

STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Confidence in Princes"

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*This teleplay is dedicated to the victims
of the tragic events of Tuesday 11th September, 2001.*

Let us hope that something good comes of this.

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STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Confidence in Princes"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. ENTERPRISE

Docked at the STARBASE we saw at the end of "Aftermath."

There are still ENGINEERS on the hull; some are working around a section that has been ripped out completely and we see people walking under force fields looking out through the devastation.

CROSS (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 78080.4.
The Enterprise has been in dry dock receiving repairs for almost three weeks now and is almost ready to get underway. The ship sustained heavy damage during our encounter with the Q'tami that left several members of our crew dead.

(beat)

I sense a feeling of awkwardness around our newest crewmember, Y'lan. Maybe even fear. I truly hope that they will be able to put their difficulties aside in order to work for the greater good.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM

All of the senior staff are gathered around the center table, with the exception of Y'LAN and ELRIS.

CROSS (V.O.)

Begin Personal log. I'm still having difficulties with Lea. The transition into our new working conditions has been a difficult one and though she is still avoiding me, I feel that by doing this we can both get on with our work without unnecessary conflict.

The rest of the crew sit in silence; tension is in the air.

The doors slide open and Y'LAN walks in, seemingly at a normal speed, unaware that he is late, or if he is aware, he doesn't seem to be bothered.

CROSS (CONT'D)

You're late, Mister Y'lan.

Y'LAN

Mister? I have not a gender you
are familiar with.

Cross is somewhat taken aback by Y'lan's directness but
doesn't mention it.

CROSS

(awkwardly)

I'll try to remember that in the
future. Now that everyone's here,
let's get underway. We have--

TALORA

(interrupts)

Doctor Elris is still not present.

Cross gives her a stern look, turns away from the rest of
the crew, and only faces Talora.

CROSS

We'll go on without her.

Talora does not look too pleased with Cross's reply.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Now, we have Admiral Delfune en
route to tour the ship. She'll be
arriving within the next few hours,
so I expect everything to be ready
for her inspection.

Grey seems to have been made unusually nervous by the
announcement and looks up.

GREY

Have you got anything more solid
on when the Admiral will be docking,
Captain?

CROSS

All I know is that it will be
sometime within the next few hours.
I'm sure that the engine room will
do as it is now, Mr. Grey.

GREY

Yes, sir.

CROSS

Does anyone else have anything to
report?

DOJAR

We're still having problems with
the phasers since the Q'tami attack.
I wouldn't recommend going out of
dock anytime soon.

GREY

The quantum core isn't yet up to its full efficiency either, but we are working on it. The engineering team is out on the hull as we speak.

CROSS

What's the bottom line?

GREY

Two, three days.

TALORA

We also seem to be having trouble scheduling staff meetings. Certain key personnel haven't been present at a number of meetings over the last few days.

CROSS

I am aware of that, thank you, Commander. Now, unless anyone has anything else to add, you're all dismissed.

The staff all walk out leaving Talora and Cross alone in the room.

TALORA

I should not be the one to remind you to discipline your officers.

CROSS

And you don't need to, Commander. The good Doctor and I just need some time to work out the new condition of our relationship.

TALORA

Then I suggest you work quickly, Captain, because if you don't, you may not have a crew left.

CROSS

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

TALORA

It means, Captain, that if you do not sort out your own personal problems, then it will soon get in the way of your duty as a Starfleet Officer and it will end in the destruction of this ship.

CROSS

If I recall correctly, it was you who almost blew up the Enterprise.

TALORA

I think that was different.

Cross shakes his head. Half amused, half frustrated.

CROSS

Pot and kettle, Commander. Pot and kettle.

He walks out, leaving Talora staring out of one of the observation windows. She sighs, displeased.

EXT. ENTERPRISE HULL

GREY is wearing a space suit, working on the hull.

Below him he can see the huge gash in the Enterprise's side as he and other ENGINEERS repair wiring and tubing. Above it a huge piece of hull floats, waiting to be put down into place.

He picks up some of the wiring and walks across the force field. Carrying the wiring along behind him, he attaches it to another burnt piece of wiring on the other side of the gap. ENSIGN BOYLE follows him, a slight waver in her steps.

GREY

Are you able to continue, Ensign?

BOYLE

I think so, sir. Just some space sickness.

GREY

I haven't had that for years. I remember the first time I did this, I felt like my stomach was going to explode.

Dripping with sarcasm:

BOYLE

(sarcastically)
You're a great help, sir.

GREY

(in all seriousness)
You're welcome.

BOYLE

Talk about something. Just anything to get my mind off this.

Y'LAN walks under the force field and looks up at the work crews above him. He nods respectfully to Grey who in return raises a hand. Y'lan walks on.

GREY

You know, I still haven't gotten used to the idea of having Y'lan on board.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

(beat)

Three weeks ago the Q'tami were trying to destroy the ship, and now here's one of them roaming about the ship... observing us.

BOYLE

It's no different than having a Romulan as the first officer.

GREY

On the contrary, Ensign. It's very different.

BOYLE

The Romulans fought Earth for years back in the twenty second century; the Q'tami attacked us once.

GREY

And nearly destroyed the ship and killed me.

BOYLE

So it's because of your personal experience?

Grey nods.

GREY

I guess it's different when it's your life that's on the line. I don't have any problems with having a Romulan first officer... but Y'lan... I was there, his race tried to kill me and that's not something that I'm just going to put to one side.

BOYLE

I don't think he's going to try and blow up the ship. He's on it as well. He doesn't want to die.

GREY

And how do we know that? As far as we know he might be the equivalent to a Japanese kamikaze pilot.

Boyle shakes her head and carries on with her work.

BOYLE

Sir, let's just get on with what we're supposed to be doing.

Grey smiles.

INT. BRIDGE

ELRIS ENTERS and walks over to Talora who is sitting in the command chair.

ELRIS
The weekly sickbay report,
Commander.

Talora takes the PADD and skims it, before giving it back to Elris.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Is there something wrong, Commander?

TALORA
It is not me you should be giving this to, Doctor. It should be the Captain.

ELRIS
Then maybe you can pass it on to him for me?

TALORA
I do not currently have the time to act as a go-between for you and the Captain, and neither does the rest of the bridge staff. Unless you have more pressing matters, deliver it yourself.

ELRIS
(sneering)
Yes, ma'am.

Elris marches towards Cross's ready room and hits the chime.

When the doors open she ENTERS. Dojar turns from his station.

DOJAR
I really don't think that was a good idea, Commander.

TALORA
I disagree. By putting the Captain and the Doctor together they will be forced to spend some time with each other and begin to work their problems out. Hopefully.

Dojar smirks as the doors to the ready room open and an extremely frustrated Elris STORMS OUT. She eyes Talora as the Doctor heads towards the turbolift.

DOJAR
So much for that theory.

CROSS'S COM VOICE
(not sounding too
happy)

Commander Talora, would you please
report to my ready room? And I
mean right now.

TALORA
Of course, Captain.

Dojar gives her a "told-you-so" look. She returns a smirking
glance and ENTERS Cross's ready room. Dojar is left behind,
amused.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross sits behind the table, agitated.

CROSS
Commander, I appreciate everything
you are doing for me and my
estranged wife, but, quite frankly,
right now is not the time to be
forcing us near each other.

TALORA
Then what is a good time, Captain?
When the ship is under heavy fire
and half of the crew are dead?
This is not an efficient way to
run a ship - whether it is
Federation or Romulan.

CROSS
And you have no right to interfere
in my personal life, especially
with my relationship with Doctor
Elris!

TALORA
On the contrary, Captain. I have
every right to interfere with
decisions that I believe put this
ship at risk - when it is
unnecessary. And this, in my
opinion, is one of those moments.

DOJAR'S COM VOICE
Dojar to Cross.

CROSS
Go ahead.

DOJAR'S COM VOICE
Captain, the Admiral's shuttle is
requesting permission to dock.

CROSS
Already?

DOJAR'S COM VOICE

Affirmative, sir.

Cross brushes his hands through his hair and stands up.

CROSS

Clear them for landing, Dojar, but try to delay the Admiral for as long as possible I need to...

(looking for an excuse)

Get my dress uniform on.

DOJAR'S COM VOICE

Acknowledged.

Cross goes to the back of the ready room and removes a well-folded DRESS UNIFORM which obviously hasn't been used in a long time.

CROSS

After the Admiral has left, we'll continue this conversation. But I'll say this, stay out of my personal business. All right?

INT. CORRIDOR

Cross and Talora in dress uniforms, pacing fast. Their conversation slowly heating up:

TALORA

Captain, I was only trying to help.

CROSS

Is nagging a Romulan trait or just your own specialty? Look, as I said, I appreciate your efforts - I really do - but I don't need your help to sort out my personal problems. I'm not that desperate yet.

TALORA

We'll see.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

Now, how do I look?

The dress uniform is an ill-fitting match for him. It doesn't look comfortable on him, and he doesn't look comfortable in it.

TALORA

This could turn out to be very interesting.

Cross isn't at all that enthusiastic. As they enter the SHUTTLEBAY, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. SHUTTLEBAY

CROSS and TALORA walk in, Cross adjusts his uniform collar, and reaches the shuttle as the door begins to open. ADMIRAL DELFUNE, a middle-aged human female, walks out of the door and up to Cross.

DELFUNE
Captain Cross.

CROSS
Admiral Delfune, I presume. Welcome
to the Enterprise.

Cross extends his hand, she doesn't take it. Instead, she just looks around.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Ahem... This is Commander Talora.
My first officer.

TALORA
Admiral.

Only a nod in response.

DELFUNE
I expect the ship is ready for my
inspection?

CROSS
We still have some damage to the
hull plates and engineering section,
but we've done all that we can in
the given time.

DELFUNE
And almost destroyed the ship on
the first mission. You're an
Enterprise Captain all right, Cross.

CROSS
(uneasy)
Thank you, sir.

They EXIT the shuttle bay.

INT. SICKBAY

The doors slide open and Cross and Delfune ENTER. The room doesn't have any patients, but all of the medical staff with the exception of Elris are hard at work.

CROSS
(proudly)
This is the Enterprise's sickbay.
(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)

It's the most up-to-date medical facility aboard a starship in the Quadrant and is equipped with the latest technology.

DELFUNE

I'd like to meet your Chief Medical Officer. I understand you two have a history together.

CROSS

Well... yes.

DELFUNE

I'd like to have a talk with her, to know what she thinks about her new assignment. Where is she?

Cross pulls aside ONE OF THE NURSES walking past.

CROSS

Could you go and find Doctor Elris for me?

NURSE

Of course, Captain.

DELFUNE

(to Cross)

You mean she isn't here?

CROSS

I'm unaware of the Doctor's current whereabouts, Admiral, but I'm sure she's on her way here as we speak.

The doors open and ELRIS calmly walks in.

ELRIS

Admiral Delfune, I didn't realize you were on board.

DELFUNE

Apparently so. But better late than never.

ELRIS

I trust the Captain has told you everything you need to know about the sickbay.

DELFUNE

The basics. But I wanted to talk to you personally for a few minutes.
(to Cross)

Excuse us, Captain.

Cross politely moves out of the way as he watches Elris and Delfune head towards Elris's office.

GREY'S COM VOICE
Lieutenant Grey to the Captain.

CROSS
Go ahead.

INT. ENGINEERING

The whole place is in a flurry of activity. The ENGINEERING CREW runs back and forth, removing excess crates and containers, organizing tools, cleaning the place up. GREY tries to keep everything in check.

GREY
Captain, Engineering is not going to be ready in time for the Admiral's inspection.

CROSS'S COM VOICE
I thought you said that the ship was ready, Mr. Grey?

GREY
(sighs)
Well, technically it is. But the ship's engines are what we engineers live for and they aren't what they should be.

CROSS'S COM VOICE
I'm sure that it's fine, Mr. Grey.

Cross out.

GREY
But...

INT. SICKBAY

Cross taps the comm line closed. He shakes his head at the short conversation and puts his head in his hands, wondering what impression the Admiral's going to get of the ship.

Finally, Delfune and Elris walk out. There is a stern look on Elris's face but the Admiral seems pleased with herself.

DELFUNE
I'm ready to move on, Captain.

CROSS
Great. Next stop: main engineering.

As they walk out, Cross turns around and looks at Elris, who just gives him a blank look that reveals nothing.

Cross is unwillingly drawn out in the Admiral's wake, unable to talk to Elris.

INT. CORRIDOR

Y'lan walks down the corridor and nods at Cross and walks to them.

CROSS

Y'lan. This is Admiral Delfune.

Y'LAN

(in all seriousness)

Do you enjoy your position of authority?

DELFUNE

Excuse me?

Y'LAN

Is that question not appropriate?

Delfune throws a glance at Cross who tries to shrink into the corner. Then, she turns back to Y'lan.

DELFUNE

No, I don't think it is.

Y'LAN

I will rephrase. Does your authoritative position grant you more involvement in mating rituals? I asked Captain Cross and--

CROSS

(interrupts)

Perhaps we should move on now. We're behind schedule for our bridge tour already, Admiral. Shall we continue?

The two leave Y'lan and walk on, into...

INT. TURBOLIFT

As the doors close, Delfune turns to Cross.

DELFUNE

I understand that you authorized Y'lan to be brought aboard.

CROSS

That's correct.

DELFUNE

Then he's your responsibility?

CROSS

Yes.

DELFUNE

Then it's your responsibility to teach him to become suitable for
(MORE)

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

starship life, because to be quite honest, Captain - if I was one of your crew - I wouldn't like the idea of him being on board at all right now, let alone treating me as a lab rat.

CROSS

Understood, Admiral.

INT. MESS HALL

QUINLAN is sitting at a table when ELRIS ENTERS. She grabs a drink from a bartender and sits opposite Quinlan.

ELRIS

How are things?

QUINLAN

Good. Though I'm not quite sure what I'm supposed to be doing; at the moment my job as "Tactical Advisor" just means sitting in on senior staff meetings.

ELRIS

I'm sure it will become more than that.

QUINLAN

I hope so. Otherwise I'll end up being the ship's gossip officer.

They both laugh and take a sip of their drinks.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

And how are you and you know who?

ELRIS

(sighs)

We're on shaky ground at the moment. He doesn't really want to see me and I don't really want to see him, but Commander Talora seems intent on bringing us together.

QUINLAN

And when she does?

ELRIS

Sparks fly. But there's a lot going on, so I don't want to talk about it.

Quinlan nods and takes another sip of her drink.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Anyway, do you know anything about Astralasian Bacteria?

QUINLAN

I know it used to be a hot commodity during the war. Pretty deadly stuff - it's used in several variants of biogenic weapons. Why? You want to buy some?

ELRIS

(shaking her head)

It can also be used to repair cell damage as soon as it occurs, if put in the right conditions.

QUINLAN

If you say so. I wasn't really good in biology at the Academy. Why do you ask?

ELRIS

I happen to have had some brought aboard this morning for an experiment I want to run. I've run a few computer models on it for some time now and I think I'm ready to try it for real.

QUINLAN

Good for you. What are you waiting for?

ELRIS

Because as it's used in biogenic weaponry, I can't use it without the authorization of the captain or the first officer.

QUINLAN

Ah.

ELRIS

Ah, indeed. Unfortunately, Commander Talora is making me go through Neil, and hence the problem.

QUINLAN

I see. But why don't you just go ask him?

ELRIS

I really don't want to cause more trouble than there is.

QUINLAN

I think these issues are part of your job descriptions. I don't think you can avoid him forever.

(beat)

Go ahead, he can only say yes or no.

ELRIS

You are sounding like a counselor.
Ever thought of a change of career?

QUINLAN

(with a grin)
And give up all this fun? Hardly.

INT. TALORA'S OFFICE

Y'lan ENTERS, and sees Talora working. He takes a look at his surroundings, notes several, still unpacked boxes.

Y'LAN

A... well-designed office.

TALORA

Thank you... I think. I just moved in. How can I help you?

Y'LAN

There is a vacant science lab.
Under the damaged section.

TALORA

Yes.

Y'LAN

I will use the facilities and set up some Q'tami equipment.

TALORA

Just like that?

Y'LAN

Yes. A problem?

TALORA

Well, there are a couple of issues to sort through.

Y'LAN

I have all the credentials.

Talora turns and enters something into a PADD.

TALORA

Yes, I read the file your people provided. I have my reservations and I'll have to discuss your idea with the Captain. But - knowing him - I believe that he'll agree.

Y'LAN

I will go to the lab now.

Y'lan EXITS quickly and Talora looks up, about to say something, but quickly dismisses it and gets on with her work.

INT. ENGINEERING

Delfune, Cross and Grey walk towards the exit. All of Grey's engineers are standing at attention on either side of the walkway.

DELFUNE

Thank you, Mr. Grey. That certainly was a by-the-book tour.

GREY

I'm glad you approve, Admiral.

As the doors open, all of the engineers jump to attention, do a regulation turn and begin working on the consoles directly behind them or march over to another position.

Cross winces as Grey smiles proudly.

DELFUNE

Impressive. You keep a tight and efficient engine room, and would like to hear more. But, unfortunately I have to get back to Starfleet Command.

GREY

Understood, Admiral.

Grey himself then does a by-the-book turn and walks to the warp core where he wipes some sweat from his forehead.

Cross and Delfune EXIT.

DELFUNE

You have an exceptional engineer, Captain.

CROSS

Indeed. Though he does tend to get a little carried away when it comes to formality.

DELFUNE

I'm sure he'll grow out of it.

Cross laughs, rather uneasily.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

But on a more serious note, Captain, I have to inform you that you should expect a call from Starfleet Command about some of the decisions you made during your first mission.

(beat)

You'll be facing a review board.

CROSS

A review board? Which decisions?

DELFUNE

All of them.

Cross visibly flinches as he walks along.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The shuttle moves out of the still docked Enterprise and out into the distance.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross sits down and sighs. He puts his head back on the top of the chair and gazes at the ceiling.

CROSS

Now I know why all of the famous Captains ended up bald.

DOJAR'S COM VOICE

Bridge to Cross, you have a call waiting for you, sir.

CROSS

Put it through here, Lieutenant.

The screen on Cross' desk lights up with the familiar Federation logo and is replaced with the image of ADMIRAL PORTMAN.

PORTMAN

Neil, how are the repairs going?

CROSS

Admiral. They're coming along according to schedule.

PORTMAN

Good, I want the Enterprise back on duty as soon as possible.

CROSS

Why do I get the feeling that this isn't just a social call?

PORTMAN

I take it that Admiral Delfune has left the ship.

CROSS

Five minutes ago.

PORTMAN

And she told you about the review?

CROSS

Yes. I still have a hard time believing I have to go through this.

PORTMAN

A lot of difficult choices were made on your maiden voyage, Neil, and I'm afraid you're the one being held responsible.

CROSS

We didn't know that the Q'tami weren't hostile; they had destroyed the Klingon base.

PORTMAN

That's what the board will be reviewing. You'll have to find yourself an advocate to represent you.

CROSS

When will the review be held?

PORTMAN

Tomorrow. I suggest you get a good night's sleep.

On Cross's tired face we go to...

INT. CORRIDOR

GREY is walking alone when DOJAR comes from another corridor and begins to walk along side him.

DOJAR

Lieutenant. I want to ask you something. It's about the Captain.

GREY

What about him?

DOJAR

I heard he's about to go up against a review board. You know about this?

GREY

I overheard him and Admiral Delfune talk about it, but I don't know what it's about.

DOJAR

There are rumors floating around the ship that his actions during our last mission were... Well, let's just say apparently there's been a lot of controversy surrounding some of his decisions.

GREY

Don't believe everything you hear, Lieutenant.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

Besides, we were all responsible
for some of those more
"controversial decisions." Don't
forget that.

DOJAR

I don't have anything to worry
about. We aren't the ones up against
a panel of Starfleet's toughest.

GREY

What do you mean?

DOJAR

Admiral Delfune is handling the
prosecution herself. And from what
I heard, she's out for blood.

Off Grey's troubled expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. STARBASE

Same as before.

INT. REVIEW ROOM

The room is a large, circular, two-level auditorium. A number of seats for guests look down on to the lower level where the review takes place. There are a few ADMIRALS and other OFFICERS seated here.

Cross sits at a desk on the lower level, in front of a panel of more ADMIRALS (including PORTMAN). Next to him is a vacant seat.

DELFUNE walks in, wearing her game face. Cross looks at her as if she were a traitor.

The center seat between all of the Admirals is empty. An elderly Bolian Admiral, TUFORN, walks into the room.

PORTMAN

All rise.

Everyone in the room stands to greet the Admiral, but quickly sit down again at a sign and polite nod from the him.

Tuforn sits down as well and reviews a PADD.

TUFORN

We are here to review the case against Captain Neil Cross, currently of the Starship Enterprise, registry NCC-1701-G, regarding his and his crew's decisions during the maiden mission. The review will begin with the prosecution, followed by an immediate defense to the statements made against the Captain and his crew.

(beat)

Captain Cross, where is your legal counsel?

As he is about to answer, the door opens and TALORA walks in, carrying several PADDs.

CROSS

She's here.

TALORA

Commander Talora representing Captain Cross.

Tuforn nods. Talora sits down, leans to Cross.

TALORA (CONT'D)

You didn't give me much time to prepare.

CROSS

You have credentials on judicial proceedings, right?

TALORA

Same as every other officer. My first advice to you is to get better representation.

CROSS

I need a miracle now, Commander. And since there doesn't seem to be one available at the moment, I'll take the second best: a Romulan lawyer.

TALORA

Captain...

CROSS

And I'm desperate.

Before she can speak her mind:

TUFORN

Admiral Delfune, you may begin.

DELFUNE

I'd like to call Admiral Portman to the stand as my first witness.

Cross and Portman both look more than a little surprised.

PORTMAN

With all due respect, Admiral, I was never aboard the Enterprise during the said events.

DELFUNE

No, Admiral. But you did assign Captain Cross to the Enterprise in the first place.

(beat)

Despite the objections of many disapproving Admirals, I might add.

Portman reluctantly stands up and heads over to the stand.

TUFORN

For the record, please state your name and rank.

PORTMAN

Rear Admiral Henry Portman.

TUFORN

You may proceed, Admiral Delfune.

Delfune walks forward to where Cross sits and looks down at him, followed by a harsh look at Portman.

DELFUNE

Why did you recommend Captain Cross for the command of the Enterprise, Admiral?

PORTMAN

I believed that he would be able to cope with the difficult circumstances that are unfolding at our borders. We need a strong Captain and a strong flagship if the Federation wants to put up a strong face against the foreign powers.

Delfune nods and continues.

DELFUNE

How long have you known Captain Cross?

PORTMAN

Ten years.

DELFUNE

And do you think that could have influenced your judgment in choosing the Captain?

PORTMAN

Well, if you mean do I trust Neil Cross, then the answer is yes.

DELFUNE

I didn't ask that. I asked you whether or not your friendship could have influenced your judgment.

PORTMAN

Of course it has, but I believed, and still do believe, that I chose the right man for the job.

DELFUNE

But how long has it been since Captain Cross last commanded a ship or a station of his own?

PORTMAN

He hasn't commanded a starship for six years. But I assigned him to one of our ship building yards off Deep Space Nine where he headed the research department

(MORE)

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
concentrating on derivative Voyager
technology.

DELFUNE
And why did you assign him to DS9,
Admiral?

PORTMAN
I believed that it was the best
place for him at the time.

DELFUNE
For what reasons?

Cross hangs his head, unable to believe that the Review
Board is going to dig into his personal life. He turns to
Talora, pleading. She only sits there, calm.

PORTMAN
Neil was having... personal
problems.

DELFUNE
Please specify, Admiral.

PORTMAN
I think the Captain's personal
life is none of our business.

DELFUNE
I disagree. If it affects his
judgments and or his performance
during missions, then I believe
that it does become our business.
Now, please specify.

Portman looks at Tufoan for refuge, finding none. Delfune
doesn't yield.

PORTMAN
Neil had just separated from his
wife. Even though they are still
officially married they haven't
been together as a couple for
several years.

DELFUNE
And would this be the same wife
who is the current Chief Medical
Officer of the Enterprise?

PORTMAN
Yes.

DELFUNE
And who chose to give her that
assignment?

PORTMAN
Captain Cross did.

DELFUNE

Thank you, Admiral, that will be all.

TUFORN

Commander Talora.

Talora rises.

TALORA

Admiral Portman. How would you describe Captain Cross?

PORTMAN

I believe that he's one of the Federation's most capable Captains. He may not have the most medals or made the most first contacts, but his experience and integrity, I believe, make him an ideal candidate for the command of the Enterprise.

TALORA

Thank you, Admiral. No further questions.

Talora returns to Cross.

CROSS

(whispering, amazed)
No more questions?

TALORA

No. Anything else he might say will only hurt our case.

CROSS

And what was all that charade about? I thought this was going to be about the Q'tami encounter?

TALORA

She's getting to that. But first, she just wants to make sure that you're torn to pieces.

CROSS

Great. Just great.

Cross seems to sink deeper.

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- LATER

Docked with the starbase.

INT. TALORA'S OFFICE

Talora is working at her desk when Elris enters.

TALORA

Doctor, I'm quite busy now. What can I do for you?

ELRIS

Commander, I know you aren't particularly happy about my and Captain Cross's... relationship and have suggested that we talk to each other rather than go through you, but...

Elris pauses awkwardly.

TALORA

But?

ELRIS

I want to carry out an experiment that I've been researching for years and I've finally got the equipment, materials and conditions all in one place but I need your permission or the Captain's to perform it.

TALORA

So what are you asking me, Doctor?

ELRIS

Well since the Captain has his review, would you be able to authorize this for me?

Elris hands Talora a PADD and she skims through it.

TALORA

Unfortunately, Doctor, I cannot authorize this. A rank of Captain or above is required to authorize the handling of material of this grade.

ELRIS

Well, you're going to the review's next session could you ask him to authorize it then?

TALORA

Let me make myself clear, Doctor. I am not and will not act as your and Captain Cross' go-between in situations such as this one. You must--

ELRIS

(interrupts)

Commander - believe me - I would, but unfortunately he's not available right now.

TALORA

Well, then that is unfortunate,
Doctor. Maybe you can ask the next
Captain his permission. The way
this thing is going, it won't be
long. Good day.

From the angry and insulted on Elris's face we go to...

INT. REVIEW ROOM

Cross is now up on the stand as Delfune continues pacing
around the room, trying to get Cross into corners he can't
get out of.

DELFUNE

How long were you in the Dominion
POW camp, Captain?

CROSS

Two years.

DELFUNE

And during your time there did you
witness a lot of hostilities between
your fellow prisoners?

CROSS

Of course I did, it was a POW camp.

DELFUNE

And did you get involved in any of
those hostilities?

TALORA

I'd like to object to where this
line of questioning is heading,
Your Honor.

TUFORN

Objection overruled.

TALORA

Then I'd like to call a short
recess.

TUFORN

Granted.

Cross steps down from the platform and walks across to
Talora, out of ear range of Delfune.

TALORA

You see where this is going, don't
you?

CROSS

Of course and by the sound of
things, there isn't going to be a
way around it.

TALORA

No. But we can make it look like it's given you more experience, more diplomacy, more...

CROSS

No offense, Commander, but we didn't exactly play nice and hold peace talks over who got the next food batch.

TALORA

That's exactly what they want to hear you saying. Don't give them that.

CROSS

You want me to lie?

We can half-expect her answer.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. REVIEW ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Various people have moved about the room.

TUFORN

I'd like to call you all back to your positions.

Everyone moves back to where they were before.

TUFORN (CONT'D)

You may continue your line of questioning, Admiral Delfune.

DELFUNE

Thank you, Admiral. Captain Cross did you get involved in any of the hostilities in the Dominion POW camp?

CROSS

Yes. But I believe that they shaped me for the better.

DELFUNE

And what were these hostilities over?

CROSS

Food, the murder of innocents...

DELFUNE

Just causes, would you say?

CROSS

Yes.

DELFUNE

And you say that you believe these events shaped you for the better?

CROSS

Yes.

DELFUNE

How so?

CROSS

They taught me a great deal about what life was like in the real world. I learned to negotiate for food, water, bandages. I learned how to fight verbally and be able to see two sides of one story.

DELFUNE

And you'd say that these were all good qualities?

CROSS

Yes, but I'm not saying that I'd repeat the experience again just to gain them. I lost two years of my life in those camps, my childhood, Admiral. I'm just glad some of the qualities I learned were put to good use.

From the crowd, Portman nods. Both confident and proud at the same time.

DELFUNE

Really, Captain. From what I read, none of this was put to use when it came to attacking a Q'tami ship.

CROSS

We were led to believe that it was hostile.

DELFUNE

Ah yes...

She picks up a PADD and reads part of it and then looks up.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

...by an ex-Starfleet officer, who was all but a pirate... and by an engineer of a destroyed Klingon base. I can't say that you saw "both sides of the story" during this mission.

CROSS

Miss Quinlan had no idea that the Klingons attacked the ship first,
(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)

and nor was it our fault that some of the base's records were irretrievable.

DELFUNE

Please, tell me how you proceeded from there.

CROSS

(sighs)

I... we presumed that it was hostile.

DELFUNE

You presumed? So much for your lessons of diplomacy in your POW camp, Captain. And who exactly is "we"?

CROSS

Myself, Commander Talora and...

(pause)

Admiral Portman.

DELFUNE

Ah, yes. Admiral Portman. As I recall Admiral Portman had ships from the Fifth and Sixth fleets on course to intercept the vessel. But tell me Captain, who made the final call as to the Q'tami's actions?

CROSS

I did.

Delfune nods and walks up close to him, resting her PADD on the stand that Cross is standing in.

DELFUNE

And whose decision was it to bring a member of that "hostile" species on board the Enterprise?

TALORA

Objection, Your Honor. Admiral Delfune herself doesn't seem to know whether or not we should treat the Q'tami as friend or foe.

TUFORN

Objection sustained.

DELFUNE

I'll rephrase that. Whose decision was it to bring the Q'tami envoy on board?

CROSS

Mine, and Admiral Portman's along with members of the Q'tami Hegemony. Upon their request, I might add.

DELFUNE

Captain, to be honest, as far as you know, Y'lan could have had a vendetta against you for attacking his ship and you wouldn't be any the wiser.

CROSS

Y'lan is a scientist, Admiral just like many of the Q'tami. From what Y'lan has told me, they are a race of scientists and psychologists who are interested in how races evolve and change, for better or worse.

DELFUNE

And how does Y'lan sees us, Captain?

CROSS

I think you'd better ask him that for yourself, Admiral.

DELFUNE

As I recall, when I met him yesterday he asked me if I enjoyed my position of authority and how much sex I have.

CROSS

He's still adapting to Starfleet life and protocols.

DELFUNE

You make him sound almost like a Borg, Captain.

TALORA

Your honor!

TUFORN

Admiral Delfune. Please.

DELFUNE

My conclusion from this conversation, Captain, is that you had no real reasons to attack that ship other than the word of a Klingon, fragmented sensor logs and a renegade Starfleet officer. And that you brought on board the Federation's flagship an alien about which we know nothing.

(MORE)

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

You made that decision after consulting only one Admiral, who happens to be your mentor.

(beat)

Thank you, Captain.

CROSS

This is no different than Captain Janeway bringing Seven of Nine onto Voyager, or Captain Picard's decision to bring Mirasta Yale of the Malcorians on board his Enterprise.

DELFUNE

I said, thank you, Captain. That will be all.

Cross looks beaten. Delfune won the round and she lets it show.

INT. STARBASE CORRIDOR

We can see the Enterprise docked behind us as Dojar walks up to Cross and Talora.

DOJAR

Commander.

Talora nods curtly.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Captain, we may have a slight problem.

CROSS

(groans)

Tell me about it. What is it now?

DOJAR

There has been a slight... misunderstanding between Y'lan and myself. He has begun to install Q'tami technology in one of the new science labs.

Talora's eyes OPEN WIDER.

CROSS

WHAT!?

TALORA

(slightly embarrassed)

I believe that I may be partially to blame for this, Captain.

DOJAR

He is refusing to take the equipment away without seeing you personally.

CROSS

I don't have time for this.

ELRIS walks around the corner.

ELRIS

Captain, I'm glad I've found you.

CROSS

Can you meet me in my ready room in ten minutes, Doctor? I'm slightly occupied right now.

ELRIS

Well, it doesn't look like it to me.

CROSS

(sighs)

Talora, meet me in the science lab.

Talora and Dojar EXIT, leaving Cross and Elris together in the corridor.

ELRIS

I knew that it would be pointless coming to you. You're not going to approve any of my work.

CROSS

Approve what? What work? What are you talking about?

ELRIS

Hasn't Talora told you?

CROSS

(agitated)

Told me what?

ELRIS

I need your authorization to carry out an experiment.

She hands him a PADD.

CROSS

I can't approve that right now, I need to talk to Grey.

ELRIS

You know what, Neil, I'm getting fed up being put to the bottom of your list of priorities.

CROSS

You know that isn't true.

ELRIS

Then what is true, Captain?

CROSS

I'm a Captain of a starship, Lea,
and at the moment I have more
pressing matters to attend to than
that of some experiment or a certain
Commander trying to patch up our
relationship. My career's on the
line!

ELRIS

It was always on the line! What do
I have to do before you put others
before that? You neglected me, you
neglected yourself and you
neglected...

She doesn't finish the sentence. Both of their faces tell
that she appears to have inadvertently struck a chord.

CROSS

I'm sorry.

ELRIS

No, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have
brought that up...

And with that Elris hastily EXITS. Cross turns around to
see ADMIRAL DELFUNE standing in the corridor behind him.

Cross lets out a deep breath and from this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. CORRIDOR

The same scene as before. After a moment of hesitation, Cross turns around and chases Elris down the corridor.

CROSS

Lea!

ELRIS

I've asked you not to call me that, Neil... Captain.

CROSS

Then Doctor. If you want to do your damned experiment, then you can do your damned experiment.

ELRIS

That's all I wanted, just a yes or a no. I never wanted this to turn into a debate.

CROSS

And neither did I. Look, I'll handle the authorization of this when I'm cleared by this review board. After that, it's the first thing I'll put my mind to. All right?

She nods. Cross shakes his head.

CROSS (CONT'D)

We need to stay out of each others way as much as possible, without missing important meetings and staff briefings.

Elris reluctantly smiles at him and turns around and for a few seconds Cross watches her walk down the corridor, before turning around himself and walking in the opposite direction.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

Cross ENTERS.

CROSS

Report.

TALORA

Y'lan is refusing to take down the Q'tami equipment without seeing you, Captain.

CROSS

Where is he?

TALORA

In his... In the office.

Cross NODS and walks towards a secluded room where Y'lan is.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB - OFFICE

Dimly lit, only a few temporary lights are in place.

CROSS

Y'lan?

Y'lan EMERGES from the darkness.

Y'LAN

Captain.

CROSS

There's been a misunderstanding... at the moment there's nothing I can do. You'll have to take these things out of here.

Y'LAN

The technology will help you.

CROSS

I'm aware of that. But there are others at Starfleet Command who are dubious about you and your equipment.

Y'LAN

They have no reason to be.

CROSS

I'd like to believe that Y'lan, really, I would. But for the time being you'll have to put your equipment away before Starfleet makes a decision.

Y'LAN

On what?

CROSS

Like I said, you and your equipment.

Y'LAN

The agreement was for me to be on board this vessel.

CROSS

I'm aware of that, and in fact that's what the problem is. It wasn't approved by the rest of Starfleet.

Y'LAN

Your rules and... regulations make no sense to me. First you want me to help you, then you don't. You are erratic. Irritating.

CROSS

I've heard that one before. But I'm sorry, Y'lan. There's nothing I can do. Lieutenant Grey will be along shortly to help you dismantle some of your equipment.

Y'lan nods and skulks off to a corner of the room where he hangs his head in contemplation. The lights dim and Cross leaves Y'lan hidden in the darkness.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

Talora stands silently when Cross exits the room where Y'lan is.

CROSS

Cross to Engineering.

GREY'S COM VOICE

Grey here, Captain.

CROSS

Lieutenant, can you come down to the new science lab and help Y'lan dismantle some of his Q'tami equipment?

GREY'S COM VOICE

On my way, sir.

TALORA

What's Y'lan's current state of mind?

CROSS

Confused, but he'll get over it. I think Starfleet will start to see the advantages of having him on board with his technology, even if they don't see me as a suitable Captain.

TALORA

No decisions have been made yet, Captain, and if I have anything to do with it, you'll be staying here for a long time to come.

CROSS

You Romulans are a loyal people, I gather?

TALORA

We just don't like to lose.

CROSS

Unfortunately I don't share your enthusiasm, Commander. I don't think you're going to have much influence on what happens or where I end up. You're responsible for my command and Y'lan as much as I am.

TALORA

I am aware of that, Captain.

There is an awkward silence.

TALORA (CONT'D)

The review board is due to start again within an hour. I suggest we both get some rest before then.

Cross nods. On his tired face...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. REVIEW ROOM -- LATER

The review board has again gathered.

TUFORN

Admiral Delfune has requested that Lieutenant Grey, Doctor Elris and Jennifer Quinlan be present at this session of the hearing.

GREY, ELRIS and QUINLAN ENTER the review room.

TALORA

Admiral, I'd like to request that Y'lan be present also.

TUFORN

Approved.

She turns around to an ENSIGN behind her and whispers something to him. The Ensign EXITS.

TUFORN (CONT'D)

You may resume the hearing, Admiral Delfune.

DELFUNE

Thank you, Admiral. I'd like to call Doctor Elris to the stand.

Elris gives Cross a firm, reassuring look as she ENTERS the WITNESS STAND.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

During the previous recess, I witnessed a conversation... or perhaps the correct word is

(MORE)

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

argument, between Captain Cross
and Doctor Elris. Doctor, how did
you end up on the Enterprise with
your ex-husband?

ELRIS

Husband, Admiral. We are not
divorced.

(with a glance at
Cross)

Yet.

Cross winces, but quickly regains his composure.

DELFUNE

Continue, Doctor.

ELRIS

I was ordered to the Enterprise by
Captain Cross.

DELFUNE

And were you happy to be posted
there? Please remember that you
are under oath.

ELRIS

No, not at all. I had a good
research career on Bajor and that
was snatched away from me. But I
can continue most of my research,
sometimes with facilities I couldn't
have access to on Bajor. There are
advantages to the job.

DELFUNE

And how would you describe your
relationship with Captain Cross?

ELRIS

I'd say that we have a mutual
understanding between us, one that's
developing every day. For better
or worse.

DELFUNE

And how would you describe the
incident in the corridor which I
witnessed?

ELRIS

A minor misunderstanding.

DELFUNE

(flatly)

Thank you, Doctor.

TUFORN

Commander Talora?

TALORA

I have no questions for this witness.

TUFORN

You are excused, Doctor.

Delfune gives her a disdainful look as Elris exits, not particularly happy. As Elris WALKS PAST Cross he LOOKS UP to her and gives her a blank expression.

Y'LAN ENTERS and takes a seat next to Elris.

DELFUNE

I'd like to call Lieutenant Grey to the stand.

Grey stands up and enters the witness box.

GREY

Grey, Lieutenant Erik. Reporting as ordered.

DELFUNE

Let's skip the formalities, Lieutenant.

GREY

Yes, ma'am.

DELFUNE

I understand that you've been having some problems with your resident Q'tami, Lieutenant. Is that correct?

GREY

Yes, ma'am. Y'lan installed items of Q'tami equipment on the Enterprise without permission from either myself or the Captain. We've been having difficulty removing it without the help of Y'lan.

Y'lan does not look pleased. His face has started to swell and his eyes have turned a different color.

DELFUNE

And could you say what the nature of this technology is, Lieutenant?

GREY

I'm... not sure, Admiral. It appears to be mainly sensor equipment, but there are some devices which I cannot decipher. They might be communications equipment.

DELFUNE

Communications equipment? Even subspace transmitters?

GREY

Possibly.

DELFUNE

Thank you, Lieutenant. That will
be all.

As Tuform looks at Talora, she only waves her hand.

TUFORN

You may return to your work,
Lieutenant.Grey nods and EXITS the witness box and EXITS the Review
Room.

DELFUNE

(to Tuform)

Admiral, it's obvious that Y'lan
has been negligent in informing
his commanding officer of his
installation of the Q'tami
technology...Y'lan is about to STAND but Talora motions him to be quiet.
Cross gives her a worried look.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

And it is also obvious that Y'lan
has not been helpful in the removal
of the Q'tami technology.

Delfune TURNS towards Y'lan.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

Admiral, I'd like to call Y'lan to
the stand.Y'lan STANDS and WALKS to the front and ENTERS the witness
box. He looks out of place. He is too tall for the box and
looks like the box would burst if he were a couple of inches
wider.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

Y'lan, are these statements I just
made a few moments ago true?

Y'LAN

No. But in your mind, there is no
difference.

DELFUNE

So you could very well lie?

Cross leans closer to Talora.

CROSS

(whispering)

Aren't you going to say something?

TALORA

I am. But not yet.

Y'LAN

(to Delfune)

Everything is possible.

Delfune allows herself a smile and turns to Talora.

DELFUNE

He's your witness.

TALORA

Y'lan. Why did you originally come aboard the Enterprise?

Y'LAN

I was ordered to do so by the Q'tami Hegemony.

TALORA

And could you explain to us what the Q'tami Hegemony is exactly? How does it operate?

Y'LAN

The Hegemony is one, a culture ages old. We speak as one, we make decisions on any one choice through telepathy.

TALORA

And are you aware of a race of cybernetic organisms known as the Borg Collective, Y'lan?

Y'LAN

I am.

TALORA

And what does your research tell you about the Collective itself, and how does it differ from the Q'tami Hegemony?

DELFUNE

Objection!

TALORA

(to Tuform)

Admiral. Delfune herself insisted on drawing comparisons with the Borg.

Tuform considers it a moment, then:

TUFORN

Overruled. Please answer the question, Y'lan.

Y'LAN

The Borg are one mind spread across the millions. We are a million minds concentrated in one.

Talora NODS. She's gotten what she wanted.

TALORA

And how would you describe your species, Y'lan?

Y'LAN

Scientists and psychologists.

TALORA

How many other cultures have you made contact with?

Y'LAN

Over two hundred. Some don't know that we are present. We observe them, study how they go about their ways of life. It fascinates us.

TALORA

And is that why you installed the Q'tami technology on board the Enterprise?

Y'LAN

Yes. But it clearly bothers all of you. As a sign of cooperation, I will remove them.

With that Y'lan EXITS, leaving Delfune and even Tuforn with slight expression of shock on their faces.

TALORA

Admiral, I put to you that Y'lan is here only to further his and his race's knowledge of our cultures and way of life. None of the technology that has been installed on board the Enterprise is threatening in any way.

(beat)

For the record, I also have to note that I fail to see how Y'lan has to do with the competence of Captain Cross.

Delfune and Talora exchange looks. There are sparks between them, about to explode.

TUFORN

Thank you, Commander.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan ENTERS as Grey TURNS towards him.

GREY

Y'lan, come to help me this time?

Y'LAN

Yes. But we will reassemble it again within hours.

GREY

And why do you think that?

Y'LAN

You call it... reverse psychology?

GREY

Well I wish I could say that I wish you luck, Y'lan, but I don't.

A lot of this crew lost people they knew in the Q'tami attack, and they weren't too pleased when one came aboard to stay.

Y'LAN

Again, it was you who attacked us, on a false assumption.

GREY

(shaking the comment off)

Nevertheless a lot of the--

Suddenly the RED ALERT klaxon sounds and the entire lab seals off, leaving Y'lan and Grey standing in darkness with a HISSING SOUND above them.

GREY (CONT'D)

Please tell me that was something you did...

Y'LAN

I cannot, Lieutenant.

Grey raises an eyebrow as he looks around him.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning: Science Lab six, will lose all remaining oxygen in seven minutes and twenty eight seconds.

GREY

Great.

Y'lan looks around him as his face again begins to bloat. With this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. REVIEW ROOM

QUINLAN is now on the stand, it's obvious that she does not want to be there.

DELFUNE

Jennifer Quinlan. I never thought I'd hear that name again.

QUINLAN

I remember hearing that just a few weeks ago... it's like history is repeating itself.

DELFUNE

Admiral, are you aware of Miss Quinlan's past?

TUFORN

I am.

DELFUNE

Then would you say that it would be suitable for her to be serving on board a Federation starship?

TUFORN

As you are well aware, Admiral Delfune, I cannot comment on matters which you have brought the witness in to discuss.

DELFUNE

(nods)

I understand that you yourself, Miss Quinlan, had doubts about serving on board a starship when Captain Cross, let's say... first offered you the job?

QUINLAN

I really didn't have much choice in the matter.

DELFUNE

Please elaborate.

QUINLAN

Captain Cross told me that he would be able to get me off the hook if I cooperated with him and told him any information I had on the Klingon station. And when I say off the hook I mean that literally when it comes to the Klingons.

DELFUNE

So he bribed you?

QUINLAN

(sarcastically)

For the good of the ship, of course.

DELFUNE

And do you still wish to be on that ship now?

QUINLAN

Well it's better than rotting in a Federation prison, wouldn't you say?

DELFUNE

You do realize that there are higher powers that can take you off the Enterprise without the permission of Captain Cross, don't you, Miss Quinlan?

QUINLAN

I do. But you're forgetting that I'm not a Starfleet officer anymore.

DELFUNE

Neither were the Maquis.

QUINLAN

I've done a few good deeds, I saved the ship. You could say that I saved the day.

DELFUNE

And you think that really makes a difference?

QUINLAN

I'd say I saved Captain Cross from his first court martial. So yes, I think it does.

DELFUNE

But was it not you, Miss Quinlan who told Captain Cross that the Enterprise would be next on the Q'tami, I quote, "hit list"?

QUINLAN

It was. But I think you're forgetting who this trial is about, Admiral. Not me and my... 'controversial' information, but about Captain Cross's decisions three weeks ago.

DELFUNE

As I recall, Miss Quinlan, one of those decisions was to bring you aboard...

Cross' commbadge CHIRPS.

DOJAR'S COM VOICE

I'm sorry to interrupt the hearing, Captain, but we have a situation on board the Enterprise which requires your attention.

CROSS

If you'll excuse me, sirs. I still have a ship to run.

TUFORN

You are excused.

CROSS

I'm on my way, Lieutenant. Commander, you're with me.

CROSS and TALORA EXIT, leaving everyone else in their original positions.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

As the air escapes, Grey begins to COUGH.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning: There are five minutes of air remaining.

GREY

(anxious)

Can't we contact anyone using your communications equipment?

Y'LAN

As I have already told you three times, the power is off-line.

GREY

(still anxious)

So there's no way out of here.

Y'LAN

Unless the outside can get in here, we will be very much dead.

GREY

(looking for someone to blame)

You know what, Y'lan? It's all because of you. They'd be able to get a transporter lock on us if it wasn't for your equipment.

Y'LAN

Attempting to place the blame on me will not help you, Lieutenant.

GREY

But the blame is on you. If your people hadn't attacked the Klingon outpost...

Y'LAN

The Klingons attacked us.

GREY

Whatever. But there never would have been a hearing for the Captain, and there never would have been an incident. And we'd never be here. I believe I have the right to blame you.

Y'LAN

I find it hard to believe just how closed some of your human minds can be.

GREY

(angry)

What the hell's that supposed to mean?

Y'LAN

You have never encountered anyone quite like the Q'tami. We are truly alien to you. You are treating me like your own ancestors would have.

GREY

Don't be ridiculous! We're past that.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning: There are four minutes of air remaining.

Y'LAN

On the contrary. Many of your people did not change their views on "enemy" states for many generations.

GREY

I think you're only seeing one side of the story here... A lot of us lost people we knew during your attack. It's obvious that we're not going to be able to accept you right away.

Y'LAN

Captain Cross doesn't seem to have that problem.

GREY

Really? Then why do you think he's so edgy around Lieutenant Dojar? Who do you think ordered your equipment to be taken down?

Y'LAN

The current hearing forced that action upon him--

GREY

(quickly interrupts)
But it was his decision.

Y'LAN

Captain Cross was the man who reawakened me. I owe him a great deal.

GREY

And I'm the man who keeps the ship from exploding. You owe me a great deal too.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning: There are three minutes of air remaining.

INT. CORRIDOR

Cross and Talora run around the corridor where a team of ENGINEERS and SECURITY GUARDS are waiting.

CROSS

What's security doing here?

DOJAR

Sir, it may be possible that Y'lan is holding Lieutenant Grey hostage inside.

CROSS

Why would he do that?

DOJAR

He may be having difficulty accepting the fact that his equipment must be removed.

CROSS

If I'm not mistaken, Admiral Tuform will more than likely give his permission for Y'lan to stay on board and I think he knows that too. I don't think he would take a hostage.

TALORA

Nevertheless, we must keep it as a possibility.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

Grey is now shivering on the floor whereas Y'lan is still standing up, looking out of one of the windows.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning: There are two minutes of air remaining.

GREY

I never wanted to die like this. I always thought I'd die saving the ship, or in a bed surrounded by my family.

Y'LAN

If it makes you feel any better, I will outlive you by approximately two minutes. The crew may be able to rescue me if they don't reach you in time.

As Grey speaks, Y'lan kneels down to the floor and attempts to rewire some equipment.

GREY

Great. You know what, Y'lan? You're nothing like I expected you to be. You're a scientist and that's something I never expected the Q'tami to be when I saw that ship on the viewscreen. I think that once everyone get their heads around what's happened, they'll realize what they've learned, what we all should know.

INT. CORRIDOR

With Cross, Talora and the security team.

CROSS

Commander, do we still have workers out on the hull?

TALORA

I believe so.

CROSS

Where are they now?

TALORA

I believe they are repairing damage to the bridge.

CROSS

How fast could they get here?

Elris rushes around the corner, gasping for air.

ELRIS

Neil, I just heard what happened...
I think I know what's going on. My
experiment, the computer is
detecting the contamination and
removing the air to clear the
infected areas.

CROSS

I didn't authorize the experiment
to begin yet!

ELRIS

I didn't need your authorization.

CROSS

Who then?

TALORA

Can we settle this later?
(to Elris)
You were saying this is your
experiment.

ELRIS

Lieutenant Grey said the internal
sensors were still being modified.
The computer must think that the
experiment is in there.

CROSS

So what do you need to do?

ELRIS

My override code, that's all I
need to enter.

Cross gives her a look telling her to do it.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Computer, abort medical procedure
Elris-One. Authorization...

Before Elris can speak, the doors part and Grey gasps for
air as Y'lan carries him out, seemingly unharmed.

CROSS

What happened?

Y'LAN

I was able to rewire some of my
equipment to open the door.

The security guards take Y'lan and handcuff some of his
tentacles as Elris grabs Grey.

ELRIS

Elris to transporter room one. I
need an emergency transport to
sickbay. Now!

The two dematerialize as Y'lan is led off in handcuffs.
Cross and Talora look at each other as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. SICKBAY

GREY on the medical table. ELRIS passes a tricorder over him. CROSS and TALORA stand close by.

CROSS

Is he going to be all right?

ELRIS

He almost suffocated, but I think Y'lan got him out in time. He'll be fine, but a few days rest wouldn't hurt.

CROSS

He's certainly earned it.

TALORA

Doctor, if the Captain didn't authorize the experiment, then who did?

ELRIS

Admiral Delfune.

CROSS

Excuse me?

DELFUNE

Yes. Since you said you were busy and Delfune happened to be close by, I asked her for the authorization.

TALORA

And she approved?

ELRIS

Sure. In fact, she said she was looking forward to working with me in the future.

Cross and Talora exchange looks.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

What?

In unison, the two storm out.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Neil!

INT. REVIEW ROOM

Elris is in the witness box.

ELRIS

...and because the Enterprise's internal sensors were still not fully operational, the science lab was sealed off for decontamination. I don't believe Y'lan held Lieutenant Grey hostage, as some people seemed to think, nor did he have anything to do with the incident.

DELFUNE

Though his unauthorized equipment did indeed jeopardize Lieutenant Grey's life, did they not?

ELRIS

Yes.

TUFORN

Thank you, Doctor.

Elris steps out.

TUFORN (CONT'D)

Now, are there any more witnesses?

DELFUNE

Prosecution has just one: Lieutenant Dojar.

TUFORN

Very well.

Talora stands up.

TALORA

Defense would like to call in a witness as well.

DELFUNE

Your Honor, I was not informed about this. Who's the witness?

TALORA

You, Admiral.

DELFUNE

Excuse me?

TALORA

You seem to be eager to pound this case through, sir. I'm sure you won't mind answering a few questions.

Delfune looks to Tuform and Tuform in turn to Talora.

TALORA (CONT'D)

We have the prerogative to do this, Your Honor.

TUFORN

(nods)

Very well. Take the stand, Admiral.

Reluctantly, Admiral Delfune steps into the witness box.

TALORA

I'm sure we can skip the formalities. I believe everyone here knows who you are.

DELFUNE

Get on with your questions, Commander.

TALORA

Certainly. Let's get back to Mr. Y'lan. You say that his communications equipment jeopardized Lieutenant Grey's life.

DELFUNE

Yes.

TALORA

(off the PADD)

"Powerful subspace emissions emanating from Q'tami transceivers prevented an accurate transporter lock. This long-range communications equipment not only put Lieutenant Erik Grey's life in danger but also pose a significant security threat to the Enterprise as authorized by Captain Cross," and so on and so on.

(beat)

Your own words, on the investigation. Do you stand behind this statement?

DELFUNE

Yes, Commander. Of course.

TALORA

Doesn't that strike you as odd?

DELFUNE

What strikes me as odd, Commander, is your futile attempt to circle around the real issue. That Y'lan is building covert communications devices on a Federation ship and Captain Cross is authorizing it.

TALORA

Covert communications devices? Well, here's a statement made by Y'lan himself.

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)
(hands Delfune the
PADD)

Do you mind reading it?

Delfune is fire and brimstone but tries to contain it, continuing to jump through her hoops. She takes the PADD.

DELFUNE
(off the PADD)
"The Hegemony is one. A culture
ages old. We speak as one. We make
decisions on any one choice
through... telepathy."

Delfune's expression goes sour.

TALORA
Telepathy. And would you mind
telling me why a species with an
instant telepathic access would
even need subspace communications?

Delfune is just quiet, her mind racing furiously.

TALORA (CONT'D)
Admiral?

DELFUNE
I don't know! But that's not the
point...

TALORA
Of course it's not the point. Y'lan
isn't on trial, he never was. Yet
you try to make him appear as the
enemy so you can incriminate Captain
Cross.

DELFUNE
That's a lie!

TALORA
Really, Admiral? Tell me, are you
pursuing this trial really to find
out if Captain Cross is fit to
command or is this some petty
vendetta?

DELFUNE
I--

TALORA
Weren't you the one who in the end
authorized the experiment which in
turn led to endangering the lives
of both Lieutenant Grey and Y'lan?
Remember, Admiral, that you're
under oath.

DELFUNE

I did. But Doctor Elris--

TALORA

Doctor Elris, who in turn you hoped would testify against Cross after you'd done her a little favor. In fact, you were hoping that she would continue to work in your favor when you took the Enterprise as your personal ship. Weren't you, Admiral?

DELFUNE

Those are baseless--

TALORA

No, they're not, Admiral! Here's Doctor Elris's testimony that she is willing to prove authentic under oath. I quote: "Admiral Delfune hoped that we would have a fruitful working relationship after Captain Cross was transferred off the ship."
(now eye-to-eye)
End quote. You underestimated her, Admiral, and you most certainly underestimate Captain Cross!

DELFUNE

He's a disgrace. The Enterprise was my ship! I won't have a man like Cross take that away and tarnish her name! Never!

Dead silence. Delfune gasps, as a moment too late, she realizes Talora got her baited. Hook, line and sinker.

TALORA

But in the end, the Enterprise isn't your ship, Admiral. But Captain Cross's. And in his first mission, he not only avoided a war but opened relations with a powerful alien government I was bent to destroy. Me, not him. If you have a problem with the decisions made in the last mission, take them to me. And not to a man like Cross.
(sneering)
You're dismissed, Admiral.

With that, Talora walks back to her desk. Cross watches her with respect.

INT. REVIEW ROOM -- LATER

Same as before.

TUFORN

Based on the testimonies I have heard over these days, I have come to the conclusion that neither Y'lan, nor his equipment, pose a threat to the starship Enterprise. He may remain aboard indefinitely and act as an ambassador between the Federation and the Q'tami.

(pause)

As to Captain Cross... Some rash decisions were made during the first mission of the Enterprise, which fortunately for him and us resulted in a satisfactory ending. Some members of the crew he selected may not be what Starfleet had in mind when it comes to the Federation flagship, but despite all of this, I have received no clear evidence why he shouldn't remain aboard the Enterprise as her Captain.

Cross straightens in relief.

TUFORN (CONT'D)

One more thing... However prejudiced Admiral Delfune's accusations may have been, there is still a basis of truth. We know, Captain Cross, that you have several personal issues. But know this, a Starfleet officer - especially one of the Enterprise - should not and can not let personal issues interfere with his command. Is that understood?

Cross nods.

CROSS

Yes, Admiral.

TUFORN

Good. There will be no further hearings over this issue. This meeting is adjourned.

Cross remains seated for a while next to Talora. He watches as Delfune marches out, not saying a word.

CROSS

I doubt that Admiral Delfune will be pleased over the final verdict.

She'll be back for more.

TALORA

But you're still in command of the Enterprise and Y'lan is still on board. And as Admiral Portman said, You have a strong sense of morality - even if I think some of the decisions you made weren't by the book.

CROSS

What do you think would have happened if I wasn't still in command?

TALORA

Who knows? But the main thing is it didn't happen. And I did not have any doubts about the outcome of this trial.

CROSS

Because you don't like to lose?

TALORA

And because, maybe, we Romulans are loyal people.

They both sit contemplating what could have been as Elris walks up to them. Seeing Elris, Talora stands.

TALORA (CONT'D)

I'll talk to you later, Captain.

Cross walks towards Elris and they EXIT the review room together.

INT. CORRIDOR

As they walk.

ELRIS

So it looks like we're still going to have to work together.

Cross grunts and turns to look at her as they walk down a corridor.

CROSS

You know, if you really don't want to stay...

ELRIS

You know what? I think I'm going to. I've realized that there are too many opportunities aboard the Enterprise that as a scientist, I can't turn away from. Even if it does mean staying.

CROSS

What about your research?

ELRIS

I can go back to that any time I want to, and the facilities aboard the Enterprise will let me carry on with some of that here.

CROSS

I'm glad you've decided to stay.

ELRIS

Well don't expect anything to go back to the way it was before. There's a lot between you and me and I'm only ready to talk to you on a professional level. Friendships will have to wait.

Cross nods.

CROSS

Three weeks ago, I was on the verge of losing almost all of my senior staff. Three days ago, I was on the verge of losing my command. If the next three months are anything like this, I think I'll be able to stay out of your way.

A slight grin appears on Elris' face before she quickly goes back to a stern face.

CROSS (CONT'D)

I'm glad you're staying, Lea.

ELRIS

Doctor.

CROSS

Of course... Doctor.

And with that Elris turns down the next junction in the corridor without saying goodbye. Cross starts in the direction in which she is heading with a plain, stern look on his face.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross ENTERS the Bridge from the turbolift and takes a quiet look around at his crew.

GREY

Captain on the bridge.

All of the senior staff are present except for Elris.

Grey, Talora and Dojar give Cross a respectful nod and go back to their work, but Quinlan walks up to him.

QUINLAN

So, how was your first hearing?

CROSS

Not something I'd care to repeat.

QUINLAN

You think this was bad? Wait until you face your first court martial. If any of the other Enterprise Captains are anything to go by, you'll be facing one of those soon enough.

CROSS

I intend to bring this ship back to go in a museum, Miss Quinlan.

QUINLAN

Whatever you say, boss.

Cross gives her a funny look and walks on past her to his ready room.

CROSS

Care to join me, Commander?

Talora walks to the ready room and ENTERS just after Cross does.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross sits behind his desk and gestures for Talora to sit in front of him and she does.

CROSS

Y'lan said you gave him permission to begin building the science lab. Just a misunderstanding?

TALORA

On his part, yes.

Cross nods.

TALORA (CONT'D)

But as the ship's Captain you are responsible for the actions of your crew. I could have gotten you into a... difficult situation at the review board and for that I apologize.

CROSS

There's no need, Commander. You're the one who got me out.

(beat)

Past is past, Commander. We have to be able to move away from it without looking back... At least not all of the time.

They both sit in silence for a moment, before Cross looks up and out of a nearby window.

CROSS (CONT'D)

How long until we can take the ship out?

TALORA

Lieutenant Grey's last status report indicated that the engineering teams would finish on the hull within the hour. The quantum induction core should be powering up now.

CROSS

Then let's take her out, Commander. And let's try and avoid scratching the paintwork.

TALORA

(slight smile)

Yes, Captain.

Talora EXITS, leaving Cross sat in the ready room on his own. He picks up a PADD and begins to read it, just before he hears the ship's impulse engines power up. He looks behind him and sees the stars beginning to move around them, he stands up and smiles. This is where he wants to be.

Then, remembering something, he EXITS.

INT. Y'LAN'S SCIENCE LAB

Cross ENTERS and sees Y'lan reassembling some of his equipment. Y'lan hears the doors open and quickly turns around to see Cross picking up a piece of equipment.

Y'LAN

You have come to tell me to disassemble my equipment again?

CROSS

No, actually. I've come to do the exact opposite.

Cross gives Y'lan the piece of equipment and Y'lan attaches it to a half constructed spherical device.

Y'LAN

Over the past few days your people have taught me a great deal about how your culture operates.

CROSS

And what have you learned?

Y'LAN

Your way of approaching situations is different from any other culture I have heard of or seen, but your justice system is a fair one.

CROSS

I'm glad you approve. I just hope that people who use it prove to be worthy enough. Now, you do understand why I had to ask you to take your equipment away, don't you?

Y'lan nods.

Y'LAN

How is Lieutenant Grey?

CROSS

He was in sickbay for ten minutes before he persuaded Doctor Elris that he was fine and went straight to Engineering. I think he'll live.

Y'LAN

I am glad to hear that. While we were in the lab he told me that many of the crew don't accept me, and will not do so until I have proven myself to them.

CROSS

He shouldn't have said that, Y'lan, but he's correct. Because of the conflict between our ships a lot of the crew aren't going to trust you for a while. They lost a lot of people they knew and loved we humans like to think we're past all that, but some of us aren't, and probably never will be.

Y'LAN

Would you say that you were?

CROSS

No. I'm still prejudiced towards the Dominion, the Cardassians. They kept me as a prisoner when I was a child and killed my family, they killed my mother before my eyes.

Y'LAN

That is understandable.

CROSS

Then I hope you can see why some of the crew can see you in the same light.

Y'LAN

But I was not the individual who returned fire on you.

CROSS

And the next Jem'Hadar that walks around the corner won't be the one who killed my mother. You just have to take every day as it comes. The Dominion War was a huge shock to almost every Starfleet officer. It was the first major intergalactic war since we were fighting the Klingons, and even then it wasn't as intense as that was. It changed everyone's attitudes - it changed Starfleet.

(beat)

We won't be the same again. Ever.

Y'LAN

But you try.

Cross picks up a CRATE.

CROSS

Where would we be if we didn't?
Now, where do I put this?

As Cross and Y'lan continue to talk, we can not hear the words. They work together to rebuild the science lab, Cross helping Y'lan to build a future for himself aboard the Enterprise, helping him to build a home. From this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END