

## Black Wolf of Yesterday

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# **Black Wolf of Yesterday**

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## Summary

Beware the black wolf of Tarsus IV. It is no legend. It is very real and it lives. It has killed the guards and stolen away into the night.

But what does this tale have to do with Jim Kirk?

It started with hushed whispers. Adults conversing with one another, their wary faces pale and their voices low.

There's a shadow in the woods. It is dark and tall and clearly not human. It has shining red eyes and there's a flash of white teeth before it disappears into the night. It's not human, it's some wild animal. The guards are dying in the night, their throats slashed open with jagged cuts.

*Are we next? Who else is going to be killed by this beast? Has anyone actually seen this animal?*

The children are huddled close to their parents and guardians, they're told to always be home before sunset.

*Something else sinister is lurking in the woods. It steals children and food, it bites and claws and kills the guards who are there to protect us!*

The days crawled by, supplies were running thin as were the people (but not the guards or the governor himself). They started asking questions, which the guards and the governor tried their best to stifle them, promising that the other colonists in their own smaller settlements were fine despite no one hearing from them for days, *weeks*, now.

Guards were being killed every other night, food supplies were stolen and bloody prints leading out of the settlement made the people more jumpy, keeping their doors and windows shut. No one could ask questions anymore, their rations were noticeably smaller and their health declining steadily.

At one point, the killings stopped. No blood spilling in their streets, no more rations disappearing with the deaths. The guards and the governor himself appeared settled, their demeanours lighter than it had been since the killings started - since the shadowed beast started appearing.

Then one night, a wild fire struck the governor's building - guards were running around, yelling loudly with some of them being cut short suddenly, a gurgle echoing after. The settlers were in a panic, the fire was spreading quickly and they worked together to put it out so it would not reach their own homes.

In the flicker of the flames, they saw the beast; it was a wolf, blood coating its black fur and gleaming white teeth. Its jaws were wrapped around the lifeless body of the governor's personal guard.

It dropped the body, running through the dying flames and disappearing into the night.

*Did you see it? It was horrible! So much death and destruction, all by that black dog! An omen! It's bad enough with the blight, now there's a rapid beast out on the loose!*

The governor was missing, the rations had burnt in the fire and the settlers did not know what to do. One man, tired and fed up with the situation, travelled to the closest settlement only to come back paler and more frantic than when he had left.

*They're dead! All of them! Men, women, even children! They were killed!*

There was silence, heavy and stifling. *H-how? Was it the beast?*

*No , the man wailed, no! It was no beast. It was phaser fire! They were murdered by the governor's orders!*

What could they do? The governor was gone, the guards dead and now, a neighbouring settlement had been wiped out by phaser fire - a weapon only the governor's guards held.

Slowly, others went to check other settlements. Most were wiped out or just empty, they only managed to find another town with people much further away, with their own guards and thin resources.

The guards were not aware of what had been happening, that the other settlement was under attack by a mad wolf, that the governor was missing or that there even was a fire. They were clueless as to what to do; their supplies were quickly disappearing, there were mass murder sites and their long-distance space communication radar were destroyed in the fire.

They needed to do something. A mass grave would be ideal but the people were weak with little food and energy, but they could focus on bringing all the survivors together instead of having two different towns. They needed to work together, to live as long as they could and hope to the stars above that Starfleet would come by and check on Tarsus IV.

By some miracle, the fleet arrived soon after the survivors all came together. More of the fleet would arrive as soon as they could, but help was finally here. They were saved!

The atrocities Starfleet officers discovered were heinous; half the number of registered colonists starving but alive, mass executions with bodies left where they fell, a list of the survivors and those that were sentenced to die and a hidden torture chamber under the rubble of the governor's building.

Evacuations began as more of the fleet arrived, the critical were removed and treated first as doctors and nurses while search and rescue were deployed to find possible survivors hiding in the wilds of Tarsus IV.

There were rumours among the settlers that there was a group of children and a wild beast lurking in the woods beyond the rotten fields of their towns. They started there, fanning outwards and scouting for signs, any sign, of life within the silent brush. It would be two weeks before they found a child, sickly and delirious with fever screaming for help.

He was crying as he begged the adults to help. His friends - his family! - were dying. No one could leave their hiding spot anymore, they were too sick to do anything. A young officer took to the boy, doing his best to calm him down before promising that he and his friends are from Starfleet and that they'll help him.

It was a long walk and a steep climb up to this hiding spot. There were signs of life in the area, broken off twigs and a faint walking trail as well as two depressingly small and shallow

graves nearby.

The unpleasant scent of sickness permeated the air as they approached, the sounds of harsh breathing and wet coughs grew louder. The young boy ran forward, crying out that he'd brought help.

The Starfleet team were slow to approach and stopped immediately once they heard a loud snarl. A pre-teen lunged forward, eyes fever bright and hands wrapped tightly around a phaser set to kill.

*We're here to help*, the officer stated, hands raised to show he was unarmed. The rest of the team quickly followed, worry pinching their expressions and postures.

*Liars! You're going to kill us*, she hissed. The phaser started to whine in warning.

*We're with Starfleet. We got your message!*

The whining stopped and her arm waivered. She licked her lips, *you did?*

*Yes. Yes, we did. We're here to help.*

*You... you actually came?*

He nodded, *let us help you and your friends.*

The phaser was dropped and the pre-teen fell to her knees. The officer kicked the phaser aside and approached her, gently placing a hand on her shoulder. *We've got you. All of you.*

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