STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Foreign Territory"

Written by
Andrew J. Leyton

This teleplay is originally from
www.startrekrenaissance.com

"Star Trek" and related names are registered
trademarks of Paramount Pictures, Inc.
This original work of fiction is
written solely for non-profit purposes.
Copyright 2001 by The Renaissance Group
All rights reserved
FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

SEQ: Pivotal moments from "Day In" and "Between Two Worlds."

QUINLAN (V.O.)
Previously on Star Trek: Renaissance.

INT. MESS HALL

Quinlan sits at a table looking particularly drunk, talking to HAL. Quinlan is holding a BOTTLE OF VODKA.

HAL
You know, I think you've had a few too many bottles of that.

QUINLAN
I never really liked synthehol, Hal. Hally Hal Hal.

Quinlan laughs.

INT. CORRIDOR

A drunk QUINLAN staggers down the hallway, and bumps into TALORA.

TALORA
Quinlan.

QUINLAN
Talora.

They move past each other, but then Quinlan turns around.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
Hey, Talora. What was with all the snide comments down on the planet before?

TALORA
I do not think now is a good time to discuss--

QUINLAN
2
I think it's a very good time to discuss, ACTUALLY. So, what's up?

TALORA
I did not think your reactions were appropriate to the situation we were in.
QUINLAN
In what way? How was I meant to react?

TALORA
I expect members of Starfleet to act in a professional manner.

FADE TO BLACKNESS.

FADE IN:

INT. TALORA'S QUARTERS -- MORNING

The room is dark. In the bed lies TALORA, fast asleep.

COMPUTER VOICE
The time is six-fifteen hours.

Talora's eyes open, not groggy, but ready for morning. She slides her feet over the side of the bed, stands up, and walks past the window to the washroom.

INT. CORRIDOR

Talora emerges from her quarters in a neatly-pressed uniform, carrying a PHASER. As a few crewmen greet her, she responds without emotion.

INT. PHASER TRAINING ROOM

A small, spherical room with a flattened base, about three meters in diameter, that serves as a floor. The metallic walls are a dark gray.

In the middle stands Talora, phaser in hand, carrying an irritated expression on her face.

TALORA
Computer, time.

COMPUTER VOICE
The time is oh-seven-ten hours.

TALORA
(beat)
Begin phaser training. Level one.

COMPUTER VOICE
Level one initiated.

After a BEAT, a panel of the wall begins to GLOW red in the center. It simultaneously begins to hum. Talora makes a calculated turn and fires her phaser at the glow, which immediately goes out. Another beat, and another panel glows green and begins to hum. Talora turns and shoots her phaser at it. More and more panels light up, increasing in speed.
Talora continues firing at the targets.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.

INT. CORRIDOR

An angry Talora steps out of the TURBOLIFT and strides down the corridor.

Crew that pass her address her, but she ignores them. She soon comes to a door and rings the chime. After a BEAT, the door CHIRPS and opens.

INT. QUINLAN'S QUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

QUINLAN has just finished getting dressed, straightening out her tunic, and is en route to the replicator when she sees Talora.

QUINLAN
Oh, Commander. Welcome to the Quinlan residence.

TALORA
I'm in no mood for that, Crewman.

QUINLAN
What can I do for you then, Commander?
(to replicator)
Coffee, decaf, black.

TALORA
You'd better make that regular coffee, Crewman. You were late.

QUINLAN
(a bit confused)
If I recall correctly, my duty shift starts at oh-eight-hundred hours.

TALORA
You're correct.

QUINLAN
I'll be spending the day reconfiguring tricorders. Doctor Elris and Lieutenants Grey and Dojar all need theirs done. You don't use a tricorder, do you?

TALORA
(cold)
No...
QUINLAN
You can probably tell I'm not looking forward to the task.

TALORA
Then you are in luck. Your tricorder duties will be postponed for a few hours.

QUINLAN
Something more interesting?

TALORA
You failed to report for phaser training this morning for the second time in a row.

It dawns on Quinlan. She looks like she's somewhere between apathy and regret, but not at either extreme.

TALORA (CONT'D)
You will spend three hours in phaser training before you begin your duties every morning for the rest of the week, and I'm putting a reprimand in your file. Consider yourself lucky.

QUINLAN
Commander, I can make it up...

But Talora is on her way out. Almost out the door, she turns to Quinlan.

TALORA
And by the way, if you're looking for more responsibility, I'm sure Lieutenant Dojar wouldn't mind having you on security. You'll be a perfect shot by Friday.

As Talora exits, Quinlan looks on in disbelief.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Talora, Quinlan, CROSS, ELRIS, DOJAR, Y'LAN, and GREY are assembled. Cross is speaking, using the wall screen as his visual aid.

CROSS
Ladies, Gentleman, and Q'tami, I give you...
(beat)
The Torraht Expanse.

Quinlan shifts in her chair.
CROSS (CONT'D)
Twelve sectors of unclaimed territory, full of nebulae that would fascinate any scientist. A week ago, the starship Reliant sent a probe to survey the systems closest to the Federation. Unfortunately, the Reliant was called to the Klingon border...

DOJAR
...And we're here to finish the job they started.

CROSS
Exactly. Subspace radiation between us and the probe means that we can't communicate with it. I'm sending a shuttle to retrieve the probe.

DOJAR
That's dangerous space.

TALORA
The most dangerous areas are closer to the Breen end of the Torraht Expanse. That's where most of the pirates are.

ELRIS
I thought that was controlled by Breen warlords.

TALORA
Exactly.

CROSS
The risk isn't in sending the shuttle so much as in not sending the shuttle. It's an advanced probe, and we can't have pirates taking them apart.

QUINLAN
They're not pirates.

CROSS
They obey no law and have no loyalties. Would you prefer I called them "renegades?"

QUINLAN
I think many of them have a moral standard -- it's just different than yours.
TALORA
We're here to discuss retrieving a probe, not your past, Crewman.

ELRIS
(pointedly)
Exactly.

Talora shoots Elris a look with a hint of an uncharacteristic GLARE.

CROSS
Commander, you're heading this mission.

TALORA
Yes, sir.

CROSS
If that's it, then the rest of you are dismissed.

The crew file out, leaving Talora and Cross behind.

CROSS (CONT'D)
You'll need someone else on the mission too, of course.

TALORA
Lieutenant Dojar will be an excellent tactical advisor.

CROSS
That's not who I was thinking of.

TALORA
Captain?

CROSS
I want you to take Quinlan.

TALORA
Crewman Quinlan lacks about everything necessary for an away mission -- (beat) responsibility, adherence to the chain of command...

CROSS
Not to mention respect for senior officers.

TALORA
You read my mind.
CROSS
She does have expertise on the area. After all, she used to be a pirate.

TALORA
She still may be, Captain, which is why I would protest her being on this mission.

CROSS
If you thought I'd listen. You'll leave tomorrow at noon.

TALORA
(beat)
Yes, Sir.

CROSS
Dismissed.

Talora turns, and exits.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER
RENAISSANCE: "Foreign Territory" - ACT ONE

ACT ONE

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is stopped.

INT. SHUTTLE

TALORA sits at the controls, and DOJAR is helping her out.

DOJAR
I've uploaded the trajectory of the probe into the shuttle's database, plus a detailed map of the area. Watch out for these plasma currents. They can sweep a probe off course.

TALORA
Thank you, Lieutenant.

DOJAR
No problem, Sir. Good luck. (beat, then smiles) But you don't believe in luck.

TALORA
I certainly do not. But -- thank you.

DOJAR
(smiling)
You're welcome.

Dojar steps out of the shuttle, just as QUINLAN steps in.

TALORA
First Officer's log, Stardate 78356.1. Crewman Quinlan was on time today.

QUINLAN
She's early, actually. I've got fifteen minutes.

TALORA
You'll understand if I don't congratulate you. I've been here for an hour preparing the data with Lieutenant Dojar.

QUINLAN
Care to let me in on the information, Commander?
TALORA
(pointing to map on console display)
We believe that the probe was swept off course by these plasma currents here, possibly to this area near the Lenkos system.

QUINLAN
All right. When do we leave?

EXT. SHUTTLEBAY
A lone shuttle departs from the shuttlebay.

INT. SHUTTLE
Talora is at the helm; Quinlan is at a side station.

TALORA
Shuttle Bavaria to Enterprise. We're preparing to jump to warp.

INT. BRIDGE
Cross is standing in the center of the bridge; Dojar mans tactical.

CROSS
Acknowledged, Commander. And good luck. To both of you.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
(slightly uneasy)
Thank you, Sir. Bavaria out.

DOJAR
They're at warp, Sir.

CROSS
All right. Helm, I believe we have a nebula to check out.

INT. SICKBAY
Elris is examining a female Bajoran officer named Rayta. Rayta is very pregnant and very eager. She shows a lot of respect for Elris, more than she would most superior officers.

ELRIS
(routinely)
Metabolism stable... Skin progressing nicely... Skull bones could speed it up...
RAYTA
(worried)
That's not going to be a problem, is it?

ELRIS
No. I can give you an injection.
And even if I didn't, your baby will come out fine.

RAYTA
(relieved)
Oh, good.

ELRIS
(folding up tricorder)
Well, it look's like your doing quite well. The injection will be ready by tomorrow. I can have it sent to your replicator, Ensign, or you can come here.

RAYTA
Oh, I can stop by.

ELRIS
All right. 
(warm smile)
Congratulations, Ensign.

RAYTA
Thank you. Oh, and we've picked a name.

ELRIS
Oh?

RAYTA
(eager)
Well, two actually. We can't decide. Diranna or Adami.

ELRIS
I'm sure you'll figure it out.

RAYTA
Well, Doctor, could I have your opinion?

ELRIS
Oh. Um... certainly. I'd go with Adami, I suppose.

RAYTA
(a little let-down)
Oh.

(MORE)
RAYTA (CONT'D)
Thank you... I'll take that into consideration. I'll pick up that injection tomorrow.

ELRIS
I'll be here.

Rayta walks out, leaving Elris to ponder their exchange.

EXT. SPACE
The shuttle whizzes by at WARP SPEED.

INT. SHUTTLE
Talora is again at the helm. A mug of TEA sits on the console next to her.

She is silent, almost reclining in her comfortable chair.

Quinlan is working in the rear of the cabin, behind a console.

It's hard work: she's got a panel open and is working on the internal circuitry beneath the console. An open toolkit lies next to her, with several tools lying around. She HUMS to herself.

QUINLAN
You know, when I was at the Academy, I majored in sensor engineering. For my exit project, I created an algorithmic mapping processor that extrapolated star charts faster than the computers we had at the time. I wish I had that now.

TALORA
No doubt that was a long time ago. You can't be expected to remember it.

QUINLAN
Of course not. But it would speed things along.

TALORA
We have several hours till we need to bring it online. I'm sure you'll figure it out.

QUINLAN
Your confidence is heartwarming.

TALORA
I pride myself on my compassion.
Quinlan jabs at the circuitry for a second longer, then removes her tool and wipes off her hands.

QUINLAN
Okay, try something for me, Commander. I want to see if my transmission system is still intact, so run a multi-spectral analysis.

Talora complies.

TALORA
I'm not getting anything different than usual.

QUINLAN
Good. You shouldn't. All right, that'll be all for the moment.

Quinlan resumes work. A moment later, she mildly shocks herself.

She recoils instantly.

TALORA
What happened?

QUINLAN
I shocked myself. Don't worry, I'm alright.

She picks up a tool and slowly and deliberately returns to work.

TALORA
Perhaps it was your aim.

QUINLAN
Yes, that must be it.

(beat)
It must really pain you to know that I'm missing phaser practice because of this.

TALORA
You'll have plenty of opportunities when we return.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle at warp speed.

INT. SHUTTLE -- TWO HOURS LATER

Same as before, but there is more of a mess in the rear. Quinlan makes a few adjustments to her circuitry.
QUINLAN
I think I've got it. Let's bring this online.

TALORA
Bringing auxiliary sensor palette online. Beginning power transfer... Activating long-distance mapping... bringing to full resolution.

QUINLAN
Ready?

TALORA
I'm bringing the new system online.

QUINLAN
Well?

TALORA
It would appear that your creation works.

QUINLAN
I'll begin mapping the plasma currents.

TALORA
That would be a good idea. Hopefully, the map will provide us with a good starting path for the probe.

QUINLAN
You got it, Commander.

Quinlan moves to a forward console and begins working.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
You know, I read up on this probe before we left.

TALORA
I'm glad you decided to take the initiative. My log will be full of all these rare occurrences today. Are the stars lined up?

QUINLAN
Permission to speak freely, Sir?

TALORA
Granted.

QUINLAN
Well, remarks like that aren't much of an incentive to be on time or to (MORE)
QUINLAN (CONT'D)
do background research. I had something interesting to say.

TALORA
Then I apologize. Now tell me about this probe.

Talora's expression suggests that she isn't really sorry, and Quinlan ignores this.

QUINLAN
It was the last of the Tarenek-class to be built. Admiral Kurt cancelled the project and diverted the resources to fortifying protection around Earth.

TALORA
I believe I heard that. Earth is now the one of the most heavily fortified planets between Romulus and Tzenkethon, I believe.

QUINLAN
Yeah. It's a shame, actually.

TALORA
At the time, it was necessary.

QUINLAN
I meant the cancellation. We haven't been sending out nearly as many probes as we used to.

TALORA
I would have thought that you would have appreciated the defenses. Very surprising.

The shuttle cabin falls silent.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle at warp.

INT. SHUTTLE -- AN HOUR LATER

Same as before.

TALORA
We're approaching the estimated coordinates.

QUINLAN
Good. It should be somewhere in the area.
TALORA
Initiating scans.
(confused)
The probe is not here.

QUINLAN
But we predicted its flight path!

TALORA
I'm running further scans. I'm picking up traces of neon exhaust...

QUINLAN
That's standard emissions from this type of probe.

TALORA
The probe was here thirty minutes ago. It shouldn't be far.

QUINLAN
Then it must have been carried somewhere.

TALORA
The plasma currents wouldn't have taken it far.

QUINLAN
That's not what I meant.

TALORA
You think somebody picked it up?

QUINLAN
If I were in this area, I would.
Could be valuable.

TALORA
I'm running an extended scan.
(beat)
There is only one ship in the area.

I'm running its signature through the database.

She taps some controls, and a diagram of a small ship with a menacing shape appears on a wall screen.

QUINLAN
A medium size fighter. Maybe thirty meters long. Probably Kensettel, from the looks of the nacelles. I'm reading the probe's signature as well.
TALORA
The ship is moving away at warp. We can catch up in about ten minutes. I'm laying in a course.

QUINLAN
I don't know if that's such a good idea, Commander.

TALORA
They have our probe, and we're going to retrieve it.

EXT. SPACE
A medium-sized fighter, like we saw in the diagram, is at low warp. Its hull is dark gray with patches of blue, and the sleek shape suggests that this was built to take ships much larger than it.

Our shuttle slowly creeps up on it, matching its pace.

INT. SHUTTLE
Same as before.

QUINLAN
Keep us at a safe distance.

TALORA
That's standard procedure, Crewman.

QUINLAN
I'm not kidding. I'm scanning the ship... it's packed with weapons, shields, not to mention our probe.

TALORA
I'm hailing them.

QUINLAN
Commander, be careful.

TALORA
I know what I'm doing.

She taps a control, and an image of Captain KESTOL, a chubby and exotic humanoid alien on an equally exotic bridge appears.

KESTOL
This is Captain Kestol. Identify yourselves.

TALORA
This is Commander Talora of the United Federation of Planets. You have our probe.
KESTOL
The probe is my property.

TALORA
Finders aren't keepers.

KESTOL
Maybe not where you're from, but we aren't exactly at Earth. Or Romulus.

TALORA
Hand over the probe, Captain, or I will take it by force.

QUINLAN
(sotto voce)
Commander...

Talora silences her.

KESTOL
You can forget it.

The channel shuts off.

TALORA
Fire a warning shot.

QUINLAN
Commander! That ship is capable of blowing us to shreds. You remember what I did before Coular?

Talora considers this, but not for long.

TALORA
This shuttle is more maneuverable than the Enterprise. I intend to win this fight.

QUINLAN
But you won't!

TALORA
Don't play fortune-teller with me. Prepare quantum torpedoes. One dorsal, one ventral.

QUINLAN
(sighing)
One dorsal, one ventral.

TALORA
Fire.
EXT. SPACE

Two torpedoes exit from the shuttle. They branch away, then converge on Kestol's fighter, detonating at opposite points of the hull. The fighter shakes, but as the explosions subside, it is still very intact.

A TRACTOR BEAM emerges from the fighter and engulfs the shuttle.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before.

TALORA
We're in a tractor beam.

QUINLAN
Not anymore. I'm repolarizing the hull.

TALORA
The tractor beam's gone.

EXT. SPACE

The fighter fires two red PHASER BEAMS at the shuttle. The first makes the shields flicker; the second penetrates.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before.

TALORA
Get those shields online!

But it's too late. The lights flicker and dim. The controls start to flicker as well. The shuttle rocks badly, and lurches again.

QUINLAN
Main power coils have fused. The sensor upgrades finished the job.

TALORA
Switch to auxiliary.

QUINLAN
I can't--

Quinlan and Talora disappear in the red shimmer of a RED TRANSPORTER BEAM, leaving the darkened shuttle cabin behind.

INT. FIGHTER -- CELL

Quinlan and Talora re-materialize to find themselves in a small, spartan cell without their weapons or commbadges.
A doorway of sorts offers a view to a corridor that leads out of sight. Quinlan approaches the doorway, only to be blocked by a FORCE FIELD.

She surveys her surroundings. Two cots. Nothing else.

    TALORA
    We're in a prison cell.

    QUINLAN
    (sarcastic)
    Let's not jump to conclusions.

    KESTOL (O.S.)
    Your Commander is right.

Kestol has appeared at the doorway.

    KESTOL (CONT'D)
    Jennifer Quinlan, I believe?

    QUINLAN
    That's me.

    KESTOL
    In Starfleet. With a Romulan, no less. I trust this wasn't voluntary.

    TALORA
    (cutting in)
    The Enterprise will find us. You do know that, don't you?

    KESTOL
    I'm not so sure.

    QUINLAN
    You're not safe, even out here.

    TALORA
    And I doubt that the Romulan Empire would be happy about having one of their nationals in captivity.

    KESTOL
    We're a long way from Romulan space. You're going to be here for a while. You'll have to pardon the furniture. I'm not much of an interior decorator.

Kestol walks down the corridor, leaving Quinlan and Talora alone.

Quinlan sweeps the austere, monochromatic room one last time with her eyes before selecting a cot to recline on.
QUINLAN
Give yourself some credit. The grey and the grey work well together.

On this, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
EXT. SPACE

The fighter at warp, shuttle in tow in a TRACTOR BEAM.

INT. FIGHTER -- CELL -- NEXT DAY

QUINLAN has pulled out a panel near the doorway and is working at some circuitry. TALORA is standing as close to the doorway as she can without being zapped by the force field, watching to make sure no one is coming down the corridor. She is holding a piece of metal from the cot, fashioned into some sort of weapon.

TALORA
Strange.

QUINLAN
What?

TALORA
It's been a long time since anyone has been back here to check on us.

QUINLAN
Our host could be asleep.

TALORA
Then another crewmember would check on us.

QUINLAN
Not necessarily. Kestol could very well be the entire crew. I went solo on my fighter.

TALORA
That's true. But it's still strange. A good captain would interrupt even sleep to check on prisoners. Are you making progress?

QUINLAN
Actually, yes. I think we can try.

TALORA
Do it, then.

Quinlan connects something in the circuitry, and recoils from the shock.

The force field in the doorway FLICKERS as sparks fly from the exposed circuitry.

Talora extends a hand through the doorway; it passes through unhindered.
QUINLAN
(as Talora)
Good work, Crewman Quinlan.
(as Quinlan)
Oh, thank you Commander.

Quinlan grabs her own homemade weapon and follows.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

The corridor ends by opening into a smallish room that appears to be the junction of all the main compartments of the fighter. A pair of transporter pads are in an alcove of the junction; a few consoles line the wall. Doors lead to quarters, the cargo hold, the helm compartment, and the engine room.

The room is moderately lit and the floor is grated. Almost every bit of wall space is covered in consoles, monitors, and control panels.

Talora and Quinlan arrive at this junction ready to strike, but find it unoccupied. Talora spots a locker and opens it, finding a stock of weapons.

QUINLAN
Be careful! Make sure the exit refraction hasn't been reversed.

Talora examines her phaser.

TALORA
It looks all right to me.

QUINLAN
Let me see.

Talora tosses her the phaser. Quinlan examines it quickly but thoroughly.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
Looks good. They're probably okay.

Talora takes another phaser, while Quinlan works on one console and brings up a layout of the fighter.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
(pointing to one of the doors)
Helm's that way. We'll take it first.

TALORA
(reluctant)
Very well.
INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

A small cabin with room for two maximum. A console stretches across the front, next to a viewscreen and lots of monitors. Currently on the viewscreen is a picture of the SHUTTLE, fully intact. On a side console, two COMMBADGES have been discarded.

Quinlan and Talora burst in, phasers ready. They are surprised to find no resistance. Quinlan moves forward, to find KESTOL'S BODY slumped over in one of the seats.

QUINLAN
Commander! It's Kestol.
(Feeling for pulse)
He's dead.

Talora instantly rushes over.

TALORA
How did he die?

QUINLAN
No phaser wounds... No blood stains.

TALORA
Poison?

QUINLAN
Or internal problems. His body could have just shut down.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is still stopped.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is fiddling with some equipment next to a bio-bed. Ensign Rayta enters.

RAYTA
Doctor!

ELRIS
Oh, hi. I have your injection ready.

RAYTA
Thank you, Doctor.

As Elris retrieves the hypospray from a locker, Rayta examines the equipment that Elris was working on.

RAYTA (CONT'D)
If you don't mind my asking, Doctor, what's all this?
ELRIS
I'm having some trouble with the cardiac scanners. I don't think they've worked properly since we first left spacedock.

RAYTA
Why don't you get it repaired?

ELRIS
Lieutenant Grey has other priorities. This sickbay isn't the only thing that isn't running smoothly. I suppose a redundant cardiac scanner isn't the most important thing.
  (hands Rayta hypospray)
  Here's the injection.

RAYTA
I have a friend who works in Engineering. Perhaps he can stop by.

ELRIS
Oh, Ensign, you don't have to do that. I'll get by.

RAYTA
No, I'll make sure it's fixed.

ELRIS
(giving in)
  All right, then. Thank-you.

EXT. SPACE
The Enterprise. Same as before.

INT. SICKBAY -- HOURS LATER
Elris is doing paperwork at her desk when a man in an engineering uniform enters. It's Bajoran CHIEF BELA.

BELA
Doctor?

ELRIS
Chief. What can I do for you?

BELA
I believe you have a cardiac scanner out of alignment?

ELRIS
(slowly)
  Yes, that first biobed.
INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora is examining Kestol's body when Quinlan enters.

TALORA
Anyone?

QUINLAN
The fighter's empty.

TALORA
No signs of foul play. No bruises, skin marks, or anything else. Nothing in the cockpit suggests that he poisoned himself.

QUINLAN
Nobody could have poisoned him either. It must have been something internal.

TALORA
(beat)
We'll put this matter aside. I'm going to send you down to the shuttle.

QUINLAN
(begins to nod, then has a thought)
Wait, that's not such a good idea. The shuttle might be damaged. Life support might not be online.

TALORA
That'll be the first thing you restore. I'll beam down an air bubble.

QUINLAN
What will you be doing while I'm gone?

TALORA
(slightly annoyed)
I will be learning how to work the controls.

QUINLAN
Do you have any idea what you're doing?

TALORA
I'm not switching jobs, Crewman. Prepare to beam down.

QUINLAN
(beat)
Fine, just be careful. It's risky.
TALORA
(again, annoyed)
Of course.

INT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle interior is almost pitch black. A single console is flickering.

This shuttle has been dead for a while.

A red shimmer appears, but nothing comes along with it. It's as if thin air is being beamed into the ship.

Another shimmer appears. This time, it's QUINLAN, with her commbadge on this time. She carries a flashlight and a case of power cells. As soon as she inhales, she coughs the air out.

QUINLAN
Ughh!

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
Is the air sufficient?

QUINLAN
It's sufficient, but not much more.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
What's the status of the shuttle?

Quinlan attaches a power cell to the flickering console. It comes to life, as do a few consoles around it. She reads the displays.

QUINLAN
Life support isn't functional. Engines off-line.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
Is it repairable?

QUINLAN
Doubtful. I think our late Captain gave this shuttle a few more punches after we were captured.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
The air bubble I beamed down will last you twenty-five minutes. Get life support back online, then I'll beam you back.

QUINLAN
I don't know if I can.
TALORA'S COMM VOICE
You're going to have to.

Quinlan considers protesting, but decides not to.

QUINLAN
You got it.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
I've got it?

QUINLAN
(rolls eyes)
Yes, Commander.

Quinlan sets to work, unpacking a few more power cells.

EXT. SPACE

Same as before - shuttle in a tractor beam.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora has hauled the corpse away, and is working at the console. She looks confused, since she has no idea what she's doing.

EXT. SPACE

The tractor beam begins to fade a little, as it weakens in strength. The shuttle sways the slightest bit.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

She touches a few controls. A few lights begin to blink; she hurriedly tries to retrace her steps and reverse her mistake.

The lights continue to blink.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
What's going on up there, Commander?

TALORA
I'm having a little trouble with the tractor beam.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
Be careful!

TALORA
(exasperated)
I am, Crewman.

She hits a few more controls, finally reversing her mistake.
EXT. SPACE

The tractor beam is now back at its original strength; a minor tragedy has been averted.

INT. SHUTTLE

Quinlan works diligently in the ill-lit cabin. She moves from console to console, working to restore systems. A half dozen power cells are attached to various consoles around the ship.

QUINLAN
Commander, I've restored life support. I don't know how much more this shuttle can take, though.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
I'm beaming you up.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora enters from the helm compartment. She touches a few controls, shakes her head, and tries again. Quinlan appears in a SHIMMER on the transporter pad.

QUINLAN
(inhaling)
Ahh, fresh air.

TALORA
You said you were able to get life support back online?

QUINLAN
It took some coaxing, but yes.

TALORA
We will move to the engines next. I'll beam down to the shuttle. I've figured out how to take us out of warp, so you can begin examining the probe.

QUINLAN
You're not suggesting that we try to ride home in that shuttle?

TALORA
Any trained officer knows that she is better off in her own ship, especially when in foreign territory--

QUINLAN
We're bound to be attacked!
TALORA  
(cooly)  
We weren't before.

QUINLAN  
That's because you went looking for a fight. Nobody had the chance to attack.

TALORA  
You have your orders, Crewman.

QUINLAN  
Commander, I'm telling you from experience. That shuttle...

ORA  
(cutting her off)  
When we do return to the Enterprise, you will receive another reprimand, this time for insubordination.

Talora steps up to the transporter pad, and motions to Quinlan, who angrily blocks her way.

QUINLAN  
(angry)  
You may be the senior officer out here, Commander, but this is my area of expertise. I know the kind of people that live out here. They're not afraid of the Federation. Starfleet tactics and protocol and what not doesn't cut it out here!

TALORA  
(slowly losing her cool)  
You have never tried Starfleet tactics. I'm ordering you to get out of my way!

Quinlan steps aside. Talora takes her place on the transporter pad.

TALORA (CONT'D)  
Energize.

QUINLAN  
If we get that shuttle online, there will be fighters on our tail within minutes!

TALORA  
I'm willing to take that risk.
QUINLAN
You're taking an enormous risk, one you shouldn't be taking!

TALORA
If you want to spend the rest of our trip in that cell, keep talking.
(beat)
Energize.

Quinlan fumes, but she has no choice. On her angry expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.

INT. BRIDGE

It's a shift change. As officers leave the bridge, others relieve them.

GUER is currently in command and DOJAR is just leaving. CROSS enters from the back and all officers stand.

GUER

Captain on the Bridge!

CROSS

At ease. Mr. Guer, enjoying the hot seat?

GUER

(smiling)

It's much more comfortable, Sir.

Cross laughs, but then his expression returns to normal.

CROSS

You're relieved, Lieutenant.

GUER

Yes, Sir.

As they pass each other, Cross asks in a lower voice:

CROSS

Any news?

GUER

Still no word from the Commander, Sir.

CROSS

It's been eight hours since they were supposed to meet us here. (beat) All right. See you tomorrow, Lieutenant.

GUER

Good day, Sir.

Guer leaves.
CROSS
Helm. Take us within long-range scanning distance of the coordinates where they were supposed to pick up the probe. Warp 9.

HELM OFFICER
Yes, Sir.

EXT. SPACE
The Enterprise turns ninety degrees and jumps to WARP.

INT. SICKBAY
Elris enters sickbay and relieves the doctor in charge. As that doctor leaves, RAYTA enters.

RAYTA
Doctor!

ELRIS
Ensign. What can I do for you?

RAYTA
Well, this is kind of a personal thing, actually.

ELRIS
(fleeting frown)
Yes?

RAYTA
My husband and I are having the Ikapa ceremony for our baby tomorrow at nineteen hundred.

ELRIS
(slightly confused)
Ikapa?

RAYTA
The naming ceremony. We pray to the Prophets that the child goes far in life.

ELRIS
Oh. Right.

RAYTA
We wanted you to come.

ELRIS
(surprised)
Oh.
RAYTA
You can come, can't you?

ELRIS
Well... Ensign...

A beat -- Rayta is hanging on Elris's every word.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I can't. I just can't make it.

Rayta is very let down.

RAYTA
Oh. Well, that's OK. I understand.

She turns to leave. As she reaches the door, she turns.

RAYTA (CONT'D)
If you change your mind, it's in my quarters. Deck eleven.

She turns to leave, and Elris considers her decision.

INT. SHUTTLE

Most of the consoles are now functional. TALORA is at the helm, working on various systems.

TALORA
Computer, bring inertial dampers online.

COMPUTER VOICE
Inertial dampers online.

The shuttle jerks a little but stabilizes.

TALORA
Bring impulse support online.

COMPUTER VOICE
Impulse support online.

TALORA
Bring impulse engines online.

COMPUTER VOICE
Impulse engines online.

Talora's commbadge chirps.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
Quinlan to Talora.
TALORA
(irritated)
What is it?

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
How are you coming down there?

TALORA
I'm doing fine. You don't need to check up on me, crewman.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
What's the status of the impulse engines?

TALORA
I've brought them online, if you must know.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
Warp?

TALORA
I was about to try that, except that you decided to check up on your senior officer. Don't do it again.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
You got it. Quinlan out.

Talora rolls her eyes and returns to her controls.

TALORA
Computer, bring warp engines online.

COMPUTER'S COMM VOICE
Fuel injectors are not properly calibrated.

Talora works furiously at the controls. After a few seconds, she tries again.

TALORA
Bring warp engines online.

COMPUTER'S COMM VOICE
Bringing warp engines online.

The lights flicker, then go out for a few seconds. They come on again, but several consoles are flickering.

COMPUTER'S COMM VOICE
Insufficient power to bring warp engines online.
TA\LORA
(beat)
Forget it.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora MATERIALIZES on the transporter pad, and heads for the helm compartment.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora storms in. Quinlan is already at the helm, working fast but carefully.

QUINLAN
The probe is intact, for the most part.

TA\LORA
The shuttle, however, is not. We'll return to Federation space in this vessel. And spare me the I-told-you-so speech.

The console begins to BLEEP.

TA\LORA (CONT'D)
What's happening?

QUINLAN
(unsure)
I'm not positive, but I think another fighter is de-cloaking.

EXT. SPACE

Our fighter is at warp, with the shuttle Bavaria in tow. Another fighter, slightly smaller but appearing to pack just as much punch, appears in a slight RIPPLE before becoming clearly visible.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Same as before.

QUINLAN
Yes, now I'm sure. Another fighter. They're hailing us.
(beat, looks Talora in the eye)
There's going to be a fight.

Talora taps her commbadge.

TA\LORA
Talora to Bavaria. One to beam down.
Talora disappears in a SHIMMER.

QUINLAN
(smirks)
A sound decision.

She taps a control, and the face of Human CAPTAIN CORT appears on the viewscreen. About fifty years old with a white beard, he and Quinlan are equally skilled with years of experience.

CORT
(with a slight grin)
Jennifer Quinlan. What a surprise to see you here.

QUINLAN
(cordial, as rivals)
Captain Cort. It's been a while since I've seen you. You've got a bigger ship. I expect your ego has had similar growth?

CORT
(confused)
And I see you're in Starfleet now--but with someone else's ship--

QUINLAN
I'm afraid Captain Kestol has had an unfortunate accident.

CORT
I'm sure. Unfortunately for you, I'm in need of a fighter like Kestol's. I'm sure you'd be willing to hand it over. I'll permit your shuttle to go freely.

QUINLAN
I don't give up ships. You know that.

CORT
A shame. En garde!

Cort disappears from the viewer. Quinlan taps her commbadge.

QUINLAN
Quinlan to Talora. Get ready.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora is at the helm, ready for battle.

TALORA
We'll see if this still works.
Computer, bring phasers online.
EXT. SPACE

All three ships drop out of warp. The smaller fighter fires on the larger, its orange disruptor beam hitting it square on the back.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

The fighter rocks. Quinlan scrambles to use the fighter's arsenal to her advantage, but has little success with the unfamiliar controls. She curses under her breath.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora makes a calculation in her head and transmits it to the console.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle lashes out at the smaller fighter. The fighter receives a phaser blast on its port nacelle.

Then a second and a third. The fighter directs its attention to the shuttle, returning the fire in a succession of orange phaser beams.

INT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle rocks, and smoke spews out of several vents. Talora hits a few more controls.

EXT. SPACE

Our shuttle takes a few more shots at the smaller fighter.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Quinlan is still working frantically at the controls.

QUINLAN

Dammit! Why are these things so complicated?

Her commbadge chirps.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

Quinlan, hurry up. I can't take this fighter alone.

QUINLAN

I'm working on it!

She hits more controls, while smoke pours out of vents in her own ship. The ship rocks, but Quinlan's eyes light up.
Our fighter launches three golden, shimmering torpedoes. Each one slams right into its target. A small EXPLOSION rocks the smaller fighter.

A larger one destroys it altogether.

Quinlan settles back into her chair, exhaling, but her face is worried.

Talora does no such thing. She taps her commbadge.

TALORA
Talora to Quinlan. What's your status?

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
That fighter packed a hell of a punch. I've taken some heavy damage. Weapons and warp engines are offline.

TALORA
It's worse down here. (beat) We'll fix the fighter.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
Another rather key system was damaged.

TALORA
What is it?

QUINLAN'S COM VOICE
Ships in the area will have noticed the battle. (beat) We've blown our cover.

The Enterprise at warp.

INT. MESS HALL

The mess hall is somewhat crowded with officers who have recently gotten off their shift. At one table sits Elris, alone, sipping an exotic DRINK. She looks up often at the doors, as if she's waiting for someone to enter.

And someone does -- Dojar. He goes to the replicator.

DOJAR
Potato soup, hot, extra salt.
He retrieves his steaming bowl of soup from the replicator and searches for an empty table.

ELRIS
Dojar!

His face lights up when he sees Elris. He sits at her table.

DOJAR
I finally got around to trying the potato soup.

ELRIS
Hey, Neil... Captain Cross ate it for years before I would try it. I was in for quite a surprise.

Dojar takes a sip. It suits him.

DOJAR
Not bad, although it could use some more spices.

ELRIS
You'll have to decide on those for yourself.

DOJAR
Some devennera leaves will probably do the trick.

ELRIS
Good.

(beat)
Tell me, have you ever met any of the other Cardassians in Starfleet?

DOJAR
I've met a couple. There are only a dozen or so. One was a year behind me at the Academy, and I met another at a tactical conference last year. Lieutenant... Plarick, I think was his name.

ELRIS
And?

DOJAR
We didn't exactly become best friends. He was more interested in battle tactics. And, you might say, so was I.

(beat)
Sometimes I wish there were a few more Cardassians aboard.
ELRIS
It seems like the Bajorans on this ship are really interested in me.

DOJAR
I can see that.

ELRIS
Why?

DOJAR
You're a symbol to them. You command a good deal of respect on this ship, and I don't just mean among Bajorans.

ELRIS
Thanks, but I'm not sure I deserve that.

DOJAR
Why do you say that?

ELRIS
I'm getting the feeling that the Bajoran crew on this ship have formed a sort of a lower-decks community. Ensign Rayta is one of my patients, and she noticed that some of my equipment wasn't working. Almost immediately afterwards, an engineer is sent up -- and he's a Bajoran!

DOJAR
(smiling)
Sounds like someone's more popular than she knows.

ELRIS
It gets worse. I was invited to a Bajoran ceremony. Faith-related.

DOJAR
Ahh... and you don't practice that faith.
(beat)
Did they know that?

ELRIS
I'm really not sure. I don't wear the earring, but there are Bajorans who practice the faith without the earring for other reasons.

DOJAR
(solemn)
I see. Are you going to go?
ELRIS
I told Rayta no. But... I'm having second thoughts.

DOJAR
Well, I can't tell you what to do. You're important to them, but you also need to be yourself.
(beat)
But from what I've learned, sometimes the greater good is necessary. You might not like it -- but you may find that the pros outweigh the cons.

ELRIS
I'm still not sure.
(beat)
I guess I'll have to think about it.
(beat, smiles)
Enjoy the soup.

DOJAR
I will.

Elris gets up to leave.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora steps off the transporter padd and Quinlan is already present. The air is a tad smokey, mostly towards one of the rear doors. Some cables have fallen out of the ceilings.

TALORA
What's behind that door?

QUINLAN
The engine room.

They head towards the door.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Quinlan and Talora enter. Along one wall runs a vertical conduit that is dull purple - the WARP CORE. Various other consoles line the walls.

More importantly, the room is a smoking mess. Several consoles are in ruins. The warp conduit has black blotches - BURN MARKS - in several places. The dull purple pulsates every now and then but is for the most part just plain dull purple.

QUINLAN
We're looking at some serious repairs here.
TALORA
Let's not jump to conclusions.

Quinlan is about to protest, but accepts the jab. Then she stares at the wreckage.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The fighter, dead in the water. The shuttle is nearby, but no longer in a tractor beam.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

TALORA and QUINLAN enter, and Quinlan takes the controls.

TALORA

What are you doing?

QUINLAN

I'm scanning the area. Long-range. Now that there's been a battle, the vultures will circle.

TALORA

Are they here yet?

QUINLAN

I think I've got a few passing in and out of our sensor range. I can't get a clear count, but at least three or four. About two light-years away.

Talora makes up her mind, as does Quinlan.

TALORA

Get to work on the warp drive. You have four hours.

QUINLAN

We've got to restore weapons. There are probably cloaked ships nearby that would love to attack. Once we can defend ourselves, we begin repairing warp drive.

TALORA

We're getting out of here as fast as we can, whether you like it or not. My order stands. Get to the engine room.

Quinlan turns to go, but stops at the door. She turns to Talora.

QUINLAN

For someone who used to live in places like this, my opinion carries little weight.
Talora is satisfied.

TALORA
You have four hours. You're wasting some of it now.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Same as before. Quinlan storms in. She stops and stares at the warp core.

It's completely dead.

QUINLAN
All right. Let's do some healing.

She approaches a console but some wires strewn all over the floor block her way. She stoops and brushes them aside. Standing back up, she goes to the console and begins to bring up information.

She begins to tap controls at a rapid rate, and different parts of the screen light up.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

Several panels in the BULKHEAD below the warp core have been removed, circuitry exposed. Quinlan is on the floor, examining them and experimenting a little.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

She's finished crossing cables and reconfiguring various pieces of machinery. Quinlan has returned to the console and is checking her work.

Some numbers appear on the screen, but fail to satisfy her. She returns to the exposed machinery below the core. After fiddling a little, inspiration strikes.

She moves to another panel and removes it. A large component that should be lit up isn't. Apparently, that is the cause of some problems.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

Quinlan has attached various pieces of equipment to that component obviously a very important one. She returns to the console and tries again.

She fails.

QUINLAN
Damn it!

Talora enters.
TALORA
Have you made progress?

QUINLAN
I'm working on it.

TALORA
Hurry up.

Talora leaves and Quinlan merely rolls her eyes.

INT. SHUTTLE -- LATER
Quinlan is disassembling another warp core -- the shuttle's. She has removed various panels from the bulkhead and is searching for various pieces of equipment.

She finds one large component and rips it out of the socket.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER
Quinlan has returned, component in hand. She replaces the old one from the fighter with the new one from the shuttle and returns to the console.

Her hands fly over the controls, which she's comfortable with now.

But she fails again.

EXT. SPACE
The Enterprise drops out of warp.

INT. BRIDGE
Cross is in command. On the viewscreen, the starfield indicates that the Enterprise is at impulse.

HELM OFFICER
We've dropped out of warp, sir, and we're at the given coordinates.

CROSS
And?

The officer works at his controls.

HELM OFFICER
I can't find the shuttle or the probe, sir.

CROSS
Long-range scans?
HELM OFFICER
(beat)
Sorry, sir. Nothing.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan is working at his SENSOR TABLE on some unreadable data. Cross enters.

CROSS

Y'lan!

Y'LAN

Captain.

Y'lan presses a key on his table, and the data disappears.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)
What can I do for you?

CROSS

You can help me look for two of my crew.

Y'LAN

Talora and Quinlan. They have disappeared, I take it?

CROSS

Right. Tell me your sensors can help me scan the area for something. Romulans. Humans. The probe. The shuttle. Anything.

Y'LAN

I'm sure I can find the shuttle. But I'm afraid it will take some time.

CROSS

(desperate)
How much time?

Y'LAN

Several hours.

CROSS

Do it.

Cross leaves, and Y'lan returns to his sensor table. Soon, the room is bathed in alternating red, yellow, and blue.

EXT. SPACE

The fighter, unmoving in space, and the shuttle nearby.
INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Quinlan is fiddling with some more equipment when Talora comes in.

TALORA
What's your progress?

QUINLAN
Still nothing. This warp core is dead.

TALORA
(beat)
I should have done this myself.

QUINLAN
Yourself?

TALORA
Yes.

QUINLAN
Why?

TALORA
You aren't up to the job. You waste time with futile tricks.

QUINLAN
Futile tricks?
(beat)
The dilithium crystals have been damaged. The fuel injector is hopelessly misaligned. The phase compensators are both fused, and we don't have spares. I've tried components from the shuttle, but they didn't help either. The best engineers in the quadrant couldn't make this thing work with the resources at my disposal.

TALORA
You have still failed.

QUINLAN
(angry)
Are you trying to make me fail?! To embarrass me? Surely you realize that nobody out here cares and you probably won't get the chance to tell Captain Cross what a miserable failure I am.
TALORA
(cold)
I'm in no mood for this kind of
discussion, especially with an
alcoholic.

Quinlan explodes.

QUINLAN
(ballistic)
Alcoholic. Alcoholic. That's good,
Commander. That's really good. I
can't argue with that, so I guess
I'll just go back to my bottle of
vodka and drown my sorrows, huh?
How's that sound? In fact, I wonder
if Kestol had any alcohol in store.
We could have some right now, you
and me.

(beat)
You and me.

TALORA
(beat, coldly)
Apparently, we'll have to restore
weapons. Actually, I'll restore
weapons. You take the helm.

Gladly.

She storms out.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Quinlan storms in and takes a seat. She works slowly but
angrily at the controls. A light starts to flash and the
console BEEPS.

QUINLAN
Shut up.

She touches a few more controls, taking care of the problem.
The flashing and bleeping goes away.

Quinlan reclines in the chair, with nothing to do but wait
for Talora. She taps her commbadge, which CHIRPS.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
Begin recording. Crewman's log. No,
wait, start over. Jennifer Quinlan's
log. I'm stuck on this alien ship,
waiting for Talora to do whatever
she feels is a good idea, which never
is. I'm wondering if I'll ever get
back to the Enterprise.

(MORE)
QUINLAN (CONT'D)
They don't even know we're on a ship like this. And all because of some stupid probe. A little jumble of sensors got us into this mess.

A beat, and then something dawns on Quinlan.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
End recording.

She bolts out of her seat and exits the helm cabin.

INT. FIGHTER -- CARGO HOLD

The probe sits in the cargo hold, taking up most of the room.

It's about a meter and half in height, width, and length, but various pieces of equipment stick out of the roughly spherical probe. In one place is a small console for human access.

Quinlan enters. She approaches the console, which bears the familiar Starfleet interface, and touches a few controls.

QUINLAN
Begin recording.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
EXT. SPACE

The FIGHTER, dead in space, shuttle nearby.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

The helm compartment is empty. TALORA enters, looks around, but does not find Quinlan. She is about to go when she notices something on a MONITOR. She taps her commbadge.

TALORA
Talora to Quinlan.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
Quinlan here.

TALORA
Return to the helm compartment.

Talora takes a seat and begins to work at the controls. Seconds later, QUINLAN enters.

TALORA (CONT'D)
Why did you leave?

QUINLAN
I had an idea.

TALORA
What?

QUINLAN
We'll use the probe as a distress beacon. I've entered our coordinates and an encoded message. If the Enterprise stumbles across it, they'll at least have some idea of where we are.

TALORA
(beat)
No.

QUINLAN
Why not?

TALORA
It will likely get taken by another pirate.

QUINLAN
What's the alternative? Send one from our current location?
TALORA
We wait for them to find us. Captain Cross is very creative.

QUINLAN
It'll take them too long! We're sitting dead in space, and the Enterprise has little chance of finding us. There's little chance that if the pirates capture us they'll kill us -- prisoners are a valuable commodity -- so we can be safe until the Enterprise arrives.

The console begins to BLEEP. Both turn their attention to the monitors, where they learn that...

EXT. SPACE

Four sleek WARSHIPS are approaching. They are silver, compact, and MENACING.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

QUINLAN
Don't you see? We're going to get creamed. We were creamed before in a fully functional shuttle. Here we are without a shuttle, stuck in this piece of broken metal. The probe is our only chance! We've already attracted enough attention to get those four warships on our tails. We're looking at the shortest skirmish in the history of the galaxy!

Talora's plans are slowly and visibly collapsing in her mind.

TALORA
(desperate)
It won't work!

QUINLAN
It's our only hope! Commander, think about it.

TALORA
(a little angry)
I don't like the idea!

QUINLAN
You don't like me!
(beat, calmer)
TALORA
Most of the time.

QUINLAN
You don't have to like me, but face it. My plan is the only one that has a chance of working.

There is a longing beat. Talora weighs the options and makes up her mind. Her cold, calculating personality returns to her face.

TALORA
We'll discuss our personal relationship later. Launch the probe, crewman. We'll put up a brief fight. The Enterprise can track these ships.

QUINLAN
Yes, Commander.

EXT. SPACE

The four warships are closing in. Meanwhile, the PROBE shoots out of the fighter and jumps to warp in a miniature tunnel of stars.

A few phaser blasts chase it but it is soon forgotten.

There is a brief pause. Suddenly, the four warships begin a coordinated attack. Phasers rock the lone fighter simultaneously as the warships circle with deadly cruelty.

A few shots lash out from the fighter and shake a warship. The warship, however, quickly regains composure and the attack continues.

A barrage of torpedoes strikes the fighter, and seriously cripple it. There is another brief pause. Another barrage storms through empty space and the fighter is destroyed in a tremendous EXPLOSION.

INT. ALIEN WARSHIP -- TRANSPORTER ROOM

A strange, alien transporter room. Architecture dominated by blacks and browns, walls lined with trophies and depictions of battles, this is the ship of a society dependent on war. Several ALIEN GUARDS, all of the same strange demonic-looking species, are ready to receive the prisoners.

TALORA and QUINLAN materialize, again weaponless. They are grabbed by several GUARDS, who shout at them in a strange and harsh language.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.
INT. BRIDGE

Cross is waiting coolly at the captain's chair. Y'lan enters.

Y'LAN
Captain, I believe I have found something helpful.

CROSS
What is it?

Y'LAN
The probe has shown up on sensors. It had a distress call from Quinlan and Talora specifying four Katasarri warships.

CROSS
Did you find the warships?

Y'LAN
Am I not Q'tami? (beat)
They are headed towards Breen space at a high speed. I have sent their positions to the helm.

CROSS
Thank-you. (taps combadge)
Cross to Engineering.

GREY'S COMM VOICE
Grey here.

CROSS
Get ready for slipstream.

Cross turns back to the helm, ready to make the jump.

EXT. SPACE

The four fighters at warp. Suddenly, a tunnel of light appears behind them and the Enterprise emerges in a CRACKLE of energy.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross shouts out orders. Various officers, including Sukothai, work quickly.

CROSS
Shields up. Ready torpedoes and phasers. Prep sickbay.
EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise quickly catches up to the four warships.

INT. BRIDGE

Same as before.

CROSS

Hail them.

SUkOTHAI

No response.

CROSS

(beat)

Engage.

As the bridge crew complies, we...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at warp.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

Jennifer Quinlan's log, Stardate 78361.6. I'm back aboard the Enterprise, along with Commander Talora, sadly. It was quite a trip.

INT. CORRIDOR

Quinlan walks through the corridors.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

Sometimes, the trip doesn't always go as planned. Things go wrong.

INT. CREWMAN'S QUARTERS

A Bajoran ceremony. Rayta and several other BAJORANS are crowded around a small Bajoran prayer orb, engaged in solemn ritual.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

We meet people we don't want to like but are forced to.

The ritual is interrupted when ELRIS enters, surprising all. A few smile slightly, and invite Elris in. She is still uncomfortable, not sure what to say.
INT. MISSION OPS

Quinlan enters.

QUINLAN (V.O.)
And we meet people we probably never will like.

Talora enters, bringing tension with her.

QUINLAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I suppose we learn to live with it.

Talora approaches Quinlan.

TALORA
(uncomfortably)
You do not have to report to phaser training today.

QUINLAN
(sarcastic)
How kind of you.

TALORA
But be there on time tomorrow, or you'll have another reprimand.

QUINLAN
You got it.

TALORA
What?

QUINLAN
You got it, Commander.

Talora is about to rebuke her, but decides not to. She turns to go.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
Commander!

Talora turns back around.

TALORA
What is it?

QUINLAN
Have you ever heard of the phrase "agree to disagree?"

TALORA
I believe I have. Why?
QUINLAN
Well... we tend to disagree. But we don't have to get angry about it.

TALORA
What do you propose?

QUINLAN
I propose we agree to... dislike each other.

TALORA
That's an interesting idea.
(candid)
But it could work. I don't like you.

QUINLAN
And I don't like you.

TALORA
Then we are in agreement.
(beat)
Phaser practice. Tomorrow, 0600.

QUINLAN
I'll be there.

Talora leaves, and after considering the conversation, Quinlan continues with her duties.

EXT. SPACE

As the Enterprise continues her journey, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END