**Prenglar Nights**

**Galactic Standard Time (GST):** 50.057:13:52 (i.e., 50 Federation Year, Day 57, hour 13, minute 52)

The morning sun filtered through the hexagonal windows of Vrik’s flat, casting geometric patterns across the floor of his small workshop. He stood amidst a clutter of tools, components, and half-finished projects, his mandibles clicking softly as he reviewed his inventory. The move from Zik-Kit had been hectic, and he was still missing a few critical items for his work. Today, he decided, would be dedicated to equipping himself properly.



Vrik donned his utility harness, a lightweight exoskeleton that enhanced his strength and dexterity, and slung a satchel over his shoulder. He stepped out into the bustling corridor of the New Housing Developments, where the air was thick with the mingling scents of alien cuisines and the hum of conversation in a dozen dialects of the Frontier’s five languages. The monorail station was a short walk away, and he joined the stream of commuters heading downtown.

The monorail glided into the station with a soft hiss, its sleek, aerodynamic design a testament to Prenglar’s technological prowess. Vrik boarded and found a seat near the window, his compound eyes scanning the cityscape as the train accelerated. The new housing developments gave way to industrial zones, then to the gleaming spires of downtown Port Loren. The city was a patchwork of cultures and architectures, from the hive-like efficiency of vrusk designs to the organic curves favored by dralasites and the angular brutalism of human structures.

Vrik’s first stop was TechTrek, a well-known tech shop in the heart of downtown. The shop was a maze of shelves and display cases, filled with everything from basic components to cutting-edge gadgets. A human clerk greeted him with a nod, and Vrik handed over a list of items he needed: microservos, duralloy plating, and a high-capacity power cell. As the clerk gathered the items, Vrik’s attention was drawn to a holonet terminal displaying a news article: *“Archaeologists Uncover Pre-Contact Vrusk Artifacts on Ken’zah-Kit.”*

The article detailed the discovery of a buried hive-city, complete with intact machinery and cultural artifacts. Vrik’s mandibles twitched with interest. The artifacts were said to shed light on the early days of vrusk civilization, a topic that had always fascinated him. He made a mental note to look up the full report later.

With his purchases in hand, Vrik left TechTrek and wandered the streets of downtown Port Loren. The city was alive with activity: street vendors hawking their wares, hovercars zipping through the air, and the occasional security drone patrolling the skies. He passed by QuiveraCab, the largest taxi company in the city, and noted the sleek hovercars emblazoned with the FF&S logo. The company’s presence was everywhere, a reminder of its dominance in the freight and transportation industry.

As the day wore on, Vrik found himself in a quieter district, where the buildings were older and the streets less crowded. A small jewelry store caught his eye: GemCraft, a store specializing in rare minerals and gemstones. Though he wasn’t here to buy, Vrik couldn’t resist stepping inside. The shop was a treasure trove of glittering stones, each with its own unique properties. The owner, a dralasite with a keen eye for detail, greeted him warmly.

“Looking for anything in particular?” the dralasite asked.

“Just browsing,” Vrik replied, his voice a soft hum. “I have an interest in gemology.”

The dralasite nodded approvingly. “A rare hobby these days. Let me know if you have any questions.”

Vrik spent a few minutes examining the stones, his mind already calculating their potential uses in robotics and electronics. The visit was a pleasant diversion, but he knew he needed to prepare for tomorrow’s interview with FF&S. He left the shop and made his way back to the monorail station, his satchel now filled with the tools and components he needed... all but a personal security device: namely, a laser pistol and a good supply of SEU clips to go with it.



He walked south along Mainsquare Promenade, then took a turn west, crossed the street, and walked over to Shanghai Kelly’s, a well-known purveyor of weapons and spacefaring gear. He cleaned out the rest of his account on a sleek retro design, and got six clips for the road.

“Much obliged,” the yazirian shopkeeper handed him his merchandise and receipt, and he returned the pleasantry.

Exiting the shop, Vrik took a left turn towards the monorail station around the corner, scanned his ID badge to debit his transit pass, and settled into one of the vrusk-specific benches that jutted outward more than the smaller seats. It was shaping up to be a great start to his new stint in Port Loren, and with a bagful of robot parts and personal gear, the TechEx would set up his portable workshop in his new flat, and reprise his construction of a general maintenance bot.

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GST 50.058**:**09:18

Having spent a few hours tinkering in his newly set up workbench last night, Vrik had slept a solid 7 hours before starting his morning routine, which now had him heading back to the monorail station with his new outfit on, making way for his interview. The ride there was uneventful, though he appreciated the grandness of Prenglar—the majestic star around which he now orbited—rising and showering the city with beams of cosmic gold.

The Frontierwide Freight & Shipping sign in front of the office building that might become his second home was ensconced by topiaries and a pond where migratory pterofalcons now drank and rested. He made his way along the meandering clay path that led to the muted blue door that opened automatically as he approached.

He was greeted by a receptionist—a human—who scanned his ID, then promptly gave him a temporary badge to one of the corridors. A security guard—a dralasite in her female stage—escorted Vrik along said corridor, and he was led into a lobby with a few empty vrusk-fitted benches from which to choose.