

The Witches of Eriadne: Interlude Four D - Part 2: Tripping the Light Fantastic

by [The Space Witches](#)



Lucas settles in quickly.

Chapter 1

January 2270

Lucas leaned forward across his desk, polishing the shiny star he held in his hands, while whistling softly to himself. He was in a good mood. A very good mood. Until yesterday, this office, and this desk, had been occupied by the most influential person on Regula IV. It still was, but he was now that person. He was now Mayor-Sheriff of the largest community on the planet. The previous occupant of the office was history. Dead history.

Leaning back in his chair, Lucas pondered on his progress to this position. Only nine months before, he had been held captive on board the Excalibur. He had lost everything, and when he had made his escape on Orion VII, he'd possessed little more than the clothes he'd stood up in. That, and the native wit, intelligence and charm with which he was plentifully endowed. [And that ain't the only thing that I'm well endowed with.] Lucas' lips curled into a lascivious smile. He'd certainly had no complaints in

that area.

Then again, very few people had dared to complain about anything he'd done since arriving on Regula IV just over six months before. Those who had tried were no longer in any position to complain. They were all in a much better position, at least from Lucas' point of view. [Six feet under, in a box. Best position in the world, as far as I'm concerned.] He frowned briefly, remembering all too well a time when he had been in that position himself. It was unfortunate that he hadn't been dead at the time. Bad enough to be dead and buried, far worse to be buried alive, as he had been once.

Shaking off such unsatisfactory memories, Lucas pondered on the more recent past. He'd used the credits he'd stolen from Nurse Tubby to get into a poker game on Orion VII. No one there had known the dangers of playing poker with Lucas Buck. It hadn't taken him long to raise the stake he'd needed to move to Regula IV.

On his arrival as a wealthy immigrant, he'd been welcomed by all, as a source of new income and trade. It had amused him to introduce himself as Marcus Temple, calling himself after his two sons. The first name was close enough to his own so that he would answer to it, and the surname, that of the son who had banished him to the Box.

Comments had been made on Lucas' close resemblance to the Captain of the Excalibur, who had visited the planet over two years before. Lucas had admitted that they were related, but made it clear that he and Gideon were not on good terms. This had made him more popular with the villagers, who blamed the Captain for depriving them of their guide and protector, the elderly Technomage Alwyn. As far as they knew, Alwyn had died to protect them from Earthforce. Lucas was happy to let them continue thinking that, not disclosing his knowledge that Alwyn was alive and well, and working with the Captain of the Excalibur. He was saving that little snippet for when it might do him the most good.

Lucas had made himself popular by spending lavishly, buying a run down farm near the village, then employing local labor to bring the place up to scratch. For a while, no one had noticed that all the labor he'd employed had been the local hard cases, the tough guys who could help him bring the village under his control.

Lucas had bought their loyalty with money, favors and secretly bringing in women to keep the men entertained. It had been his first experience of running a whorehouse, and he'd found it quite enjoyable. Of course, he'd had to sample the goods to make sure the quality was high--or in this case, low--enough for his men. There had been some rumblings in the village about the immoral goings on in the buildings on the more remote parts of Lucas' farm, but in general, the local population was just happy that he was keeping the troublemakers out of town. And some of the more respectable citizens had dropped in for an occasional visit, giving Lucas excellent material for blackmail.

The local innkeeper had grumbled most, saying that he was losing business because of Temple's backwoods nymphos, but he quieted down when Lucas donated enough money to set up a local school, then employed the innkeeper's daughter as schoolmistress. Lucas smiled to himself again. He'd always had a weakness for teachers. It hadn't taken long for him to seduce young Claire, and she had surreptitiously warmed his bed ever since. Her father still believed that she was a young, innocent virgin. He didn't know how much his little girl enjoyed a pair of handcuffs.

Polishing his star again, Lucas then placed it carefully in the drawer of his desk. He didn't need to wear it openly. Everyone knew who was boss.

During the closing months of 2269, occasional news had reached Lucas of the adventures of the

Excalibur and her crew. He had curled his lip and sneered when he'd heard about their success in finding a cure for the Drakh plague. Gideon becoming a galactic hero hadn't been the best news Lucas had ever heard. As the year progressed, Lucas had reestablished his contacts with the less desirable elements on Babylon 5, providing him with more sources of information. It was from them he'd heard of Gideon's marriage to Whiplash, and Angel's arrest and death on Mars.

That news had affected Lucas more strongly than he'd expected. For a few hours, the Rage had taken over completely, as he'd vented his anger on anyone who crossed his path. It was then that his men had learned to fear as well as respect him. One of them was buried deep in the woods, as a result of having said the wrong thing when Lucas was out of control. And more than one of his whores had been left limping for days afterwards.

Lucas was unable to explain the sense of relief he'd felt, when from the same source, he'd heard that Angel was alive. It was mitigated, to some extent, by the knowledge that she was now on board the Excalibur with her sister. Lucas was convinced that Gideon would be bedding both sisters nightly. He knew that he'd do just that in Gideon's position, and he was sure that the Captain had enough Buck blood in him to do the same. [Unless the Space Cadet is more stupid than I think he is.] Lucas pushed aside the jealousy that threatened to bubble to the surface again. He'd dealt with it when he'd first heard the news, by encouraging the villagers to express their dislike of Gideon, and Earthforce in general.

So the year 2269 had ended with Lucas a popular member of the community on Regula IV. Many villagers were in his debt in various ways, and he was seen as a benefactor of the community, keeping the troublemakers out of town and under control, and promoting the welfare of the people by funding the provision of the village school and teacher.

When the position of Mayor-Sheriff fell vacant early in the New Year, due to a tragic accident that befell the previous occupant of the post, Lucas had 'reluctantly' allowed himself to be persuaded to stand for election. His only opponent had been the innkeeper, who had not endeared himself to the villagers by increasing the prices in his inn just before the New Year celebrations. He'd claimed it was because of the loss of income he'd suffered since Lucas' men had stopped frequenting the inn, but Lucas had started a rumor that the innkeeper was profiteering. The election had been a landslide.

Lucas opened the drawer of his desk again, and smiled as he looked at the shiny star that was a symbol of his new office. He knew exactly where he planned to pin that star on Claire later that night. She wouldn't like it much. She was still learning that a little pain made the pleasure even more intense. Claire didn't learn as fast as Angel had, but then she didn't compare to his Angel-Face in any way. Lucas was sure that no woman ever could compare, but he would make do with Claire as a poor substitute. He thought about how he would handcuff her to his bed, and pin the star on her. She'd learn to enjoy it eventually. She wouldn't get much choice in the matter.

April 2270

Lucas sighed deeply as he stared into the fire in his living room. He'd just had the fireplace installed, the final piece in his recreation of his study in Trinity. The bookshelves had long been filled, the best carpenter in the village had built the desk, and each pigeonhole had been filled with papers. It was a pity there were no tarantulas on Regula IV. He missed his pet.

The couch that stood in front of the table by the door was covered in a Regency stripe material, and

he'd even acquired a human skull to place on the table. There may well be no place like home, but his house was at least beginning to resemble his old home in Trinity.

Lifting the poker from the stand at the side of the fireplace, Lucas stirred the logs, creating a blaze of sparks that flew up the chimney. What he really needed now was a family to share his home. He wanted his son.

Lucas carefully placed the poker back on its stand, then walked over to the sofa, throwing himself down on the seat. He loosened his collar and rolled back the cuffs on his shirt, as he sat there and brooded. Today was his son's birthday. Marcus was one year old today. Lucas wondered if he was walking yet. Probably. The Buck boys were always physically well advanced. He'd probably have a few teeth, too. The Sheriff smiled as he wondered if Whiplash had weaned the baby yet. Something about the thought of his son biting her nipple aroused Lucas. He shifted in his seat to relieve the pressure of his jeans on his swollen cock.

As always, when he became aroused, he thought of Angel, wondering where she was now, what she was doing, and how often Gideon was screwing her.

Lucas leaped to his feet, unable to sit thinking about that any longer. His dislike of Gideon was growing all the time, and Lucas feared he was becoming irrational on the subject. Hearing of Batman's success in bringing the Kesani into the ISA had irritated the hell out of him. Wasn't it enough that the Captain enjoyed Lucas' woman and son? Why the hell did he have to be a hero, too?

Moving back to the fireplace, Lucas stood with one foot resting on the hearth rail, staring into the fire again. One day. One day he'd go after what was his and reclaim it. One day, Angel and Marcus would be his. Not today, not tomorrow, not even for some years to come. But one day, he would go after them, kidnapping Demon and Marcus, using Demon in whatever way he wanted before killing her, then bringing up his son in his own image, with Angel at his side. And the best part of the plan would be leaving Gideon alive and alone, mourning for the loss of his wife and son.

Lucas straightened and smiled as he thought about the future. For now, he'd go and find a way to relieve some of his tensions. Now where the hell had he put his handcuffs?

June 2270

Lucas stood at his desk, reaching over it to shake hands with the man standing opposite. "Welcome to Regula IV, Ranger Tibald. What brings you to our little planet?"

He waved the Ranger to a seat opposite, then sat himself, leaning forward on his desk, his face showing nothing but interest and pleasure at meeting the man. The concern he felt that a Ranger had arrived in his town was not evident in any way. [What the hell is going on here? What could a Ranger want with this place?]

Lucas tried to tell himself that it might be something to do with the unusual element that Earthforce had found in the soil here a couple of years before. The investigations made at the time had come to nothing, but perhaps they'd made progress since. Maybe the ISA would be interested in buying some of the element from Lucas. He was always ready to do a deal.

The biggest problem he had was in keeping a straight face as he looked at Tibald. The Ranger was

the spitting image of a 20th Century actor. The name eluded Lucas for a moment, then he remembered. How could he have forgotten Penis Van Lesbian? Or Dick Van Dyke, as he was more commonly known. Lucas wondered if the Ranger could do a lousy cockney accent, while singing about chimney sweeps. He doubted it. The man looked as if he had absolutely no sense of humor at all.

The Ranger sat, then looked over at Lucas, his face expressionless, as he answered. "I have been sent here to investigate. We have been advised that there have been an unusual number of 'accidental' deaths here in the last year. We wish to be assured that they were indeed all accidental."

Lucas allowed himself to appear surprised and shocked by the Ranger's revelation, suppressing his fury as he thought, [Who the hell got a message out? I thought I had every channel out of this place covered!] None of his anger showed as he answered Tibald. "We've had a couple of unfortunate accidents, yes, but nothing that I would have expected to cause concern off-planet. My predecessor was in office when most of these incidents occurred, of course, but I'm sure he carried out thorough investigations and ruled out every possibility other than accident. You're welcome to check the files."

Soon after his election, Lucas had gone through all the previous Mayor-Sheriff's files, removing anything he didn't like. All the Ranger would find there now, was evidence of his predecessor's incompetence. Lucas' own investigation of the death of the previous incumbent of his office was, of course, impeccable. The evidence detailed on the files clearly indicated that the death had been suicide. The files also made it clear that kindness to the surviving family had led Lucas to record the death as accidental. The only thing the Ranger would be able to find was that Lucas had twisted the truth a little, to prevent a family being hurt unnecessarily. Just the sort of kind thing that a caring, considerate leader would do.

Tibald nodded. "I will require full access to the investigation records."

Lucas agreed immediately. "Of course. I'll log you onto our system, and give you full access." As he spoke, he thought, [Or what you think is full access. Like hell I'll let you poke around in all my records.]

A few minutes later, he left the Ranger in his office, and strode down the corridor to the front of the building. His senior deputy was sitting at the front desk, feet up on a chair, eating a donut. Lucas kicked the chair out from under his feet and slapped the donut out of his hand.

"You could at least try to look as if you're working." The deputy grinned sheepishly, and stooped to pick up the remaining part of the donut from the floor. Lucas barked, "Leave it. The dogs can have it later. Right now, I want you to find out who the hell brought the Rangers down on us. Git."

Lucas stood watching, his thumbs hooked into the pockets of his jeans, as his deputy fled the building. Then he turned and plastered an ingratiating smile on his face, before returning to his office and Tibald's questions.

"The facilities are rather primitive." The Ranger looked disapproving, as he and Lucas stood in the doorway of the schoolroom.

Lucas controlled his irritation and agreed. "I'm working on it. Believe it or not, when I arrived here, there was nothing in place for educating the young. Kids learned at home or not at all. Even now, some of the families refuse to send their children here, insisting that they're needed to work the farms. It's not

right. Kids should have the opportunity to learn that there's more to life than the back end of a mule, plowing the south forty."

The Ranger nodded seriously and moved to inspect the computer terminal that one small group of children was studying. Claire looked over at Lucas and gave him a nervous smile, then went back to instructing another group of younger pupils.

Lucas surveyed his empire with some satisfaction. By donating the school and the teacher, he got to control what these kids were taught. He could be sure that the one lesson drummed into them every day was respect for the law. And he was the law. Of course, to any outsider, it looked like Lucas was a philanthropist. The idea was enough to make Lucas sick with laughter. He never did anything that didn't give him a return on his investment. The return here would be a generation growing up knowing who was boss in this town, knowing who they should obey.

The Ranger's visit was proceeding smoothly. He'd gone through the files Lucas had allowed him to access and expressed his concern about some of the previous Mayor-Sheriff's actions. Lucas had agreed sadly and advised Tibald that it was because of some of those actions that he had allowed the villagers to persuade him to stand for election.

"I didn't want or need the extra work, but you know how it is. When your community calls on you, a good citizen has to answer that call." Lucas had somehow kept his face straight, as he'd solemnly avowed his commitment to the community, and watched the Ranger nod seriously. [I guess there's no chance of getting him to give us a chorus from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.]

They had then toured the village together, allowing Tibald to see the clean streets, neat houses, and happy citizens, all of whom greeted Lucas cheerfully, as they strolled down to the new schoolhouse. The Ranger had been able to see just how much Lucas was liked and respected by the community.

Tibald straightened from his perusal of the children's studies and walked back to join Lucas, gesturing the Sheriff to precede him out of the door. They walked back to the Sheriff's station in silence, and into Lucas' office. The Ranger refused Lucas' offer of refreshment, and leaned forward to study Lucas carefully, as he reported his conclusions from his visit.

"I can see that you've made quite a difference to this community, Mr. Temple. I can also see how that could have aroused envy and resentment in some quarters. There's no doubt that some of your predecessor's actions were questionable, but I'll be happy to report back to the ISA that things are now under control here, and in good hands."

The Ranger stood and held out his hand, smiling for the first time since he'd arrived. Lucas smiled back, and expressed his modest appreciation of the praise. He then walked Tibald back to his ship and waved him off. Returning to the station, he stood in front of his deputy's desk and barked, "Well?"

"It was Tom Woods. Seems that our innkeeper isn't happy with the way things are run around here." The deputy looked almost frightened as he gave the information to Lucas.

Lucas nodded. "Figures. Well, sometime I'll have to ask him about it. For now, I have business over at schoolhouse. I'll catch you later," Lucas glanced at the clock on the wall, as he left the station. Woods should be changing barrels around now, and no one would ever know that Lucas had been to see him. He could always rely on Claire to give him an alibi, if needed.

"Well now, Tom. Seems that you're not too happy with the way things are running around here." Lucas stood inside the door of the inn, talking to the innkeeper's back, as he bent over a barrel, rolling it toward the open door to the cellar.

Tom Woods nearly leaped out of his skin at the sudden noise behind him, and his nervousness at suddenly finding himself alone with Lucas was obvious. He cleared his throat and stuttered, "Uh, how do you know? I mean, what do you mean, um, what gives you that idea, Marcus?"

Lucas smiled as he watched the innkeeper wipe his hands, suddenly slick with sweat, against his vest. "Oh, just a little something that the Ranger said before he left," he lied. "He told me that you were the one who complained to the ISA. Now, if you had a problem, Tom, why couldn't you come to me and talk about it? Man to man." Lucas allowed his voice to express nothing but sorrow and regret.

The innkeeper snorted in disgust. "Man to man? Like Stephan did when your men moved the boundary of your property? I hear he's still having to be fed his meals through a straw."

Lucas sighed sadly. "That was a nasty fall Stephan had. Shouldn't have tried to fix the roof of his barn by himself." He stepped forward, moving to stand in front of Woods, the open door to the cellar at Lucas' back. "You thought you were going to take over when old Hansen died, didn't you, Tom? You thought you were going to be able to run this place as your own personal fiefdom. You must be really pissed with me, derailing your plans like that. And of course, you must hate the fact that I'm fucking your daughter."

The innkeeper's eyes opened wide, "What did you say? What about Claire? What are you doing to her?"

Lucas smiled lazily, spreading his legs wide and hooking his thumbs into the pockets of his jeans. "She's not much good, yet, but she's trainable. More enthusiasm than experience at this point, but I'm working on it. She's got the potential to be one of the best cock-suckers it's ever been my pleasure to know. Nothing she likes more than a hot cock in her mouth while another man takes her, doggy fashion, from behind. Your Claire is a real bitch in heat, did you know that, Tom?"

Woods screamed in anger, and charged across the room at Lucas, his hands outstretched to throttle the Sheriff. Lucas waited until the last moment, then like a bullfighter, stepped quickly to one side, sticking his foot out in front of the charging man. The innkeeper's momentum carried him forward and he tripped over Lucas' foot, then fell headfirst through the open doorway behind. There was a series of thuds as he bounced off the stairs, then a sickening crack.

Lucas turned and looked through the door and down the cellar steps. Woods lay in a crumpled heap at the bottom, his neck at an angle that clearly showed it was broken. The innkeeper was dead.

Sighing sadly, Lucas kicked at a floor-tile at the top of the steps, loosening it until it stood proud of the other tiles around it. Then he turned and walked out of the back door of the inn. [That's what happens when you don't keep your property in good repair and rush around at breakneck speeds.]

"Tom Woods will be sadly missed by everyone in this community." Lucas bowed his head, as he shoveled earth onto the coffin in the open grave. He straightened, then smiled sadly at the mourners gathered around the grave. "He was well loved by us all, and most of all by his daughter, Claire." He

turned to the schoolteacher standing next to him at the graveside, and put his arm gently around her shoulders, comforting her as she wept. "We'll all have to work together to help Claire through this sad time, and to help her with running the inn that her father left her in his will."

Lucas had some plans for exactly how he planned to comfort Claire, and for how the inn would be run in future. The additional income it would generate for him would be useful, as he had a purchase in mind that would likely be expensive.

Walking back from the graveyard to the inn with the other mourners, Lucas kept his arm lightly around Claire's shoulder as he thought about his plans. One of his contacts on B5 had let him know that a certain piece of equipment might be available for sale, if a sponsor could be found to fund its theft. It was a piece of equipment that Lucas would find very useful, so although it would be costly, he had pretty much decided to take a short vacation on Babylon 5 to acquire it.

The only thing he now had to decide was whether to take Claire with him, to entertain him on his trip, or whether to re-familiarize himself with the limited charms of Captain Lochley. Of course, he'd have to come up with a new story for Lochley. She'd surely have heard about Gideon's marriage, but Lucas could be inventive when he wanted to be.

[Decision, decisions. A man's work is never done.] Lucas decided that he was due a vacation. He'd been working hard lately. And rather than make a decision as to which woman to have, he'd take Claire with him for the journey, telling the villagers that he was trying to ease her sorrow by taking her on a nice trip, then seduce Lochley when he arrived.

[Why have one woman, when you can have two?] Lucas smiled to himself. There was only one woman in the galaxy who could really satisfy him, but until it was time to take her again, he'd just have to make do.

{Chapter 1}

The Witches of Eriadne: Interlude Four D

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