” Lance said, exasperated.

“Sorry.” Iolite apologised again.

Lance sighed. “Well, at least I know what she’s doing to me. And that I can’t even trust my own memories now.”

Iolite winced in sympathy.

“What are you going to do?” She asked.

“I’m going to fight it, now that I know, I can stop her mind games.” Lance said, mustering up his confidence in himself.

“I hope you can.” Iolite said.

It seemed like hardly any time had passed when a Druid opened the door and took Lance to his next session with Haggar.
Lance and Iolite decide they need to escape after finding out Haggar's plans for them.

“Lance, not right now.”

No!

“Lance, go be useless somewhere else.”

Stop it!

“You're holding the team back.”

It’s not real!

Lance’s unconscious form grunted as he fought against Haggar’s mind tricks, now that he was aware of what she was doing he could spot where his memories became fuzzy or skipped like a movie on a scratched disk, indicating that they had been changed, that his team didn’t really think of him like that and it was just the witch’s attempts to turn him against his team.

“Stop resisting.” Haggar hissed.

‘Never!’ Lance screamed from within his mind.

Eventually, Lance was released and Haggar stepped away with a scowl. Unlike his previous sessions, Lance was quick to come back to his senses, though he remained very dizzy and nauseous. Despite barely being able to focus, he glared at Haggar with what he hoped came across as defiance.

“So, you have become aware of what I am doing.” Haggar said, it wasn’t phrased like a question. “No matter.”

“I’ll keep fighting you, I won’t let you turn me against my team.” Lance said, slightly slurred from his session. “I’ll know it isn’t real.”

“I believe that with my next course of action, that will not be an issue.” Haggar said. “This process is too long and I doubt you have enough valuable information to remain with this action.”

“What do you mean?” Lance asked nervously.

“Why spend so long changing small parts of a program when it would be easier to wipe it clean and start again?” Haggar said.

Lance was confused, not understanding. “What…”

Haggar didn’t seem inclined to elaborate. “I’m sure Lord Zarkon will agree that it is the better
Haggar then spun around to face him. “But until then, I believe it is time for you to start your service to the empire.”

“I’m not going to do anything for you.” Lance told her.

“I do not need your compliance.” Haggar said. “And you have already served the empire with your existence, informed me of a new way to create soldiers for Lord Zarkon, combining Gems with biological beings.”

Lance’s eyes widened.

“And I believe that I’ll start with the Gem you have become so attached to.” Haggar continued cruelly.

Lance struggled uselessly against his restraints.

“Don’t you dare!” He cried.

Haggar didn’t respond to him. “Bring me the Gem.” She ordered another Druid.

Lance kept trying to protest but was soon silenced by a shock from Haggar, sending him into unconsciousness.

Iolite was dragged into the room not long after, thrown into the same tube with a destabilising field as before.

Iolite spotted Lance’s unconscious form.

“What did you do to him?” She demanded.

“Silence.” Haggar told her.

“Silence.” Haggar told her.

The Druids attached tubes and wires to Iolite’s prison, causing her to worry. But before any experimentation could begin, another Druid entered the room.

“Lady Haggar, the traitor has been found.” They informed.

“Good.” Haggar said. “We shall continue this later.”

Haggar and the Druids left the room, leaving Iolite in the tube and an unconscious Lance strapped to the table, Sentries were posted at the door.

A while later, Lance woke up, after regaining his baring he realised Iolite was in the room and quickly turned towards her.

“Iolite, we need to get out of here now.” He told the Gem. “They’re planning on experimenting on you because of me, they want their own Gem hybrids.”

Iolite quickly turned worried herself.

“That’s not good.” She said.

Lance nodded in agreement.
“And she’s going to something to be because I’m resisting the memory altering. Something about wiping clean...” Lance finally caught onto the meaning behind what Haggar told him. “Oh no. I think she’s going to completely wipe my memory.”

Iolite looked shocked. “As in everything? So you won’t be able to tell that the Galra are the bad guys anymore, or that you’re not Lapis Lazuli?”

Lance nodded.

“You’re right, we need to get out of here.” Iolite said.

“How though? I’m strapped down, and you’re behind that destabilising field.” Lance observed.

Iolite nodded in agreement, analysing her prison.

“If I had my gauntlet, I bet I could get out of this.” She murmured to herself.

Iolite then looked out of her prison and scanned around the room, spotting something not that far from her.

“Well, that’s lucky.” She said.

“What?” Lance asked.

Iolite pointed and Lance followed her finger to what looked like a long metal cuff with a screen sitting on a table, wires leading out of it.

“My gauntlet. It can get us out of here.” Iolite said quietly so the guards didn’t overhear her.

“How?” Lance whispered back.

“You’ll see.” Iolite promised, she then frowned. “Though, I don’t know how far we’ll get, I know the way to the hanger bay, but we’ll run into Galra long before we can reach it. What we need is a distraction.”

The ship then suddenly shook and there were noises outside the laboratory.

Lance then felt an impression from the Blue Lion enter his head.

“My team, there here!” He cried happily.

“Well, they have convenient timing.” Iolite grinned. “Now, let’s get out of here.”

Iolite turned towards the metal cuff on the table and sang a tune, the screen brightened and the tune repeated from it, Iolite sang the tune again except for the last note being lower which the cuff also repeated. Energy then cackled from the cuff, spreading down the wires and into the computers they were attached to, the energy then spreading across the room until it reached Iolite’s containment tube, the destabilising field flickering before disappearing. Iolite grinned and jumped about before the effects of the energy dissipated and everything returned to normal.

But before Iolite could celebrate her newfound freedom, the Sentries came to investigate the commotion and quickly spotted her, opening fire. Iolite dodged as she ran towards her, holding up her left arm, her gem glowed as something formed around it, a bladed gauntlet, which Iolite quickly used to take down the Sentries.

“Wow.” Lance commented.
Iolite grinned at him before using her bladed gauntlet to slice through Lance’s bonds. As Lance sat up and rubbed his wrists, Iolite released her weapon and went over to the metal cuff, detached the wires, and clamped it around her right forearm.

“What is that?” Lance asked as he attempted to stand on wobbly legs.

“Standard issue gauntlet for all Iolites, packed with all sorts of things for when we get into trouble during our chronicling.” Iolite explained.

“I have got to get one of those.” Lance said.

“Too bad, this is mine and you’d have to be an Iolite or a type of Gem to need one to be given one.” Iolite said. “Now, escaping.”

“You said you know the way.” Lance said, bending down to pick up one of the Sentries’ guns.

“I know the entire layout of the ship.” Iolite bragged. “Another thing about Iolites, you’ll never get lost when you’re with one.”

“Do you know the way to the room I’ve been kept in then? I need to retrieve my armour and bayard.” Lance remembered.

Iolite hummed. “I remember which way you were taken, but it’s going to be risky going there.” Something then dawned on her as well. “I’ll take you to get your armour if you help me rescue my crew and any other Gems being kept here.” She said.

“Where are they?” Lance asked.

“Just a few rooms down.” Iolite pointed at the wall.

Lance shrugged. “Sure.” He said.

Iolite picked up the remaining gun from the floor and walked out the door.

“Iolite!” Lance quietly exclaimed. “There could be guards out there.”

“Don’t worry, I would know if there were.” Iolite said confidently.

Lance followed Iolite and the two of them walked until they came to a locked door.

“This is it.” She said.

“Looks like that’s going to take more than a Galra hand.” Lance observed the lock. “Does being an Iolite allow you to pick locks too?”

“Yes.” Iolite answered simply.

Iolite held her gauntlet up to the lock and a beam of light shot out, the door then opened.

“The Diamonds know about every lock the Galra use and have every lock pick.” Iolite said.

Iolite stepped into the room but suddenly stopped, her face turning horrified. Worried, Lance stepped around her to see what had caused her state, and then wished he hadn’t.

Around the room where many Gems, some were contained within jars of quintessence while others were in glass cases, but one thing that they all had in common were that they were cracked or
completely shattered.

“This is awful.” Lance said.

Iolite remained speechless, tears welling up in her eyes, slowly walking further into the room.

Lance also looked around, but then his eyes caught something.

“Iolite, look, these ones are okay.” He called to her.

Iolite snapped out of her horrified shock and ran over to Lance, crying in relief where she saw the container of un-cracked Gems.

“These must be the ones yet to be experimented on.” She said. “Oh, thank the Diamonds, my crew is here as well.”

Iolite grabbed the container, balancing it on one hand while holding her other hand over it, she then pulled her hand away and Lance was amazed when it was encompassed in a purple bubble, Iolite then tapped the top of the bubble and it and the container inside disappeared.

“Where’d it go?” Lance asked.

“Hopefully, back to Homeworld.” Iolite said.

“What about the other Gems?” Lance asked, looking around the room.

“They’re too damaged to function anymore, but I can’t leave them here for the witch to mess with either.” Iolite said. “Grab all that you can, I’ll bubble them and send them back to Homeworld too.”

Lance quickly grabbed all the damaged Gems that he could, using his gun to crack the containers they were in, dumping them in a pile for Iolite to bubble when they were done.

“What going to happen to them?” Lance asked as he added more to the pile.

“I don’t know.” Iolite admitted. “Hopefully the Diamonds can ensure that they’ll be at peace, but whatever’s going to happen to them is better that what the witch is doing.”

Soon all of the cracked and shattered Gems were in a pile, which Iolite bubbled and then sent to Homeworld.

“Right then, let’s get your armour then get out of here.” Iolite said.

The two of them left the room and began to run.

“Wait.” Iolite said, stopping suddenly. “Someone’s coming.”

The two of them raised their guns and prepared to fire on whoever was approaching. An injured Galra wearing no armour appeared from around the corner, the shock of seeing his state stopped them from firing straight away.

“Wait, don’t shoot.” The Galra said, holding out a hand. “I'm not on Zarkon’s side.”

“What?” Iolite was confused.

Lance, however, understood. “You’re a Blade?”
The Galra nodded. “It’s good to see that you escaped on your own, Paladin.” He said, eyeing Iolite warily, who was not inclined to lower her gun just yet. “I’m going to shut down the shields of the ship so that the power can be shut off and Voltron can attack, you need to get to your Lion and join your team as soon as possible.”

“Already on our way.” Lance said.

The Galra looked Iolite up and down. “You can shapeshift, correct?” He asked.

“Yes.” Iolite said warily.

“Good, that’ll help you get around the ship. I advise that you disguise yourself as a soldier guiding the Blue Paladin.” The Galra said.

The Galra then began to walk off in another direction, presumably towards the core.

“Wait!” Lance called to him.

The Galra turned his head.

“Thanks. I’m Lance.”

The Galra offered a small smile.

“Thace.” He said, before continuing on his way.

“Come on, let’s go.” Iolite said, grabbing Lance and dragging him along.

They continue to run with Iolite leading the way until she stopped again.

“Soldiers up ahead. Let’s hope that they fall for this.” She said.

Lance watch as Iolite glowed until he could only see her outline, her shape then shifted to become bigger, and when the glow died down a Galra soldier was now in Iolite’s place. Even after living with Gems for so long, it still amazed Lance the difference between Allura’s transformation into Galra and Iolite’s.

“Good thing Galra are purple.” Galra-Iolite commented. “Put your hands behind your back like you’re in cuffs.” She told Lance.

Lance did as told, reluctantly dropping his gun as well since the soldiers would question him having it, and the two of them continued to walk. They internally sighed in relief when the soldiers ran past them without comment, until they were eventually stopped by one.

“Where are you going with the Blue Paladin?” A Galra asked.

“I have been ordered to take him back to his room for safety.” Iolite said without missing a beat. “His safety is my priority and there’s nowhere safer than his room.”

The Galra seemed to buy her excuse and let them past, they continued to walk until they were along again and in front or a large and imposing-looking door.

“We’re here.” Iolite announced, shifting back to her normal form.

The door into Zarkon’s room, and subsequently Lance’s mother’s room took a long time because the locks were much more complex, but they eventually got though.
“Here.” Lance pointed to his armour and bayard in the glass case. “Just one more lock.”

“Why bother with this lock.” Iolite said.

Iolite then summoned her bladed gauntlet and sliced through the lock easily, the door popping open.

“Or you could do that.” Lance said.

“Just grab your armour, we’ve wasted enough time.” Iolite said.

Lance grabbed his helmet and popped in on his head before grabbing his armour, he was only able to hold half of it without struggling but Iolite grabbed the rest of it for him without being asked.

“What would you do without me?” Iolite said jokingly as they ran out the door.

Since they couldn’t pull the same trick they used to get there, the two of them had to be sneakier and hide more as they made their way to the hanger bay, but Iolite was thankfully able to keep them from running into anyone. As they made their way through the ship, Lance switched on his coms in his helmet.

“Guys are you there?” He asked quietly.

“Lance.” Came a chorus of relieved voices.

“You’re alive!” Pidge exclaimed.

“It is so good to hear your voice again, buddy.” Hunk said.

“I’m glad you’re alright, Lance.” Shiro said.

“Where are you?” Came Keith’s voice, he sounded out of breath, like he was running.

“We’re almost at the hanger, I’ll be joining in on the fight soon guys.” Lance responded quietly.

“So, you’re not injured then?” Hunk asked.

“No.” Lance said.

“You better hurry it up.” Keith said. “One of the Blade members is overloading the core to shut off the shields.”

“We will.” Lance assured.

“We?” Shiro asked.

“Just another prisoner.” Lance said.

“Lance, we’re here.” Iolite interrupted the conversation.

“Okay. I’ll speak to you guys again once I join the fight.” Lance said, getting some sounds of affirmation from his team.

There were some Sentries walking around the hanger, but they were quickly taken down by Lance and Iolite before an alarm could be raised. The two of them then ran over to where the Blue Lion stood proud, forcefield raised, which soon dropped when Lance touched it.

Iolite dropped the armour she had been carrying and ran over to a round object not that far away
from the Blue Lion, pressing her palm to it, causing a door to open.

“Good, the Galra haven’t messed with it.” She sighed in relief.

“It that your ship?” Lance asked, pulling on his flight suit on now that he had time to rest.

Iolite nodded. “Yeah. It should be in good enough condition to reach Homeworld.”

“Then I guess this is where we go our separate ways.” Lance said sadly.

Iolite looked at him with equal sadness.

“Why don’t you come with me?” She offered. “You’re a Gem and belong on Homeworld too. I’m sure our Diamond would want to meet you, you are technically your mother after all.”

Lance shook his head. “Thanks for the offer, but the others need me, Voltron can’t form without the Blue Lion and I’m her Paladin.”

“I guess that is more important.”

“Yeah, I don’t want to say goodbye either.” Lance said.

“We don’t have to just yet.” Iolite said.

Iolite waved her hand over her Gem, doing complex hand movements until her Gem glowed and something rose out of it.

“Here.” She handed a small device to Lance. “It’s linked to my gauntlet, so we can stay in contact.”

“Thanks.” Lance said.

Suddenly, the entire ship shook with the sound of and explosion, nearly sending the two of them to the floor, and not long after the lights shut off, leaving the only light to come from the two ships.

“I guess that’s the power gone.” Iolite said. “Let’s get going. See you again someday.”

“See you.” Lance agreed.

Iolite ran into her ship while Lance gather up his remaining armour and ran into his Lion, he jumped into the pilot’s seat and grabbed the controls.

With the power out, the hanger bay doors weren’t going to open, but that wasn’t going to be a problem, with a few laser blasts a hole appeared in the doors and the Blue Lion flew out, Iolite’s Gem ship flying out behind it and off away from the battle.

“So long.” Lance said as he watched Iolite’s ship fly out of sight.

Thankfully the Blue Lion then piloted itself while Lance pulled on his remaining armour.

“Alright, guys, I’m here.” Lance said, the Blue Lion flying to meet the rest of the team.

“Good to see you again.” Hunk said.

“I am glad you are alright, Lance.” The Blue Paladin heard Allura said.

“We can have full reunions once we’ve dealt with Zarkon.” Shiro said. “Alright team, form Voltron!”
Chapter End Notes

And now we have reached the end of season 2. The next chapter will be in season 3. I know some of you might be disappointed that I’m not writing out the climax of season 2 in full, but I don’t see the point in doing it, it’s not going to be any different from canon except for maybe a few lines, and we all know what happens in the climax of season 2, so it would just be something to skip though if I did write it. Though, I do wish the chapter ended up being longer since it’s such an important chapter, but that’s just how some things end up.
Aftermath

Chapter Summary

We pick up half-way through season 3

Chapter Notes

I’m just going to be skipping through most of season 3, with this chapter taking place after ‘Hole in the Sky’, it’s the same reason I skipped the season 2 climax, we all know what happened and there isn’t going to be that much different from what happens to write out the episodes, so there’s not much point to writing them.
Anyway, season 4’s come and went, and it hasn’t really affected my plans for the story. Though, I don’t know how I’m going to treat the relationship between Lance and Lotor, since Lotor is technically Lazuli’s brother and Lance’s uncle through adoption. I sort of know the relationship between Lazuli and Lotor, though that depends on whether Lotor was born before or after Zarkon and Haggar went all evil.

Lance breathed in deeply before letting out a long breath, his eyes closed in concentration. Above him the castle-ship’s pool glistened.

“Focus, Lance, you can do this.” He whispered to himself.

Lance raised his arms and spread out his hands, above him the water rippled.

“Just don’t think.” He said. “Heh, if Pidge were here, she’d say it wouldn’t be hard for me.”

Lance brought his hands down and two tendrils of water emerged from the pool towards the ground, with a subtle shift of his hands sideways, the tendrils started to circle around him instead of hitting the floor. Opening his eyes, Lance smiled.

Then, splaying his fingers, more tendrils broke off from the main ones, forming spirals and fountains.

Lance sighed happily, a content calm washing over him. This was his power. Something he could do with mere thought and movement, bending to how he felt.

“Lance?”

“Wah!”

Lance just barely managed to reassert his control over the water before it touched the floor after the sudden voice broke his concentration.

“What do you want, Keith?” Lance turned to the owner of the voice.

“If that’s all it takes to lose control, I don’t think you’ll be able to use your powers on the battlefield anytime soon.” Keith said.
“Ladies and gentlemen, our leader.” Lance said sarcastically at Keith’s disparaging comment.

“Sorry.” Keith apologised. “I didn’t mean it like that.”

Lance sighed. “I know.”

Lance commanded the water to move again, this time into five orbs which then stretched long with more parts stretching out of them until they took on the vague shape of the Lions, slowly growing more detailed as they flew around him.

“You’re getting better.” Keith offered unsurely.

“Thanks.” Lance said. “I’ve been working hard on it since…I got back.”

“Are you alright?” Keith asked.

Lance laughed. “You’ve asked that multiple times since I got back, and I keep telling you that I’m fine, I got given a few shocks but nothing bad happened.” He said. “So, did you want something?”

“No, uh, I just wanted to see how you were fairing.” Keith said.

Lance smirked. “How’s this for fairing?”

More water was summoned from the pool and headed straight for Keith, who flinched away, expecting it to hit him and to get wet, only for it to stop right in front of him and take on a humanoid shape.

“Ha! Got yah.” Lance laughed.

“Very funny.” Keith said, rolling his eyes. “What’s this supposed to be?”

“What it’s supposed to be?” Lance gasped as if he’d been insulted. “It’s meant to be you.”

Keith looked at the water in front of him.

“I can’t see the resemblance.” He said.

“Come on, it has your mullet.” Lance pointed to the head of the water figure.

Keith eyed the water figure again.

“I still can’t see it.” He said.

“You need to borrow Pidge’s glasses.” Lance pouted. “Anyway, the shape is just something extra I’ve been working on, try punching it.”

Keith eyed Lance in suspicion.

“Okay.” He said hesitantly.

Keith drew back his fist and punched as his, as Lance claimed, water replica, then hissed as he drew his hand back, rubbing his wrist. He then frowned and punched again, this time his fist went through and he grinned, only for the expression to drop as the water reformed around his hand, leaving him struggling to free his hand.

Lance laughed at Keith’s predicament, eventually returning the water to a formless mass and freeing
Keith’s hand.

“What do you think?” He asked, still laughing.

“That’s amazing, how’d you do that?” Keith said, still rubbing his wrist.

“Something to do with water tension and changing the density of water molecules.” Lance said, showing that he didn’t understand all of it himself. “I fell asleep halfway through Pidge’s attempts to explain my powers.”

“Typical.” Keith said.

“Hey, attempting to explain my powers just sucks all the fun out of using them.” Lance justified.

Lance sent the water used for the replica back up into the pool.

“I guess it’s handy to have such a large water source right at your disposal.” Keith said, looking up at the pool.

Lance nodded. “When I finally have enough control, I’m probably going to have to carry around a flask of water or something.”

Keith nodded. “Well, I’ll leave you to it.” He said, leaving the room.

Lance sighed once he was gone. “He’s trying his best.” He muttered.

Lance then turned back to the water Lions and began to refine their shapes, he focused on one in particular, knowing its details the most, his Lion, the Blue Lion. Only, the Blue Lions wasn’t his anymore, the Red Lion was. Lance then turned to another Water Lion and began to make the details of the Red Lion, the Lion he now flew, the Lion he was forced into flying after Blue rejected him. Above Lance, the water began to flow more rapidly.

“No.” Lance said to himself. “Don’t let yourself think like that.”

The water calmed as Lance turned to detail the other Lions, Green and Yellow, both of whom still had their pilots, then he came to Black.

Black was now piloted by Keith because Shiro was gone, leading to Lance being moved to Red and Allura taking Blue from him, meaning that they weren’t properly prepared for Lotor under Keith’s new shaky leadership. The water became rapid again as each of Lance’s thoughts led to another, this time without Lance stopping them.

With each of the water Lions completed, Lance had them fly around the room before they came into formation, bringing them together, only they weren’t in perfect formation, Black flew too ahead, Red flew too uncontrollably, and Blue was too slow. The water Lion’s clashed together violently and there was a brief shape of Voltron before the water exploded apart and swept across the room, soaking everything, including Lance.

Lance blinked in shock, water dripping off of him as he snapped out of his dark thoughts, he shook his head and looked at the puddles that littered the room.

“Well, that could have gone better.” He said.

With a wave of his hands, the puddles lifted from the floor and floated back into the pool, he waved his hands over himself and water began to drift off him and back into the pool as well, until he was
dry again; drying himself had been one of the first tricks Lance had perfected with his powers.

Lance sighed heavily once all the water was back where it belonged.

“I’m exhausted.” He said to himself.

Lance left the pool room, his feet taking him to the lift, and then to his room where he collapsed onto the bed, not even bothering to undress as he closed his eyes.

But he was kept from rests as an incessant beeping stopped him from dropping off into sleep, it took him a few moments to make his way out of his doze to realise the beeping was from inside his room and that he’d have to do something about it. Forcing his eyes open, he looked to the side and reached out his hand, grabbing onto something that flashed in time with the beeping. He eventually registered what it was as he looked at it.

“The device Iolite gave me.” He said, yawning as he sat up.

He pressed the only button the device had and watched as a holographic screen appeared from it, Iolite’s face then appeared on the screen.

“Hello.” Iolite said.

“Iolite.” Lance said happily, despite his exhaustion. “Did you make it back to Homeworld?”

“Yes.” Iolite reported. “Back home, safe and sound, though it took me a while due to the Galra messing with the ship and breaking the hyperdrive. But now I’m back on Homeworld, given my report and been given the all clear of any corruption from my time as a captive.”

“Corruption?” Lance asked.

“In the past, the Galra have been known to capture Gems and then corrupted their quintessence, which affects their mind and physical form, and then send those Gems back to Homeworld or a colony to cause trouble, recently they’ve managed to put the corruption on a timer so we don’t appear corrupted at first when we reform. My crew and the other Gems we rescued are still being examined for corruption.” Iolite explained.

“That sounds horrible.” Lance said.

Iolite nodded in agreement. “But, the witch doesn’t seem to have touched me. What about you, any lasting effects?” She asked.

“Uh…no.” Lance answered unsurely.

Iolite eyed him, unconvinced.

“Really?” She questioned.

Lance sighed in defeat. “The changes to my memories are still there, but I am able to identify which ones are fake and am slowly remembering them how they really happened.” He answered.

“But?” Iolite sensed that there was more.

“I’m…not always sure about them though. Sometimes I can’t tell if they’re fake, or if it’s really how it happened, if they really think of me like that.” Lance said.

“You just have to stay strong and sort them out, I’m sure your team can help.” Iolite said, she then
noticed Lance’s hesitant look. “They have been helping you, right?”

“Well…they don’t exactly…know.” Lance said slowly.

“Lance.” Iolite groaned.

“I know.” Lance said. “I should tell them. But, there’s just so much that’s happened that I didn’t want to tell them what happened on the ship and burden them with my emotional issues.”

“What happened that’s so bad that you think you can’t confined in your team?” Iolite asked.

“What hasn’t happened?” Lance moaned. “Shiro, our leader, went mysteriously missing immediately after the battle with Zarkon, Keith’s been chosen as the new Black Paladin, then the Blue Lion shut me out so that I could be the new pilot for the Red Lion, who is so much different to Blue, and then Blue chose Allura as her new pilot. And to top it all off, Zarkon’s son, Prince Lotor, or something or other, has appeared to take control of the Galra empire and has been flying circles around us.”

Iolite took a moment to put the names into context and understand the situation.

“Oh, that doesn’t sound good. So, you’re in the Red Lion now, you said?” She said.

“Yeah. She’s completely different to Blue, and so hard to control, though I am getting a hang of it, and she if fun to fly if you don’t mind having zero control on the breaks.” Lance said.

Iolite laughed. “Sounds like something I’d love to ride, it sounds like Star Racing.” She said.

“Maybe.” Lance agreed. “Except you can go in every direction. So, anything interesting on your end?”

“I’m bored!” Iolite groaned loudly, startling Lance at the sudden change in demeanour. “I’m basically grounded on Homeworld because of my capture.”

“Why?” Lance asked.

“I’m an era one Iolite, let’s just say that puts more value on my Gem than others of my cut. So, my Diamond has ordered that I remain on Homeworld in case the Galra are looking for me because of my escape and hand in taking down Zarkon.”

“Your hand?” Lance questioned. “But you only escaped and took me with you.”

“You don’t have to make it sound like I did nothing.” Iolite pouted. “But I technically did because through helping you escape, you were able to form Voltron. Not to mention, you’re considered the child of Zarkon and I helped you escape, which is another reason the Galra will be after me and to stay on Homeworld.” Iolite said unhappily.

“Is it really that bad?” Lance asked.

“Don’t get me wrong, I love that my Diamond is concerned about my safety, but I’m just so bored here. I’m an Iolite, I was made for going out and doing things, going on adventures, I’m not made for sitting around and doing nothing. It’d be like asking a Quartz not to protect, a Sapphire not to see the future, or a Lapis Lazuli not to move water, it’s what we’re made for.” Iolite complained.

“Okay.” Lance said in vague understanding.

From his previous talks with Iolite during their captivity, Lance had learned a little more about Homeworld that his aunts had neglected to mention, including that Gem were usually created with a
specific purpose in mind, sort of like ants or bees, so he could sort of understand the frustration of not being able to do something you were literally created to do.

“So, it’d be like asking me not to be incredibly handsome?” He joked flirtingly.

Iolite rolled her eyes with a smile. “That, is a matter of perspective.”

“I didn’t hear you deny it.” Lance said.

Iolite shook her head, still smiling. The then looked to the side, her smile twitching, and then looked up as if she was thinking.

“Well, anyway, I’m going crazy here on Homeworld, so I’m thinking of maybe sneaking off world, just for a bit, to let off some stress.” She said.

Lance gasped in fake shock.

“Iolite, you’re considering doing something so naughty and daring?” He asked dramatically, but couldn’t help from grinning.

“Oh, shut up.” Iolite replied, but was grinning herself. “I don’t always have to follow orders you know. And it’s nothing big, just to a nearby space hub. You want to come?”

“You want to meet up?” Lance asked to clarify.

“Yeah, if I’m sneaking off world, I may as well be to meet a familiar face. We can catch up properly, muse about all one of our adventures together, maybe even go on a new one before I have to go back to Homeworld” Iolite said enticingly.

“I don’t know.” Lance said unsurely. “It’s a bit busy here, with tracking down Lotor.”

“Okay, we’ll cut out the second adventure. It’ll just be for a couple of vargas at a station, and we could both use the time to de-stress.” Iolite compromised.

“I guess I could.” Lance said, nodding in agreement.

“Great!” Iolite said in excitement. “There’s this bar at the station, I’ve heard the drinks there are amazing, we can go there.”

“But you’re a Gem, you don’t drink.” Lance said in confusion, remembering how his aunts always refused food and drink.

“Correction.” Iolite said, holding up her finger pointedly. “We don’t need to, but we still can.”

“I suppose that makes sense.” Lance said. “So, where is this station?”

“Hold on, I’ll send you the co-ordinates.” Iolite said.

The device in Lance’s hand beeped, the image of Iolite then shrank as a map of space and some numbers appeared, the map then zoomed in on an arm of a galaxy, lighting up two dots that were very close together.

“Wow, it’s really close by.” Lance said.

“So, you won’t have any trouble getting there, then?” Iolite asked, her image enlarging as the map disappeared.
“I don’t think I will.” Lance answered. “It should be a quick journey.”

“That’s good, that means more time for drinks.” Iolite said. “So, you want to meet now, or would another time be better?”

Lance thought it over, he still felt tired, but he could tell that right now he wouldn’t get more than a restless doze if he tried to sleep again, and right now there wasn’t anything around the castle he was needed for, and he’d done his daily practice.

“I can meet up now.” Lance informed Iolite.

“That’s great!” Iolite said happily, then coughed to quell her excitement. “That means I can get off Homeworld sooner. Alright, see you there.”

“See you there.” Lance agreed.

Iolite’s image disappeared.

Lance sighed as he got to his feet, pulling his jacket on and stuffing the device into his pocket.

“Should I tell the others?” Lance asked himself

With how stressed everyone was, especially with how Lotor recently tricked them, he didn’t imagine any of them would want to join, and Keith and Allura would want everyone alert and on their toes, including him, meaning they likely would want him going anywhere unless it was for a mission.

“Nah.” Lance finally settled on.

He felt slightly guilty for his decision, but Iolite was right, he needed to de-stress and have time where he wasn’t a Paladin, and telling the others could stop that.

“I best leave a message though.” Lance said.

Grabbing his tablet, Lance typed in his message for the others and then left it on his bed. Hopefully, by the time the others came looking for him and found the massage, he would already be having a good time with Iolite.

Just as Lance was leaving his room, he stopped and looked over at his armour and debated whether or not to wear it. Paladin instincts that had been drilled into him since becoming a part of Voltron told him to wear it just in case something bad happened, but showing up in his Paladin armour didn’t scream having a relaxing time.

“I'll just bring the bayard.” Lance compromised with himself, grabbing the red bayard and stuffing it in his pocket before leaving.

Lance made his way through the castle, thankfully not running into anyone, and reached the hanger bay. He briefly entertained the idea of taking the Red Lion, but realised that would alert the others to his leaving, so made his way to one of the Altean pods. The others may mock his knowledge or computers and machines, but he knew enough to disable the notification of the ship leaving the castle.

The bay doors opened, and Lance flew the ship out, towards the coordinates Iolite had provided.
A while later, there was a knock on Lance’s door.

“Lance, are you awake.” Hunk asked, knocking on the door again. “You missed dinner.”

Hunk opened the door but when he looked inside, he found the room empty.

“Huh, I thought he’d be here.” Hunk said.

Hunk then spotted the tablet on Lance’s bed, a glowing symbol on the screen telling him there was a message on it.

“I probably shouldn’t intrude on Lance’s stuff.” Hunk said to himself.

That didn’t stop from going inside Lance’s room, picking up the tablet and reading the message.

‘Gone out for a few vargas to let off some steam. Don’t worry, I’m meeting up with the Iolite who helped me escape to catch up. Knew you wouldn’t let me go, so I snuck off. I’ll be back soon – Lance.’ The message said.

“Oh no.” Hunk said. “Allura!”

He ran out the room with the tablet in his hand, rushing off to inform the others.
Curse your sudden but inevitable betrayal

Chapter Summary

Lance and Iolite meet up and run into some trouble

Chapter Notes

I had to

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Space Hub Iolite’s directions led Lance to was huge, built into the side of an asteroid, the ship he flew ID it as the ‘Dawning Star station’. A door opened as the ship approached and Lance flew through it, revealing a hanger for the ships, he parked in an available spot and was handed a ticket by a robot as he got out, from the looks of it he guessed it was a way to pay for his parking like back on Earth.

It was a little hard finding his way out of the hanger area, all of the ships turning it into a maze, making him lose his sense of direction, but he eventually came across a set of doors by sheer luck. The doors led him to a room with elevators and he pressed the button to call one, when it arrived he stepped inside and turned to choose a floor, he was then hit with a problem.

Iolite hadn’t told him exactly where to meet, not the floor or any recognisable areas, all he had was that she wanted to go to a bar, but in a place as big as the Dawning Star there were no doubt multiple bars.

Lance sighed and pressed the button that he guessed was for the ground floor and the lift took him up.

The doors opened to reveal another barren room and another set of doors, opening the doors, Lance was suddenly assaulted by many sounds and sights.

The space hub was very different to the swap moon Coran had taken the Paladins to, for one it was grittier, it definitely didn’t have the pristine look of the mall, and many buildings were separated rather than being built into the walls, though they still stacked on levels, and many of the pathways were narrow rather than being wide open for the many types of aliens milling about. The building with the lifts that Lance emerged from seemed to be in the middle of an open area.

“Greetings.” A synthesised voice said.

Lance turned to see an android, but instead of a face it had a screen on the head that showed a virtual pixelized face.

“We see that you are new to the Dawning Star Station. Are you looking for residence or just visiting?” The android asked in a preppy tone.
“Uh, just visiting.” Lance answered.

“That’s great.” The android’s voice was already getting to be annoying. “Here is a map of our wonderful station.” It indicated to a large stand with a map on it. “And more detailed maps can be bought here for a small fee.” It indicated to a metal box next to the map stand that had a slot for coins and a slot where the map presumably came out of. “Is there anything else you need?”

“No, thank you.” Lance answered.

“Okay. We hope you have a great stay.” The android said, walking off.

Lance watched it go and then walked over to the map, trying to make sense of it, and his eyes widened at just how big the station was.

The Dawning Star wasn’t just a mall like the swap moon, it was a full on indoor space-city.

“How am I going to find Iolite in all of this?” Lance questioned.

“Well, you don’t have to look as far as you think.” A voice interrupted.

Lance startled and swung around to meet Iolite, who had been standing behind him.


“How did I find you?” Iolite finished his question. “Tracking beacon.”

Iolite held up her arm with the gauntlet.

“It’s connected to the device I gave you, remember. Though, I guess I should have given you a location within the station to meet at.” She said. “Sorry.”

“At least I wasn’t left wandering around.” Lance said. “So, where are we going?”

“This way.” Iolite beckoned, walking off.

Lance quickly caught up with her and they walked together through the indoor city with Iolite leading the way.

“How’d you escape anyway?” Lance asked as they walked.

“Huh?” Iolite turned to him.

“Escape Homeworld to come here.” Lance elaborated.

“Oh, uh, I have a few connections, just a matter of getting another Iolite to take my place for a bit and someone to make the cameras to look the other way as I fly the ship away.” Iolite answered with a wave of her hand.

“Okay.” Lance said. “I just hope they don’t notice the ruse.”

“Trust me, they won’t.” Iolite said with a strange laugh.

The two of them walked for a while until Lance noticed that there were far less aliens wandering around the streets and the area looked slightly dingier than where he arrived.

“Why are we going here?” Lance asked cautiously.
“Because this is where the bar is.” Iolite answered.

“In this place? It doesn’t look very safe.” Lance said.

“Well, each city has its unsavoury area, and it’s in these area that you get the best drinks.” Iolite said, unconcerned. “Besides, we’re both fighters, we’ll be fine.”

Iolite held up her arm with her gemstone for emphasis.

“Here we are.” She then said.

They had stopped outside a non-descript building, it didn’t look very much like a bar to Lance. He was beginning to get suspicious.

“That’s a bar?” He asked distrustfully.

“Yep.” Iolite answered.

Iolite opened the door and stepped inside, leaving Lance outside on his own. Keeping one hand close to his pocket, Lance followed inside.

To his relief, it really was a bar inside, with multiple patrons sitting at the tables, drinking strange beverages. Iolite was already sitting on a stool at the bar itself, motioning Lance over. He sat beside her and picked up the drinks menu, instantly left confused as to what any of the drinks were.

“Two Pan Galactic Gargle Blasters, if you will.” Iolite ordered from the barkeeper, who looked like he was made of fire. “What will you have?” She asked Lance.

“Oh… I’ll have one to.” Lance said, unsurely, having given up on understanding the drinks menu.

“Uh.” Iolite held up her hand to stop the barkeeper. “You best start off on something far lighter first, to build up your tolerance.” She told Lance. “Give him some Romulan Ale.”

The barkeeper nodded.

“I take it that a Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster is strong.” Lance said.

Iolite shrugged.

“I’m a Gem, so alcohol doesn’t affect me, but I’ve heard the influence of the drink can be very strong on biological beings, something about lemons bashing your brain in and wrapped in gold. Since you’re half Gem, I don’t know what the effects on you would be though.” She said.

“Okay.” Lance said. “I kinda want to try though.”

“Are you sure your Gem isn’t an Amethyst? Sounds like something those Gems would do if they were biological.” Iolite said.

Their drinks arrived, and the bartender watched in shock as Iolite downed her drink in one go without any of the expected side effects, like falling to the floor and screaming in agony, meanwhile, Lance sipped his own drink to get used to the taste.

“Why do you drink alcoholic drinks anyway, you said you can’t feel the effects.” Lance asked.

Iolite shrugged. “I just like them, something you acquire after so long of blending into other cultures.”
Iolite went to grab her other drink, but then paused and turned her head slightly to the side.

“Lance, question, do you have a weapon with you?” She asked.

“Uh, why?” Lance replied.

“Because I think you’re about to need it.” Iolite said.

“Well, well, well, it’s my lucky day.” A deep voice said.

The two of them turned around fully to see an alien approaching them, a group of aliens standing not that far behind him.

“The missing child of Zarkon and the Gem who aided in ‘her’ ‘kidnapping’, both in the same place.” The alien continued. “You’ve both got a fair price on your heads.”

“You’re point?” Iolite asked calmly as she and Lance stood, the Red Paladin slowly reaching inside his pocket.

Around them, the patrons who weren’t with the alien and the barkeeper quickly took cover.

“My point, we can either do this the easy way, or the fun way.” The alien said, obviously a bounty hunter.

Lance and Iolite looked at each other as twin smirks formed before turning back to the bounty hunter and his gang.

“I prefer to do things the fun way.” Lance said.

Simultaneously, Lance drew his bayard and summoned his gun, while Iolite summoned her bladed gauntlet.

“Shall we dance?” Lance asked Iolite cheekily.

“We shall.” Iolite smiled.

Iolite changed forward, her blade meeting the weapon of the bounty hunter, while Lance flipped a nearby table and ducked behind it, firing off shots.

True to Iolite’s claim, she was a fighter, and Lance’s joke about dancing also seemed to be true, she weaved in and out of her attackers, hitting hard with her blade before moving out of the way gracefully, and the way she moved also suggested that she knew exactly where her opponents were, even when she wasn’t looking.

“Lance, to your right!” Iolite called as she backed away repeatedly from the weapon being swung at her.

Lance rolled out of his cover behind the table in time to avoid the large brute of an alien who had just thrown its body into where he’d been hiding, smashing the table under it, making Lance shudder to think what would have happened if Iolite hadn’t warned him.

“Careful, we need them alive!” The head bounty hunter shouted to the brute.

As they fought, Iolite and Lance ended up getting driven together, Iolite attacking the enemies that got too close and guarding Lance’s flank and he fired off shot after shot. Eventually, all of the enemies lay on the ground, unconscious or groaning in pain.
Lance then suddenly groaned.

“What?” Iolite asked, bringing her bladed gauntlet to the ready.

“Our drinks got spilled.” Lance complained.

Iolite frowned when she looked at the bar, as Lance had said, their drinks had been spilled during the commotion and one of the cups were broken.

“Oh, well.” Iolite shrugged. “I don’t think we’d be allowed to stay and finish them anyway.”

Given the state of the entire bar and the patrons still hiding in the corners, Lance would say that it was a fair assessment. So, the two of them left the bar.

“So, what now?” Lance asked as they walked away from the bar. “Go to a different bar?”

Iolite walked over to a bench and sat down there instead.

“We can just sit.” She said.

Lance shrugged and joined her on the bench.

“You’re a great fighter.” Iolite commented.

“I’m a Paladin of Voltron, I have to be.” Lance said. “You’re good to.”

“Thanks. It actually felt kind of good to fight beside you like that.” Iolite said.

“Yeah, I felt like you always had my back.” Lance agreed.

“Maybe we can fight side-by-side again in the future.” Iolite said.

“What do you mean?” Lance asked.

“Lance.” Iolite turned towards him. “Come back with me to Homeworld.”

“What? I-I can’t do that.” Lance protested.

“You should.” Iolite insisted. “If you meet with our Diamond, you might be able to work out an alliance, we both fight the Galra, we could do it side-by-side.”

“I don’t know. Allura’s already said that we shouldn’t, saying that Gems only fight the Galra because they want the universe for themselves and that they don’t care about the planets they use.” Lance said.

“You should know not to judge all Gems by the word of others.” Iolite said. “I’ll admit that in the start, our kind didn’t give much thought to the consequences of what we did, but that’s changed, we’ve learned to take other races into account, worked out mutual relationships with planets, protecting them from the Galra.”

“Well, I guess that most of Allura’s information is ten-thousand years old.” Lance said.

“And based in her own views.” Iolite added. “But if you speak with our Diamond, you might be able to change her mind.”

“I guess.” Lance said.
“Great, come on then.” Iolite stood up.

“Woah, just a moment.” Lance said, standing also. “You mean right now?”

“Of course, I’m probably not going to be able to escape again, so this is the only chance I have to bring you with me to speak with our Diamond.”

“I don’t know.” Lance said unsurely. “I don’t think the others will be happy about me disappearing like that.”

“The ship I used brought me here in less than a varga, it won’t take us that long to get to Homeworld.” Iolite insisted.

“The meeting will probably take a long time, and I don’t want my team to worry.” Lance said.

“But our Diamond really wants to meet you.” Iolite pleaded.

“Wait, you told her about me?” Lance asked.

“Well, yeah, I had to mention in my report what your significance was to Zarkon.” Iolite explained. “And our Diamond commented that she’d like to meet you, you’re somehow the son of one of her favourite Lapis Lazulis after all.”

Suspicion and alarm bells began inside Lance’s head, he’s learned his lesson about going off on his own to strange places with a woman enticing him.

“I don’t think that’ll work out, it’ll be better if we set up a communication with the rest of the team rather than just me going with you.” Lance said.

“It’ll be easier if you set up first contact.” Iolite said, sounding desperate.

“No.” Lance said firmly.

Iolite sighed in defeat and dropped her head.

“Okay, then.” She said.

Lance was surprised when she suddenly hugged him.

“I’m sorry I couldn’t convince you.” She said as she drew away.

Iolite quickly backed away and many figures suddenly emerged out of their hiding spots, it was easy for Lance to recognise them all as Gems.

“You tricked me.” He accused Iolite.

“I’m sorry.” Iolite said, sounding sincere. “But if I couldn’t get you to come with me, they’ve been ordered to take you by force.

Lance reached for his bayard but was shocked not to find it in his pocket anymore, he looked over at Iolite and saw it in her hand, realising she must have pinched it from him during the hug.

“I’m sorry.” Iolite begged when Lance shot her a scathing look.

The Gems that descended towards Lance were all hulking and intimidating figures, and he knew he wouldn’t stand a chance against them even if he did have his bayard, so he could either go quietly or
do something stupid.

He chose something stupid.

Lance turned and ran towards one of the hulking Gems, who opened their arms to catch him, and at the last second, he dropped to the floor and skidded through their legs, losing valuable seconds as he stumbled while trying to get to his feet and continuing to run.

“Get him!” He heard one of the Gems order.

Lance ran quickly, hoping to get back to the entrance and his ship to get away, but Iolite’s deception had been tactical. Not only did he have no idea as to where he was going, but there wasn’t anyone around to help him, and if there was they were already hiding.

“I really wish I’d bought one of those maps.” Lance muttered to himself as he ran.

Lance skidded into a narrow alley and in between two machines, one of which looked like a generator while the other smelled like a waste disposal. He sighed in relief as he heard several bodies run past his hiding place, but then one stopped.

“Wait!” Iolite’s voice called.

The running stopped.

“Down there.” Iolite said.

Lance’s breath hitched as he launched himself out of his hiding space and down the alley as the Gems ran into the alley behind him and gave chase.

The chase went on for a while, Lance never having long to hide and catch his breath before Iolite pointed out where he was hiding. It eventually ended when the Gem’s managed to trick him, sending him running into the arms of a Gem who had snuck around the other side of him while the others chased him.

“Let me go!” Lance struggled to get loose from the Gem who held him in a tight grip.

The Gems didn’t say anything as they walked through the city. As he was carried, it occurred to Lance that they’d have a hard time getting him out, as the other residence of the station would find it strange that a group of Gems would be carrying a struggling person. But he was proven wrong as they entered a building with lifts like the one Lance arrived in, still in the dilapidated and sparsely populated area of the station.

“Sorry, out of order.” An alien sat in the corner.

“We’re here to fix the power.” Iolite said, producing a small bag from seemingly nowhere and throwing it at the alien.

The bag made a chinking noise as the alien caught it and looked inside, he then grinned.

“Pleasure doing business.” He said.

The alien pressed the wall next to him and a panel opened to reveal a keypad, he put in a combination and the lights on the lifts came on and the doors opened. The Gems filled into the lift and the doors closed behind them, taking them down.

The ship hanger the lift led to was smaller with less ships parked in it, some of the ships looked to be
permanent residence of the hanger considering that they had obviously been looted for parts, and Lance recognised a few of the ships as belonging to space pirates.

The Gem ship was similar to the one Iolite had taken back on Zarkon’s ship, as he was dragged inside, Lance saw that it was much bigger on the inside. The Gems went to different designated places on the ship as it came to life and began to lift off, and the Gem’s grip on Lance did not falter.

Iolite was sat in the pilot’s seat, near to where the Gem holding Lance stood.

“I can’t believe you would betray me like this, after what we’ve been through together.” Lance accused her.

“You could have said no.” Lance said.

“You can’t just reject an order from your Diamond, especially when it comes directly from her, that’s just asking to be shattered.” Iolite said, looking at Lance like he was crazy.

Iolite then turned back to her screen.

“Alright, I’m taking us out.” She said. “Brace for hyperdrive as soon as we’re clear.”

The ship approached the hanger bay doors and they opened to let the ship out, the ship then travelled a short distance from the station before disappearing.

Just as the ship left the hanger, four robotic lions entered at a different hanger, too late to stop anything.

Chapter End Notes

So, yes, Iolite did end up leading Lance into a trap, though she’s doing it under orders and belief that it’s the right thing to do. Next stop, Homeworld.

Please comment, it helps to keep authors going on a story.
Homeworld

Chapter Summary

Lance finally meets the Diamonds while the other Paladins search for him

Chapter Notes

Sorry for being gone for so long, my motivation to write seems to be drained lately and the Homeworld chapters are going to be slow ones.

The trip to Homeworld was short, much shorter than Lance would have liked. The ship landed and the Gems exited the ship, one of them still carrying Lance in an unrelenting grip, who was still struggling despite knowing it was useless. The room they entered to was extremely empty and blank, the hallway it led to via suddenly appearing doors was similarly featureless. Eventually, they passed a hall with windows and Lance was then given his first view of Homeworld, the place where his mother had come from, in his opinion, it was bland, everything was featureless and stark, and not to mention that everything was very high up. And what were all those holes in the walls? No wonder his mother had left to become a Paladin.

“This is Homeworld?” Lance questioned.

“Yep.” Iolite answered.

“It’s very…empty.” Lance commented.

“We prefer the term, simplistic.” Iolite said.

“I think boring is a more apt description. Would it really pain you to use some stronger colours?”

“The Diamonds like it like this.” Another Gem commented.

“Are the Diamonds colour blind or something?”

“The Diamonds are perfect!” The Gem holding him protested.

Lance wheezed as the grip around him tightened.

“Amethyst, he needs to breath.” Iolite reminded the Gem.

Lance gasped for air as breathing suddenly became easier again.

“It would be in your best interest not to insult the Diamonds around anyone, most Gems are very loyal.” Iolite advised.

They continued to walk, the other Gems splitting off and going their separate ways until it was only
Iolite and the Amethyst holding Lance hostage were left. The two Gems seemed to slow down as they approached a set of absolutely gigantic doors.

“What’s behind there?” Lance asked, his eyes wide.

“Blue Diamond’s throne room.” Iolite answered.

Lance gulped.

The two Gems came to a stop outside of the doors and stood there, causing Lance to get restless.

“Are you going to knock or something?” He asked.

Iolite shook her head.

“They know we’re here, we have to wait until they call us.” She said.

“For how long?” Lance asked.

The two Gems shrugged.

As it turned out, it was a while. Lance continuously shifted, trying to ease the constant pressure on his stomach and arms from being held, getting more and more impatient as time went on, but Iolite and the Amethyst seemed content to stand there.

Finally, much to Lance’s relief, and then dismay when he realised what it meant, the doors opened.

The room they entered to was absolutely huge, it had a blue colour tone to it, more colour than before but still very dull. In the centre of the room was a set of steps that led up to something that was hidden behind a blue curtain.

Iolite stepped forward and bowed deeply.

“My Diamond, I have brought you the Blue Paladin of Voltron.” She said.

Lance was momentarily stunned by the lightness of her voice, as he was used to her louder tone.

Something behind the curtain shifted, and then it pulled back to reveal the woman behind it.

Lance’s jaw dropped to the floor and he gasped for air as he looked up at the woman, having trouble comprehending what he was seeing.

Lance knew that Gems varied in size depending on their type, with Quartzes typically being the largest, from the varying sizes of his aunts, and he knew that the Diamonds would probably bigger. But he’d been imagining something just slightly bigger than the Galra. Looking up at Blue Diamond, he’d be like the size of a hamster compared to her.

“G-giant woman.” Lance gasped softly.

“Bring him forward.” Blue Diamond spoke.

Her voice was light, but carried clearly across the entire room.

The Amethyst walked forward and finally put Lance on his feet and let go, causing him to wobble as he tried to regain the feeling in his legs. The Amethyst stepped back, not needing to keep hold of Lance any more, Blue Diamond’s gaze did a good job of keeping him glued to the spot.
“This is what became of the Lapis Lazuli taken by Zarkon?” Blue Diamond questioned.

“Yes, my Diamond.” Iolite answered respectfully.

Blue Diamond was silent and no one else dared to speak.

“Do you remember me?” She finally asked.

Lance’s tongue felt thick in his mouth, he knew he’d babble out nonsense in front of the powerful Gem if he tried to speak, so he settled for shaking his head.

“Do you remember any of your life as Lapis Lazuli?” Blue Diamond asked next.

Despite still feeling incredibly small, both figuratively and literally, under Blue Diamond’s gave, the slight suggestion that he was his mother with amnesia loosened his tongue enough for him to speak.

“No, because I am not Lapis Lazuli.” He said.

He hadn’t said it in a rude manor, just simple and to the point, but Iolite, the Amethyst and the Gem standing at Blue Diamond’s feet that looked a lot like his aunt Pearl all looked at him in shock, as if he’d committed some grand fopar.

Blue Diamond looked down at Lance, analysing him.

“You claim not to be a former member of my court, and yet you have her Gem and her powers.” She said.

“Uh, that’s because-” Lance began.

“I already know the reason you claim, Iolite has informed me of the circumstances.” Blue Diamond interrupted. “But why would a member of my court choose to give their existence to you? Let alone how such a thing was to occur?”

“I…” Lance struggled to find an answer, he’d never gotten a straight one for why his mum gave herself up for him either.

Blue Diamond raised her hand and Lance struggled to maintain his balance as the floor beneath him rose, ascending until he was level with her gaze.

“What was she planning in creating you?” Blue Diamond added.

“I…I wasn’t told…” Lance said.

“Told? You had someone to tell you?” Blue Diamond asked suspiciously.

Lance’s insides turned to ice, he’d accidently hinted at his aunts.

“No…I meant that my mum never…left anything to behind to tell me.” Lance quickly covered up his mistake.

Blue Diamond eyed Lance with a frown, who smiled back nervously.

“And Lapis Lazuli’s abilities, were they all also passed onto you like her gem?” Blue Diamond asked, thankfully letting the subject go.

“Uh, yes.” Lance answered.
“Show me.”

Back on the ground, two holes opened up, from his vantage point Lance could see that they were full of water. He looked back at Blue Diamond, who watched him expectantly.

Slowly, Lance extended out his arms and felt for the water below him, calmness came over him as he felt its weight as he curled his fingers. The room watched as the water from the pools rose in tandem with Lance’s arms.

Lance smiled as the water rose above him, this was familiar to him, in an environment that was so sterile, right now he could do so much with this water. He grinned at that thought.

“You want me to show you?” He said. “Then I’ll give you a show.”

Bringing his hands together, the two tendrils of water clashed against each other, separating them into hundreds of droplets that remained floating in the air rather than falling to the ground, the droplets then began to circle around in the air and around Lance on his podium, some of them extending to form elaborate spirals that danced in and out one another, some of the water gathered together and then exploded out again like fireworks, the spirals came together to form dancers that twirled around each other like a ballet. Lance smiled as he moved his arms, conducting the water to the sound of unseen instruments.

Blue Diamond watched the show and smiled sadly, tears beginning to leak from her eyes.

“Just like her.” She said.

Lance hissed as his eyes began to water, his water show slowing down before coming to a premature stop, unable to maintain control as an inhuman amount of water dripped out of his eyes.

“What?” He questioned as wiped away the water only for more to take its place.

The water in the air drifted back down to the ground where in gathered back into the pools, but not before soaking Iolite and the Amethyst.

“Why am I crying?” Lance questioned.

The air was then suddenly expelled from his lungs as he was gripped from all sides, looking up he saw that he was in Blue Diamond’s hand, not having noticed that she’d got up.

“You may not be my Lazuli, but you are so much like her.” Blue Diamond told Lance.

She used a finger to pat Lance’s head and he groaned at the strain it put on his neck.

“Iolite!” Blue Diamond looked down at the purple Gem.

“Yes, my Diamond.” Iolite saluted.

“Organise a place for Lazuli’s…child.” Blue Diamond ordered, pausing to remember what to call Lance since Gems didn’t have the concept of children. “They are to stay on Homeworld. Make sure they have everything an organic will need.”

“Yes, my Diamond.” Iolite repeated.

Iolite then turned to leave, tapping the arm of the Amethyst to signal for her to leave as well.

But when the door opened, the two Gems stepped back in shock to see Yellow Diamond towering
over them, her Pearl at her side.

“Yellow Diamond.” The two Gem saluted as they moved to the side.

Yellow Diamond walked inside, not acknowledging the two Gems.

“I see you have the hybrid.” Yellow Diamond said, looking at Lance in Blue Diamond’s hand with distaste.

Blue Diamond nodded and smiled.

Yellow Diamond sighed in response. “I know that look.” She said. “You can’t keep it.”

“They fall under my court.” Blue Diamond said defensively.

“It’s unnatural.” Yellow Diamond said. “A thing that goes against all standards.”

“Hey!” Lance protested, not liking what he was being called.

He was ignored.

“It can’t be allowed to stay on Homeworld, it shouldn’t even be allowed to exist.” Yellow Diamond continued.

“But aren’t you curious as to how it happened?” Blue Diamond asked.

“Only in a way to stop it from occurring again.” Yellow Diamond answered. “If this thing exists, who knows how many could be out there from renegade Gems.”

It was then Iolite’s turn to be told to leave, as the Amethyst pulled on her arm to take her out the room, the smaller Gem having unknowingly stopped to listen in on the conversation. The door closed behind them.

“There has to be a reason for why my Lapis Lazuli gave up her life to create this being.” Blue Diamond continued to argue. “Maybe they are capable of more.”

“I refuse to entertain the idea that an unnatural creature such as that is in any way more powerful than the purity of a Gem.” Yellow Diamond said, she then sighed again. “But I suppose that there may a reason for its misguided existence, it doesn’t make sense for the Lapis Lazuli that was taken by Zarkon and then became a Paladin of Voltron to give up her existence without reason. Defeat comes with a lack of knowledge, we shall have it tested for its capabilities, see if there is any advantage that the Gem saw that we could use.”

“Great, more tests.” Lance moaned. “You’re not going to zap me like the Druids, are you?”

Lance’s mouth snapped shut as Yellow Diamond’s angry eyes turned to him, he was suddenly very scared of her even through it was Blue Diamond’s grip he was in.

But Yellow Diamond didn’t say anything, only turning to leave with her Pearl in tow.

Blue Diamond also began to move, but towards a different door.

“Where are we going?” Lance asked.

“To see how you’re possible.” Blue Diamond answered.
“We’ve searched the entire station, Lance isn’t here.” Pidge reported.

“But the ship he took is still here, meaning he’s been taken.” Hunk worried.

“I bet it was that Iolite he said he was meeting, you can’t trust a Gem.” Allura frowned.

“How could he have been so stupid?” Keith questioned angrily. “Is there anything we can do to track him?”

“If he’d worn his suit, we may have gotten enough of a signal to track, but that’s still at the castle.” Allura answered. “His bayard was missing but that can’t be tracked.”

“At least he brought something to protect himself with.” Hunk said.

“Except that it probably didn’t do any good considering he’s gone.” Keith responded.

“Well, I’ve just got into the station’s camera feed, so we can find out what happened.” Pidge said, typing away at her computer.

The group gathered around to look at the computer screen, facial recognition quickly found Lance in the camera feeds beginning with his arrival, they watched him enter the station and meet up with a purple humanoid woman, watched the two of them walk into a more solitary part of the station and into a building, only to emerge not that long after and sit down nearby to talk, the purple woman seemed to be desperate while talking to Lance while the Red Paladin looked unsure, then the purple woman hugged him and suddenly there with multiple large humanoid women emerging from hiding, Lance took off running but was eventually caught after a chase, the women then took him to another building, where the camera feed cut off.

“What’s in there?” Keith asked.

“I don’t know, there’s no cameras and it doesn’t show up on the station’s maps.” Pidge answered.

“Where is it?”

“Uh…here.” Pidge brought up a map of the station and pointed to a spot where the screen showed nothing.

Keith then ran off towards where Pidge had pointed him, leaving the others to struggle to catch up.

They finally reached the building and pushed open the doors to find a set of lifts, similar to the ones used to enter the main part of the station, only there was no power. And alien sat in the corner.

“Sorry, out of order.” He said.

“We’re looking for a friend of ours, we found that he was taken in here by a group of Gems.” Allura said. “Can you help us.”

“No one comes in here, no reason to. Like I said, out of order.” The alien answered.

“Then why are you here?” Keith asked in suspicion.
“I…uh, make sure that no one tries to take up residence without paying rent.” The alien answered unconvincingly.

“Why not just set up cameras, then?” Pidge questioned, also suspicious.

“Well…you see…” The alien struggled to come up with an answer, having never been put on the spot before.

The alien then gasped as he was grabbed by the collar and thrust against the wall, the Paladin’s dagger pointed at him.

“Where’s our teammate, don’t try lying.” Keith snarled.

“Whoa, Keith.” Hunk said.

This was the second time the Paladin had threatened violence against another.

“I-I-I don’t know.” The alien answered fearfully. “Those Gems took him down to the ship hanger a varga ago, they’re probably long gone.”

“Show us.” Keith ordered.

Nervously, the alien opened a panel and imputed a code into the keypad behind it, returning power to the lifts. The alien was then shoved into the lift alongside the Paladins as it took them to the hanger.

“What is this?” Hunk asked as they exited the lift into the hanger.

“Sometime less than savoury people want access to the station.” The alien answered. “Since they can’t use any of the regular ship hangers without getting caught, they use this one and we get paid to look the other way.”

“You’re willing to put people in the station at risk for money?” Allura asked in disgust.

“Hey, don’t look at me like that.” The alien defended. “We’re not the only place that does this, everything has its seedy underbelly. Besides, this place can be used for good, when the Galra first asserted control of this station, this hanger was used to sneak known rebels in and out, provided they could pay of course.”

He good looks of disgust in return.

“Does this hanger have any hidden cameras?” Pidge asked.

“Nah.” The alien answered. “If anyone really bad got in, we’d like full deniability that we knew they were here.”

“And I’m guessing that there’s no record of ships coming or leaving either?” Pidge asked.

The alien shook his head.

“Did the Gems say where they were taking him?” Allura asked.

The alien shook his head again.

Hunk moaned. “So we have no leads for Lance’s whereabouts other than that he was taken by a group of Gems.”
“Well, if I hazard a guess, I’d say the Gem Homeworld or one of the colonies.” The alien supplied helpfully, hoping to get out of the trouble he was in by letting a Paladin of Voltron be kidnapped.

“I suppose that is the most likely option considering Lance’s situation.” Allura said. “And that means that getting Lance back isn’t going to be easy.”

The Paladins left the hanger to go back to the hanger containing their Lions, letting the alien go, much to his relief.

As they were walking, Hunk turned to talk to Keith.

“Are you alright?” He asked. “It’s just, you looked ready to really hurt that guy.”

“He let Lance get taken, I wanted to.” Keith answered.

“We’ll find him.” Hunk said reassuringly.

“Yeah.” Pidge agreed. “We rescued Allura from Zarkon and got away, and then took down Zarkon when Lance got taken by the Galra. We can rescue him from the Gems.”

“If last time is anything to go by, Lance will have already escaped this Homeworld place by the time we go to rescue him.” Hunk said hopefully.

“But this isn’t like last time.” Keith snapped back as he came to a stop. “Because Shiro’s gone, and now Lance is too. And with Lance gone, we can’t form Volton again, unless we can find yet another pilot for Red.”

Keith angrily punched the wall, giving no mind to the pain that shot up his arm.

He was startled by a hand coming to rest on his shoulder.

“It’s alright, Keith.” Allura told him comfortingly. “We’ve been in tough situations before and pulled through, and we’ll find our way through this one. And while Lance may be gone, we still know where he’ll be taken, meaning we can get him back.”

Keith took a deep breath and let it out before turning his head to smile back at Allura.

“You’re right, we’ll get him back.” He said.

“Well, best start as soon as possible.” Pidge said. “Let’s get back to the ship.”

“Right.”

The four Paladins then continued on their way back to their lions.

A spaceship floated above a planet, slightly bulky in shape with a triangular design and blue and red in colour. The name of the ship was the ‘Queen Cosmos’ and it was manned by a crew of five.

“And…nothing.” One of the crew reported monotonously.

Another groaned. “Again? When will we catch up to them?”

“Well, considering this ship’s warp tech would drain the engines before we could reach our
destination, meaning we’re stuck going at regular speeds while the Castle of the Lions can warp anywhere it wants, it’ll be a long time.” The first responded.

“This ship was built to travel to the very centre of the universe, you’d think it be able to reach the Castle of the Lions.” The third crew member lamented.

“This ship was also built over ten thousand years ago.” The first crew member told them.

“So was the Castle of the Lions.” The forth crew member chimed in.

“Which was built by one of the most advanced species in the galaxy at the time.” The first crew member reminded.

“More advanced or not, we’ll reach the Castle eventually.” The final crew member interrupted. “The Queen Consmos may not be built for speed but Lazuli would not have used it all these millennia if we couldn’t trust it to get us there in the end.”

The other crew members nodded in agreement.

“Though, this would be a lot easier if Lazuli had bothered to save the Castle’s contact code into the databanks.” One of them added.

The crew nodded again.

“Wait, I’m picking up a ship’s signal leading away from the planet.” The first crew member suddenly reported.

“The Castle?” The third crew member asked.

The first shook her head. “Too small, but it’s recent enough to have been here around the time the Castle was reported to have been here.”

“It’s something. Set a course!” The fifth member ordered.

The crew nodded and set the ship in motion.

‘We’re coming, Lance’ The Blue Valkyries vowed.

Chapter End Notes

I drew some art of Lazuli and her Pearl that’s accurate to the SU art style, I’ll try and do the rest of the Blue Valkyries at some point.
https://dreamvixen2511.deviantart.com/art/Lazuli-updated-722861917
https://dreamvixen2511.deviantart.com/art/Lazuli-s-Pearl-updated-723610437

I’m also probably going to change Onyx’s gem type, because I didn’t think the gem types through before I named them, I didn’t realise Citrine was a type of Quartz, but I don’t mind designing two Quartz soldiers for the Valkyries, but Onyx is a little harder because she’d have to be a three-way fusion since sardonyx is a colour variation of onyx, and while I’m not against a perma-fusion as one of the Valkyries, a Sardonyx-like fusion wouldn’t fit. I’m thinking of maybe changing her gem-type to a Howlite.
Tests, again

Chapter Summary

Lance goes through yet another round of tests

Chapter Notes

Yay, I get to release this chapter for season 5 coming out (or rather the first half of season 5 since it’s obviously been split like the previous two ‘seasons’).

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lance tried his best not to fidget as he lay on the table, a small flying machine scanned his gem with a light. He was alone in the room, but he could see the Gems that dwelt behind the screen connecting the room to another, where they were no doubt going over the information the little machine was giving them.

Lance was getting very sick of this, it was the third time he was being tested over his hybrid status, and he knew the results were going to be the same as the last two time, i.e. nothing conclusive or helpful. Well, if there had to be a bright side, at least they weren’t electrocuting him like the Druids did.

Now that he was alone with his thoughts, not struggling to get free or being faced with a giant Diamond who could crush him with her hands, Lance had time to process them and go over what had happened to him. Iolite’s betrayal had stung, despite not knowing each other for long, the two of them had escaped Zarkon together, only for her to pull him into another cage. On some level, Lance knew that she’d had no choice in the matter, both Diamonds had come across as very dangerous, so he could believe that there’d be a risk in disobeying their orders, and Iolite was very apologetic about it, which was probably why her betrayal didn’t hurt as much as it possibly could have.

Another thought that sprung to mind was that of his teammates, they should have noticed him missing by now, but he’d left them with only a small note on where he was going and with who, that didn’t leave much to track him with, and even if they realised he’d been taken by Gems, the Diamonds had many colonies and he had to imagine that Homeworld was harder to infiltrate than Zarkon’s ship. Making hope of rescue unlikely. But then again, they did come for him when he was taken by Zarkon, but he’d escaped with Iolite when they came, which wasn’t likely to happen again.

“Ok, scans are complete.” One of the Gems said as the small machine floated away.

A door then opened, leading to another room where Lance could spot all sorts of equipment.

“Continue into the next room for physical examination.” The Gem said.

Lance reluctantly got off the table and went into the next room, where some more Gems were already waiting for him.
“What’s this for?” Lance asked as he was led to a machine.

“To test your endurance.” The Gem answered.

“Believe me, I have a lot of endurance.” Lance smirked.

“That remains to be seen.” The Gem said un-phased, clearly not getting Lance’s meaning.

The tests on his endurance turned out to be pretty standard, testing how long he could run and how much he could lift without tiring, his eyesight, cognitive ability, etc. It was nothing strenuous, but by the end of it Lance was left feeling exhausted in more ways than one.

The Gem frowned at the results.

“A Pearl could last longer.” She said insultingly.

“Hey.” Lance said in offence.

Not because of the insult towards him, but the fact that his aunt Pearl was seen as a weak Gem type to use as an insult, his aunt could take on every Gem in the room easily.

“Conclusion from results.” The Gem said, typing into a tablet and ignoring Lance. “Hybrid status downgrades endurance.”

Lance scowled at them.

“I hope that your command of water proves to be more fruitful.” The Gem told Lance.

⋯

“Hi.”

Lance looked up from where he lay in his cell, too tired to move. The Gems had been stricter than Allura when it came to test his capabilities, he had to be dragged to his cell after he’d collapsed, exerting himself trying to control so much water.

“Well, if it isn’t the traitor.” Lance said.

Iolite pouted, the door disappearing behind her as she stepped inside, leaving no exit to the room again.

“I know that you’re mad and just saying ‘I’m sorry’ can’t fix that.” Iolite said. “I really didn’t want to betray you like that, but I had very little choice, Blue Diamond can be ruthless, and she gave me the order directly after I gave my report.”

“You could have not mentioned me being a Gem in that report of yours.” Lance pointed out.

“Oh, that didn’t occur to me.” Iolite said bashfully.

Lance let out a heavy sigh.

“Well, too late now.” He said.

“I brought you food, by the way.” Iolite placed the tray she had been carrying next to Lance and sat down.
“Finally, I’m starving.” Lance said, mustering enough energy to look at what he was given.

“Sorry it took so long, I had to remind the others that you need to eat. And we’re still getting everything for your room together.” Iolite said.

Lance regarded the goop on the tray with disgust.

“Did you also remind them that not every species can eat the same thing?” He asked, prodding the goop to make sure it wouldn’t come alive.

“Yes.” Iolite said. “The packet said this stuff is suitable for most species’ consumption.”

“Most?” Lance questioned. “This is worse than the food goo.”

“Well, it’s the best I could convince them to get you.” Iolite said. “Some of the others were saying that you wouldn’t be worth the trouble going off world just to get food, and I was telling the truth about being grounded on Homeworld. Thankfully, I hold more authority than them lot and managed to get you something.”

Cautiously, Lance stuck some in his mouth and then shivered in disgust, it actually tasted of nothing, but the texture was horrible, it took his all to fight his gag reflex and swallow it.

“Ack, definitely worse than the food goo.” He said.

“Well, hopefully you won’t have to suffer through it for long. The tests are almost over, after that maybe my Diamond will allow you to go back to Voltron instead of forcing you to stay here.” Iolite suggested, sounding entirely unconvinced of her own words.

“What’s really going to happen?” Lance asked.

Iolite shrugged. “Who knows, my Diamond seemed to like you and insisted you were going to stay, but your tests aren’t exactly coming out the best.” She winced at her wording. “I’ve been put in charge of recording all the data and observations, and they’re not looking good. But like I said, my Diamond likes you, so even if the results come out badly, maybe she’ll allow you to go instead of…” She trailed off.

“Instead of what?” Lance asked.

Iolite sighed heavily, turning her head away from Lance.

“Gems that have no use on Homeworld are…harvested…recycled into something ‘more useful’.” She said.

Lance’s hand automatically went to his gem, as if to protect it.

“That’s horrible!” He stated.

“That’s just how Homeworld works.” Iolite hunched her shoulders, refusing to look at him.

“Just how Homeworld…? How can you just accept that?” Lance exclaimed.

Iolite still refused to look at him.

Lance lunged forward and grabbed her shoulder, forcing her to look at him. He pulled back when he saw the tears trying to fall from Iolite’s eyes.
“Oh.” He sat back.

They were both silent.

“Gems who don’t obey are threatened with being shattered.” Iolite eventually broke the silence. “But that’s mercy compared to being harvested. And Gems are constantly threatened with both to keep us in line. I’ve had many Gems on my crew that didn’t take those threats seriously enough, and then didn’t run fast enough.”

“I’m sorry.” Lance said.

“No, it’s fine.” Iolite insisted.

“Have you been threatened with harvesting?” Lance asked before his brain could catch up to his mouth.

“Ha.” Iolite laughed emptily. “I’ve lost count of the amount of times.”

Iolite’s gauntlet then suddenly beeped.

“I need to go.” She said, standing. “I’ll see about getting you something better to eat.”

The wall opened up and she went through it, the wall closing behind her and leaving Lance alone.

Lance once again stood on the podium in Blue Diamond’s throne room, using the water from the pools to create his water show. It was relaxing not to be using his water for tests, even if he was very aware about being watched by a giant woman who had some attachment to his mother and could squashing him with a finger.

“And I call this one, the gallop of the waves.” Lance announced as he directed the water.

The water split off into tendrils that then took the form of horses, that galloped around the room before herding together until they formed a cresting wave that collapsed and formed into one giant horse that then grew wings into a Pegasus that caught the light in just the right way to form brief rainbows.

Lance bowed as he let the water fall back into the pools.

“That is something new.” Blue Diamond said.

“Thank you, I’ve been working on perfecting it for a long time. It’s hard to control so much water at once and keep track of everything.” Lance said.

“It’s hard for you?” Blue Diamond asked.

“Well, yeah. Humans have to learn things, we’re not just given instant knowledge. I can do far more now than I could a few years ago.” Lance explained.

“Oh, that’s…interesting.” Blue Diamond said like she was going over the concept in her head. “When my Lapis Lazuli was created, the sea in front of her parted as she emerged and came to greet me.”

“Can you…can you tell me about my mum?” Lance asked hesitantly.
His aunts had told him plenty, but he’d never heard about her time on Homeworld.

Blue smiled and held out her hand to the podium, it took a few seconds for Lance to understand what she wanted before he stepped unsurely onto her hand, quickly sitting as the hand moved him closer to the Diamond.

“Lapis Lazuli was formed on one of my colonies, the first to come from that world.” Blue Diamond told him. “She was to be just another Lapis Lazuli, created to terraform the very world she formed from. But the way she bent the oceans as soon as she emerged was stunning, it was what made her special, I know that she’d make that colony my pride. And I was right, the world she changed became a world of stunning beauty. Everything she created was wonderous.”

Blue Diamond’s other hand came down on Lance and she used one of her fingers to pet him, regarding him with a blank but sad look. Lance then grunted as the finger came down heavier as Blue Diamond’s expression became darker, he found himself fearing for his safety.

“Then Zarkon took her away from me.” Blue Diamond said harshly.

Despite knowing how in danger he was, Lance’s curiosity won over his self-preservation instincts.

“What’d he do?” He asked.

Blue Diamond was quiet, but removed her other hand, much to Lance’s relief.

“Our colony was attacked.” Blue Diamond said. “An alliance of the Galra and Alteans attacked while it was still being perfected, she was caught up in the attack. At that time there was not much water left on the colony for her to use and could do nothing when faced with Zarkon.” She paused before continuing. “She then disappeared, we believed her shattered at the hands of Zarkon. But it was worse, she’d been turned against me, I don’t know what he did to her but when we found her again she was fighting beside the alliance, and then piloting that Lion.”

Blue Diamond put her free hand to her face.

Lance suddenly felt tears in his eyes and realised that Blue Diamond was crying.

“She betrayed me, and yet here you are. By my order.” She said. “Tell me, was it by her choice, to go against me?”

“I don’t know.” Lance answered. “Honestly, I’m confused about the entire thing, I’ve been learning a lot of new things since I came into space. My mum was a Paladin, she piloted the Blue Lion, she was Zarkon’s daughter-”

“Wait, his daughter?” Blue Diamond looked at Lance in confusion.

“Uh, yeah. Apparently Zarkon became a father to my mum. Which made meeting him really creepy because he’d decided I was my mum because of my gem.” Lance was becoming aware that he probably shouldn’t have told the Diamond this. “I thought everyone who knew my mum knew that.”

“Father and daughter?” Blue Diamond said, slowly remembering what those words meant since Gems had no concept. “Is that why? Was there no other cause?” She asked herself.” She let out a shuddering sigh. “I need to think, alone.”

She lowered Lance to the floor.

“Pearl, take Lance to where he is kept.” Blue Diamond instructed the quiet Gem next to her feet.
“Yes, my Diamond.” The Pearl said in an almost whisper.

The Blue Pearl began to walk out of the room and Lance followed, looking back up at the Diamond one last time before the door closed behind them.

“So, can you tell me anything about my mum?” Lance asked the Pearl.

The Pearl didn’t respond, just kept walking.

“You know, Lapis Lazuli?” Lance tried again.

The Pearl stayed silent.

“Come on, I just heard you speak.”

Still, silence.

The two of them eventually came to a wall, which opened up into Lance’s cell, with an annoyed groan he went in.

…

Yellow Diamond entered into Blue Diamond’s throne room, said Gem was sat on her throne, pensively.

“Well, the results of your little experiment have been delivered.” Yellow Diamond said. “I see no gain from that disgrace’s continued existence. It is not as strong or has the same control as a Lapis Lazuli, it is a defect, no reason to exist.”

“It is still what’s left of her.” Blue Diamond argued.

“She abandoned Homeworld.” Yellow Diamond argued back. “She joined the enemy to halt the expansion of our colonies. She was a traitor. And yet you want to keep what’s left of her?”

“I had hoped that something had been done to her to make her leave, she had always been so loyal.” Blue Diamond confessed. “But her creation told me that she became Zarkon’s daughter.”

It took a moment for Yellow Diamond to also remember the context of the term, her lip curled in disgust.

“All the more reason to be rid of it.” She said.

“Perhaps…perhaps you’re right.” Blue Diamond admitted. “It has no use and it the result of a… traitor.”

“Good.” Yellow Diamond said happily, clapping her hands together. “I shall order it to be shattered immediately.”

“Wait.” Blue Diamond protested. “We can’t just shatter it.”

“Why not? I thought you were agreeing to end this.” Yellow Diamond frowned.

“It is a Paladin of Voltron, we should let it return.” Blue Diamond said.

Yellow Diamond sighed. “We could bring Voltron to us by doing so.” She agreed. “But such an abomination with no use should not be allowed to exist, it could give ideas to the less loyal. And it’d
be a strong strike against Zarkon, to have his ‘daughter’ dead.”

“Voltron is strong, it crippled the Galra empire badly in injuring Zarkon.” Blue Diamond nodded. “But there is also a reason the Galra had yet to reach Homeworld while they lose more of their empire each day. If they attack, we no longer have the Galra to split our attention.” She added in realisation.

“And it’s only one being, it’d be much more beneficial to Voltron to find a new Paladin than bother fighting us for the destruction of this one.” Yellow Diamond agreed. “Then we should shatter it? It’s harvested remains may have some form of use.”

“We should analyse the situation first, if Voltron does decide to attack, consult White.” Blue Diamond said.

“I suppose.” Yellow Diamond relented.

Blue Diamond stood, and the two Diamonds went to the centre of the room, where the warp pad took them to their planning room.

Out of sight, a purple figure had been secretly listening in, her hand covering her mouth in horror.

Chapter End Notes

Yeah, Lance doesn’t get to stay long on Homeworld. I’ve never really had much planned for the Homeworld stuff, it was just a required stop in the story that I had to get to if I wanted to get to the stuff I want to write.
Anyway, you can now find all of Blue Valkyries in my DeviantART gallery.
Unlike other Gems, Iolite had no delusion of the Diamonds, she didn’t know an Iolite who was. They were created to go out into new worlds and to document them and analyse their potential for a colony, this often meant blending in with the populace of said world while they did their research, which meant Iolites got to see exactly how the rest of the universe viewed Gem kind at a personal level. All Iolites knew just how terrible the things the Diamonds did were.

But, if Iolite knew her Diamond was so evil, why didn’t she go renegade like so many other Gems? Loyalty, maybe, she’d been one of the last Gems to be born on Homeworld itself before lack of space and resources led them to conquering new worlds, Homeworld was literally her home, and despite the knowledge of the horrible things the Diamonds had done, she still felt a sense of duty towards her Diamond. But another reason would be straight up fear, the Diamonds made it very clear what happened to those who disobeyed, sometimes even making public spectacle’s out of it to send a message to those who would want to defect. And because they were able to see the damage caused by the Diamonds, Iolites were the most likely Gems to defect, meaning they were also the most threatened so that they were too scared of the consequences to defect.

So, despite knowing how wrong it was, Iolite continued to visit new worlds to judge for colonies. The best she was able to do was to focus on the positives of uninhabited planets for a colony while focusing on the negatives of inhabited planets, but in the end, it was the Diamonds who decided what planets they wanted for the colonies.

But now?

Now it was something different.

Before she’d managed to keep it impersonal, never talking with the people of a planet for too long, never getting attached. It was the golden rule of all Iolites.

A rule she’d broken.

She’d gotten attached, and now she was going to do something crazy because of it.

Lance looked up as Iolite entered his cell, noting that she looked on edge.

“What’s wrong?” He asked.

“We need to go.” Iolite told him.

“What do they want now?” Lance moaned, thinking she was taking him to be tested again.
Iolite grabbed his arm and hoisted him to his feet, putting her hand over him mouth to muffle his cry of surprise.

“Shh.” She shushed him. “We need to be quiet.”

Iolite dragged Lance out of the cell, not bothering to check around as she already knew where every other Gem and searcher drone was.

“What’s going on?” Lance demanded quietly.

“The Diamond’s want to shatter you.” Iolite informed him.

“What!” Lance exclaimed.

“Shh!” Iolite shushed him again.

“What?” Lance repeated, in a whisper this time. “I thought your Diamond wanted to keep me because I reminded her of my mum.”

“Yeah, well, now she’s remembered how your mother abandoned and turned against Homeworld, and since there seems to be no advantage to being a hybrid, Yellow Diamond’s just about convinced her to shatter you. So, I’m getting you out of here before they can.”

“Why are you helping me then?” Lance asked. “If I remember correctly, you’re the reason I’m here in the first place.”

“I didn’t plan on the Diamonds planning to shatter you, I thought they’d just let you go afterwards.” Iolite answered.

Iolite suddenly slammed herself against the wall, using her hand to force Lance flat against the wall next to her. Both stayed as quiet as they could as two Quartz Gems marched past.

“Honestly, I’m not even thinking things out right now.” Iolite continued, dragging Lance along once the Gems were gone. “I don’t want to stop and think, really, because then I’d realise how stupid I’m being in trying to help you escape.”

“Have we got a place to go?” Lance asked.

“Well, there’s the old tunnels, no one goes down there anymore, expect off-colour Gem hiding there, though don’t let anyone loyal to the Diamonds know that. You could hide down there, and you’d have company with the off-colour Gems.” Iolite suggested.

“I’d rather get off of this planet.” Lance told her.

“Right, stealing a ship then.” Iolite said. “That shouldn’t be too hard.” She added with a manic giggle.

‘Are we going to escape before or after she finally breaks down?’ Lance questioned in his mind.

The two of them continued to run, Iolite keeping them from being spotted by any other Gems, until they finally made it to where the ships were being kept.

“How are we going to take one?” Lance asked.

“It’d be a simple matter of getting to a ship, they’ll automatically open and can be piloted by any Gem, we don’t bother with keys or codes since they only work for Gems, and the doors will open
for any Gem ship. We just need to sneak you into one without the guards getting suspicious.” Iolite answered, pointing at the group Rubies guarding the ships.

“How?” Lance asked.

“I…do not know?” Iolite said in defeat.

“Great.” Lance huffed.

“I told you that I’m just going off the moment.” Iolite defended.

Lance looked around, forming an idea as he analysed the situation.

“Go tell them I’ve escaped.” He said.

“What?” Iolite looked at him. “Are you insane?”

“No. Go tell them I’ve escaped and then direct them away from the hanger, we can snatch a ship before they realise the lie.” Lance explained.

“Or, they could sound the alarm and put Homeworld on lockdown, locking the exits and putting everyone on high alert.” Iolite pointed out.

“I thought we were making our plan on the fly, and I’m the best at doing that.” Lance said.

Iolite groaned. “Fine. But if we get caught and shattered, I’m blaming you.” She said.

She made her way towards the guarding Gems, briefly stopping in front of a reflective surface to make sure she was keeping a calm enough composure so as not to be suspicious, coming to a stop in front of them.

“Halt.” One of the Rubies ordered. “State your purpose.”

“Well, if you must know.” Iolite said calmly. “Prisoner escape.”

“What!” The Rubies cried.

“The hybrid that was brought in has managed to get out, seen heading Northwards towards the industrial area.” Iolite explained. “Blue Diamond wants all available Gems to head there immediately to find and capture him.”

“Right!” The Rubies saluted, running off.

“Wait, what about the ships?” One of the Rubies stopped to ask.

“I’ll keep an eye on them, it’s not like I’ll be taking them anywhere.” Iolite laughed nervously when she realised what she said. “Besides, the hybrid will be far away from here.”

“Oh, okay.” The Ruby said, running off to join the others.

Lance came out of hiding as Iolite went over to one of the ships and opened it.

“I cannot believe that worked.” Iolite muttered.

“My plans are amazing.” Lance bragged.

Iolite eyed him disbelievingly. “No, they’re not.” She said bluntly. “We’re just lucky that it was
Rubies on guard, they’re dumb enough to believe anything.”

Lance pouted.

“Now, let’s get out of here before they realise I was lying.” Iolite said.

They ran inside, Iolite seating herself in the pilot’s seat and powering up the ship, Lance unsurely plopping himself down in one of the spare seats.

“Right, the power is working and the core is fully operational.” Iolite said to herself. “Lifting off.”

The ship slowly rose and then began moving towards the door to the outside.

Suddenly, everything turned red as alarms began to blare outside of the ship.

“I think they’ve realised I’m gone.” Lance said.

“You think?” Iolite shot back sarcastically.

“The door!” Lance shouted, pointing at the way out, which was disappearing.

“Hold on!” Iolite cried.

She pressed some buttons before slamming her hand onto the large one in the centre of the screen, the ship violently shooting forward and out of the ship hanger, just barely scraping the sides of the door as it closed behind them. The ship then continued to shoot into space, breaking out of Homeworld’s atmosphere and gravity.

But despite being free of Homeworld, the ship continued to speed up.

“Can’t we slow down now?” Lance questioned, fighting against being forced back into his seat by the G-Force.

“Ships will be after us, we need to get as far away as we can.” Iolite reported.

Lance clutched his head as the pressure began to build, he cried out in pain as he was forced into blackness.

“Lance!”

Lance groaned as he began to come to.

“Lance, are you with me now?” Iolite’s voice broke through the haze.

He moaned and opened his eyes.

“What happened?” His voice was strained.

“You passed out from traveling so fast. Sorry, I forgot organics have a limit for how fast they can go. Though, I think your hybrid status is helping you to adapt, if you’re awake now.” Iolite told him.

“Great.” Lance said. “If only that could have happened before I passed out.”

He felt something wet run down his chin and put his hand to it, slowly as he was still being affected by traveling so fast, his hand came away with blood.
Hopefully that’s just a burst vessel and not anything serious.” He said to himself.

Looking over at Iolite, Lance was shocked to see her form destabilising, like someone had taken the blur and stretch tool to her form.

“What’s happening to you?” He asked in concern, struggling to speak through the force being exerted on him.

Iolite frowned. Well, Lance thought she frowned, it was hard to tell with her form so destabilised.

“The calibration is malfunctioning.” She said, voice also distorted. “We’re at the speed of light, and slowly creeping beyond it. Since my body is composed of light, it’s struggling to keep up with my gem.”

“We’re going at the speed of light?” Lance cried out, as best as he could anyway. “How are we not dead?”

“Gem ships are built to modify gravity on the inside so that we’re not affected by the speed the ship is going. But the calibration is malfunctioning and isn’t working for me.” Iolite explained.

“How about we slow down then? We must be far enough from Homeworld by now.” Lance suggested.

Iolite nodded, but when she tried to reach her hand to slow the ship down, her form glitched and pressed the button to speed the ship up instead, which destabilised her form even further.

Lance cried up in worry as he saw the vague shape of Iolite behind the pilot’s chair, getting further and further away from her gem which was still in the pilot’s seat, stuck to the backrest by the force of the gravity along with her gauntlet which wasn’t part of her projected form.

It also meant the ship no longer had a pilot.

“Iolite, you need to come back, we’re going to crash.” Lance cried.

Iolite couldn’t even respond anymore.

Lance tried to get out of his seat to pilot himself, but he was fully stuck to the seat by the force now, barely able to move his arms.

“Come on, there must be something I can do.” Lance panicked.

Tears leaked out of his eyes, immediately shooting behind him to the back of the ship, which gave Lance an idea.

Reaching out with his powers, he felt for the water of his tears, there wasn’t much of it, but if he could gather it together he may be able to use it somehow. But, no matter how much Lance tried, the water wouldn’t move, the g-force proving to be more powerful than his control. Lance tried and tried, but only ended up blacking out again from the pressure and exhaustion of trying to control the water without avail.

As it turned out, he didn’t need to do anything, as the screen in front of the pilot’s chair began beeping loudly, flashing hazard symbols, and there was the sound of sparks from down below the deck before a loud boom.

The ship came to an abrupt stop, causing Lance to bang his head on the console in front of him as he
was forced out of his seat, also forcing him back to the waking world. Iolite was back too, her form restoring to normal now that they were no longer going past the speed of light.

“If I was organic, I would be sick.” She commented.

“Iolite!” Lance stood on shaky legs before launching himself towards her, hugging her forcefully.

“We’re alive!” He cried into her shoulder.

“Yes, we are.” Iolite said, uncomfortably.

Reading the display in front of her, she sighed.

“Well, the gravity core is completely gone now.” She said.

“What’s that mean?” Lance questioned.

“If means no more fast travel.” Iolite told him.

“Good.” Lance said. “I don’t want to go through that again.

“It also means that if trouble finds us, we’re not going to be able to get away very easily.” Iolite reminded him.

“I’m sure we’ll be fine.” Lance said, letting Iolite go and standing. “We must be far away from Homeworld by now.”

Iolite looked at her screen again.

“We are.” She admitted. “But they could find us again, so we should be prepared.”

“We need to contact my friends.” Lance said.

“How, we don’t know where they are? Do you have the castle’s contact code?” Iolite asked.

“Uh…” Lance trailed off.

It wasn’t that he hadn’t been told how to contact the castle of Lions, it’s just that he hadn’t bothered to memorise it. The Lion’s had automatic links to the castle and he had the code saved in his Paladin armour, so he didn’t think he needed it anymore.

“So, we’re on our own then. In a broken ship with Homeworld now after us.” Iolite breathed.

“Is there anywhere nearby that we can go to?” Lance asked hesitantly.

Iolite typed into the screen, a picture of a planet appearing with symbols Lance didn’t understand labelling it.

“We’re in luck.” She said. “Valux is a trading planet and is under a quintant away with the current state of the ship, we should be able to find whatever we need there.”

“That’s a relief.” Lance said. “Think we’ll be able to find a way to contact the castle there?”

Iolite shrugged. “Maybe.” She answered.

Iolite typed some instructions into the computer before standing.
“There, the autopilot will take us to the planet.” She said, walking away. “Keep yourself entertained until then.”

“What will you be doing?” Lance asked.

“Finally having a break down now that I have the time to process all that’s just happened.” Iolite answered honestly.

Shiro blinked blearily, fighting to stay awake and finish his log.

After being stuck in the tiny ship for weeks with no food or water, and dwindling oxygen supplies, it seemed that he was finally reaching the end. He was no closer to the castle of the Lions, or any form of life for that matter and his final bits of oxygen would most likely run out before he could be found.

But just as Shiro was about to accept his fate and finish his final log, he noticed something huge approaching his ship. It was another ship, much bigger than his and unlike any ship he’d seen, so at least he could take comfort in the fact it wasn’t Galra.

The huge ship stopped next to his. Next thing he knew, there was someone outside his cockpit, waving at him while they floated in space.

And the lack of oxygen must have really been getting at him because the person floating outside his cockpit seemingly wore no space suit to protect them from the vacuum of space.

Two more people joined the first, both also wearing no space suits, they seemed to be talking to each other, though Shiro could hear nothing, one moving their hands to indicate the larger ship while another put their hands together and pulled them apart, all three then nodded their heads. One of them disappeared and one of them turned to him, seemingly talking to him though he could still hear nothing, and put their hand on the glass of the cockpit. In his delirium and need for some form of comfort, Shiro put his hand to theirs on the other side of the glass, he could swear they smiled at him when he did that, but things were beginning to fade now, his oxygen was almost gone.

The other person returned with something big, placing it against the glass of the cockpit. The comforting person withdrew their hand from the glass, Shiro doing the same but maybe that because his arm was too heavy to hold up anymore, and held it up with spread fingers, which began to fold down one by one as they silently spoke.

Shiro was already unconscious by the time all the fingers were down, though he heard the sound of something breaking before he was completely out.

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
“What was I thinking?”

Lance sat in front of one of the ship’s computers, supporting his head with one hand while the other messed with the screen in front of him, hooded eyes attempting to make sense of the information it was displaying.

“Just running off with a prisoner like that.”

He found a game after messing around with the computer for a while, he guessed even Gems got bored and played games, it was similar to solitaire and didn’t take long to figure out what the order of the cards were.

“I’m going to get shattered for this! No, worse, harvested!”

Lance wasn’t really into solitaire, he preferred action-based games, but it was a good way to pass the time. Considering as the only other person on the ship was…busy at the moment.

“Don’t. Get. Attached. That’s the number one rule! Do not get attached! But no! I had to feel guilty about bringing you to my Diamond and not want you to die, I had to value your existence over my own safety. Over ten-thousand years I have been loyal to my Diamond, ten-thousand, I was an elite, I was respected, and I just threw that all away for some guy I happened to feel guilty about. Ugh!!”

Bang!

“You feel better?” Lance looked up from his game at Iolite, whose hand was still pressed against the wall when it she had punched.

Iolite let out a heavy, stuttering sigh.

“Yeah.” She said.

She walked back over to the pilot’s chair and slumped into it.

“Thanks for rescuing me, though.” Lance told her.

Iolite smiled in response.

The ship touched down on the planet Vallux roughly.

“Finally here, I was getting cabin fever.” Lance said.

“You were the one to say good to the warp drive being broken.” Iolite reminded him.

“Yeah, whatever. Let’s get out of this ship and see if we can find a way to contact my friends.”
Lance said.

“Wait a minute, I need a disguise first.” Iolite said.

Iolite’s form turned into light, changing shape before the light receded, leaving Iolite’s new form. She looked like a lizard woman, with swirling patterns over her scales, a long snout, and spikes at the back of her head that grew progressively darker the further they went, making them look like hair, clawed hands and feet, and a long tail. She was dressed similarly to her normal form, but with bare feet and minus her Diamond’s symbols.

Iolite’s Gem then glowed as she pulled a piece of fabric out of it, wrapping the fabric around her wrist like a bandana, covering her Gem.

“There we go.” Iolite said.

“Why’s you change?” Lance questioned.

“Some planets are hostile to Gems because of our colonisation of other worlds.” Iolite explained. “So, I’d rather not get into trouble.”

“Oh, right.” Lance said.

Iolite opened the door and the two of them stepped out, only to be met by weapons pointed at them. The aliens, who looked like one—eyed satyrs with fur wings too small to fly with, lowered their weapons when they got a good look at the disguised Iolite and Lance.

“You’re not Gems.” One stated.

“No, we just so happen to be flying one of their ships, sorry for the panic.” Iolite said.

The satyr aliens sighed in relief.

“Can we get your names and identification, please?” One of them said, holding up a tablet.

“Sure, I am Iona of the Proaxi system, and this is my companion Lance of the Solus system.” Iolite introduced them. “We’re here to do some trading.” She pointed at their ship.

“In that case, welcome to Valux.” Another alien said.

The aliens then left.

“Wow, you weren’t kidding about them being hostile.” Lance said.

“Yep.” Iolite nodded her head. “Anyway, you look around for a way to contact Voltron. Take this, it should pay for anything you need.”

Iolite put her hand under the fabric around her wrist, there was glow under it and she pulled out what looked like an old-fashioned MP3 player that Lance remembered from a museum of technology.

“What will you be doing?” Lance asked as he took the device.

“Looking for someone to sell the ship to.” Iolite said.

“Why do you want to sell our way off this planet?” Lance questioned with a frown.
“It’s broken and the Diamonds will be looking for it, best to trade it for something else.” Iolite explained.

Lance shrugged. “Fair enough.” He said.

The two of them parted ways with the promise to meet at a nearby statue in two vargas.

“Right, how can I contact the others.” Lance pondered to himself as he walked through the bustling streets. “Maybe I can find someone from a coalition planet, there’s enough aliens around here that one of them could be.”

As he got further into the city, the more diverse the aliens became, some were humanoid in shape, others walked on all fours, aliens of every shape and size wandered the streets.

“How can you find anything in this place?” Lance wondered aloud. “Hey, can you tell me where I can find something to do with communication?” He asked a random alien.

The alien turned around, it towered over him and looked like a yeti.

“Adaba gota.” The alien grunted, pointing down the street.

“Uh, thanks.” Lance said unsurely.

“Borta.” The alien said, walking away.

Lance followed where they had pointed, soon becoming lost again.

“Probably should have asked Iolite to come with me.” Lance muttered. He then shook his head. “No. I can do this without help.” He said.

It took some more wandering around and asking for directions, but Lance eventually found what he was looking for. The shop seemed to be a permanent one as it was inside a building, rather than one of the many stands that lined the streets, and it was huge, full of all sorts of technology.

“Man, if I brought Hunk or Pidge here, they’d never want to leave.” Lance said to himself.

“Can I help you?” A voice asked.

Lance looked around but couldn’t see anyone.

“Down here.”

Lance looked down to find an alien no bigger than his lower leg, a humanoid-shaped ball of fluff.

“Uh, I’m looking for a way to send a message to my friends.” Lance said.

“Ah, follow me.” The fluffball said, toddling away.

For something so small, it sure was fast, Lance only being able to keep up due to his long legs.

“Here we go, communication devices of all sorts. Short range, long range, send a distress signal or just talk to your friends, we’ve got it all here.” The fluffball advertised. “Do you need help finding a specific type?”

“Well, I need to send a message to Voltron.” Lance explained.
“Voltron?” The fluffball was surprised. “Sorry to let you down, but we don’t have communication devices that directly link to Voltron.”

“I really need to get a message to them, it’s important. Are you sure there isn’t anything I can’t use.” Lance pleaded.

“Let’s see, I think we do.” The fluffball said happily. “Here we have out ‘Echo throughout the Universe’, it’s very popular right now for people who just want to get their message out there.”

“What does it do?” Lance asked, picking up the device.

“You record a message, and this handy device beams in all throughout the universe for anyone listening to pick up on. You can use it for advertisement, just to get a message out, or let people know where you are.” The alien said.

“Sounds good.” Lance said. “I’ll take one.”

“Would you like to throw in a solar charger for a discount when you buy this item?” The fluffball asked. “You can keep your ‘Echo throughout the Universe’ charged and your message going on indefinitely with a solar charger.”

“Uh, I don’t know how much is on this thing, but sure.” Lance said, it was Iolite’s money after all.

With his items bought, Lance exited the tech shop, heaving the bag the devices were in behind him, he had underestimated how heavy both of the items would be together. He dragged them all the way back to the statue he and Iolite had agreed to meet at, setting the bag down and stretching his arms in relief.

Looking over to where they had landed on the planet, Lance saw that the Gem ship was already gone.

“I wonder what the new ship will look like.” Lance said aloud.

“Well, why don’t you come see?” Iolite asked as she walked up to the statue.

“You’ve got the ship?” Lance asked.

“Yes. Come on.”

Iolite picked up Lance’s bag when she saw he was struggling, showing no signs of having the same struggle. Lance pouted at how Iolite was stronger than him.

Iolite led him to a large metal structure, all around it was scrap from different types of spaceships, they went inside and Lance saw a large ship being suspended by thick wires.

“Is that our ship?” Lance asked.

“Yes.” Iolite nodded. “It’s in good condition but needs a few touch-ups before it’s fit to leave the planet. That’s what Tristis here is doing.” She pointed at another alien, working on the wiring of the ship.

Tristis was another satyr-like alien, but with a more human-like face and two eyes.

“How long until it’s done?” Lance asked.

“Give me two quintants, at most!” Tristis called out, having overheard them.
“We can still live in the ship while he’s working with it, though.” Iolite said.

The two of them climbed some metal stairs, walking across a platform to reach the door to the suspended ship.

“Cosy.” Lance commented when they stepped inside.

The walls were padded instead of being metal and everything had a pastel colour pallet to it, a quick look into once of the rooms showed sleeping quarters with similar colours.

“I’m guessing this is how we’re going to contact Voltron, then?” Iolite asked as she pulled the devices out of the bag.

“The shop guy said that could broadcast a message throughout the universe.” Lance pointed to the ‘Echo throughout the Universe’. “I figured I could just send a message to my friends that way, the Castle ship automatically picks up messages and my friends should be looking for me.”

“Why not just get a personal distress signal?” Iolite questioned.

“Uh…that’s the one I got recommended.” Lance explained.

“But a distress signal is so much cheaper and would get attention quicker too.” Iolite said.

“Oh, I didn’t realise that.” Lance said. “The little fluffball didn’t say that a distress signal would be better.”

“Fluffball? Oh.” Iolite said in realisation. “Let me guess, the guy was about this high, covered in blue fur, and was very cute.” She measured to her knee.

“Yeah.” Lance said.

Iolite laughed. “You got suckered by a Ginzo.”

“A what?” Lance asked.

“A Ginzo. They’re a race that specialise in the trade, using their cute looks and small size to sucker unassuming people into buying things. That little guy could probably smell how out of your depth you were in buying things and directed you to the most expensive thing they had, I’m surprised he didn’t try to get you to buy more.” Iolite giggled.

“Jokes on you, it’s your money I spent.” Lance shot back.

“Ah, it’s fine.” Iolite waved off. “It’d not even a drop in the bucket compared to how much money I’ve built up over the millennia.”

“Let’s just get this set up.” Lance moaned.

With Iolite’s help, the two of them managed to set up the device, pointing the camera at Lance for the message.

“And…action!” Iolite joked.

“This is Paladin Lance to the Castle of the Lions, my location is…” Lance looked at Iolite having forgotten their location.

“Planet Valux of the Plux system in the Drageon belt.” Iolite said from behind the camera.
“Yeah. Planet Valux of the Plux system in the Drageon belt.” Lance repeated. “Come and get me.”

Iolite turned the camera off, then messed with some buttons on the device, which began to let out a steady beeping.

“There, that’s the message being sent. Now all we can do is wait.” She said.

“Well, we can get some supplies while we wait, I’m hungry.” Lance complained.

“Sure.” Iolite shrugged.

The two of them stepped out of their new ship, leaving the ship hanger for the streets, Iolite still in her Iona disguise.

“Please tell me you know your way around this place.” Lance said, still trying to make sense of everything going on around them.

“Nope.” Iolite said. “Trading planets are hard to make heads of tails of, it’s all chaos, no organisation to the stalls. Thankfully, there are permanent fixtures around here, like food markets. Now, finding what you want in said food markets, that’s another thing entirely.”

Lance found out what she meant when she led him into an absolutely huge building, foods of all types lining the walls or stacked on counters.

“How are we going to find what I can eat in here?” Lance questioned.

He’d already learned, after an unfortunate incident with Hunk’s experimental cooking, that not all foods out there were suitable for human consumption.

Iolite pointed at a wall of holes next to the entrance, a few of them filled by hand-held devices, Lance picked one up to look it over.

“What’s this?” He asked.

“Biology scanners, you register your biology in them and then scan any food you’re looking at and they’ll tell you it they’re safe to eat or not.” Iolite explained.

“How do you register?” Lance looked over the device to try and find how it worked.

Instead of answering, Iolite took the device from him and used her free and to grab one of his, she then jammed the end of the device into his hand.

“Ow!” Lance cried as he felt something prick his hand.

“There you go, it reads your blood.” Iolite grinned.

“You could have been a bit more gentle.” Lance complained, shaking his hand to get rid of the stinging sensation.

Iolite shrugged.

The two of them walked around the huge food market, scanning the food they came across for what Lance could, the Paladin taking samples when he could so he knew what they tasted like, he also made sure that those samples were actually free, Hunk had told the other Paladins what had happened when he ate food samples that weren’t free back at the swap moon.
“Ack!” Lance tried his hardest to get rid of the taste of one of the samples. “That tastes like nail polish remover. Are you sure this isn’t toxic for me? Because bad taste usually equals bad.”

“These things aren’t wrong, and I don’t think it’s broken.” Iolite said, waving the device. “You’re just being dramatic.”

“You have no taste buds, you have no room to judge.” Lance bit back.

“Hey, I can taste things, the taste just has no effect.” Iolite defended.

The two continued shopping until the cart they were pushing was full.

“Finally.” Iolite moaned. “Do your species really need to eat so much?”

“It’s meant to last a while.” Lance said. “Besides, this is just the food. Humans have other necessities.”

“Great.” Iolite moaned.

It took a few hours of traveling around the city to get everything that Lance would need on the ship, by the end they had bought a cart just to be able to carry all the bags.

“How does one person need so much stuff?” Iolite questioned.

“We don’t know how long it’ll take for the others to come pick me up.” Lance explained. “And I have some very important needs.”

Iolite took one of the items out of one of the bags and eyed it sceptically.

“Face cream?” She asked.

“I need to keep my face looking good. I’ve been forced to skip my routine for the last few days and it’s left my skin feeling dry and itchy.”

Iolite shrugged and put the face cream back, not really understanding what Lance’s fuss was about.

As they walked back, they decided to take a more scenic route, which helped them to bypass the packed streets which would have been hard to navigate with their bags.

“This world’s changed so much since I was last here.” Iolite mused.

“You’ve been here before?” Lance asked.

“Yeah, I’ve been to so many planets that I didn’t recognise it at first.” Iolite said.

“What’s changed?” Lance asked curiously.

“Well, it’s a lot more technologically advanced, the stalls actually made the streets rather than lining them last time, and there used to be a big fountain over there, but I guess it got removed.” Iolite pointed.

“How many planets have you been to?” Lance asked.

“I’ve lost count.” Iolite smiled. “I’ve been to big ones, small ones, the barren and the beautiful, rocks and gas giant, some orbiting more than one star and some with no star to call a home. I’ve met so many different people, every kind you can imagine.” Iolite’s smile dropped as she looked at the
ground. “And I betrayed them all.”

“Well, you said you had no choice.” Lance said.

Iolite only hummed.

She then stopped and turned her head, looking over to a pile of wooden boxes. She walked over to them and crouched down, holding out her hand.

“Hey, it’s alright, you can come out.” She said.

“What are you-?” Lance began to asked, being cut off by Iolite putting a finger to her lips.

Iolite then motioned for Lance to crouch down with her.

Lance peered into the pile of boxes and realised that he could see something moving inside of them.

“That’s right, come on.” Iolite continued to coerce.

A small creature slowly emerged, nose twitching as it peaked out.

“Here you go.” Lance reached into the food bag and took out some meat, putting it down in front of the creature.

The creature sniffed it curiously, coming out of the boxes to reach it.

It was covered in fur with a cat-like head, big eyes included, two sets of pointed ears on the top of its head, there was a collar of longer fur around it’s neck and a long tail that the fur got progressively longer on. It stood on digitigrade hindlegs but arms with small hands rather than forelegs.

The creature then snatched up the food, darting back inside of the boxes, not coming out again.

“Awe, how cute.” Iolite said, standing.

“Yeah.” Lance agreed. “Are we just leaving it, I gave it food?”

“You didn’t have to, I just wanted a look.” Iolite said.

Lance pouted as the two of them continued their walked to their ship, a pair of big eyes watching them go.
Meanwhile

Chapter Summary

Let's check up on the Castle of the Lions, shall we?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Pidge rubbed her eyes under her glasses, squinting at her computer screen, attempting and failing to make sense of the information through her blurred vision.

Behind her, the door to her room opened. A few seconds later, a plate of food was set next to her.

Hunk sighed as he looked down at his smaller friend.

“Pidge, you need to sleep.” He said.

“I can’t.” Pidge replied. “I need to find out any information as soon as it pops up.”

“Pidge, have you even noticed that your screen is frozen?” Hunk asked.

“What?” Pidge looked closer at her screen, realising that the text on the screen wasn’t moving.

She then became aware of how much noise the fan on her computer was making, meaning that her computer had most likely overheated.

“No! No, no, no!” Pidge frantically messed with her computer, trying her best to get it working.

She started bashing her computer, as if it’d make it work again.

Her hands were grabbed by Hunk and she was brought to his chest, Pidge struggled against him before collapsing from lack of energy, crying into his shirt.

“It’s alright, I’m worried about Lance too.” Hunk said once Pidge had calmed down. “But do you think that he’d want you to be doing this to yourself for him.”

Pidge weakly shook her head in response, not looking up.

“I just want him back already.” Pidge mumbled.

“I know, I do too.” Hunk said. “And at least we know he’s out there somewhere, if that transmission we got about him escaping Homeworld is true. And Lance will find someway of letting us know where he is, we just have to find that, but we won’t be able to find it if you’re too tired to see it.” Hunk said.

Pidge laughed. “I wouldn’t be so tired if Lance bothered to memorise the contact code for the castle, but he always insisted on not needing to.”

Hunk laughed too. “Yeah. Lance is sure to get an earful from Allura when he gets back.”
“Hunk.”
“Yeah?”
“I’m tired.”
“Then go to sleep.”
“But my computer…”
“I’ll fix it, it’ll be there for when you wake up.”
“Oh.”

Pidge drifted off in Hunk’s arms. Careful not to disturb her, Hunk got to his feet and looked over at her bed, which was covered in junk, nowhere to place down the young genius.

“Ah.” He said.

Pidge’s door then opened again.

“Good, you got her to sleep. I was coming down to try and talk to her myself, but you seem to have beaten me.”

“Yeah, she just needed some support.” Hunk said. “But do you mind clearing her bed, I don’t want to put her down unless it’s on a soft surface.”

“Sure.”

Shiro walked over to Pidge’s bed and swept all the bits of scrap and machinery to the floor, clearing enough room for Hunk to tuck her in.

“How’s she doing.” Shiro asked once they left Pidge’s room.

“She’s still pushing herself, she really wants to find Lance. Though, she is less stressed than before, since we found you, one less person to worry about.”

“I really left this team in a mess.” Shiro sighed. “If I hadn’t been taken then maybe Lance wouldn’t have been taken himself.”

Hunk put a hand on his shoulder.

“Hey, it’s not your fault.” He said to his leader. “Who knows why the Black Lion sent you into the hands of the Galra.”

“Yeah. Thanks.” Shiro smiled.

“So, are Allura and the Valkyries having any luck.” Hunk asked as they walked.

“Nothing since picking up on that transmission about Lance’s escape from the Gem Homeworld. It seems the Gems are having as much luck finding him as we are.” Shiro answered.

“I feel sorry for them.” Hunk said. “They come all this way out into space to find Lance, only for Lance to be missing when they finally reach us.”

“Then we’ll just have to make sure they get their reunion.” Shiro said. “I’m going to train. Do you
want to come.”

Hunk shook his head. “Nah, I need to fix the overheating problem with Pidge’s computer.” He held up the computer he took from Pidge’s room. “I’m planning on holding it hostage until she eats properly after she wakes up.”

“Well, good luck.” Shiro said, heading off to the training deck.

Hunk went to his own room and set down Pidge’s computer, it wouldn’t take him long to get it back to normal, with hopefully no data lost.

“Man, these last few weeks have been hectic.” Hunk said to himself.

As he worked, his mind drifted back to a few days ago.

Hunk was stress baking, trying out every recipe he could think of with their current ingredients in an attempt to distract himself.

He looked up as Keith entered the kitchen.

“Oh, hey, you’re just in time to try out my new recipe.” Hunk said.

“You’re seriously baking at a time like this?” Keith questioned grumpily.

But he sat down to be given the food regardless.

“I’m not really much use to anything right now, and baking is how I cope.” Hunk muttered as he gave a plate to Keith.

“You could be training, if these Gems are as tough as Allura and Coran say, we’ll need to be able to fight them to get to Lance.” Keith suggested pointedly.

“I would, but you’ve been hogging the training deck all day.” Hunk said. “I’m there’s no way I’m training in the same space as you without supervision.”

“We’d be against the training droids, not each other.” Keith said.

“With how savagely you’ve been fighting since Lance was taken, I’m not taking my chances.” Hunk said.

Keith grunted, deciding to shovel food into his mouth instead of answering.

“Have Allura and Coran got anything yet?” He asked after swallowing.

Hunk sighed, shaking his head as he sat down to eat himself.

“Last I heard, they’re still trying to contact Homeworld in hopes of a peaceful resolution, but it seems that they don’t have any interest.” He answered, raising his food to take a bite.

Allura’s voice then came through the speakers.

“Everyone, report to the bridge, we have a ship attempting contact with us.” She said.

Keith quickly stood, grabbing hold of Hunk when he deemed the bigger male too slow and dragging him with him.
“But… I didn’t even get a single bite.” Hunk whined as he was dragged away from the food he had made.

When Hunk and Keith arrived on the bridge, Pidge was already there with Allura and Coran.

“What’s so important for us all to be here?” Pidge asked.

“Bringing up visuals on the ship now.” Coran said.

The screen appeared, displaying a bulky looking ship.

Pidge, Hunk and Keith looked at the ship with curiosity, Allura and Coran looked at in shock.”

“Is that…?” Allura said.

“The Queen Cosmos.” Coran confirmed.

“Wait, you know this ship?” Pidge asked.

“The Queen Cosmos was a ship built by long time allies of the Alteans.” Coran explained. “The last I saw it, it was in the hands of the-”

He was cut off by beeping, the ship attempting to establish contact with them.

“Let them through.” Allura ordered.

A screen appeared over the image of the Queen Cosmos, a woman with grey skin and hair, darker grey markings and grey clothes looked back at them.

“Princess Allura.” The Gem greeted. “It took a long time to find you.”

Allura seemed to be having trouble recognising the Gem, but Coran had no such trouble.

“The Blue Valkyries.” He gasped.

The Gem looked at him, smiling.

“It’s been a long time since any of us have been called that.” She said. “Anyway. Permission to come aboard? We have some things to discuss and matters we can both help each other out with.”

Allura, having now recognised who the Gem was, remained suspicious despite knowing who they were.

“I would prefer to meet on the ground, the planetoid nearby should suffice.” She said.

The Gem looked at something and nodded.

“That’s fine with us, see you down there.” She said.

The communication closed and the ship on the screen began to move towards the planetoid Allura had mentioned, Allura also directing the castle towards it.

“You seem to know who they are, mind filling us in?” Keith said.

“Wait, Blue Valkyries? Isn’t that the name of the group you said the last Blue Paladin was in charge of?” Hunk asked.
“They are. I’m glad to see that Howlite managed to survive all this time, and hopefully the other Valkyries too.” Coran answered. “I’d feared that Lapis Lazuli had been the only one to survive.”

The remaining Paladins armoured up as the castle ship was landed on the planetoid where the Queen Cosmos was already waiting. Thankfully, the planetoid seemed to have enough of a breathable atmosphere that they didn’t need their helmets on.

The Paladins then exited the castle ship alongside Allura and Coran.

The door to the Queen Cosmos opened as they approached, Howlite and other Gems stepping out.

“Thank you for meeting us, we have been trying to find you for a long time.” Howlite repeated herself from before.

“How didn’t you just contact us?” Coran asked.

“The Castle of the Lion’s communication code was not saved on the Queen Cosmos.” The green Gem spoke up. “Lapis Lazuli did think to put in the code once she got the ship.”


“Technically, wouldn’t Kugo be the one at fault since he never bothered to put in the communication codes and he’s the one who gave it to her?” The orange Gem questioned.

“Anyway.” Howlite interrupted. “I think we found something of yours on the way here.”

Howlite and the other Gem’s stood to the side, giving the Paladins and Alteans a clear view of their ship. A thin blue Gem stood at the door, helping to guide a familiar figure.

“Shiro!” The Paladins and Alteans rushed over to the Black Paladin as he exited the ship.

Shiro didn’t even have time to say anything before he found himself the centre of a hug.

“Careful now, he’s still recovering.” The blue Gem cautioned.

“Recovering?” Keith questioned.

They stepped back and took in Shiro’s appearance.

Their leader had long hair that was tied behind him, stubble decorating his face, was pale with bags under his eyes and was skinnier than the last time they had seen him.

“What happened to you?” Keith asked in concern.

“I think it’d be better for him to get inside and rest first.” The blue Gem interrupted.

“Yes, that’s a good idea.” Allura agreed.

They all filed inside the Castle of Lions, gathering in the common room. Hunk was quick to fetch some of the food he had made after the blue Gem, Pearl, had explained that they hadn’t had much in way of supplies for organics aboard the Queen Cosmos to help Shiro heal.

Once comfortable, Shiro explained what had happened to him since disappearing from the Black Lion. About waking up in Galra captivity, escaping to an ice planet, being helped by the rebels stationed there, stealing a Galra ship and following the trail of the Castle of Lions for weeks until he ran out of oxygen and passed out.
“When I woke up, I was aboard the Blue Valkyrie’s ship.” Shiro continued his explanation. “They gave me the food and water they had and nursed me back to health.”

“As well as we could, anyway.” Blue Pearl said. “It’s been a long time since the Queen Cosmos was equipped for organic living, we only had a small amount in reserve.”

“Well, it seems we owe you a great debt of gratitude for saving Shiro.” Allura said. “If there’s anything we can do for you, please don’t hesitate to ask.”

“Actually, you can help us with something.” The green Gem, Peridot, said. “We’ve been chasing you all this time for Lance.”

“Lance?” The Paladins, save for Shiro, and Alteans asked, their good mood dropping.

“When Lance went missing, we checked on the Blue Lion and found it missing too.” The red Gem, Carnelian, explained. “It was obvious what happened.”

“And then we heard about you from the Galra signals Peridot hacked, so we knew we had to find the Castle of Lions.” The orange Gem, Citrine, continued.

“Where is Lance, by the way.” Shiro said, taking note of said Paladin’s absence.

The other Paladins and Alteans looked down.

The Gems and Shiro were quick to catch on that something bad had happened.

“Where’s my baby?” Pearl begged them.

“He has, unfortunately, been taken by Homeworld.” Allura answered.

The Blue Valkyries gasped, tears coming to Pearl’s eyes.

“Please, no.” Pearl pleaded quietly.

“How?” Howlite demanded.

“He snuck off to meet with a Gem, who then betrayed and captured him with the help of other Gems. We can only guess where they took him, but Homeworld is the most likely. Unfortunately, they won’t respond to our attempts to negotiate for his safe return.” Allura said.

“If Lance is in the hands of Homeworld, a safe return would not be likely.” Peridot said.

“We can’t believe that!” Citrine exclaimed. “Right?” She turned to Howlite for guidance.

Howlite was silent.

“We can’t give up on Lance, not after all this time.” Carnelian joined in the protest.

Pearl continued to cry.

“Why are you acting like he’s already dead?” Hunk asked in fear.

“Homeworld is very strict and controlled, each Gem has its place and anything that doesn’t fit the mould is discarded.” Howlite finally said quietly. “A hybrid like Lance, he would be an insult to the perfection the Diamonds strive to create.”
“But Lance is a Paladin of Voltron, they wouldn’t just kill him. Would they?” Pidge pointed out.

“It’s hard to say.” Peridot said. “My Diamond is logical, but she also has a distaste for anything off-colour.”

“Well then, if we have any luck, there’s still time to try and get him back.” Coran said optimistically. The Valkyries nodded in agreement.

“You said that you can’t communicate with them?” Howlite asked.

“No. Can you?” Allura responded.

“No. But Peridot is good at hacking frequencies. With any luck, we can pick up news about Lance.” Howlite answered.

“Then there’s no time to lose.” Coran said, hopping to his feet.

Coran marched towards the bridge, Peridot and Allura following after.

The Paladins chose to remain with Shiro, happy to have one of their missing team members back.

“I want my baby back.” Pearl said sadly, having managed to stop crying.

“Don’t worry, he’s as strong as his mother. He’ll be alright.” Howlite comforted Pearl before following after the Alteans and Peridot.

With the help of the Blue Valkyries, the members of Voltron had found hope. A broadcast about someone escaping from Homeworld, and from the description, it was obviously Lance they were talking about.

So, they had reassurance that Lance was no longer in the hands of Homeworld. That just left them with the issue of no longer know where Lance was.

“Hey, what are you doing?”

Hunk looked up from Pidge’s computer to see Citrine looking down at him.

“Pidge’s computer overheated, so I’m fixing it.” Hunk explained.

“Oh, I was wondering where she was. I haven’t seen her without it since Peri interrupted that Homeworld signal.” Citrine said as she sat down. “What she been doing again?”

“She’s running every signal the castle receives through a program she created, which analyses them and picks out the ones that could be Lance sending a signal. But I guess it was too much of a task for her computer.” Hunk explained. “That won’t stop Pidge though, she’ll just build her computer to have more processing power and a bigger fan once she wakes up.”

“I hope she gets a signal soon.” Citrine said.

“You really want to see Lance again too, huh.” Hunk said.

“That kid is my family, we all want to find him. We all gave up space adventuring to keep him safe, and then the Blue Lion goes and takes him off to do his own space adventuring without consulting us. Pearl was not happy about that, let me tell you.” Citrine laughed. “We’re just lucky we still had
“What is the Queen Cosmos, anyway?” Hunk asked in interest.

“It was a ship built to fly to the centre of the universe.” Citrine said.

“Seriously?” Hunk gasped.

“Yep.” Citrine popped. “It all happened before I was formed. But from what I remember, something was happening to the universe, a sort of corruption, and to fix it, this lady had to go to the centre of the universe to revive it or something. One of her protectors who accompanied her there, Jan Kugo, later became the Red Paladin.”

“So, how’d you end up with the ship?” Hunk questioned, invested with the story.

“When Zarkon turned on the Paladins, Kugo told Lazuli to take the Queen Cosmos to get out of there.” Citrine answered. “Since she had to hide the Blue Lion not long after, we started using it to travel the universe and help out.”

“Geeze.” Hunk said.

“Yeah. At the time, the Queen Cosmos was one of the best ships in the universe, now it’s old and outdated. Why do you think it took us so long to reach the castle?”

“I can look at it, if you want, see if there’s anything I can fix.” Hunk offered.

Citrine shrugged. “I don’t see why not.” She said.

“Let’s go then, I’ve finished Pidge’s computer.” Hunk said, standing.

Hunk closed down Pidge’s computer and hid it beneath his pillow before heading off towards the Queen Cosmos with Citrine.

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
The story Citrine was telling is about a really old anime from 1978 called Starzinger that I remember watching on VHS just before it died out, it’s a sci-fi retelling of Journey to the West.
And, as you can see, I’ve decided to stick with my story of the original Paladins rather than the canon version.
Remember that you can find my designs of the Blue Valkyries on my DeviantART.
"Iolite, did you leave the door to the ship open?" Lance called from his room on the ship he and Iolite shared.

“No. Why?” Iolite asked, peaking into his room.

“Then how did he get in?” Lance pointed to his bed.

Iolite looked at the bottom of Lance’s bed and was surprised to see the creature from the previous day happily curled up at the foot.

“Why are they on your bed?” Iolite asked.

“That’s what I want to know!” Lance exclaimed. “I woke up to him there.”

He poked it and the creature opened an eye, then closed it.

“He, come on, get off.” Lance said.

When he was ignored, Lance resorted to trying to push the creature off his bed.

The creature then rolled onto its back to show its belly.

“Awe.” Iolite cooed.

“You’re seriously falling for his cuteness?” Lance questioned.

“He’s not hurting anyone, stop being so mean.” Iolite defended.

“I want him off my sheets, who knows what he could be carrying in his fur. Not to mention, he’s dirty and stinks.” Lance defended.

“You’re being dramatic.” Iolite rolled her eyes. “I’ll go get some food to bait them out.”

Iolite left but then soon returned with some of the meat they had bought the previous day. It took only a few seconds for the creature’s nose to twitch, then lift its head to stare at the food with attentive eyes.

“Come on.” Iolite encouraged.

The creature stretched on the sheets, rubbing more dirt into them much to Lance’s ire, before hopping off, following the allure of food as Iolite backed away. She led it through and then out of the ship, placing the food outside, which the creature went eagerly for, happily munching away.
As soon as Iolite returned to the ship, Lance closed the door behind her and made sure it was locked.

“Right, now that he’s gone, I need to change my sheets.” Lance said.

As he said, Lance changed the sheets on his bed for clean ones. He then went through his morning routine, taking comfort in something so familiar. By the time he was ready for breakfast, though he supposed lunch would be more appropriate, he was feeling much better than he had since it had all started.

The mood was quickly soured when he reached the kitchen area, only to find the creature waiting for him there, sitting in front of the fridge with what he could swear was a grin on its face.

“Iolite! Did you let it back in?” Lance called to the Gem in the bridge.

“Let what-oh.” Iolite appeared, staring at the creature. “How’d it get back in, this ship should be securely locked?”

“When he got back in somehow.” Lance said.

Iolite sighed, picking up the creature, which thankfully didn’t protest, walking to the door, which was strangely still locked.

“Where can we take him where he won’t come back.” Lance wondered.

“What have you two got there?” Tristis asked as he appeared.

Iolite quickly changed into her lizard form before he could see her.

“Trouble here keeps sneaking into our ship.” Lance pointed at the creature.

“A Vanx?” Tristis recognised the creature. “Did you happen to feed it?”

“Yeah.” Lance said hesitantly.

Tristis laughed. “That’ll be the problem then.” He said. “Vanx’s attach themselves to whoever feeds them. If you feed them, they’re yours for life. And you can’t get rid of them, no one knows how they do it, but they can get into anywhere when they want to, no matter how secure it is.”

“So, we’re keeping him?” Iolite asked.

“Yes.” Tristis confirmed.

“Oh well.” Iolite didn’t look bothered by that, in fact she looked delighted. “I guess we’ll need to give you a name if we’re keeping you.” She looked down at the Vanx in her arms, who smiled up at her.

“I guess if we have no choice.” Lance resigned. “But if we’re keeping him, there’s one thing we need to do above all others.”

“What?” Iolite asked.

“Give him a bath.” Lance said.

Iolite suddenly had to hold on tight as the Vanx began to squirm, obviously recognising the word and not liking it at all.
“Keep holding onto him, I’ll go run a back.” Lance quickly disappeared into the ship.

If they were going to keep the Vanx, he was not going to let it wander around dirty.

The whole debacle took over a varga to complete. It was only thanks to Iolite ability to shapeshift that she was able to keep the Vanx in the water while it wailed as if they were boiling it alive, Lance scrubbed shampoo into its fur and then dumped water over it to rinse the shampoo out. It was there that they learned something about the Vanx.

“No!” The Vanx wailed. “No! No! No!”

“Stop being such a baby.” Lance told it, dumping more water over it.

“No bath! Bad!” The Vanx continued to wail.

“Right.” Lance sighed. “I think that him clean.”

Iolite lifted the Vanx out of the water, placing it down.

The Vanx quickly shook itself off before shooting out of the bathroom to hide.

“Quick, catch him before he gets water everywhere!” Lance told Iolite.

It was easier said than done, as the Vanx was very slippery and would always escape just before they could grab onto it. Eventually, then settled for laying down a towel and leaving, the Vanx thankfully rolling around on the towel to dry itself.

“Ugh, I’m going to have to have a bath myself now.” Lance complained as he and Iolite left the ship to stand in the sun, both soaked from giving the Vanx a bath.

They heard a laugh and turned to see Tristis, standing in front of an open panel on the ship.

“Did you manage?” He asked.

“Yeah.” Lance sighed. “He was harder to wash than my nana’s dog.”

“We found out it can speak.” Iolite said.

“Yeah, Vanx’s can learn and say words.” Tristis said. “They’re like permanent young ones in a way.”

“Great, so we’re basically responsible for a kid?” Lance asked in alarm.

“No, they speak like one but they’re perfectly able to take care of themselves, they just prefer that others look after them.” Tristis placated.

“Good, because I’m not ready to be a parent.” Lance said.

Lance sniffed and then wrinkled his nose.

“I’m going to get that bath now.” He said, disappearing back inside of the ship.

“So, how’s the ship coming along?” Iolite asked Tristis as she walked over to the outdoor hose and began rinsing off the soap suds and dirty water that had clung to her after giving their Vanx its bath.

“I’m almost done.” Tristis told her. “I shouldn’t need more than a varga or two.”
“That’s good. We probably won’t be leaving for a while though, Lance is waiting for his teammates to find his signal and come get him.” Iolite said.

“You’ll still have to move out of my garage, you know.” Tristis said. “I can recommend some good long-term landing sights.”

“Thanks.” Iolite smiled.

Iolite shook herself dry.

“I best go make sure our new friend isn’t getting into trouble.” She said, going back inside the ship.

“What sort of stuff are we going to need for him?” Lance asked as he and Iolite navigated their way through the market stalls.

“Basic necessities, a bed and such. Vanx’s are apparently common on Valux, so it shouldn’t be hard to find the things that apply to their needs.”

“Hopefully it won’t take too long to find what Loki needs, I feel like I’m going to get swept away by the crowd at any time.” Lance said, trying to keep close to the disguised Gem.

“Why’d you name him that again?” Iolite asked about Lance’s naming choice for their Vanx.

“Because he’s been complete trouble so far.” Lance replied.

“Okay.” Iolite guessed that the name meant trouble.

All was going fine until Lance bumped into a large alien.

“Watch it!” Lance grunted, sick of the constant battery his body was going through trying to navigate the tightly packed street.

Lance then let out a wheeze as he was grabbed by the back of his jacket and lifted into the air.

“How dare you speak to me like that!!” The large alien demanded.

“Woah, woah, okay now.” Iolite quickly worked to defuse the situation, holding her hand with some of the fingers folded over her chest. “My friend here didn’t mean disrespect.”

“He spoke to me disrespectfully.” The alien grunted, not willing to put Lance down.

“The both of you are from two very different cultures, my friend doesn’t understand how important respect is for you. So, how about he gives a very sincere apology and we move on with our lives?” Iolite proposed.

Lance nodded frantically in agreement.

But the large alien wasn’t in agreement.

“You can’t tell me what to do!” He shouted.

He then threw Lance at Iolite, knocking them to the ground.

The other aliens had already gotten out of the way, but still formed a crowd around them to watch the events unfold.
“Why is this species always so stubborn?” Iolite asked herself as she got to her feet.

It turned out that the large alien had heard her, which only got him madder, charging at her and Lance. They both dived out of the way.

“What I wouldn’t give for my Paladin armour right about now.” Lance groaned. “Or at least a weapon.

“How about this?” Lance looked at Iolite, who held the Red Bayard out to him.

“What the…where’d you get this?” Lance asked.

“I’ve always had it.” Iolite answered, showing off her uncovered Gem.

Iolite then summoned her weapon.

“We just need to subdue this guy until whoever protects this place shows up, right?” Lance asked as he turned his bayard into a gun.

“Yep.” Iolite answered.

The two worked in tandem, not letting the large alien get too close to one another, mostly acting as annoyances rather than trying to attack.

Eventually, the guards that had greeted them when they first landed on the planet arrived, using ropes to tie down the large alien and return order.

“Sorry about the chaos.” Lance said when the guards turned their attention onto him and Iolite. “We were only defending ourselves, I was accidently rude but they guy wouldn’t accept an apology.”

“It’s fine.” The lead guard waved off. “With so many different species wandering around, fights because of different standards break out all the time.”

“Well, sorry about the trouble anyway.” Iolite said.

“Just continue about on your business.” The guard said.

“Sure.” The two agreed, waving as they went to leave.

“Wait!”

Iolite found her arm being grabbed by one of the guards, who held it up before him. He stared at the Gemstone on her arm.

“She’s a Gem!” The guard announced.

Iolite suddenly found all the guards pointing their weapons at her.

“Show your true form!” The head guard ordered.

Iolite sighed and shapeshifted into her normal self, causing the crowd still formed around them to gasp.

“What are you doing on this planet, scouting it out for another colony?” Another of the guards accused.
“No.” Iolite denied calmly. “We’re just here because we needed supplies, I was only transformed because I knew this would be your reaction.”

“Go back to Homeworld!” Someone from the crowd shouted, getting many shouts of agreement.

“If I go back to Homeworld, I would be shattered on sight.” Iolite told the guard captain. “I’m a renegade, a deserter of the Diamonds because I don’t agree with their destructive philosophy.”

“Yeah.” Lance pitched in. “Iolite risked everything to rescue me from Homeworld.”

The captain regarded the both of them before signalling to his men and women to lower their weapons.

“I’ve heard of Gems deserting Homeworld before, so I will trust your word, for now.” The captain said. “But if I see any Homeworld ships coming here, I will personally shatter you myself.”

“Understood.” Iolite said.

The captain and his guards began to walk away.

“It would be in your best interest to leave this planet as soon as possible.” He said over his shoulder.

Lance and Iolite stood there, very aware of the death glares directed at them, specifically Iolite.

Without a word, Iolite walked off.

“General, we’ve picked up a signal that might be of some interest.” A Galra lieutenant reported.

“Play it.” The Galran general said.

“This is Paladin Lance to the castle of the Lions. My location is Planet Valux of the Plux system in the Drageon belt. Come and find me.” The message played.

“It seems one of the Paladins of Voltron has been separated from his team.” The commander realised.

“Data shows that this is the Paladin from the message.” The lieutenant brought up some pictures of a Paladin in blue armour, one of them without his helmet on. “Additionally, he is a match for the Paladin that escaped Galra command and who Zarkon is very interested in.”

“A fine opportunity presents itself to us.” The commander grinned wickedly. “With the Paladin separated from his team, we can easily capture him and bring him back the emperor for the glory of the Galra. Set course to Valux.”

“Yes sir. Vrepit Sa!”

“Vrepit Sa!”

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
Lance sighed in relief when he finally found Iolite, the Gem had been surprisingly fast and he had easily lost her when the crowd began moving again. She was sat in the stands around what appeared to be an ice-skating rink. He guessed that it made sense Earth wasn’t the only one to come up with the idea of sliding about on ice for fun.

“Are you alright?” Lance asked as he sat next to Iolite.

“Yeah.” Iolite said, though Lance could see her far-away look. “This isn’t the first-time others have reacted to me like that. I’m a Gem, it’s to be expected. At least they didn’t immediately try to shatter me like others.”

“That’s sad.” Lance looked down.

Iolite shrugged. “It may be sad, but it’s true. Gems are created by harvesting the resources of planets, and the Diamond don’t care for any life on those planets, therefore Gems aren’t expected to care for other life either. So, you can’t blame others for reacting as they do. If it weren’t for the Galra, we’d probably be the biggest threat to the universe Voltron was fighting.”

“But the Galra have the Blade of Mamora, and Homeworld has Gems like you. But because you’re from a species with a bad rep’, doesn’t mean you’re like them or be treated like you are.” Lance said.

“But I was until I broke you out.” Iolite pointed out. “I was the reason you ended up on Homeworld in the first place, remember?”

“And I know not following orders would have turned out bad for you.” Lance said. “You weren’t bad, and I bet a lot of other Gems aren’t bad either, you’re just following orders to survive.”

“I guess.” Iolite agreed. “I think it was a Bismuth I overheard that said if we didn’t have the Diamonds, Gems would be at a much better place in the universe. Thing is, we’d be nothing without the Diamonds. They’re our leaders, they keep us in order and we adore them. Even now, I feel lost now that I’ve left my Diamond’s court.”

“Come on, you don’t need her.” Lance encouraged. “It was your Diamond that led to me being taken, but it was your own decisions that led to you helping me escape, you’re better off without her.”

He decided to keep his opinion about the Diamonds being emotionally unstable, insane tyrants to himself for now.

“I guess.” Iolite smiled.
“There you go.” Lance grinned. “And once the others find me, you can come stay at the Castle.” He offered.

“Are you sure?” Iolite frowned. “I think your teammates will object to the one who abducted you tagging along.”

“It’ll be fine, I’ll explain everything to them.” Lance waved off.

“If you say so.” Iolite said. “It’ll be difficult for me to find a planet neutral to Gems that Homeworld won’t find me on anyway. The only one that comes to mind would be Alwas.”

Lance hummed and then looked towards the ice rink, getting an idea.

“Hey, can you ice-skate?” He asked.

“What?” Iolite asked.

“Ice-skating.” Lance said.

He hopped out his seat and walked onto the ice, immediately sliding around and struggling to keep his balance.

He turned around but Iolite wasn’t in her seat anymore, turning around again, he saw her skating backwards.

“You know, it’s easier if you have the right footwear.” She said matter-of-factly.

Looking down, Iolite’s boots now had blades on the bottom, likely a result of her shapeshifting.

“Unfortunately, I can’t do that.” Lance said.

“I’m going to have to coach you on some shapeshifting lessons.” Iolite hummed.

“I know how to skate without blades.” Lance boasted.

“Show me then.” Iolite said.

Looking down at his feet, Lance shifted them, allowing him to go gliding across the ice, struggling to stay upright as the bottom of his shoes slipped on the ice.

“Very graceful.” Iolite joked. “Here.”

Iolite grabbed Lance’s arm and began moving, dragging him behind her. They moved fast over the ice and Lance struggled to keep his footing. Iolite then took a sharp turn and let go of Lance, forcing him to keep sliding across the ice and away from her.

“Woah!” Lance eventually fell onto the ice.

Iolite laughed.

“Very funny.” Lance groaned. “Help me up.”

Still giggling, Iolite skated over to him, holding out her hand, which he grabbed. He then yanked back with all his strength as Iolite attempted to lift him up.

“Woah!” It was Iolite’s turn to fall onto the ice, though her fall was broken by Lance.
“I should have thought that through.” Lance said as he struggled to breath through Iolite’s weight on him.

“Yes, you should have.” Iolite told him.

They looked at each other seriously, before bursting out laughing.

As they laughed, their gems glowed and there was a bright flash of light in the ice rink, when it faded there was only one person laughing.

Their laughter broke off as they noticed something wrong. Well, maybe not wrong per say, but definitely different.

“Lance? Iolite?” They asked, looking around the ice they were alone on. “No, wait. Who am I talking to?” The raised a hand to their mouth. “Whose voice is this?”

They looked down, and then proceeded to freak out.

“Four arms! I have four arms!” They cried.

Said four arms, a darker purple than Iolite’s, turned as they looked each of them over. On one of the arms, a familiar gem, though different in shade, was embedded.

“Iolite?” They asked, looking at the gem.

One of the hands felt along the side of their longer legs and they gasped in shock when they felt something. Looking down, they saw another familiar gem, same colour as the one on their arm, embedded in their leg, no longer covered by their jeans.

“Lance?” They asked.

They shakily climbed to their feet, slipping on the ice until they made it to the edge and off the ice.

“If you’re both here, then who am I?” They asked. “What am I?”

They placed one of their hands to their head.

“A fusion? Is that what I am?”

“No! This can’t be fusion. I don’t feel like me, fusion isn’t like this.” They insisted.

“But what else could I be? I’m not you. I’m so different, I’m something else, I’m a…Charoite?”

“Is that what I am?”

“No! No, no, no. I don’t like this. It’s too different, it’s so confusing.”

They shook their head while gripping it with one pair of hands, the other pair of arms wrapping tightly around themselves. They began to glow, their shape looing form.

“It’s okay. It’s okay.” They reassured themselves, returning to normal. “This is fine. We can do this. I can do this. This is a new experience.”

They stood up straight and looked around.

“Okay…Charoite.” They said. “What now?”
They stepped forward, wobbling as they did.

“Come on, Iolite’s been bigger than this before, you can do this.”

It took a few more seconds, but they were eventually steady on their feet as they walked.

“This is so weird.” Charoite said, looking down at themselves as they walked. “I’ve had four arms before, but they’ve never felt like a part of me like this before, these are my actual limbs. I wonder what I can do?”

They pulled on their clothes, a messy mixture of Lance’s and Iolite’s own clothes, and felt their hair, which was longer than Lance’s but shorter than Iolite’s, with two thin braids coming from the back instead of Iolite’s bigger braid.

They were so busy looking at themselves, that they failed to notice where they were going until they ran right into someone.

“Sorry, my fault.” Charoite apologised.

A blaster was pointed at them.

Looking up, they were shocked to see a Galra to be the one holding the blaster. Instinctively, they moved their arms so that one was hidden behind the other and also covered their leg.

“Sorry, man. All I did was bump into you.” Charoite said.

“If you comply with demands, I won’t shoot you.” The Galra said.

“Okay.” Charoite said, feeling calmer than they would have been otherwise when faced with a Galra.

It turned that they weren’t as intimidating when Charoite towered over them, rather than them towering over Lance or Iolite. They had to resist the urge to crack a grin over the fact that they had to look down in order to face the Galra.

“We are looking for two fugitives from the Galra empire.” The Galra said, showing them a screen. “Have you seen them?”

Charoite’s eyes widened when they saw Lance and Iolite on the screen.

“Uh, yeah.” Charoite said. “I last saw them over that way a few doboshes ago, near the ice rink.”

“Your compliance is acknowledged.” The Galra said, suddenly grinning. “Proceed to the centre of the trading district where everyone else has been gathered!”

“Yes sir.” Charoite said, making a show of heading towards where they were ordered to.

“I’ve found a slighting of the fugitives near my location, send ground troops here immediately!” They heard the Galra order as they left.

Once they were sure they were out of sight, they quickly changed course towards their ship.

“How did they find us?” Charoite asked as they ran. “Did the captain snitch on us?”

They suddenly stopped and hid as droids marched past, and they spotted more further ahead.
“How am I going to sneak past all of them?” Charoite asked themselves.

They gasped as they suddenly saw everything around them, the buildings, all the droids that were patrolling the city, all the way back to the ship and even beyond that. It was like there was a 3D map right inside their head.

“How am I going to sneak past all of them?” Charoite asked, looking at the gem on her arm.

“Never mind. We can get back to the ship without being seen now.”

They wove in and out of the buildings and abandoned stalls, avoiding every drone, droid and Galra in their way, finally making it back to their ship.

Said ship was outside of the mechanic’s garage, looking to have already been prepped to leave.

“Tristis?” Charoite called.

There was no reply.

“I guess he’s already been rounded up.” They said.

They went into their ship, running around to boot up all the systems, which were thankfully coming up as all working perfectly.

“At least he managed to finish everything in time.” Charoite said.

As they were running around, they spotted the device they had been using to try and draw Voltron to them, still active and sending out a clear message of who was sending it and where to find them.

“Of course.” Charoite groaned. “How could we have been so stupid?”

They quickly turned it off, pulling out some of the parts for good measure, before going back to preparing the ship.

It then occurred to them that they were missing someone.

“Loki?” They called.

There was the sound of shuffling, which they followed to Lance’s bedroom, finding the Vanx napping happily on the bed.

“There you are.” They said in relief. “Come on, we need to get strapped in.”

Loki looked at Charoite in curiosity, like he was trying to work something out.

Charoite sighed. “I’m Lance and Iolite, see?” They showed off their Gems.

Loki looked at the Gems before jumping at Charoite, latching onto the fusion.

“Mummy.” Loki purred happily.

“Oh, that’s something to deal with later.” Charoite decided.

Picking up Loki, they ran to the bridge and deposited the Vanx on one of the chairs, strapping him in.

“Be good and behave.” They said.
They went over to the pilot’s chair, only to come across a problem, it was now too small for them so sit on, having not been made for a fusion in mind.

“Oh well, it was fun.” Charoite sighed.

They glowed and separated, leaving Lance and Iolite in their place.

Loki looked at the two of them in confusion.

“Where mummy go?” He asked

The two elected to ignore what he said.

“That was weird.” Lance said.

“I’ve never experienced fusion like that before.” Iolite agreed. “But we can work things out when we’re off this planet.”

“Right.” Lance agreed.

He ran over to the remain seat while Iolite took the pilot’s chair.

“Alright, everything it online and ready.” Iolite said. “Powering up thrusters.”

The ship began to lift off of the ground, angling itself upwards.

“And, launch!”

It shot into the air, cutting quickly through the sky, ready to escape the atmosphere.

“Unknown vessel, this planet is currently on lock down. Land your ship immediately.” A voice came over the communication.

Iolite shut it off.

“Okay, now for the tricky part.” She said.

As soon as the Galra ships watching over the planet realised that they weren’t complying, they opened fire.

“Lance, this ship has weapons, use them!” Iolite ordered as she steered the ship to avoid the laser fire.

Lance tapped at the screen in front of him and controls popped out of the panel, the screen displaying the outside of the ship with markers identifying the ships shooting at them.

“Alright.” Lance grinned.

On the outside of their ship, gun turrets popped out and began firing on the Galra ships.

“Yeah.” Lance cheered when he landed a hit.

“More are joining the party.” Iolite frowned. “I’m heading towards an asteroid field, hopefully we can lose them in there.”

“Isn’t that very dangerous?” Lance asked in concern. “We could get hit ourselves.”
“Lance, have a little more faith in my piloting skills. I see everything, remember?” Iolite assured him.

Lance nodded, remembering what it was like as Charoite.

Iolite flew the ship towards a field of asteroids that were very large and very close together, constantly clashing as a result. Without hesitation, the ship flew into the field, between the gaps in the rocks, the Galra ships following.

With some careful aiming from Lance, a few of their pursuers ended up crashing into the asteroids or being crushed between them, but more still came and fired at them, which was harder for Iolite to dodge without sending their ship into one of the space rocks.

“We need to do something, they’re not giving up and we’re going to crash at this rate.” Iolite groaned.

Lance analysed the area on his screen.

“I have an idea.” He said.

If Iolite was more familiar with Lance, she would have felt dread at his words, but instead she listened.

“Fly the ship to this point and let the Galra fighters get close, I’ll take care of their weapons. Alright?” Lance informed Iolite, sending the image on his screen over to her own screen.

“I have no idea how this will work out, but it’s the best idea we have right now.” Iolite said, following Lance’s instructions.

Iolite slowed the ship slightly, allowing the fighters to get in closer, Lance’s precise aiming taking out their weapons before they could use the proximity to fire on their ship.

“The asteroids are closing in on each other.” Iolite warned.

“Keep going.” Lance instructed.

Iolite looked at him with wide eyes but bit her lip and kept the ship going.

The Galra fighters closed in as they neared the asteroids that were about to collide.

“Wait for it.” Lance said.

Closer and closer, without their weapons the ships clearly intended to kamikaze themselves to take down their ship, as they weren’t pulling away.

“Speed up! Now!” Lance shouted.

Iolite turned up the power to the boosters, causing the ship to speed forward as Lance switched his aim to directly at one of the pursuing ships and fired.

There was a huge explosion as the Galra fighters collided with the two asteroids as they smashed together, breaking the asteroids into smaller chunks and sending them flying. The explosion was quickly taken by the vacuum of space, leaving a lot of metal debris behind. No sign of Iolite and Lance’s ship.

“Whoever was on that ship will have been crushed by those asteroids.” One of the Galra had been waiting outside of the asteroid field reported. “Scour the wreckage for any identification of the
escapees.” The instructed the droids.

Unnoticed by the Galra, a ship clung to one of the pieces of asteroid as it was flung out into space away from the field of space rocks.

“Woohoo!” Lance cheered. “It worked!”

“We’re actually alive.” Iolite laughed. “And I don’t think they’ve noticed.”

“Yeah, pulled one over on the Galra. I come up with the best plans.” Lance boasted.

The two of them laughed until the adrenaline faded away, leaving them in silence.

“So,” Iolite eventually broke the silence. “We fused.”

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
You would not believe how long I’ve waited to introduce Charoite, and they’re finally here.
In the context of the story, Iolite has fused before but only with another Iolite as per the rules of Homeworld, which is why Charoite freaks out so much to begin with. And despite using ‘they’ pronouns since they’re a combination of a male and female-coded Gem, I plan for Charoite to be gender-fluid, so don’t be surprised if they’re pronouns suddenly change when they next appear.
I don’t have what Charoite looks like for definite, other than their clothes being a mix of Lance and Iolite’s, their hair-length being between Lance’s and Iolite’s with the two long braids, the four arms, and that they’re very tall as they’re height would be Lance and Iolite’s combined and Iolite is about the same height as Allura. So, if anyone wants to draw them, I’d love to see their interpretation.
Also, Lance and Iolite’s pet was conceived before Keith got his space wolf, just so you know.
Chapter Summary

Lance and Iolite land on a new planet to claim as home while waiting for team Voltron to find them, deciding to find an activity to get involved with while they wait, though it's Charoite who actually does it.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

“Acceptance granted, you are clear to land.” The voice over the communication said.

“Understood, thank you.” Iolite responded.

She then used the ship’s controls to begin lowering it towards the planet surface.

“So, what’s planet Alwas again?” Lance asked as they descended.

“It’s a pretty neutral planet to everything.” Iolite responded. “It’s a bit out the way and not really big on resources, so neither Homeworld or the Empire have bothered with it. As such, the locals won’t be as hostile to us as Valux.”

“So, you won’t have to hide?” Lance asked for clarification.

“No.” Iolite answered.

“That’s good.” Lance sighed in relief. “Seeing you walk around as a reptile constantly was weird.”

“I’m just glad I don’t have to strain myself.” Iolite said. “I may be better at shapeshifting than most Gems, but even I can only stretch myself so far.”

“Is it really that bad?” Lance asked.

“Have you ever shapeshifted before?” Iolite asked in return.

Lance shrugged. “I’ve tried, but I’ve never really managed to do much more than small changes.”

“It gets harder the further you are from a familiar shape, and it’s more about mental fortitude than physical and what you are comfortable with. I usually go with Iona because it’s a familiar form I’m used to, allowing me to hold that shape for longer.”

“Do you think you could teach me to shapeshift more easily?” Lance asked, suddenly eager.

“We could do that while we’re waiting for your team here.” Iolite agreed.

“Won’t we bring the Galra to us again if we send out another message?” Lance frowned.

“We were stupid last time.” Iolite admitted. “We sent out a message completely unfiltered for anyone to find, proudly proclaiming who you were and where to find you. We should have expected the Galra to answer.”
“So, we just need to send out a coded message they’ll ignore this time.” Lance said in realisation.

Iolite nodded. “The problem is, now that they know you’re separated from Voltron, the Galra are going to be combing through every signal they come across. So, it’s going to be difficult to send a message that they’ll ignore.” She said.

Lance hummed and put a hand to his chin in thought.

“I’m blanking.” He eventually admitted. “But I’m sure we can think of something.”

There was a soft thump as Iolite landed their ship.

“May as well get out and walk around then.” Iolite said.

The two of them exited the ship, Loki the Vanx following them out and deciding to go for a wander.

“I’m sure he’ll be back.” Lance said to himself as Iolite paid for the spot their ship was parked in as if they were at a campsite.

Iolite and Lance then moved towards the city they landed at the outskirts of, passing other aliens as they went. There were a few different types of aliens in the town, but the main type who actually lived on the planet were bipedal squid-like aliens.

“So, is there anything to do here while we’re waiting for my team? After we work out how to send them a private message.” Lance asked.

Iolite shrugged. “I haven’t been here in a long time.” She admitted. “The last time I was here the planet was pretty basic and had only just cracked space travel.”

“It still looks pretty basic to me.” Lance mumbled to himself, looking around the city.

They passed a mini-market, the squid-like vendors selling different types of food, all equally unappealing to Lance.

“Good thing we already stocked up on food for a while.” Lance mumbled to himself as he avoided what looked like an ugly fish being thrust into his face by a vendor.

They continued exploring until they reached another edge of the city, full of large fields, towering columns, tunnels and valleys, large rings, etc.

“What’s all this stuff for?” Lance asked aloud.

“Star Racing, of course!”

Lance cried out and leapt to the side at the sudden, enthusiastic voice.

He and Iolite then turned and looked down to see one of the squid-aliens standing behind them.

“Star Racing?” Lance asked, holding his hand over his chest to steady his heartbeat.

“You don’t know about Star Racing?” The alien exclaimed as if Lance had offended him. “It’s only the most honourable sport and the life blood of Alwas!”

“Oh yeah,” Iolite said, remembering something about the planet. “Alwas has that annual Star Racing tournament, doesn’t it?”
“That’s right.” The alien said proudly. “From all over the galaxy, Star Racers come to our planet to compete against each other for the title of Star Racer champion.”

“Sounds fun.” Lance said. “Is it happening any time soon?”

“Not the galaxy wide tournament, no.” The alien told them. “But there are still plenty of local races for you to enjoy, each sector has its own racing team that compete against each other, and the eventual winner becomes Alwas’ representative in the galaxy wide tournament.”

“When’s the next local race then?” Iolite asked, as eager as Lance for entertainment.

They were surprised when the alien slumped. “I don’t know, the local team doesn’t have a pilot anymore and no one’s willing to fill in the position.” He said.

He then walked away, looking very sad.

“Weird.” Lance and Iolite said.

“I wonder if there’s anywhere that allows you to do your own Star Racing.” Lance said as he looked out at the huge race track. “It sounds like it’d be something fun to pass the time with.”

“Let’s go find out.” Iolite suggested.

They didn’t have to search for long as they came across a poster with ship-like vehicle emblazoned on the front that Lance guess was a Star Racer.

“Come and audition for the opportunity of a lifetime.” Iolite read the poster for Lance, who couldn’t understand the writing. “Open for only a short time, the position of a Star Racer pilot.”

Lance grinned. “Sounds like exactly like we were looking for.” He said.

“I think it’s a professional thing though.” Iolite pointed out. “Have you ever even flown a Star Racer?”

“No, but I pilot a Lion. How different can they be?” He said jokingly, fully aware that they’d be different.

“Well, one of us is going to have to bow out either way.” Iolite noted. “There’s only one spot.”

Lance frowned. “I really want to try this.” He said.

“I do too.” Iolite said, folding her arms.

They stared at each other.

“Well, there auditions.” Iolite said with a shrug. “So, we’d both get a shot at proving who’s best.” She then slumped. “But I don’t like that one of us wouldn’t be able to fly while we’re waiting for your friends.”

“Well, there doesn’t have to be two of us.” Lance brought up.

Iolite looked at him unsurely.

“I guess if you’re comfortable with it.” She agreed.
Syd was slumped over his desk, mulling over his problems.

He had no racer, and no racer meant his district would soon be disqualified from Alwas’ race for who would represent the planet in the galaxy-wide Star Race until the next time, meaning he was going to miss out on the glory of being the racing manager of Alwas’ racing champion and become even more of a laughing stock than he already was.

He’d opened up the position of Star Racing pilot to anyone who wanted to apply at this point, but still no one came through that door, all you afraid of their wrath.

Syd was kicked out of his self-pity by the door opening and a rather tall alien entering, having to stoop low to enter the door.

“I never imagined being so big would become an issue.” She muttered to herself.

“Can I help you?” Syd asked.

“I’m here to audition to be a Star Racer pilot.” The woman grinned.

Hope flared inside Syd as he sized her up, he barely managed to appear professional before this woman.

“Do you have experience in piloting a Star Racer?” He asked, though he didn’t care if she did, he had to appear professional.

The woman contemplated her answer. “I guess you could say I do.” She answered.

“And how good is your accuracy?” Syd asked.

“Good doesn’t begin to describe me.” The woman bragged. “I’m not a sharpshooter for nothing.”

She held up her top two arms as if she was holding a gun.

“Good enough for me!” Syd thought. “Then welcome to the team.” He said aloud. “Sign this and I’ll show you what you’ll be flying with us.”

Syd handed her a tablet.

The woman grinned, quickly skimming through the terms listed in the contract before signing.

“Wait.” Her grin suddenly dropped as something occurred to her as she was signing her name. “Why would you sign me up without even seeing if I can actually fly?” She regarded Syd suspiciously. “What aren’t you telling me about this?”

“Honestly, you’re the first person to come in here looking to be our pilot, everyone else has been scared off, a rival team has been threatening the safety of any pilot who comes under my employ. I signed you up because if I don’t have a pilot, my team would be disqualified from racing.” Syd informed her offhandedly.

“And you didn’t think I would have liked to know this when I came in?” The woman frowned.

“If I told you, you would have been scared off, and I really need a pilot. Besides, you’ve already signed the contract, you have no choice but to be my pilot for the next few races.” Syd grinned, taking the tablet out of the woman’s slack hands. “Ms Charoite.” He added politely after reading her signature.
Charoite scowled.

“I’ll show you to your racer now, then.” Syd said.

Charoite reluctantly followed him into the garage where the racer was being kept.

“Look alive, we finally have our pilot!” Syd called out to the mechanics.

Two squids hopped up from where they were lying about to greet them.

“We do?” One of them asked.

Charoite waved.

The other one hummed. “You’re big, we’ll have to completely rework the cockpit to fit you.

“Maybe they’ll be big enough for Cyne’s gang not to try anything against her.” The first mechanic said hopefully.

“Why is this guy threatening any would-be pilots anyway?” Charoite asked.

“Our region was the one who represented Alwas in the last Star Racing tournament.” Syd said proudly. “We had the best ship.” He waved his tentacle arm over to where the Star Racer was being held up by wires. “The best mechanics.” He waved over to his crew. “And the best pilot and gunner on the planet. Cyne’s crew didn’t take kindly to us representing the planet instead of him, claimed we cheated and all that, and they started sabotaging us, they even hired muscle to put anyone off from taking the pilot and gunner positions after our previous ones left for different reasons.”

“Isn’t there some sort of authority you can call on them?” Charoite asked.

“We could, but we don’t have any proof.” One of the mechanics sighed. “We all know it’s him who hired those thugs, but we can’t do anything without proof, and no one wants to take in said thugs for questioning, everyone’s too afraid of them.”

“All over you guys winning a race? How petty.” Charoite commented.

Syd shrugged. “Well, we have our pilot now, and that’s what matters.” He said. “We don’t have a gunner, but those aren’t necessarily needed to qualify to race, so we’ll make do with what we have.”

“I can be the gunner too.” Charoite volunteered.

“You can?” The squids asked her.

“Yeah, I have four arms and don’t need my eyes to see, I can do both at once.” Charoite said confidently.

The mechanics looked at each other and then up at the racer.

“It’ll take some work to reroute control of the turrets to the main cockpit.” Mechanic one said.

“But we’ll be redoing the cockpit to make room for her anyway.” Mechanic two pointed out. “And if we remove the gunner’s cockpit, it’ll give us more room to add those upgrades we’ve been wanting to.”

“Good, you boys get to work then.” Syd ordered. “As for you.” He turned to Charoite. “We’ll need to get you measured for a racing suit, and then we’ll need to book a photoshoot to advertise you as
our new racer.”

“You are speaking my language.” Charoite smiled.

Charoite stretched as she walked away from the racing building vargas later, she then glowed and split into Lance and Iolite.

“That was exhausting.” Iolite commented.

“That was just getting measured and sorting out the details, we’ve still got the photoshoot and actual racing to do.” Lance told her.

“I meant the fusion.” Iolite told him. “It wasn’t like shapeshifting, I didn’t feel like it was a strain to hold the fusion. But it’s still weird that Charoite is a completely different mind to either of us, yet we still make up her mind.”

“I know what you mean.” Lance agreed. “There were times when it was just Charoite, but then there were times that I was more aware of us as separate entities than one mind, it felt that we could easily fall apart during those times.”

“Well, hopefully it’ll get easier the more we fuse.” Iolite said.

“It’ll have to get easier if Charoite’s going to continue racing.” Lance said.

“You know, it occurs to me that we didn’t need to fuse for this. I could have been the pilot and you could have been the gunner if they had just advertised the gunner position too.” Iolite commented.

Lance shrugged. “Too late now.” He said. “Besides, I’d like to see if we can actually fly and shoot as Charoite.”

The two reached their ship where Loki was sunbathing outside.

“At least he didn’t run off.” Iolite said, rubbing the Vanx’s head.

Iolite opened the ship and they headed inside where Lance went to the kitchen to fix himself some food.

“Any ideas on how we’ll send a signal to your team yet?” Iolite asked.

Lance shook his head. “Unless you’re a master of encryption so good that the Galra can’t crack it but my friend Pidge can, I’ve got nothing.” He said.

“Me either.” Iolite sighed.

Personally, Alwas didn’t seem like a bad little planet to hunker down on for a while for Iolite, at least until she found out where the other renegade Gems that managed to escape Homeworld gathered, but she knew that it was important that Lance get back to his team.

“Maybe we’ll be able to come up with something tomorrow.” Lance said.

The next day, Charoite walked into the racing building to meet with Syd and his team. She, still a ‘she’ this time but gender was very confusing and up for change as a fusion, was very eager to see if they had the racer ready to go and couldn’t wait to get inside the cockpit.
“Hey guys.” Charoite greeted the mechanics as she entered the garage. “Your racer held hostage by contract is here.”

She wasn’t going to let that go, even if she would have probably signed on regardless.

“Hello, Ms Charoite.” One of the mechanics greeted.

“Drop the ‘Ms’.” Charoite told him. “It makes me sound old.”

Though one of her parts was thousands of years old, she herself was technically only a few vargas old if you added up how long she spent in existence when Lance and Iolite were fused.

“Well, we’re almost done.” The other mechanic said. “We just need to get this up to the turrets.”

He tapped his spanner against a piece of machinery.

“Need help?” Charoite asked.

“Not unless you can lift something this heavy.” The mechanic joked.

Charoite raised an eyebrow before bending over and lifting the heavy machinery into her arms, grinning at the mechanics’ gobsmacked expressions.

“So, where did you want this again?” She asked cheekily.

“Up there.” Mechanic one said, pointing up at the racer where the insides were showing after snapping out of his shock.

Charoite effortlessly hoisted the machine above her head and inserted it into the open gap in the racer.

“I don’t think we’ll have to worry about the thugs scaring her off.” Mechanic two said to his friend.

He nodded in agreement.

“Hey, you can’t come in here!” They all heard the far-off voice of Syd.

Peaking out of the garage, they spotted Syd running after some rather large aliens dressed head to toe in thick armour, heading their way.

“We’ve told you, we don’t want any more racing around here.” One of the suits of armour grunted.

“Yeah, it disturbs our peace.” Another grunted.

“So, who’s dumb enough to go against us?” A third called out to those in the garage, punching his fist threateningly.

“Are these the guys giving you problems?” Charoite asked the mechanics.

They nodded.

“Well then, time to bid them welcome.” Charoite said.

“Come on, where’s your new racer?” A suit of armour said impatiently. “We just want to ‘tell’ them how things run around here.”

Charoite stepped out of the garage and walked towards the aliens.
“The new racer would be me.” She said confidently.

The aliens stepped back slightly, they obviously had been expecting another squid or alien of similar size, not an alien who was bigger than them. But they quickly gathered up their confidence to become threatening again.

“Well, if you have any brain cells, you’re going to quit this little racing job right now.” The leader of the suits of armour threatened.

“Or what?” Charoite asked, unperturbed.

“Or, we’ll break all of your bones until you do.”

Charoite hummed, pretending to think about the threat.

“Do I even have bones, or am I still comprised completely of light?” A stray thought entered her mind, which she quickly dismissed to think about another time.

“I’m going to have to say no.” Charoite told the leader. “I don’t think I will quit.”

“I guess you’re not that smart then.” The leader said. “But don’t worry, we’ll beat some sense into you.”

Syd and the mechanics quickly took cover as the thugs surrounded Charoite.

“I hate to break it to you boys.” Charoite said calmly as she held up one of her arms, summoning Iolite’s bladed gauntlet. “But I’m not going to be that easy to take down.” She placed another of her hands at her leg and a fancy arrow ripped through her jeans, exposing the gem it was summoned from beneath.

Charoite took the arrow and placed it over top her bladed gauntlet, combining the two weapons into one.

“Well then.” She said. “Let’s dance.”

They came at her, but Charoite jumped out of the way of their attacks, firing arrow heads out of her new gauntlet as she got behind them, they turned to attack her again but she managed to dodge again. She tried to fire at them once more, only to have to dodge as too many came at her at once.

“Looks like I need more fire power.” Charoite said.

She withdrew the Red Bayard from inside her jacket and held it in the opposite hand to her Gem weapon, it then changed shape into another arrow-launching gauntlet to match.

Charoite flipped backwards to give herself more space, firing with both gauntlets while upside down, hitting a few of the thugs in the weak spots in their armour, causing them to grunt and kneel over.

As they were recovering, Charoite spotted the lake that was part of the racing track nearby.

“I wonder.” She said to herself.

Holding out her hand, a large tendril was summoned from the lake, freezing the thugs in their tracks as they were about to attack. Grinning, Charoite launched the tendril at them.

The thugs were knocked off of their feet as the water smashed into them but didn’t do much else.
“Is that all you can do?” The leader spluttered as he tried to rise to his feet.

“No.” Charoite said simply.

She raised her hands again and the water left on the ground rose, sharpening into spikes that pointed at the thugs, piercing through the armour of some of them but not hurting any of them yet.

“Leave!” Charoite commanded.

Saying nothing, the thugs quickly ran off, the spikes following them until Charoite deemed them far enough away.

With the alien thugs gone, Charoite bent down to expect her work.

“These are strange.” She commented to herself, touching one of the spikes.

She had been aiming for ice, compacting the molecules inside the water to turn it solid, but these spikes weren’t made of ice or even cold to the touch.

“That was amazing!” She was broken out of her thoughts by Syd.

“You kicked their metal-plated asses like it was nothing!” Mechanic two joined in on the excitement.

“How’d you even do this?” Mechanic one asked, looking at the spikes.

“Honestly, I don’t even know.” Charoite answered.

“Well, thanks to you, are troubles are over.” Syd proclaimed happily. “We’re back on our way to the big leagues!”

“No matter how many times I’ve practiced with water, I’ve never been able to do that.” Lance said as he and Iolite headed back to their ship for lunch.

The morning had been spent clearing up the solid water spikes instead of any racing, as despite summoning the spikes, Charoite had been unable to turn them back into normal water.

“Maybe they’re something only Charoite can do.” Iolite theorised. “My gem paired with yours unlocking new possibilities. I mean, I don’t think I’ve heard of a Lapis Lazuli doing that before, they always have to keep control of the water to keep it solid.”

“No Lapis Lazuli has done that.” Lance contemplated. “I guess that I’ve finally achieved something mum wasn’t able to. I wonder if there’s anything else we can do as Charoite.”

Iolite shrugged. “We’ll just have to practice some time and see.”

She then noticed that Lance had stopped walking.

“What?” She asked.

Lance was looking into a shop window where musical instruments were displayed, one looking remarkably like a guitar.

“We can get something if you want.” Iolite told him when she saw what he was looking at. “I know how to play my fair share of instruments. What about you?”
“A few things like a guitar and flute.” Lance shrugged.

His eyes then widened as he was struck with an idea.

“I know how we can send a message to my teammates!” He exclaimed. “Come on.”

Lance grabbed Iolite arm and dragged her into the shop to buy what they needed.

They exited the shop a while later, carrying instruments resembling a guitar, flute and a drum, along with music paper. Once back at the ship, they set up in the common room-like area and began testing how well they could play their new instruments.

“So how is playing this song meant to tell your teammates where we are?” Iolite asked as she tuned the guitar.

“This song is something Pidge and Hunk should be very familiar with, since I played it all the time back on Earth, so they should recognise it as coming from me.” Lance explained. “I only wish I had the actual song with me, but I left the recordings from my mum back on the Castle of the Lions. Anyway, the song is just to grab their attention without alerting the Galra, the message will be in Morse Code. Anyone else will think that the message is just part of the song, but Hunk and Pidge should be familiar enough with the song to realise what’s off, recognise it as Morse Code, decode it and find us here.” Lance finished with a proud grin.

Iolite nodded in approval.

“I must admit.” She said. “That is very smart and not something I would have come up with.”

Lance continued to grin.

“So, how do you do Morse Code?” Iolite asked.

“It’s a series of dots and dashing, or in this case, short and long notes, with a different order meaning a different letter or number.” Lance told her, picking up the music sheet and a pencil. “It’s been a while since I’ve used it though, so it may take a bit to remember what I need to write. What’s our cosmic address again?”

Iolite listed off where Alwas was in the universe as well as the exact region of the planet they were on and Lance transcribed it into Morse Code music notes. He then picked up another music sheet.

“Now I just need to remember how to play the song, so you can play too.” Lance said.

He already knew how to the play the song without any music sheets, but Iolite didn’t, and teaching her how to read Earth music would be easier than trying to teach her the song from nothing.

“Here you go.” Lance handed over the music sheets when he finished.

Iolite took the sheets and read the music as Lance quickly taught her how to ready the music and what notes corresponded to the chords of the guitar. He also taught her the lyrics to the song as she would be the one singing, it would have been better for him to sing but his voice would be too recognisable to the Galra if they heard the song.

“Alright.” Lance sighed when all the preparations were complete. “Are you ready?”

“Yes.” Iolite said. “Let’s play your message.”

They pressed record and Iolite strummed the guitar, Lance brought the flute-like instrument to his
lips, ready for when his part would come in, Loki sat nearby with the drum, ready to add the Morse Code that had been taught to him at Lance’s signal (Lance had to admit, the Vanx had his uses and was smarter than given credit).

“–Hush now, mo stóirín
Close your eyes and sleep
Waltzing the waves
Diving in the deep
Stars are shining bright
The wind is on the rise
Whispering words of long lost lullabies
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the moon is made of gold
And in the morning sun
We’ll be sailing
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the ocean meets the sky
And as the clouds roll by
We’ll sing the song of the sea
I had a dream last night
And heard the sweetest sound
I saw a great white light
And dancers in the round
Castles in the sand
Cradles in the trees
Don’t cry
I’ll see you by and by
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the moon is made of gold
And in the morning sun
We’ll be sailing
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the ocean meets the sky
And as the clouds roll by
We'll sing the song of the sea
Rolling, Rolling
Rolling, Rolling
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the moon is made of gold
And in the morning sun
We'll be sailing free
Oh, won’t you come with me
Where the ocean meets the sky
And as the clouds roll by
We'll sing the song of the sea
Grá go deo~”

Lance pressed stop on the recording and then messed with the device, sending their song out into space.

“Now all we can do is hope they pick it up soon.” He said.

“Speaking of soon.” Iolite said, looking at the time on her gauntlet. “We’re late to get back to racing.”

“Quiznak!” Lance shouted as he shot up in his chair.

“Don’t repeat that!” Iolite shouted at Loki as she joined Lance in his rush to leave.

Soon, Loki was left alone on board the ship.

“Quiznak.” The Vanx said to the silence.

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
The concept of Star Racing and planet Alwas come from a cartoon that I highly recommend to any fan of Voltron called Oban Star Racers, though I’ve tweaked it a bit for my story.
For anyone confused about Charoite’s height in reference to everyone else, I’d but them
at about the height of Rainbow Quartz, they’re only meant to be a head or two taller than a Galra, not literally towering over the Galra like I made it seem, Charoite was embellishing how tall they were like Lance would.

It seems that we’re finally nearing the end of Ocean Blue. Not that I haven’t enjoyed writing this story, but it is a relief when I can put a proper end on one of my stories rather than letting it go on until creativity is exhausted and it falls into permanent hiatus.
The Voltron team and Blue Valkyries continue their search for Lance, following his signal to Alwas.

It was calm on the castle, everyone was going about their daily tasks. Hunk was with Carnelian and Citrine in the kitchen, Howlite was training with Shiro and Keith in the training room, Pearl was catching up with Allura and Coran, Peridot was working on the Queen Cosmos to update its systems with the castle’s, while Pidge continued to comb through every signal the castle received to find Lance.

“I’ve found him!” A sudden should cut through that calm.

The news quickly spread and soon everyone was gathered on the bridge.

“I found him!” Pidge repeated excitedly. “I found Lance!”

“Really?” Hunk asked hopefully.

Pidge nodded. “He sent us a message.” She said.

Everyone gathered around as Pidge played the message.

Lance’s face popped up on the screen, filling everyone with relief at the sight of their teammate.

“This is Paladin Lance to the Castle of the Lions, my location is…” Lance paused his message and looked at something off screen, there was the sound of someone else talking before Lance looked back at the camera. “Yeah. Planet Valux of the Plux system in the Drageon belt. Come and get me.”

The message ended.

Coran was already searching through the castle’s star charts and data banks for the coordinates of the planet Lance had told them he was on.

Everyone was visibly excited about hearing from Lance.

Shiro, however frowned.

“Is this how you got the message?” He asked Pidge.

“Yeah. My program picked up the word ‘Voltron’ and alerted me to it, I just picked it out of the ‘save’ file the program sends potential clues on Lance to.” Pidge answered.

“I mean, did you have to do any decoding to get the video?” Shiro elaborated.

Pidge shook her head. “The video was received just as we saw it. It actually reminds me how Earth
sends out messages into space.”

“Meaning anyone else who would care to listen would also get Lance’s message.” Shiro concluded.

Allura was the first to get what Shiro was hinting at, though the others weren’t far behind in their realisations.

“Meaning the Galra could pick up on Lance’s message and find him.” She gasped in horror.

They all shared worried looks.

“Coran?” Allura turned to her advisor.

“Coordinates are already programmed in.” Coran reported.

“Then let’s wormhole there immediately. If we’re lucky, we’ll get there before any Galra.” Allura said, running to the ship’s controls.

But the Voltron team knew their history with luck, and though they were hopeful, they knew what was likely the reality.

The Voltron team’s brand of luck held true, when they arrived on Valux the Galra were already there, imposing terror. Thankfully, it was only a single cruiser, which they were able to take down despite being down a lion due to there being no Lance to pilot Red and thus unable to form Voltron.

“I don’t think they found Lance, the cruiser wouldn’t have stuck around if they didn’t have him.” Pidge theorised.

“Meaning Lance either got off the planet without them noticing, or he’s in hiding.” Shiro said.

“Then let’s get down there and find him.” Keith said impatiently.

They landed their Lions in an opening between the buildings and many stalls that lined the streets, the Blue Valkyries opting to stay on the castle ship, where they were quickly greeted by the leaders of the planet.

“Thank you for defending our planet.” One of the leaders of the planet said. “The Galra usually leave us alone as we’re just a trading planet, they invaded unexpectedly and rounded up every trader, buyer and citizen.”

“We are sorry for the trouble they caused.” Allura stepped forward. “We believe that they were searching for one of our teammates who has become separated from us. He had sent out a destress signal originating from this planet.”

“Perhaps we can help you find your teammate in payment for your help, if he’s still on the planet, that is.” Another of the leaders offered.

“Your help would be much welcomed.” Allura smiled.

Pidge quickly produces an image of Lance for the leaders to look at.

“Here’s what he looks like.” Pidge said. “Recognise him?”

The leaders regarded the image, but all shook their heads.
“We’re not the best to ask this directly, we don’t meet with the people who come here unless its for special occasions.” One of them said. “You’ll have better luck talking with the guards who patrol each district, they’re the ones who keep an eye on each new arrival.”

“We’ll take a copy of the image and send it to each guard station for them to look at.” Another leader said.

“Thank you for your help.” Allura said as Pidge gave them a copy of her image of Lance.

It doesn’t take long to get a response back, the message arriving during Allura working out their alliance with the trading planet. So, while Allura, Coran and Shiro stay behind to continue alliance arrangements, the rest of the Paladins leave to meet with those who claim to have seen Lance.

“Paladins of Voltron, thank you for defending our planet.” The captain of the guard greets as they arrive in the district.

“It’s fine, it’s what we do.” Hunk says.

“We heard that you’ve seen our teammate.” Keith keeps them on track.

“Yeah, we saw him.” The captain said. “He arrived a few quintants ago with a Gem who was disguised.” The guard said with disgust in his voice. “It should have been obvious since they arrived in a Gem ship, but their ruse was discovered not that long ago but we didn’t shatter the Gem since she was apparently a defector, though I told her she should leave the planet. Only a couple of vargas later, the Galra arrived.”

“A Gem was with him?” Pidge questioned. “What type?”

“I don’t bother to learn Gem types, but she was purple and not that much shorter than your friend.” The guard captain answered.

Pidge hummed before going through her collection of images, bringing up one from the projector in her gauntlet.

“Is this her?” Pidge asked, showing a picture of Lance and Iolite taken from the Dawning Star station’s security feed.

The captain nodded. “Yeah, that was her.”

Pidge, Keith and Hunk looked at each other, all wondering the same thing. Why would the Gem who kidnapped Lance be with him after escaping Homeworld.

“So, did they leave the planet before the Galra attacked?” Pidge asked.

The captain shrugged.

“The last time I saw them was when the Gem got revealed.” He said. “Though, I remember seeing a ship take off after the Galra invaded, the ship being chased by fighters, I don’t know if it was their ship, though.”

“Thanks for your help.” Pidge said.

“So, what have you got?” Shiro asked as they all met up on the castle ship.

“I don’t think Lance is on the planet anymore, a ship left the planet while the Galra were invading
and Lance is apparently traveling with a Gem, who aren’t welcome on the planet and was told to leave.” Pidge reported.

“Any idea where he was heading?”

Pidge shook her head.

“The Galra were chasing after the ship that left, though.” Keith remembered from what they were told.

“We’ll need to intercept every Galra transmission that we can to see if they captured the ship Lance was on then.” Allura said.

“If Lance managed to get away, he’ll start sending out a signal again.” Hunk said.

“Meaning the Galra will find him.” Keith pointed out.

Hunk shoot his head. “Lance may not think things through sometimes, but he learns from mistakes.” He said. “He’ll have realised his last message is what brought the Galra to him and send out a message that would slip past the Galra the next time.”

“Back to square one.” Howlite sighed.

She then spotted the looks on Hunk and Pidge’s faces.

“We’ll find him.” The Gem assured them. “You know Lance, he’s stronger than some Galra fighters.”

A week later, Pidge sat at her laptop in one of the spare hangers where the Queen Cosmos was being kept, the other Paladins and Blue Valkries working on said ship or just lying about the hanger rather than doing anything else, Pidge’s laptop playing the various messages her program had picked up.

“What if we find Lance, and he doesn’t even remember us.” Hunk was letting his imagination run wild as he worked on the Queen Cosmos’ engines. “I mean, anything could have been done to him on Homeworld before he busted out.”

“I don’t think that would have happened, Hunk.” Shiro said.

“But how do we know? He’s apparently traveling around with the same Gem that kidnapped him. What if he didn’t actually escape and they’re on some sort of secret mission?” Hunk continued.

“I doubt that.” Pearl spoke up. “Even if the Diamonds hadn’t wanted to kill him, they wouldn’t have willingly sent him out so soon, or let him send out a distress signal. The Gem who kidnapped Lance likely bonded with him and then ran off with him when she realised exactly what the Diamonds had planned for something that doesn’t fit the Gem mould.”

“Though, I find it weird that it was an Iolite with Lance.” Peridot said, looking up from her programming on the ship’s computers. “They’re meant to be experts at not bonding with others, considering their role.”

“That just means that when they do bond, they have a hard time sticking to that role.” Howlite said. “Iolites tend to defect or get shattered when they start being empathetic towards the species of the planet they’re scoping out, or ran away from the Galra with in this case.”

Music then began playing, which the Gems as well as Hunk and Pidge recognised.
“This was one of Lazuli’s favourite songs from Earth.” Pearl smiled. “I remember her recording it for Lance so that he could hear her sing to him when she was gone.”

“Lance listened to those recordings all the time.” Hunk said. “Especially when he got homesick at the Garrison. I swear those songs have been engraved into my brain with how often he played them when going to sleep and forgot his headphones.”

“He played them for me when he deemed I’d stayed up for too long searching for Matt and dad.” Pidge smiled slightly. “They did help.”

“I’m glad Lazuli could help you.” Pearl said.

“I hope Lance is doing okay without them, he left his recording of songs here when he got taken.” Hunk said.

Hunk took out the recorder that he kept in his pocket, so he could give it to Lance as soon as they found him (and also because listening to those songs helped to calm him as their time without Lance grew longer).

Howlite frowned when she saw the recorder.

“It’s not playing?” She questioned, seeing no light to indicate the device was active.

Hunk held it up to his ear and looked at the power switch. “Uh, no.” He said.

“Come to think of it, the person singing sounds different too.” Pidge said.

She turned back to her laptop and realised the song was coming from one of the signals her program had picked up.

“Is it from Lance?” Pearl asked as everyone gathered around Pidge.

“It has to be, that song is from Earth, it wouldn’t be all the way out here without someone else from Earth sending it.” Pidge said.

“Where’s it coming from?” Keith asked.

“I don’t know.” Pidge said in frustration. “The signal’s too weak to trace. I could work out the origin from what direction the signal is traveling, but that would take a long time.”

“Why would Lance send us a signal with no solid way to track him?” Citrine questioned.

“Wait.” Hunk said, holding up his hand to silence everyone. “Listen.”

They were all quiet as the song played again.

“I don’t get it.” Keith said eventually.

“There’s something wrong with the song.” Hunk said.

They listened again.

“The tune isn’t right.” Pearl realised after listening.

“Like something’s been added.” Hunk nodded.
Hunk tapped his finger, finding the rhythm of the out of place tune.

“I think it’s Morse Code!” Pidge exclaimed after listening to the out of place tune and Hunk’s tapping.

Pidge quickly isolated each tune within the song and then ran them through a decoding program, specifically selecting Morse Code. The guitar and flute sounding instruments came up as complete nonsense, but the drum turned into a message.

‘This is Lance to Voltron, my location is…’ The message read, giving coordinates.

“Well then, what are we waiting for.” Shiro said. “Let’s go get Lance.”

Pidge quickly ran off to find Allura and Coran to give them the new coordinates, it didn’t take long for the ship to wormhole after that.

“This is a good place to hide on.” Howlite said as everyone stepped out of the castle ship. “Alwas is out of the way and doesn’t have many resources, meaning the Galra and Gems aren’t likely to be around here. And it’s not hostile to Gems either, so his companion can walk around without issue too.”

“The signal is still going, meaning Lance will hopefully still be here.” Pidge said.

“How are we going to find him, though?” Hunk asked. “The message just said that he was on this planet, not exactly where.”

“The Castle of the Lions can be seen for miles around, and word will no doubt spread across the city that we are here.” Coran said. “If we’re in luck, Lance will come to us.”

“Still,” Shiro said. “I’d like to go out searching for him rather than waiting for him to find out that we’re here. We should split up to explore the city, with one of us staying behind on the ship if Lance finds us first.”

“I’ll stay.” Peridot volunteered. “The Queen Cosmos still needs work and I’d prefer finish it sooner rather than later.”

“Okay.” Allura agreed. “Coran and I will meet with the leader of the planet for help finding Lance as well as securing another alliance.”

“Take care.” Shiro nodded. “The rest of us, split up and spread out.”

They split up, walking towards different areas of the city, looking for Lance and hoping the locals may have seen him. But after many vargas, they had yet to find him.

“Anything?” Shiro asked when they all met up again.

Everyone shook their heads except for Carnelian.

“I found someone who spotted him in this district, but it was about a week ago and they couldn’t remember exactly.” The Gem reported.

“Well, it gives us a smaller area to search.” Shiro said. “We’ll should spread out again.”

“Can we take a break first?” Hunk interjected. “I’m really hungry right now and more than a bit tired from the constant searching.”
“You really want to take a break when we’re so close to finding Lance?” Keith asked.

“Hey, relax. We need to care about our own health too, and Lance could still find his own way to the castle ship.” Hunk defended himself.

“I’m feeling tired and hungry too.” Pidge added.

Shiro analysed how he felt himself and had to admit he could use a short rest and food as well.

“I think we can take a short break, Keith.” Shiro said.

“You guys can take a break before resuming your search.” Howlite told them. “We’ll keep going.”

The Blue Valkyries nodded, not needing food or rest themselves.

The Gems and Humans parted ways.

“Let’s find somewhere with food that’s edible.” Hunk said.

The others nodded in agreement.

“Hey, Syd.” Charoite said as he walked into his racing manager’s office. “What do you want to talk to me about?”

“Ah, my top racer.” Syd said happily. “Your popularity over the last few quintants is through the roof, I’ve already gotten questions about merchandise, and you’ve won all your races like it was effortless.”

“What are you buttering me up for?” Charoite questioned, crossing both pairs of arms.

“I’m not buttering you up for anything, whatever that means.” Syd raised his tentacle hands in defence. “I’m just being grateful, you’ve made me a famous manager again, I’m even getting offers for other racers, though I would never drop you. It’s just…”

“I knew it.” Charoite uncrossed his top pair of arms to throw them up in the air.

“You need an image.” Syd finished.

“I need an image?” Charoite questioned.

“Well, I’ve got you a new racing costume, something more suited to you.” Syd handed Charoite a package.

Charoite opened it and pulled out a one-piece body-suit and jacket, whistling at how it looked.
“Yeah, this defiantly suits me.” He said.

Technically speaking, he didn’t need the suit as he could just change his physical projection into different clothes, but he liked the physical aspect.

“It was designed to match your visor too. But it’s not just your look that needs to be unique.” Syd said. “You need an act, something that makes people to take notice and look at only you.”

Chaoite hummed. “I think I know something that will make people take notice.” He grinned. “I’ll need a microphone, stage lights, a fog machine and a very long piece of rope.”

“Why are we here?” Keith asked as the Paladins sat down in the stands of a racing arena, their food and drinks carried in their hands.

“It’ll give us something to watch while we eat.” Hunk said.

“Plus, Lance would probably come to an event like this, we might be able to spot him.” Pidge added.

“I’m interested to see what Star Racing is.” Shiro said.

Keith hummed, he was interested in the Star Rancing too, it looked fun from the posters advertising the race they were sitting down to see.

“Everyone be seated, the Star Race is about to begin!” The announcer called.

The audience quietened.

“Now, todays race is very interesting, as both racers are from off planet.” The announcer proclaimed. “Representing the Quailar district for the first time, we have the very big and the very intimidating, Maxus and Malus!”

From one side of the arena, two brutish-looking aliens who were the same size as a Galra but looked more like armoured gorillas, emerged. The aliens flexed and growled at the crowd as they walked over to their Star Racer, which was equally large and brutish, also looking very dirty, one jumped into the pilot’s seat while the other jumped behind a gun turret mounted on the racer. Much of the crowd booed at them, which Hunk gladly joined in on.

“And, representing the Quadratus district, the returning solo racer who can win a race blindfolded, Charoite!”

Everyone looked to the tunnel on the other side of the arena, but no one emerged. Instead, fog clouded that side of the arena as coloured lights flashed through it. A beat then started.

Boom, boom, clap! Boom, boom, clap! Boom, boom, clap!

The audience soon got the idea, joining in on the beat, slapping their knees and clapping their hands, or tentacles in the case of most of the aliens.

From the fog, a figure emerged at the top of the arena, their silhouette hanging from a rope.

“We will, we will, rock you!” The figure shouted as the fog dispersed to reveal them.

The paladins looked at each other.

“Is that…?” Shiro questioned.
“Maybe it’s a coincidence.” Hunk said.

“It has the same beat and words.” Keith deadpanned.

The four-armed purple alien twisted around on the rope like an aerial dancer as one of their hands held a microphone to their mouth.

“~Buddy you're a boy make a big noise
Playin' in the street gonna be a big man some day
You got mud on yo' face
You big disgrace
Kickin' your can all over the place
Singin'

We will we will rock you
We will we will rock you~”

As they sang, they continued to twist around on the rope, slowly making their way down it while showing off their flexibility.

“That’s Queen.” The paladins said at the same time.

“Well, there’s an entire Earth shop and this is a popular song, so aliens could have picked it up.”

Pidge said.

“Or they could have learned it off Lance.” Hunk said hopefully.

“It the best lead we have.” Shiro agreed. “But we’ll have to wait until the performance, and race is done before we can talk to them.”

So, the paladins settled down to keep watching.

“~Buddy you're a young man hard man
Shoutin' in the street gonna take on the world some day
You got blood on yo' face
You big disgrace
Wavin' your banner all over the place

We will we will rock you
(Sing it!)
We will we will rock you~”

The audience began to join in on the chorus along with clapping to the beat.

“~Buddy you're an old man poor man
Pleadin' with your eyes gonna make you some peace some day
You got mud on your face
Big disgrace
Somebody better put you back into your place~”

Charoite finally reached the bottom of the rope and let go of it, their free hands now clapping along with the beat too as they finished off the song.

“~We will we will rock you
Charoite stood still as the song ended, arms spread out as they accepted the applause for their performance, they bowed before jumping off the ground and backflipping into the cockpit of their Star Racer, which was much higher off the ground than them, just because they could.

“Well, after that…performance.” The announcer said. “Let’s get back to the race itself. Today’s racecourse is the tried and true onbeck course, the racers must make their way through the course just once with the one who crosses the finish line first winning, making sure to avoid all obstacles in their way, which include opening and closing doors, falling rocks, tight caves and more. Standard rules apply, the racers must complete the entire course, no unofficial shortcuts allowed, and while both racers are allowed to shoot at each other, they must be disabling shots, any attempts to bring harm or death to the other racer will result in disqualification.”

Down in the arena, Charoite stood in the cockpit as he listened to the announcer, throwing kisses and finger-guns at the crowd.

“You’re not a racer, you’re a performer.” Maxus grunted. “How could you hope to beat professionals like us?”

“I don’t see how I can’t be both.” Chaoite grinned back. “I just like to add a bit more pizazz to my show, makes me more memorable. You should do it to, it would give you something to be remembered by other than being beaten by me.”

“I’m going to enjoy crushing you.” Malus growled.

“Now, now, remember the rules.” Charoite tutted.

“There are ways it can be made to look like an accident.” Malus promised.

“Well then, I’ll be sure to keep and ‘eye’ on you, as it were.” Charoite said.

“Racers, are you ready?” The announcer called out.

Maxus and Malus roared, showing that they were ready.

Charoite sat down in the pilot’s seat, bringing one of his hands to his face and swiping down, making a visor appear in front of his eyes. They held up the hand to show a thumbs-up as the glass of the cockpit closed over them.

“On your marks! Get set! Go!”

Chaoite punched the control stick forward, sending his Star Racer flying out the gate of the arena and into the race track. One set of arms were on the flight controls while the second set grasped the controls for the turrets that were either side of the racer.

Malus was immediately shooting at him, but Charoite manoeuvred his racer out of the way of the
shots. With his internal navigation, he saw the first obstacle ahead, heavy rocks with the capability of damaging both teams racers being thrown into the air and falling again, Chaoite felt each one and was able to plan a path through the timing of the rising and falling of the rocks.

Chaoite’s advantage in being to see everything pulled him into the lead as Maxus struggled slightly to move through the rocks without being his.

The next obstacles were the opening and closing doors, two sets of them. Chaoite slowed down in ordered to match the timing of the doors, allowing Maxus to catch up. Chaoite took the right hall, able to go at a constant speed as the doors opened and shut in a constant rhythm. Maxus took the left while Malus immediately began blasting their way through the doors instead of matching the speed to the rhythm of the doors like Chaoite.

Both racers emerged from the hallway of doors at the same time, Malus immediately turning to fire at Chaoite, who didn’t waste time firing back now that they were in the open, not even bothering to look as he fired.

Maxus then changed tactics to ramming against the over racer, hoping to drive Chaoite into a wall and damage his racer. Chaoite grunted as the other racer clashed against his, pushing back to avoid clashing against the wall.

Maxus broke off to avoid hitting an obstacle but quickly came at Chaoite again, but he was ready this time. Using boosters underneath his racer, Chaoite lifted higher off the ground while flipping over, Maxus and Malus passed underneath and Chaoite blew a kiss at them before his racer landed upright on the other side while Malus had to swerve to avoid hitting the wall himself.

This distraction allowed Chaoite to enter the very narrow tunnel that made up the next part of the course first, but also made him an easy target for Malus as there was no room to dodge in the tunnel.

Chaoite gritted his teeth as his racer shook with each laser that hit the back of it.

“Let’s see how you like this.” He said.

Chaoite turned his own laser canons to aim behind him, but instead of aiming directly at Maxus and Malus, he aimed up at the ceiling. Rocks and dust fell down on the opposing racer, obscuring their field of vision and making it hard to aim at Chaoite.

Up ahead, the tunnel branched into many paths, but with his internal navigation, Chaoite was able to tell which path led out of the tunnels the quickest and took it, turning his canons to the entrance of the tunnel and firing, collapsing it behind him. With all the dust and rocks falling in front of them, Maxus was barely able to see the branching paths and stop in time to avoid smashing head first into a wall, let alone which tunnel Chaoite had gone through, so he picked a random one and followed it.

Chaoite emerged from the tunnels into what was called the ‘home stretch’, no obstacles, just a wide-open space for the racers to do whatever with to ensure their victory, though he didn’t have to worry much as Maxus and Malus were still in the tunnels. It didn’t stay like that for long, as the other racer emerged from the tunnels as Chaoite was halfway to the finish line.

“I should have shot the exit to the tunnels closed too.” Chaoite said to himself, pushing the flight controls harder while shooting behind him.

Chaoite grunted as return fire hit his racer, red lights starting to flash.

“Oh, that’s just great.” He said sarcastically, seeing that the attack had ruptured his fuel line, meaning he didn’t have long until his racer wouldn’t be able to move.
He had enough time to cross the finish line, but whether he did that first was the question, as Maxus and Malus were quickly gaining.

“Well don’t you see how you like this!” Charoite said.

He flipped a switch on his turret controls, causing his turrets to sink into his racer, only to be replaced by a singular large one. Charoite then pressed fire just as the other racer started to pass him.

There was a loud explosion as a hole was blown into Maxus and Malus’ racer, halting their advancement just as Charoite’s racer ran out of fuel, both racers still making it to the finish line through motion alone and quickly slowing down as they dragged along the ground, kicking up dirt around them and obscuring both racers from the crowd just before they reached the finish line.

“And the crowd watches in anticipation to see who won the race.” The announcer said. “Did either of them even win? We’re going to find out, the dust is settling. And the winner is…”

The dust cleared to reveal that Maxus and Malus’ racer had stopped just short of the finish line, while Charoite’s racer had made it over by just a few inches.

“Charoite!”

The crowd cheered as Charoite stood up from the pilot’s seat to accept the praise before jumping down, her racing crew coming to take the racer away to be fixed.

“Come on.” Shiro said as the Paladins stood up to leave with the rest of the crowd. “Let’s see if Charoite knows anything about Lance.”

Chapter End Notes

Please comment
The performance before the race seems like something Lance would do considering what he does in the show, so Charoite must do it as well, only more. It also reminded me of how the singer P!nk does aerial performances during her live performances, and P!nk once sang ‘We will rock you’ as part of a Pepsi ad, so that became the song Charoite sung, and it’s also a really recognisable song.
Charoite waved at his fans as they gathered around him, gleefully signing autographs, allowing the children to hang off his lower set of arms and posing for the camera.

“Alright, that’s enough for today.” He eventually said. “I’ll see you guys at the next race.”

He threw up finger guns at the crowd.

Charoite would have loved to stay and soak up the attention for longer, but he had to get back to Loki, the Vanx was no doubt hungry by now and preferred Lance’s cooked meals rather than anything they tried to feed him out of a can, meaning Lance had to be there to feed the Vanx.

Parting from the disheartened crowd, Charoite decided to take the scenic route through a rather pretty park, Loki had had a large breakfast, so he could afford to wait for his lunch.

Charoite stretched his four arms as he walked, rubbing them uncomfortably. He’d been fused for too long, and while Lance and Iolite had a good friendship, they didn’t have a strong enough bond to maintain Charoite for a long time without it becoming uncomfortable and a strain for the fusion. They would need to un-fuse once they managed to find somewhere more private.

“Uh, Charoite?” A voice called from behind him.

Charoite frowned at how familiar voice was before turning around with a grin on his face, intending to greet what he thought was a fan.

Instead, when he looked down, he received the shock of his life at the painfully familiar face of Shiro.

“Could I talk to you?” Shiro asked, not taking notice of the turmoil racing through Charoite or the slight glow of his skin as he fought to remain fused.

Shiro was the only one there, the Paladins having split up to find Charoite after the racer disappeared, which had been surprising for someone so big.

“You see, I’m looking for my teammate and am wondering if you might know him.” Shiro continued.

“Shiro!” Charoite finally managed to get over his shock, picking the Black Paladin up like he weighed nothing and hugging him tightly.

“Uh…” Shiro said at suddenly finding himself in a stranger’s arms.
“You’re here!” Charoite said happily, spinning around with Shiro still in his arms. “You’re alright! I missed you so much!”

“It’s nice to meet you too.” He said in case hugging strangers was part of Charoite’s culture and he didn’t want to offend. “But how do you know my name? Do we know each other from somewhere?”

“Oh, right.” Charoite said in realisation, placing Shiro down gently. “You wouldn’t know me.” He looked down at himself. “I’m not Lance right now.”

“Wait, you know Lance?” Shiro asked, slightly confused by Charoite’s wording. “Do you know where he is?”

“Well, yeah.” Charoite said, wondering how exactly to tell Shiro that Lance made up part of him. Maybe just un-fuse and hope his leader didn’t get too shocked?

“Where is he?” Shiro asked in relief. “My team and I really need to find him.”

“Wait, the rest of Voltron is with you?” Charoite asked.

“We’re all here looking for Lance, and we have been for a long time, so we’d really appreciate if you told us where he is.” Shiro told him.

“They’re all here for me.” Charoite whispered to himself, smiling behind one of his hands. He then looked at Shiro. “That’s easy, because Lance is…” He paused before he could explain his identity as a fusion.

‘Let’s have a little fun first.’ A voice said from within Charoite, causing him to fight back a grin.

“…staying with me.” Charoite finished. “I’ve been letting him stay on my ship while he sent out his signal for you guys to pick up.”

“Thank you.” Shiro smiled. “Can you take me to him?”

Charoite hummed. “I’ll go check the ship, and his usual hang outs if he’s not there.” He said. “You can go gather your team in the meanwhile and meet back here.”

“Thank you for your help.” Shiro said, offering his hand. “I look forward to the rest of my team meeting you as reuniting with Lance.”

Charoite smiled and shook his hand, the both of them heading separate ways, Charoite to his ship and Shiro to gather up his team.

“This is stupid, pointless and the others are going to chastise us for it.” Charoite said as he made his way back to his ship.

“Yeah, but it’ll be worth it for the look on their faces when we un-fuse in front of them.” He then said.

Charoite lent against a fountain, sipping the drink he had just bought. With Loki fed and hanging out in a tree not far from him, all that was left was for him to wait until the Paladins to show up, so he could finally un-fuse and Lance could reunite with them.

At least, that had been the plan until some certain race losers showed up.
“What’s up, sasquatch?” Charoite asked as Maxus and Malus stormed up to him, followed by some more of their species.

“We never lose!” Maxus declared.

“Well, you did today.” Charoite rolled his eyes.

They growled at him.

“We’re going to make you pay for that embarrassment.” Malus promised darkly.

Charoite signed, putting down his drink.

“You guys are some sore losers.” He said. “But if you want to fight…”

Charoite held out the arm with Iolite’s gem on it and summoned her bladed gauntlet, he then placed another hand to his thigh where Lance’s gem was exposed through a hole in the suit (Syd had insisted on the hole after the gem created a bump in the skin-tight suit) and summoned a blue ornate arrow, which he then placed on top of the bladed gauntlet, both weapons glowed and merged together, creating a new gauntlet.

“Let’s fight.” Charoite finished.

Maxus, Malus and their cronies attacked as Charoite danced out of the way, arrows of energy firing out of his fusion weapon and striking the attackers from behind, causing them to cry out in pain.

“Come on, I can fight you guys with two hands behind my back.” Charoite taunted, putting his lower two arms behind his back. “Woah!”

He barely dodged out of the way from a laser shot.

“Should have seen that coming.” Charoite joked to himself, dodging out the way of another shot.

It seemed that some of his attackers had the fortitude to bring guns.

“So, you’ve got some fire power.” Charoite said. “Looks like I’ll need to add to my own.” He reached into his jacket.

…

It was at that time that the rest of the Paladins, Coran and the Blue Valkyries arrived at the park.

“I can’t wait to see Lance again.” Hunk said excitedly. “And I bet he’ll be so happy to see us too.”

“I wonder if he’s been up to anything other than being on the run from Homeworld and the Galra and sending us his signal.” Pidge said. “Maybe he’s picked up a new language or something.”

“Lance does pick up new languages fast.” Hunk agreed.

“I hope he hasn’t gotten hurt.” Allura worried.

“Charoite didn’t mention anything about Lance getting hurt.” Shiro assured.

“Charoite?” Citrine wondered aloud. “That sounds like a Gem name, though I don’t know any Gem types by that name.
“And the Gem Lance is traveling with is meant to be an Iolite.” Peridot said.

“They were purple.” Hunk said. “But they were bigger and had four arms.”

Howlite hummed and turned to Pearl. “Fusion?” She asked the other Gem.

“Possibly.” Pearl shrugged.

“Looks like Charoite’s gotten into some trouble.” Keith said, pointing ahead of them.

They all looked over to see Charoite being attacked by the racers he’d beaten as some more of their kind, firing at them from an arrow gauntlet on his wrist and avoiding blaster fire.

“Let’s help them out.” Shiro said.

The other nodded in agreement, but before they could leap into action, they all saw what Charoite had just drawn from out of his jacket.

Charoite held the red bayard in the opposite hand to his other weapon, it then glowed as it changed shape to wrap around his wrist, giving him another arrow-launching gauntlet to match the first.

“Why isn’t the red bayard with Lance?” Allura questioned.

The sight of the red bayard in the hands of someone who was not Lance made all of them pause their decision to help Charoite in his fight.

Thankfully, Charoite proved more than capable of handling himself, dancing out of the way of attacks while firing back his own, even doing a backflip while he did just because he could.

“Okay,” Charoite eventually said. “I’m board of this, time to take you guys out.

Charoite turned to the fountain and raised his arms, everyone watching in awe as the water from the fountain floated up, the fusion then turned rapidly and threw his arms at Maxus and Malus and their thugs, hitting them with the water. The paladins and Blue Valkyries then watched in shock as the water solidified around the thugs into purple crystal, rendering them unable to move but with their heads still free.

“Well, that takes care of that.” Charoite dusted off his hands. “Maybe next time don’t take on someone more powerful than you.”

Charoite then un-summoned his fusion weapon and reverted the red bayard back to its default form.

“You guys can come say hi, you know.” Charoite turned his head towards where the paladins and Blue Valkyries were.

They quickly walked over to him as Charoite picked up his drink again and leant against the fountain.

“Where’s Lance?” Shiro asked.

“He’ll be here shortly.” Charoite grinned.

“Why do you have Lance’s bayard?” Keith questioned. “Why wouldn’t he have it?”

Charoite continued to grin. “Guess.” He teased.
“Only two situations come to mind.” Allura said. “Either he gave it to you for protection, which I doubt you need considering what you can do, or you took it for him.”

“Technically speaking, it can be both.” Charoite joked, knowing the others wouldn’t get it.

“What does that mean?” Pidge asked in frustration.

“What have you done with Lance?” Keith grew impatient, drawing the black bayard and turning it into a sword.

Shiro quickly held him back from actually pointing the sword at Charoite.

All the paladins and Coran frowned at the purple alien. The Blue Valkyries, however, had a different reaction.

“It’s you, isn’t it?” Blue Pearl practically skipped over the Charoite. “You’ve got too much of his cheeky smile for him not to be in there.”

Charoite smiled, realising that his family had seen through his fusion.

“Hi, Pearl.” Charoite said, embracing the Gem gently in his lower arms.

“How is this even possible.” Peridot questioned, looking the fusion over. “We thought you couldn’t fuse.

“I guess you learn all sorts of new things when you’re in space.” Charoite shrugged, releasing Blue Pearl.

All of the Paladins were thoroughly confused at this point, but it was Pidge who burst first.

“What’s going on?” She shouted in frustration. “Why are you acting like you’ve already met? What are you even talking about? And where’s Lance?”

“Oh, right, they don’t know about fusion.” Carnelian said.

“Young man, I think this has gone on long enough.” Blue Pearl chastised Charoite.

“Yeah. To answer your question as to where Lance is,” Charoite turned to the Paladins. “You’re looking at him.”

“Wait, what?” Hunk asked.

“You’re Lance?” Keith questioned. “But you look nothing like him. Lance doesn’t have purple skin and hair, he only has one set of arms, he isn’t twice as tall, and I’m pretty sure you’re too feminine to be Lance.”

Charoite couldn’t help himself and began laughing, putting one hand over his mouth while the other three went around his stomach as he shook uncontrollably.

Charoite then began to glow until he was nothing but white light, his shape melting down into two smaller figures. The light then vanished to reveal Lance and Iolite laughing as they leant against each other, much to the shock of the Paladins.

“Lance?” The Paladins cried.

“Hey, guys.” Lance waved as he managed to stop laughing.
Iolite barely managed to move away from Lance in time to avoid getting hit as Pidge threw herself at Lance and latched onto him.

“Oof! Hey, Pidge.” Lance wrapped his arms around the younger girl to support her weight.

He then had to fight for breath as both he and Pidge were hugged by Hunk.

“I missed you so much.” Hunk cried.

“I missed you too, big guy.” Lance wheezed.

The other Paladins and Coran quickly joined in on the group hug, refusing to let go for several minutes. They eventually had to let go after it became awkward.

“I have so many questions.” Hunk said. “Where have you been? When did you manage to turn into Charoite? How did you turn into Charoite? And have you gotten older?”

The paladins looked at Lance and realised that he had indeed gotten older by at least a couple of years, his hair was even a few inches longer with slight curls on the ends.

“I have?” Lance questioned, going over to the fountain to check his reflection.

He hadn’t realised he’d been getting older, but then again, he had been spending a lot of time as Charoite in the past week.

“How have you gotten older?” Pidge questioned. “You’ve only been gone for a couple of months. Did you go somewhere that displaces time or something?”

“I don’t know?” Lance shrugged.

“It’s because Lance is part Gem.” Howlite explained. “Our physical forms can often reflect our maturity and it’s the same for Lance. We hadn’t noticed, but his family said that he had stopped aging once he reached seventeen. Do you feel more mature than when you left Earth, Lance?”

“I guess.” Lance said.

“Wait, if you stopped aging at seventeen, how old are you?” Hunk asked.

“Twenty-one, though I could be wrong since it’s hard to keep up with Earth time in space.” Lance answered.

“Twenty-one!” The paladins exclaimed.

“Yep.” Lance nodded.

“How’d you get past the Garrison?” Pidge asked. “They would have questioned it if you applied with your real age?”

“My age had generally been consistent when I applied, and I guess none of the instructors took notice that I wasn’t aging after a while. And when they put me in a younger class, I didn’t complain so I didn’t draw attention to how I should have been older.” Lance explained.

“Okay, Lance is older that he looks because he’s a hybrid.” Hunk said. “Onto my other question, how did you and her become a large alien with four arms?” He pointed at Lance and Iolite.

“Fusion.” All of the Gem present answered.
“What’s fusion?” Pidge asked eagerly.

“How about we answer that later.” Howlite suggested. “Once Lance has been settled back in with us, and we’ve gotten to know his fusion partner.”

Iolite waved when all heads turned to her.

“I agree.” Shiro said. “It’s been an exhausting past couple of months for everyone and I think it’d be best for us all to enjoy that we’re all together again.”

“Let’s head back to the Castle of the Lions, then.” Coran said happily. “We can prepare some food and drink while we catch up.”

“Sounds good to me.” Lance smiled. “Loki!”

The other Paladins watched as a small and fluffy alien hopped out of a nearby tree and ran over to Lance.

“This is Loki, my pet Vanx.” Lance introduced.

“Hi.” Loki said, sniffing around the Paladins.

“I haven’t seen a Vanx since I was traveling around with my grandad.” Coran commented. “He looks a bit different from what I remember, though.”

“It’s been ten-thousand years since your time, his species has evolved since then.” Iolite said, rubbing Loki between the ears.

“He sort of attached himself to us.” Lance said. “He likes anyone who feeds him.”

“Then prepare to lose him to Hunk.” Pidge joked.

“What do you say little guy?” Hunk join in on the joke. “You want to some food?”

“Food! Food! Food!” Loki jumped up and down excitedly, grabbing onto Hunk’s vest.

“We just fed you.” Lance said exasperated.

“More food! More food!” Loki insisted, causing everyone to laugh.

“Come on.” Shiro insisted. “Let’s get back to the castle.

“So, let me get this straight.” Hunk said as they all gathered in the common room of the castle. “You-” He pointed at Iolite. “Lured Lance into a trap and kidnapped him under orders from your Diamond otherwise you would have been ‘shattered’. Then, once you realised they’d kill him, broke him out and went on the run with him. You both landed on Valux where you got a new ship, picked up Loki, learned that you could fuse and then left the planet to escape the Galra. And finally arrived on this planet where you sent out your distress signal and got a job as a Star Racer, as Charoite, while you waited.”

“Pretty much, yeah.” Lance and Iolite agreed.

“I’m amazed you survived long enough to escape in the first place.” Blue Pearl said. “I thought you’d be shattered on sight for not being a pure Gem and carrying the Gem of a Homeworld traitor.”
“Apparently, Blue Diamond had some sort of deeper connection with mum.” Lance said. “Though, I guess she realised that I wasn’t my mum and decided to have me killed then.”

“Lance was just lucky that I managed to overhear the Diamonds planning to kill him.” Iolite said.

“I’m surprised you were willing to risk shattering to save Lance.” Blue Pearl said. “Considering you brought Lance to Homeworld.”

“Honestly, I didn’t have time to think of the consequences after I overheard the Diamonds, I was running on autopilot until we actually managed to escape. All I knew, is that I had to get Lance off Homeworld.”

“Well, despite being the reason Lance was taken away, we thank you in your sacrifice to return Lance to us.” Allura told Iolite.

“Speaking of which.” Lance said. “Can Iolite stay with us? She’s sort of on the run from Homeworld now.”

“I suppose.” Allura said hesitantly.

“It’d be good for some more help around the castle.” Coran piped in.

“I’ll be sure to do my part.” Iolite assured. “I’m pretty knowledgeable about most habitable planets and species from all the chronicling I’ve done.”

“Would you mind updating the castle’s records then? More than once they’ve said a planet is peaceful when it’s not.” Keith said.

“Yeah, I can do that.” Iolite said.

Most of the group sighed in relief.

Pidge then yawned, followed by Hunk, then Lance. Soon, all of them were yawning.

“With all that’s happened, I think it’s time for an early night.” Shiro said from behind his hand after he yawned.

The others hummed in agreement but none of them moved.

“I don’t really want to be alone right now.” Lance was the first to admit.

“I know the feeling buddy.” Hunk said. “I know that you’re finally back, but I feel like I wouldn’t be able to sleep without being able to see you there when I open my eyes.”

“We have to sleep though.” Keith said quietly.

“I think I know how we can solve this problem.” Lance shared a knowing look with Pidge and Hunk.

“Slumber Party!” All three yelled.

“That sounds like a marvellous idea.” Allura said.

Shiro nodded in agreement.

“Yeah sure.” Keith said.
“I’ll get the pillows!”

“I’ll get the blankets!”

“I’ll make some snacks!”

Everyone walked off to do their own task in organising the impromptu slumber party.

Except for Iolite, who was walking towards the castle door.

“Where are you going?” Shiro stopped to ask.

“I’m still a stranger to everyone but Lance.” Iolite said. “It would feel like I was intruding if I tried to
join in.”

“Are you sure?” Shiro asked in concern.

“Yeah, I’m fine. I won’t make it a habit to exclude myself from group activities or anything.” Iolite
reassured. “But this is something that needs to be for you guys. Besides, I need to sort some things
out before we leave the planet, what we’re going to do with Lance and I’s ship and cancelling
Charoite’s contract with our race manager.”

“Can you just cancel the contract?” Shiro asked, concerned Iolite might get into trouble.

“Well, it’s still got a few more races in it before it expires, but that doesn’t matter since it’s null and
void anyway. The contract was signed by Charoite, and Charoite doesn’t exist anymore.” Iolite
grinned.

“Is that how fusion works?” Shiro asked. “The fusion is a new person who ceases to be when
unfused?”

“Basically.” Iolite admitted. “Though it’s more complicated than that. I’ll explain after you’ve all had
your slumber party and gotten reacquainted. Bye for now.”

She then turned and left.

Shiro hummed before turning around himself and heading back to the common room where the
Paladins and Blue Valkyries were setting up their temporary sleeping area, happy to be in the
presence of each other.

Chapter End Notes

The End
The End

Yep, Ocean Blue has finally come to an end.

Sorry if the ending is rushed by the way, I was just so excited to finally finish it. Not that I hated writing it, just that I was able to put a definitive end to this story instead of completely abandoning it and letting it go on forever like other fics.

…

Not that this is the actual end of Ocean Blue, just the main story.

I have quite a few ideas to set in the Ocean Blue universe, but that would be a pain to work into the main story. So, I plan to do one-shots that are set in Ocean Blue from now on, that way I can get to the story points I want without writing out how we got to that point in the story.

As of right now, I plan to do one-shots that will address some more of Lance’s powers, what his interactions with (uncle) Lotor would be like, how the Lazuli and the original Paladins formed as opposed to how it happened in canon, facing off against Zarkon again, etc.

If any of you have something you wanted to be seen in Ocean Blue, you can leave it in the comments, and if I like it enough I’ll make it into a one-shot.

End Notes

If anyone’s confused with what’s going on, Zarkon taught Lazuli that there was more to life than serving the Diamonds and taught her own to be her own Gem, teaching her other things as well including the meaning of the word father, which Lazuli eventually came to call him by. Lazuli then became the Blue Paladin. As a high-ranking Gem, Lazuli had a Pearl specially made for her, and when she turned against Blue Diamond, her Pearl followed her out of loyalty, Blue Diamond then sent a group of Gems to retrieve her but Lazuli managed to convert them into her way of thinking. Those Gems them became Lazuli’s own little crew that join Voltron in protecting planets. Then Zarkon turned on the Paladins, killing all but Lazuli. And a ‘dead zone’ is basically slang I made up for an area of a galaxy where no life has managed to evolve.

This is just going to be a tester chapter to see how well it’s received and to see if I can write it, so don’t expect an update for a while. Please, leave your opinions.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!