STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"In Sickness and in Health"

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FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

We open on a scene of total chaos. A large conference room set up for diplomatic talks has become a battleground. PHASER BEAMS and ENERGY BOLTS crisscross the screen. There are two groups of aliens firing at each other, and also taking potshots at a Starfleet contingent in the middle, off to one side.

CROSS, DOJAR, plus two N.D. security guards, and a wounded crew member lying on the floor. The unhurt officers are all FACING OUTWARD in DEFENSIVE STANCE, trying to keep the aliens at bay, FIRING OVER A TABLE that’s used as a barricade. (They are using small hand phasers, not the full-sized models.)

CROSS
  (shouts)
  Cross to Enterprise!

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
  Enterprise here.

CROSS
  The situation’s gone to hell, Commander! They’ve started shooting at each other, and we’ve got wounded. We need an emergency beam-out!

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
  (cool)
  Acknowledged, Captain. Stand by.

A long BEAT. Cross and the others keep firing, but Dojar is getting nervous.

DOJAR
  Come on, come on...

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
  Away team, there’s a problem. Someone’s set up an energy shield in the room. We can’t beam you out.

Cross CURSES.

CROSS
  Acknowledged, Enterprise. Stand by.
  (to others)
  All right, we’ve got to get out of here. Dojar, give me some cover. Anderson, with me.
Dojar LEANS OVER their makeshift barricade, and lays down DEFENSIVE FIRE. Cross and Anderson DIVE OUT from cover, FIRING AS THEY GO, RUNNING towards the conference room door. They make it and lean up against the wall, taking cover against the aliens who are suddenly focused on them. Cross LEANS OUT to fire back, providing cover as the rest of the away team follows.

INT. HALLWAY

The door OPENS, and the away team rushes out one by one. One guard carrying the wounded officer first, then Dojar. As Dojar makes it out of the room, there’s a sudden FLURRY OF PLASMA BOLTS heard from inside the conference room, and a sort of HALF-SCREAM as someone is hit. Dojar TURNS BACK to look.

INT. SICKBAY OFFICE

ELRIS is working at her desk, TYPING SOMETHING into her monitor when the comm beeps.

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
Talora to Sickbay. The away team’s been ambushed. Stand by to receive casualties.

Elris springs in to action.

ELRIS
Acknowledged, Commander. Any specifics?

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
None, Doctor.

Elris is already out the door.

INT. SICKBAY -- CONTINUOUS

Elris RUSHES IN, calling orders as she goes.

ELRIS
Agolive, help me prep the surgical bay. Configure the dermal regenerators for unspecified energy burns, and have the cardiac support unit standing by. Atkinson, clear ward two for any auxiliary cases. Thayer...

Elris is interrupted by the comm.

TALORA’S COMM VOICE
Sickbay, stand by. The away team is beaming in now.
Elris is in the surgical bay, configuring the controls on the diagnostic bed, with Agolive behind her setting up equipment. We hear the away team BEAM IN behind her, and the sickbay staff hurries to assist.

Elris rushes back into the main part of the room, ready to call orders to the nurses and other doctors. But when she sees the away team, she freezes.

ELRIS

Neil...

CUT TO:

A wounded Neil Cross, supported by Dojar, with a MASSIVE PLASMA BURN on his chest...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER
INT. SICKBAY

Continuous action from the teaser. Dojar is CARRYING Cross to the diagnostic bed, as Elris pauses in shock nearby.

AGOLIVE

Doctor!

Elris snaps out of it, and quickly takes charge of the situation.

ELRIS

What happened?

DOJAR

He was hit by an Antican plasma blast. He was covering our exit from the room...

Elris cuts him off, she’s got what she needed to know.

ELRIS

Atkinson, pull up our data on Antican plasma weapons. We’ve got to stabilize his system. What’s his blood pressure?

AGOLIVE

Dangerously under normal levels.

ELRIS

We’ve got to get that back up. Ten CC’s of tricordrazine.

Agolive PUTS A HYPOSPRAY to Cross’ neck and injects it into his system. Cross starts VIGOROUSLY SHAKING and Elris CALLS DOJAR over.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Hold him.

Dojar looks on.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Dojar!

DOJAR

Yes, Doctor.

Dojar PRESSES down on Cross trying to stop him from shaking.

ELRIS

(to herself)

What the hell’s happening?
AGOLIVE
(reading a monitor)
I think I’ve got something, Doctor!

ELRIS
Don’t keep it to yourself, Agolive!

AGOLIVE
It looks like the plasma bolt infused some kind of chemical into his system. Anything we inject...

ELRIS
(interrupts)
Will be counteracted by the chemical.

AGOLIVE
Exactly.

ELRIS
I need some information on that chemical!

AGOLIVE
I don’t have much...

ELRIS
(shouts)
Then get some, damn it! What can we do to stabilize him?

Algolive is frantically reading the monitor, trying to get any useful information.

AGOLIVE
Leave him.

ELRIS
What!

AGOLIVE
Whatever we give him is going to be infected by the chemical and will spread around his system more than if we do nothing.

ELRIS
He’ll die!

AGOLIVE
And it will be even sooner if we try and treat him.

Elris pauses for a moment, clearly weighing the options.
ELRIS
All right! I want a good look at that chemical so we can develop a drug of our own! Let’s start with something small, like a sedative and work our way up.

AGOLIVE
Yes, Doctor!

CROSS IS STILL SHAKING. Elris seems to have a sudden thought.

ELRIS
Agolive!

AGOLIVE
Doctor?

ELRIS
What if we put a drug of our own through an electric current? It won’t stop the other chemical, but it might stabilize him.

AGOLIVE
Is that possible?

ELRIS
Well, there’s one way to find out. I need an electromagnetic pulse generator!

Agolive goes over to a TROLLEY and picks a piece of equipment off it and HANDS IT to Elris. Elris presses some buttons on it and keeps looking up at the display.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Damn!

She seems to RESET the device and start again. Her hands are SHAKING slightly. She finally programs the device correctly and puts it on Cross’ chest.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
I’m going to set the pulse for total cardiac reset.

Algolive and the other nurses look up, shocked.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
We’re going to be making the Captain clinically dead for twenty to thirty seconds, so I want people on standby on resuscitation units in case this doesn’t work.
NURSES
Yes, Doctor.

ELRIS
Okay then, let’s do this!

Elris presses some keys on the side of the bed Cross is on and he stops shaking. There is a long silent beat where no one speaks. Cross is dead. Elris watches the monitor impatiently.

INT. A MEDICAL BAY (FLASHBACK)

Cross and Elris stand side by side looking at a monitor which displays no life signs. Elris turns to Cross and buries her head in his arms.

INT. SICKBAY

AGOLIVE
It’s been twenty seconds, Doctor.

ELRIS
Resuscitation team, stand by.

More time passes. Still nothing.

AGOLIVE
Twenty five seconds.

ELRIS
We’ll wait until...

Suddenly the readings spring to life and Cross begins breathing again, albeit slowly, but he is no longer shaking. Elris closes her eyes in relief.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Good work, everyone. Let’s get working on that drug.

TALORA ENTERS, and walks up to Dojar as Elris walks by.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Commander, you just missed the fireworks.

TALORA
Fireworks?

DOJAR
(slowly)
The Captain was dead on the table for twenty five seconds.

Talora looks shocked for a second before regaining her composure.
TALORA
The Captain was injured?

DOJAR
Yes.

TALORA
How is he?

DOJAR
I’m not sure. It looks like he’ll be all right.

Talora walks into the surgical bay. She glances at Cross on the diagnostic bed, looking slightly unsettled. Elris is still working on Cross, occasionally referring to a nearby monitor.

TALORA
What’s his condition?

ELRIS
(distracted, still working)
Not good. I’ve got his system stabilized for now, but he’s still unconscious, and he’s not likely to improve much unless we can get some information on the properties of the chemical.

TALORA
(confused)
What chemical?

ELRIS
Ask a nurse, Commander. I don’t have time to stand around chatting.

TALORA
Understood.

Sickbay is still A FLURRY OF ACTIVITY as NURSES tend to the other injured Crewman, others attend to Cross and others work on a chemical. Talora WALKS OVER to Dojar.

TALORA (CONT'D)
(back to business)
What’s the status of the conference?

DOJAR
The Selay and the Anticans decided to turn on each other. We were caught in the crossfire.
TALORA
How was it possible for the Captain to be shot? Both sides agreed to leave their weapons.

DOJAR
They must have smuggled them in somehow. Our sensors didn’t pick them up.

TALORA
I take it the conference didn’t turn out the way we had planned?

DOJAR
Neither side agreed to stop searching the other’s ships on trade runs.

TALORA
This is becoming more ridiculous then when the Humans had trade ships under attack by Nausicaans.

DOJAR
Agreed.

TALORA
(fuming)
If the Romulans had their way they would have let both sides fight it out until they had destroyed one another and left two less powers in the galaxy for us to worry about.

DOJAR
And that’s why the Federation is here instead of the Romulans.

TALORA
To stand in the line of fire when both sides decide to go back to their primitive instincts?

DOJAR
You know what I mean, Commander.

Talora NODS. She is obviously annoyed at the shooting of Cross. Elris WALKS OVER. She looks more RELIEVED then she did earlier.

ELRIS
It looks like we’ve got him stabilized...

TALORA
(interrupts)
Good work, Doctor.
ELRIS
Unfortunately it’s not all good news. It looks like if we don’t find a way to neutralize the chemical that was in the plasma bolt, he’ll be dead within the next sixty hours.

TALORA
How is he responding to the medication you gave him?

ELRIS
Not well. I don’t know why, but he’s not responding to the treatment. There’s something strange about the chemical’s molecular structure, but I can’t quite figure out what.

TALORA
Any suspicions?

ELRIS
None. But if you let me get back to work I might be able to find something a lot quicker.

TALORA
Dismissed.

ELRIS
Thank you.

Elris heads back to the surgical bay.

TALORA
Lieutenant.

DOJAR
Yes?

TALORA
You’re needed on the bridge.

DOJAR
I know.

BEAT. Dojar is still standing in place.

TALORA
Do you require medical treatment?

DOJAR
No.

(beat)
I don’t think so.
RENAISSANCE: "In Sickness and in Health" - ACT ONE

TALORA
Then we’ll be on the bridge.

Dojar seems to snap out of his trance, and he and Talora EXIT.

INT. BRIDGE

GREY, Y’LAN and QUINLAN are all present. Dojar’s expression is grim as he EXITS the turbolift and Talora looks as Romulan as ever.

QUINLAN
What’s happened?

DOJAR
The Captain’s been shot.

STUNNED LOOKS all around, as the crew reacts to the news.

GREY
How is he?

TALORA
Critical, but stable. Doctor Elris is working with her team now.

QUINLAN
Is there anything we can do?

Talora looks annoyed at the pointless question, but lets the matter pass given the circumstances.

TALORA
Not at the moment. Mister Dojar, hail the Antican Embassy. I want to speak to someone in charge down there, and get some information on just what they’re infusing their plasma weapons with.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is working on a display in the surgical bay, when she hears Cross GROAN behind her. Elris goes over to check on him.

ELRIS
(looking concerned)
How do you feel?

CROSS
(looking terrible)
Great. Couldn’t be better.

Elris gives him a serious LOOK.
CROSS (CONT'D)
(sighs)
Okay, so I’m not so great. What happened?

ELRIS
Dojar says you were hit by an Antican plasma weapon. The bolt infused some kind of chemical into your system. We’re trying to find a way to counteract its effects now.

CROSS
So what’s the prognosis?

ELRIS
As long as you stay in bed for the next couple of days, you should be fine. I’m working on a treatment regimen to counteract the chemical in your bloodstream now.

Algolive is working on a console nearby, and has overheard the exchange. She LOOKS UP, concerned at Elris’s lie.

CROSS
(grateful)
Well, that’s good to know. Thanks, Lea.

Elris is about to reproach him for using her given name, but she stops herself, and smiles instead.

ELRIS
You’re welcome.

Elris EXITS. Cross settles back on the bed with a SIGH.

EXT. SPACE
A shot establishing the Enterprise in orbit of a Class-M planet.

INT. SICKBAY OFFICE
Elris is sitting at her desk, working away at the display. Her posture should indicate that she’s been at this for quite a while. Talora ENTERS, carrying a PADD.

TALORA
I’ve got some details on Antican plasma rifles. The ambassador was... kind enough to provide it, and expresses his sincere condolences regarding the incident.
Talora’s expression indicates that she doesn’t believe those words one bit. Elris similarly gives a **snort** of derision.

**ELRIS**
Generous of them.
(picks up the PADD)
Thanks for this. Maybe there’ll be something useful.

**TALORA**
How is the Captain?

**ELRIS**
He’s regained consciousness, but I still can’t figure out what to do about that chemical. None of this makes any sense…
(points to the display)
I’ve isolated its molecular structure, but I can’t understand how it’s progressing through his system. Neil…
(hesitates)
The Captain shouldn’t have regained consciousness I didn’t administer any stimulant to wake him.

Talora nods, but this is out of her league.

**TALORA**
May I speak to him?

**ELRIS**
Sure. He’s still in the surgical bay.

**TALORA**
Thank you, Doctor.

Talora EXITS.

**INT. SICKBAY**

Cross is still in his same position on the diagnostic bed when Talora walks up.

**TALORA**
Captain. How are you feeling?

**CROSS**
You know, Commander, everyone keeps asking me that, and I keep saying the same thing: I feel terrible.

**TALORA**
My apologies.
(MORE)
TALORA (CONT'D)
It is a rather common greeting for a situation such as this, however.

CROSS
Right. Sorry.

BEAT. Talora seems to be at a loss for words, seeing her Captain in this position. Normally projecting a commanding presence, Cross now appears withdrawn and exhausted.

CROSS (CONT'D)
This hasn’t happened to me before, you know.

TALORA
Excuse me?

CROSS
I’ve never been shot before. For that matter, I’ve never been bedridden like this, either. Never been injured, never been sick, never been...

(he interrupts himself)
Well, except for just after I was rescued from the POW camp. But that was more like a welcome rest, anyway.

(Another thought occurs to him)
And to have Lea as my doctor...

TALORA
(somewhat surprised)
You’ve never been under her care?

CROSS
Well, sure, while we were... still together. But now...

BEAT.

CROSS (CONT'D)
It’s funny... it’s almost as if she’s avoiding me. Ever since we had dinner together a few weeks ago we’ve been talking more and more. Something’s wrong. I know it.

TALORA
It is a new experience for both of you. You yourself have realized that. It may be that Doctor Elris feels that spending a large amount of time together may cause your relationship with her to take a step back, rather than forwards.
Cross NODS in agreement and there is a LONG BEAT. Talora UNCOMFORTABLY looks around the room.

CROSS
Is there something bothering you, Commander?

TALORA
No, Captain. But I believe that I should be comforting you and wishing you well whilst you are incapacitated, yet I am not the comforting type. I apologize.

CROSS
Are any Romulans the comforting type?

TALORA
I don’t think so, Sir.

CROSS
Then you have nothing to worry about. Just make sure my ship’s in one piece when I’m back on the Bridge.

Another LONG AWKWARD BEAT.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Don’t feel like you have to stay.

Talora looks RELIEVED and quickly nods, turns her back and is about to exit, when she turns around again.

TALORA
I wish you a (beat) good recovery, Captain.

CROSS
(smiles)
I’ll be back on the Bridge before you know it.

Talora gives Cross a HALF SMILE back before QUICKLY EXITING.

EXT. SPACE

Enterprise in orbit of the same planet we saw earlier. The sun is in a different position, showing the passage of time.

INT. SICKBAY OFFICE

Elris’s eyes are GLAZED. She has BAGS UNDER HER EYES and is EATING some type of food off a small plate, which she keeps picking at every now and then.
She is SQUINTING at the display and taps a control on the computer, before hearing an off putting BEEP and WHACKING the computer with the hand her food is in, realizing too late and resulting in FOOD SPLATTERING across the room just as QUINLAN enters. She dodges a piece of food before SHOOTING ELRIS A STRANGE LOOK.

QUINLAN
(seriously)
Hey! What did that food ever do to you?

ELRIS
Ugh. It tried to infect my ridges.

QUINLAN
So how’s it going?

ELRIS
(defensively)
How’s what going?

QUINLAN
The captain’s still injured, isn’t he?

ELRIS
Oh... yes.
(quickly)
But nothing to worry about.
(normally)
Aren’t you supposed to be working?

Elris goes back to WORKING on the computer screen.

QUINLAN
Yeah, but I just thought I’d stop by. And it looks to me like it’s a good thing that I did. You need a rest.

ELRIS
What makes you say that?

QUINLAN
You’re snappy and quite obviously frustrated.

ELRIS
Well, someone has to do this.

QUINLAN
Take a break for a while. You need one.

Elris finally SNAPS.
ELRIS
(shouts)
Look, Quinlan! When I need a break, I’ll go for a break. I don’t need you to tell me otherwise.

QUINLAN
(surprised at the outburst)
Woah! Calm down, Doctor. I’m only trying to help!

Elris sits back and begins to calm down, after doing some SMALL BREATHING EXCERISES.

ELRIS
It’s just having Neil as my patient. I’ve never had to care for him like this before. It’s tough having any Captain as your patient, let alone the captain and my husband.

QUINLAN
I feel your pain, my friend.

ELRIS
Believe me, you don’t. I feel like I’ve got the entire ship riding on my back.

QUINLAN
You’re the ship’s Doctor, you have that burden to carry, just like the crew rely on Grey to make sure that the ship doesn’t blow up.

ELRIS
You’re not helping.

QUINLAN
And you’re not relaxing.

ELRIS
(distressed)
And that’s because I can’t!

QUINLAN
What?

ELRIS
He’s dying, Jennifer!

QUINLAN
(shocked)
WHAT?
ELRIS
I’ve been lying to Neil. He’s going
to be dead within forty-eight hours,
unless I can find a cure. Talora
knows, some of the medical staff
know, but no one else.

QUINLAN
This isn’t the type of thing you can
just keep to yourself, Elris.

ELRIS
Then what do you suggest that I do?
Tell the captain that he’s going to
be dead soon if I don’t find a cure?

QUINLAN
Then take the pressure off of
yourself! You have a full medical
team at your disposal -- they can
help.

ELRIS
But then how long will it be before
the rest of the crew know? Do you
have any idea how hard it is for me
to look him in the eyes and tell him
that he’ll be on his feet in a couple
of days? How do you think they will
react?

QUINLAN
I don’t know but you need help,
Elris. You can’t do this on your
own.

From Elris’s PAINED EXPRESSION we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
INT. SICKBAY

Elris walks from her office and into the bay where Cross is, carrying a tray with hyposprays and a few other pieces of med tech. Elris goes in and seems to GLARE at Cross who REACTS:

    CROSS
    What have I done this time?
    
    ELRIS
    Excuse me?
    
    CROSS
    You haven’t given me that look since we were still living together, after I’d done something that you weren’t too happy about.
    
    ELRIS
    (quickly)
    I’ve got no time to dwell on the past, Captain.
    
    CROSS
    Well it looks like we’re going to be stuck in here for a while.
    
    ELRIS
    What makes you think that?
    
    CROSS
    Well, it looks like you’re about to give me some kind of complicated treatment. You have that look in your eyes.
    
    ELRIS
    How would you know? You’ve never had anything like this given to you before, let alone from me.

Elris picks up a hypospray and injects Cross. Over the following dialogue, she continues to run scans, takes a sample of blood, and places a medtech device on his forehead, which emits a BEEPING sound.

    CROSS
    I’ve seen you give it to others.
    
    ELRIS
    How does it make you feel? You’ve never been in this situation before.
CROSS
Like my life is in your hands. That’s a new experience as well.

ELRIS
I was talking to Jennifer earlier. I told her I’ve never had a captain in my care... let alone my husband.

Cross lets out a SMALL CHUCKLE.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Try not to move. The procedure is very delicate.

CROSS
I’ll try.

They both fall into an awkward silence, as Elris continues to do her work.

CROSS (CONT'D)
(trying to make conversation)
Are you all right?

ELRIS
(innocent)

CROSS
I know what you mean. But I’ll be out of your hair within a couple of days.

Elris subtly REACTS to Cross’s seeming innocuous comment.

ELRIS
(distant)
Of course...

The beeping noise the medtech device is making STOPS, and Elris takes it off Cross. She ABRUPTLY EXITS without saying a word to him.

CROSS
Elris?

No reply.

CROSS (CONT'D)
(slightly louder)
Elris?

Still no reply.
CROSS (CONT'D)
Guess I’m on my own then.

We move back to a WIDE SHOT of Sickbay, of Cross laid on the bed, alone.

INT. MESS HALL

Dojar sits at a table, alone, when Talora ENTERS and moves to join him.

TALORA
Good evening, Lieutenant.

DOJAR
Commander. How’s the captain?

TALORA
I haven’t been to see him since this morning. I’m planning on visiting later.

DOJAR
Is Doctor Elris allowing visitors?

TALORA
I believe so. She says that his condition is stable, for now.

DOJAR
I think I’ll go and visit him.

TALORA
If you think that will help.

DOJAR
What do you mean?

TALORA
The captain’s injury had an effect on you in Sickbay when you beamed in. Do you believe that by visiting him again you will have a different reaction?

DOJAR
Actually, yes I do. It was more of the shock of seeing him laid there, dead. I’ve seen a lot of deaths, Commander, but it was as if Elris was murdering him in cold blood.

TALORA
She was doing her job, Lieutenant. The Anticans and the Selay are the murderers.
DOJAR
I’m glad I’m not a doctor.

TALORA
In ways, being a Doctor is just as difficult as being a commanding officer. A captain has the safety of the entire crew in his or her hands...

DOJAR
(interrupts)
And it’s the doctor who has to make the life or death decisions. They have to make the final call.

TALORA
Exactly.

DOJAR
But on the other hand, it was my job to protect him. I was the one who let him cover the rear -- it should be me on that biobed.

TALORA
There was nothing that you could have done. And I’m certain that the captain will fully recover.

DOJAR
It still doesn’t justify what happened. I failed in my job as security officer. I should have detected those weapons!

TALORA
Does that mean that you didn’t do your job?

DOJAR
(defensive)
Of course not! But that’s... not the point.

TALORA
I believe it is. You fulfilled your duty, Dojar. There’s nothing you could have done about it.

DOJAR
You’ve never done that before.

TALORA
Done what?
DOJAR
Called me Dojar. It’s always been Lieutenant.

TALORA
And does that make you feel uncomfortable?

DOJAR
(smiling)
I’d be more worried if you called me Gril.

Talora SMILES BACK.

DOJAR (CONT'D)
Well, if you’ll excuse me Commander, I have a visit to make.

Talora NODS, and Dojar EXITS.

INT. SICKBAY OFFICE

Elris is still working at her desk. Dojar pokes his head around the corner.

DOJAR
Doctor. I didn’t expect to see you still working.

ELRIS
(sighs)
So people keep on telling me.

DOJAR
How long have you been up?

ELRIS
That is none of your concern. I have work that needs to be done, and I’m doing it.

DOJAR
You sound like Talora.

ELRIS
(looks up)
If you’ve come to insult me, Lieutenant, you’ve picked a bad time to do it.

DOJAR
(looks confused)
Actually, I’ve come to see the Captain.
ELRIS
(sighs)
Just go right through.

DOJAR
(uneasy)
Thanks. Is there anything I can do for...

ELRIS
(interrupts)
I’m fine.
(looks up)
I’d be a lot better off if you just left me alone.

Elris FORCES A SMILE, and Dojar EXITS.

INT. SICKBAY -- CONTINUOUS

Dojar walks over to see Cross in the surgical bay. Cross is ASLEEP, but Dojar does not realize this from the angle he is approaching him at.

DOJAR
Good evening, Captain!

Cross JUMPS and looks up at Dojar, a sudden look of FEAR shooting into his eyes.

CROSS
Get away from me, Cardassian!

DOJAR
Captain? It’s me, Dojar.

Cross suddenly realizes where he is, and a look of REALIZATION and SHAME come upon him.

CROSS
Dojar...
(beat)
I’m... sorry. I didn’t realize it was you.

There is an AWKWARD SILENCE.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Every time I’ve been asleep while I’ve been in here I’ve been dreaming of the POW camp. I’m sorry, Dojar.

DOJAR
(looking unsettled)
It’s all right. I just came to see how you’re doing.
CROSS
(sighs)
Not great. Elris has been giving me treatments, but they don’t seem to be working so far.

DOJAR
(uncertain)
I’m sure it’s normal. It’s probably taking a while to filter that chemical out of your bloodstream.

CROSS
Right.

BEAT.

DOJAR
Is there anything I can get for you?

CROSS
Actually, I suppose there is. Would you mind... arranging for some ship’s status reports or something finding their way down here? Elris doesn’t want me exerting myself, but I’ve been bored senseless down here.

DOJAR
(smiles)
Of course, Captain. I’ll ask the Commander if there’s anything suitable.

CROSS
Thanks, Dojar.

DOJAR
I’ll be back later.

CROSS
(sighs)
I won’t be going anywhere...

Dojar EXITS. Cross settles back in bed, alone again.

EXT. SPACE

Establishing the Enterprise still in orbit of the class-M planet. The sun disappears behind the curve of the planet, giving the effect of a peaceful sunset.

INT. SICKBAY OFFICE

A shot from behind Elris’s desk, showing her monitor is slowly scrolling data. PAN AROUND the desk to show that Elris is actually ASLEEP in her chair, having dozed off while reading.
Agolive ENTERS, reading a PADD as she walks in.

AGOLIVE
Doctor, I’ve got the latest analysis of...
(notices Elris is asleep)
Doctor?

Elris SNAPS awake suddenly.

ELRIS
(quickly)
I’m awake, I’m awake...
(gradually becoming aware)
What’s wrong?

AGOLIVE
Nothing’s wrong, I’ve just got the latest analysis of the chemical. I’ve finally managed to identify it -- it’s a derivative of the neural inhibitor resoprexahin.

Elris brightens. Finally, some good news.

ELRIS
Great work, Kathryn. Thanks. I’ll get started on running a...

AGOLIVE
(interrupts)
Excuse me, Doctor, but wouldn’t you be better of getting some rest? How long have you been on duty?

ELRIS
I’m not sure... but I’m okay.

AGOLIVE
You’ve been working since the Captain was first injured, haven’t you? That was at least twenty hours ago.

ELRIS
(tiredly)
Really, I’m fine.

AGOLIVE
(insistent)
Doctor, I can get started on running the structural analysis and reactive tests in the lab. Why don’t you try to get some sleep?
Elris looks like she’s about to continue arguing, but then thinks better of it.

**ELRIS**

All right, Kathryn, you win. I’ll see be back in six hours.

**AGOLIVE**

Good night, Doctor.

Elris EXITS.

**EXT. SPACE**

The Enterprise continues in orbit of the planet. In the distance, the sun emerges, giving the effect of a sunrise on the Enterprise’s sleek hull.

**INT. MESS HALL**

The room is crowded with officers—this is apparently a busy meal time for the crew. Elris ENTERS, looking more well-rested than she did in the previous scene. She walks over to a REPLICATOR.

**ELRIS**

Two Ktarian eggs, scrambled, an icoberry torte, and a glass of orange juice.

The tray of food MATERIALIZES in the alcove. Elris picks the tray up and WALKS OVER to a table where Quinlan, Grey, and Dojar are sitting.

**ELRIS (CONT'D)**

Good morning.

Various MURMURS of greeting from the trio already seated. Elris digs into her breakfast, and the others all continue eating in silence for a minute.

**QUINLAN**

(making conversation)

So... any news on the Captain?

**ELRIS**

Not recently. The nurses forced me out of Sickbay about eight hours ago, and I haven’t heard anything since. So no. No news.

**QUINLAN**

(grins)

So you’ve got an upstart staff, huh?

Elris smiles.
ELRIS
You know, I’ve been so buried with work in Sickbay that I haven’t had a chance to poke my head up lately. How’s the crew been taking things?

QUINLAN
Not too badly. It was a big shock, but they’ve been handling it rather well. Although a lot of people have seemed rather preoccupied in the past day.

BEAT.

GREY
Everyone in Engineering has been distracted lately, too. It seems that everyone’s been worried about the Captain. The warp core efficiency rating has fallen nearly a full percent in the past day. Of course, losing your commanding officer is a huge blow at any time.

QUINLAN
(sharp)
We haven’t lost him yet, Grey.

GREY
(quickly)
I know. I mean... having your Captain injured.

DOJAR
A group of my officers asked me about sending an away team down to the surface, to beat some answers out of the Anticans when they heard the news.

ELRIS
Can’t say that I blame them. The information that they gave us yesterday was practically worthless. So much for their regrets...

The group falls silent again.

GREY
Well at least he’s going to make a full recovery -- then he can go and beat something out of the Anticans himself.

Elris EYES Quinlan, who looks down at the table.
ELRIS
Yeah. Of course.

Quinlan SLOWLY NODS. Grey looks SUSPICIOUS.

GREY
How is the captain’s treatment going, Doctor?

ELRIS
Great.

GREY
And when do you expect him to be up on his feet?

ELRIS
(shouts)
God damn it, Grey! I’m a Doctor, not a psychic!

A number of other officers nearby are staring at Elris, and whispering to one another. Elris notices this, and calms down. Grey, though, seems to be getting angrier.

GREY
To be a doctor you must foresee patients recovery. In my opinion, Doctor, you are neither a good psychic, nor a liar.

ELRIS
Excuse me?

GREY
Every word you just told us was a lie; I can see it in your body language.

ELRIS
(deadly serious)
If you would like, Lieutenant, I will give you a medical tricorder, and you can make that judgment for yourself.

GREY
Well played, Doctor, but I still do not believe you.

With that Grey STANDS and LEAVES leaving Dojar looking on in a state of semi-shock, while Elris and Quinlan look in various directions attempting to look inconspicuous.

DOJAR
Doctor?
Dojar exercises the better part of valor and EXITS. Quinlan just gives Elris a LOOK before leaving as well. Elris SIGHS, and returns to her nearly-forgotten breakfast.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris walks in, and goes over to the surgical bay to check on Cross. He’s lying in bed in his usual position, reading from a PADD.

ELRIS

(slight)
Where’d you get that PADD?

CROSS

And a good morning to you too, Doctor. It’s just a ship’s status report from Talora. Something to keep me occupied here. I’ve been going stir crazy.

ELRIS

You shouldn’t be working in this condition at all.

CROSS

Well, it’s either that or just lie here and do nothing, so my options are rather limited, Doctor.

ELRIS

It won’t help your condition any if you keep exerting yourself. The strain on your system...

CROSS

(interrupts)
What strain? I’m just lying in bed, reading a PADD. And I’ve been here a whole day now, and I’m not feeling any better.

ELRIS

(slightly sarcastic)
Don’t worry, Captain, I’m doing everything I can to get you out of here as quickly as possible.

Elris EXITS. On Cross’s pained and angry expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

INT. MEDICAL LAB

A work table is set up with a futuristic microscope, a sample container, other medical equipment. Elris and Agolive are busy examining data, peering into the microscope, and consulting a computer display. It appears that they’ve been at this for a while, and we’re entering mid-conversation.

AGOLIVE
Look... there. I think I’ve isolated the contact point.

ELRIS
(interested)
Let me see.

AGOLIVE
(explaining)
It looks like the resoprexahin has been modified to react with the transfer neurons instead of the base neurons. As it spreads throughout the system, it latches on to whatever neural cells it can reach, and depolarizes them.

ELRIS
(understanding)
Which then disables the entire section of the nervous system. It could disrupt anything... including autonomic functions. Once enough of the system has been depolarized, the entire neural net starts to collapse.

Elris pauses, thinking.

AGOLIVE
Now we know how it works... the question is, how can we stop it?

ELRIS
(still thinking)
We know that the agent reacts with the neural cells. That gives us a starting point. What if... we were to synthesize a counter-agent that would be specifically designed to neutralize the chemical, break it up into its base components?

Agolive is doubtful.
AGOLIVE
Would that be effective enough? The chemical’s spread throughout his entire system... it would take forever to get it cleared with a counteragent like that.

(another thought occurs to her)
Besides, any agent that’s likely to interact with the chemical would probably also react with his own blood chemistry. It would tear his system apart!

ELRIS
It’s all we’ve got to go on. Forward the results to my office, I’ll start working on the reactive testing.

Elris starts to leave.

AGOLIVE
Doctor? Before you go... I wanted to ask why you haven’t told the captain how serious his condition is.

Elris stops. This is a sore point with her.

ELRIS
Kathryn, that’s not your business.

AGOLIVE
(defiant)
I believe it is. I heard what you told him yesterday. You lied. He has no idea that he could be dead in twenty-four hours. I caught him trying to walk around the surgical bay this morning! He barely made it three feet before he collapsed. He has a right to know the truth.

Elris looks anguished at Agolive’s words.

ELRIS
Don’t you think I know that? We’ve had more than our share of problems, but I can’t look at him and tell him that he’s going to die... if I can’t find the cure.

She pauses, regains her composure.

ELRIS (CONT’D)
In the end, it won’t matter. We’ll find a solution, and he’ll be fine. Soon.
AGOLIVE
Doctor, he may be the Captain, and he may be your husband... but he’s also a person, and your patient. It doesn’t matter if he’s going to be all right, he still needs to know. Tell him.

BEAT. Elris seems to be fighting an internal battle. Finally, she nods.

ELRIS
(resigned)
I will. If I can find the words...

INT. QUINLAN’S QUARTERS
Elris ENTERS.

QUINLAN
So, what’s up?

ELRIS
I’ve come to talk.

QUINLAN
What about?

ELRIS
Neil.

Quinlan GRITS HER TEETH. She knows she’s going to be in for a hard talk.

QUINLAN
Ah. How’s it going?

ELRIS
We’ve come up with something.
(beat)
But I don’t think it’s going to work.

QUINLAN
Why?

Elris SHAKES HER HEAD.

ELRIS
I’ve been outwitted by it, Jennifer. I...
(beat)
The chemical is my enemy, it’s Neil’s enemy.
(beat)
I never thought it would come to this, but... there are just some things medicine can’t cure.
(MORE)
ELRIS (CONT'D)
(beat)
Not yet, and not in time.

QUINLAN
(bluntly)
Then he’ll die.

Elris TAKES THIS IN and there is a LONG BEAT.

ELRIS
What is there to try?

QUINLAN
I don’t know. I’m not a Doctor. You are. You have a job to do, Doctor. You can’t stop now.

Elris SIGHS.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
You still haven’t told him yet, have you?

ELRIS
Agolive thinks that I should.

QUINLAN
Are you going to?

ELRIS
From the way people are speaking to me it sounds like I don’t have much choice.

QUINLAN
That sounds different from the Elris Lea that I spoke to earlier.

ELRIS
I didn’t say that I would.

QUINLAN
Then how would you feel if you were in his position? If you didn’t know what was happening to you and died without having a change to say goodbye? You have a choice to make, Elris, and its one that only Neil knows the answer to.

The camera CLOSES IN on Elris and as it does the truth seems to draw on her through Quinlan’s words.
QUINLAN (CONT'D)
You know him better than anyone on this ship. You have to make that decision for him not based on what you want but what he wants. Remember that.

ELRIS
You’re right. You have an annoying habit of doing that, especially for an ex-convict.

QUINLAN
I’m always right. Where do you think I picked that up?

ELRIS
Where?

QUINLAN
Lawyers.

Elris lets out a SMALL LAUGH.

ELRIS
Thank you.

QUINLAN
(grins)
What are friends for?

INT. SICKBAY

Elris gathers some equipment up and walks into Cross’ surgical bay once again.

She takes a look at Cross who is SLEEPING. She STIRS at him, not knowing what to do. She slowly SHAKES HIM and he WAKES UP.

ELRIS
(softly)
Hey. How are you feeling?

CROSS
(sounds weak)
Not good.

ELRIS
You should be starting to feel better.

CROSS
(aggravated)
Well I don’t, Doctor.
ELRIS
I’ve come up with some more medication.
   (smiles)
I’ve been working on it for hours -- if this doesn’t do any good, I don’t know what will.

CROSS
It doesn’t sound as simple as you originally thought.

ELRIS
It isn’t. It’s... complicated.

CROSS
How complicated?

Elris doesn’t speak.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Well?

Elris LOOKS HIM IN THE EYES, suddenly, the truth begins to dawn on Cross. Cross OPENS HIS MOUTH as if to say something but STOPS.

Elris NODS.

ELRIS
   (reluctantly)
If I don’t find a cure... you’ll be dead in less than a day.

Cross JUMPS at this news.

CROSS
What?

ELRIS
   (firm)
I’m sorry Neil. I didn’t know how to tell you.
   (beat)
I couldn’t tell you.

CROSS
   (disbelieving)
Your scans can’t be right. I can’t die. Not now!

ELRIS
I’m doing all that I can, Neil.

CROSS
You keep saying that.
ELRIS
I should have told you earlier.

CROSS
(flatly)
You’re right.

ELRIS
You don’t sound as annoyed as I thought you would.

CROSS
Well, in case you haven’t noticed you’ve got me drugged up so much since my little escapade this morning, I couldn’t raise a finger if I wanted to.

ELRIS
So you are annoyed.

CROSS
(sarcastically)
Well done, Doctor. For once you seem to have at least one prognosis correct. (beat)
You should have told me.

ELRIS
(shouts)
I know!

Elris WALKS TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BED, where Cross can’t see her as well. Cross seems to calm down, but we can tell from the AGITATION on his face that he is far from happy.

CROSS
What are my chances?

ELRIS
It’s... complicated.

CROSS
Complicated? That’s all you have to say? Your and my relationship is complicated, Doctor. Am I going to live?

ELRIS
(slowly)
I don’t know.

Cross SHAKES HIS HEAD.
CROSS
I honestly don’t believe you. First you neglect me, then you...

ELRIS
Neglect you?

CROSS
You’ve hardly come in to see me apart from when you’ve been giving me treatment.

ELRIS
And why do you think that is?

CROSS
Because you still can’t talk to me. Because you still believe that I’m not worthy of you.

ELRIS
That’s pathetic, Cross! Don’t you think that it might be because I’ve been working around the clock to find a cure? That it’s been too hard for me to talk to you? To look you in the eyes and say that you’re going to be all right more than I have to?

CROSS
You should have told me!

ELRIS
I couldn’t! Anyway, on the subject of neglect, you’d know quite a lot about that, wouldn’t you?

CROSS
What the hell is that supposed to mean?

ELRIS
You’re career always came first, didn’t it?

CROSS
(retaliatory)
And so did your faith.

ELRIS
And you didn’t even try to help me in it. You didn’t even try to understand it or appreciate it.

CROSS
And where would that put me as a Starfleet officer?
ELRIS
(interrupts)
See, there you go again.

CROSS
You’re people worship aliens in a wormhole. I appreciate that I really do, but it’s not something that I can see myself believing in, Elris.

ELRIS
Why, because of your past?

CROSS
That has nothing to do with it, and you know it!

ELRIS
You’ve always been tied to the past, Neil. You’ve never let it go.

CROSS
Fine. Let’s see how you deal with being stuck in a POW camp for three years of your life and we’ll see how you hold up, shall we?

ELRIS
You forget, Neil, I lived on Bajor for eleven years during the occupation. The whole planet was practically a POW camp.

CROSS
(weakly shouts)
You know that’s not what I meant.
(regains breath)
It was never the same. You didn’t have to live in constant fear of being beaten... of being the next person on the Jem’Hadar’s hit list.

ELRIS
No? I just had the Cardassians... not quite the same is it? Even though you still fear Dojar.

CROSS
Fear him?

ELRIS
He told me what happened when he came to see you this morning.

CROSS
I gave him a valid reason why.
ELRIS
But you still harbor animosity towards
him. You’re hanging on to the past.

CROSS
And I always relied on you to be
there for me when I needed you. But
you weren’t then and you certainly
aren’t now.

ELRIS
You’re relying on me to survive,
Neil!

CROSS
Really? Because a few hours ago I
could have sworn I was going to be
fine.

ELRIS
You’re still relying on me.

CROSS
Of course I’m relying on you! My
life is in your hands! And you’ve
been manipulating the situation to
suit your own feelings. You’re
treating the situation in the same
way you did with Daniel!

Elris FREEZES and STARES at Cross, right in the eyes.

ELRIS
You have no right to bring up our
son like that.

CROSS
Oh I think I do. His life was in
your hands just like mine is now.
You ignored the situation then, too!
All the way, until it was too late.
I didn’t have a chance to say goodbye,
Lea!

(softly)
Are you going to just let me die,
too?

ELRIS
You know that I did everything in my
power to save our son!

CROSS
You kept on pushing me away, I didn’t
have a chance to even see him until
it was too late.
ELRIS
There was nothing you could have done.

CROSS
How about letting the specialist near him? How about taking a break? How about telling me? How many people on board know this time, huh? Two? Three?

ELRIS
Enough.

Cross NODS. It’s the answer he expected.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
There was nothing I could have done to save him, Neil.

CROSS
Nothing you could have done.

ELRIS
Stop telling me what I already know! There’s nothing I can do, I can’t go back in time and change what happened. No one can.

CROSS
That still doesn’t make things right.

ELRIS
Don’t you think that I know that? I lie awake in bed nearly every night thinking about what could have been, what life might have been like. If I could pay to have Daniel brought back I’d give my life. My life, Neil. But I can’t.

CROSS
So you save other peoples lives every day, instead?

ELRIS
Like you said. It doesn’t make things right.

CROSS
Maybe one day you will get to repay your debt. I guess your beliefs got you through that part, you’ll die and he’ll be there with the Prophets.
ELRIS
You know my beliefs aren’t what they were ten years ago.

CROSS
I know.

ELRIS
So you’re mocking me? Mocking my religion?

CROSS
You don’t believe in a religion any more.

ELRIS
Is this is what this is about? My faith?

CROSS
What makes you think that?

ELRIS
You seem to keep bringing it up a lot.

CROSS
You know this is about you and me. (almost begging)
You have to save me, Lea. Don’t make the same mistake twice. Please.

Elris EYES Cross and doesn’t know what to say. We can see her MOUTH MOVING as though she is about say something, she looks awkward and unsure of herself. She tires to say something one last time, before turning around and EXITING.

INT. CORRIDOR

Elris TURNS and PUSHES HER BACK AGAINST A WALL before SLIDING DOWN IT, with her HEAD IN HER HANDS and begins to CRY.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN

INT. CORRIDOR

Same as before. Talora APPROACHES. Elris LOOKS UP before quickly REGAINING HER COMPOSURE and STANDING UP.

ELRIS
Commander.

TALORA
Are you fit for duty, Doctor?

ELRIS
Yeah... I’m just tired. That’s all.

Talora NODS, seeming to understand.

TALORA
Have you made any progress?

ELRIS
Not since my last report.

TALORA
That was over an hour ago, Doctor.

ELRIS
I’ve been busy examining the patient. I haven’t made any progress.

TALORA
No progress. In an hour?

ELRIS
Unless eliminating possibilities from how to cure the captain is your idea of progress, than the answer is yes.

TALORA
The captain has twenty-four hours to live, and you’re telling me that you have not made any progress. We do not have hours to waste, Doctor.

ELRIS
(irritated)
I’m doing all that I can, Comma-

TALORA
(interrupts)
Not good enough.

(MORE)
TALORA (CONT'D)
(beat)
It is standard procedure that doctors
do not take care of their relatives.
I was willing to make an exception
in this case, but it is clearly
misguided.

ELRIS
(accusingly)
What are you implying? That I’m
impeded because I’m his wife?

TALORA
(cold)
I am not implying, Doctor. I am
stating a fact.

ELRIS
It is not your job to interfere in a
case like this. I am doing all that
I can for my husband -- the Captain --
and there is nothing anyone else
could do better.

TALORA
On the contrary, Doctor. I can relieve
you from duty.

ELRIS
You have no grounds for removal.

Talora remains impassive. Elris realizes there is nothing
she can do.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
You can’t take me away from him,
Commander.

TALORA
I can, and I will. You are relieved
of duty.

ELRIS
(furious)
Commander!

TALORA
I am not going to change my mind,
Doctor.

Elris SHAKES HER HEAD at Talora.

ELRIS
He’ll die.
TALORA
Perhaps. But his odds of survival may be considerably better without you in charge.

ELRIS
I’ll remember this, Commander.

TALORA
As will I.

Elris takes one last LOOK towards Sickbay, before heading down the corridor.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

TALORA
Commanders Log, Stardate 78412.9. Since relieving Doctor Elris of duty the captain’s condition has continued to deteriorate. Doctor Atkinson has informed me that the captain is paralyzed and that his chances of survival are slim.

INT. SICKBAY

A male Doctor, ATKINSON is LOOKING OVER Cross, giving him treatment.

ATKINSON
I think we’re beginning to make some progress. The last treatment we tested in your blood sample began to work. We should have something that resembles a cure very soon.

CROSS
Are you just trying to make me feel better?

ATKINSON
It’s part of my job description, Captain. But we really are making progress.

CROSS
(grimly)
But not fast enough.

Atkinson SLOWLY NODS, and gives Cross a HYPOSPRAY.

ATKINSON
If anything, this should slow the chemical down.
CROSS
Thank you, Doctor.

Atkinson NODS and EXITS.

There is a couple of seconds were we just look down on Cross from above. He closes his eyes and tries to sleep, before HEARING the familiar SQUELCH of Y’lan ENTERING.

CROSS (CONT'D)
(still with eyes closed)
Hello, Y’lan.

Y’LAN
Captain.

Cross OPENS HIS EYES.

CROSS
I didn’t expect to see you.

Y’LAN
I have come to observe and give
(beat)
Lieutenant Grey mentioned... comfort.

Cross gives a WEAK SMILE.

Y’LAN (CONT'D)
But mainly to observe.

CROSS
(sarcastically)
Thanks for coming.

Y’LAN
How are you dealing with your condition?

CROSS
The same as anyone else would, I suppose. Just waiting for the medical staff to find a cure... or to die.

Y’LAN
Not a pleasant length of time.

CROSS
You’re right there.

Y’LAN
What do you think about?

CROSS
Y’LAN
What do you believe the answer is?

CROSS
I’d like to believe in an afterlife. But it doesn’t make any sense to me. How can we think if our brains cease to function, if our hearts cease to beat.

(shakes head and smiles)
I’d like to believe in a soul.

Y’LAN
It is not something that you should be so doubtful of, Captain. You have nothing to worry about.

CROSS
The Q’tami know something about death?

Y’LAN
We do not. It is one event which will eventually happen to each individual in the universe, something which can only be put on hold. We prefer to wait, to have the experience of a life time.

CROSS
So you believe in a soul?

Y’LAN
We believe in ourselves, Captain.

CROSS
I never thought of death like that before. Thank you, Y’lan.

Y’LAN
It is the least I can do, Captain. I wish you well.

Cross LOOKS SURPRISED.

CROSS
Y’lan, I want you to do something for me.

INT. ELRIS’ QUARTERS

Elris is WEARING CIVVIES and Y’lan AKWARDLY SITS on a couch next to her on a wall opposite a window looking into space.

ELRIS
I didn’t think you were the social type, Y’lan.
Y'LAN
I am not. I was asked to come and visit you.

ELRIS
By Neil?

Y'LAN
Correct.

ELRIS
Great, now that he can’t come and do his own dirty work, he’s getting you to come and do it for him. Can’t I escape that man?

Y'LAN
I am sorry, Doctor, but he asked me to convey a message.

ELRIS
(softly)
A message?

Elris turns her back to Y'lan and looks out of the window, seemingly ignoring him.

Y'LAN
He wants you to get on with your life. Don’t dwell on things past -- he says that you were correct. There is nothing that you can do to change the past. It’s the present that matters, and the future that counts.

Elris remains facing the window, in her reflection we can see tears in her eyes, though Y'lan can not see this. There is no trace of this in her voice when she speaks.

ELRIS
Thank you, Y'lan.

Y'LAN
Anytime, Doctor. I will be leaving now.

Elris just nods.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)
It is strange that you humanoids are attached to the past more than anything else. The future does not seem to be apparent to you unless it is your life which is at risk or an objective that you wish to achieve.

(MORE)
Y'LAN (CONT'D)
You attach yourself to the captain as he is a part of your past, and now that there is a chance that he may be taken away from you, you wish to consider the future. It is a strange society which you live in.

Elris just REMAINS SILENT and Y’lan EXITS. Elris TURNS AROUND and we the DISTURBED EXPRESSION on her face.

INT. CARGO BAY

Quinlan STANDS CATALOGUING cargo containers, whilst a disturbed Elris stands next to her.

ELRIS
(angry)
Why can't he just leave me alone? Even from his death bed he’s telling me to go and get on with my life and forget about him.
(calmer)
Anyway, I stopped caring for him a long time ago.

QUINLAN
Then you have nothing to worry about, do you?

ELRIS
Exactly.

QUINLAN
So how’s he doing?

ELRIS
Same as before, less time left. Atkinson’s looking after him, but I don’t think he’s found a cure yet.

QUINLAN
Uh-huh.

ELRIS
I mean, why should Talora kick me off the medical team anyway? I’m the best Doctor she has on the ship and she’s taking the odds of saving the captain's life away by having me off the team.

QUINLAN
Maybe... it’s for the best.

ELRIS
What do you mean?
QUINLAN

Your emotions were getting in the way of your decisions. They were hardly the best ones that you could have made.

ELRIS

How do you expect me to react? To sit back and treat him like any other patient? He’s been my husband for thirteen years, Jennifer, I can’t just treat him like any other patient. When I first saw him after he beamed in I...

(beat)

...froze. I’ve never seen him like that before, I’ve never seen someone close to me...

(beat and then slowly)

...like that before.

(depressed)
I should never have lied to him, I should have told him the truth from the beginning... maybe I thought that if I didn’t tell him and kept it from as many people as I could it would all go away and go back to normal.

(beat)
Maybe I wanted him to die.

Quinlan REACTS.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Maybe... maybe I’ve just had all I can take from him and need to move on.

QUINLAN

Don’t be ridiculous! You worked around the clock to try and find a cure for him! There’s no way you’d have done that if you wanted him to die.

ELRIS

(shouts)
Then why couldn’t I find a cure? Why couldn’t I save him? He’s done so much for me over the years and the only thing that I've done is to push him away.

(begins to cry)

When I first came aboard I pushed him away, when he wanted us to just be friends I pushed him away. I talked to him earlier about neglect... but

(MORE)
ELRIS (CONT'D)
I didn’t and still don’t deserve him.

(trying to regain some composure)
Now here I am pushing him away. Again.

QUINLAN
Do you still love him?

Quinlan WORKS ON. Elris is caught off guard.

ELRIS
What?

QUINLAN
Do you still love him?

There is a LONG BEAT where the two women both STARE AT EACH OTHER. Elris LOOKS CONFUSED and thoughtful as she comes to a REALIZATION.

ELRIS
(quietly)
I can’t answer that.

Quinlan REMAINS SILENT.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
(emotional)
I really don’t know. There’s so much between him and me... so much we’ve been through and now I’m throwing all of that away. My life has become the living embodiment of someone who has lost everything that she once held dear. I’ve lost my husband, my faith... my...

(holds herself back)
I’ve lost too many parts of my life to loose someone else, and now there’s nothing I can do about it. He’s going to die, Jennifer.

(crying)
He’s going to die.

Quinlan MOVES IN TO SUPPORT ELRIS, but Elris PUSHES HER AWAY.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
I have to go.

QUINLAN
Go where?

ELRIS
I have to go and see him. Now. Before it’s too late.
And with that Elris LEAVES, leaving Quinlan standing at her
post cataloguing crates.

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Elris EXITS the cargo bay and BREAKS INTO A JOG as she RUNS
THROUGH THE CORRIDORS of the SHIP and into a TURBOLIFT.

INT. TURBOLIFT -- CONTINUOUS

Elris stands WITH TEARS IN HER EYES.

ELRIS
Sickbay.

Elris LEANS BACK AGAINST THE WALLS and CLOSES HER EYES.

Note: Between each flashback, cut to a graphic of the
turbolift moving through the Enterprise.

INT. CORRIDOR (FLASHBACK: "AFTERMATH")

Elris holds up a PADD and shoves it to Cross.

ELRIS
Here's my official request to be
transferred off this ship.

CROSS
I can't accept this.

ELRIS
Either that or my resignation,
Captain. One way or another, I'm
out!

(sharply)
Sir.

INT. SICKBAY (FLASHBACK: "AFTERMATH")

Elris patches up the final patient of the day, gives an
approving nod to the nurses. Another job well done, another
life saved. She sits down in her SMALL OFFICE, exhausted
from the day's work. Notes a FLOWER on the table, with a
FOLDED NOTE and a PADD attached to it. Elris unfolds the
note and something SLIPS OUT. She reads the text:

We may not be able to forget, but maybe
we can forgive? I am sorry. For everything.

-- Neil

She looks at the PADD, her resignation she shoved to Cross
earlier. Then she takes the small item that slipped out.

It's a traditional BAJORAN EARRING.
INT. CORRIDOR (FLASHBACK: "CONFIDENCE IN PRINCES")

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...

INT. SICKBAY (FLASHBACK: "DAY IN...")

ELRIS
Us? You think that there's an us still here?

CROSS
Not a relationship, but I'd like to think that we could eventually be friends.

ELRIS
I don't think I'm ready.

INT. ELRIS'S QUARTERS (FLASHBACK: "...DAY OUT")

ELRIS
So what is there to talk about?

CROSS
What we used to talk about. As friends.

ELRIS
But we're not friends, captain.

We're shipmates, and as much as I'd like to be friends, right now, I can't.
INT. TURBOLIFT

Elris OPENS HER EYES and BEGINS TO JOG to Sickbay.

INT. CORRIDOR

As she reaches the doors, they PART OPEN, giving her a view of the CHAOS INSIDE. Elris ENTERS SICKBAY.

INT. SICKBAY

NURSES FRANTICALLY RUN AROUND THE ROOM gathering up equipment and taking it into the surgical bay where Cross is. We see ATKINSON WORKING ON an UNCONCIOUS CROSS with NURSES all around him. Elris PULLS AGOLIVE ASIDE.

ELRIS

What’s happening?

Agolive just SLOWLY SHAKES HER HEAD and LOOKS ELRIS IN THE EYES before TAKING SOME EQUIPMENT into the surgical bay. As Agolive WALKS OFF we slowly SLOW DOWN into SLOW MOTION as Elris WATCHES the DOCTORS WORK ON CROSS.

We see a CLOSE UP ON CROSS, a CLOSE UP ON ELRIS and a WIDE SHOT OF THE BAY as TIME SLOWLY ROLLS BY. We go back to a CLOSE UP ON ELRIS.

ELRIS (CONT'D) (very softly)

It’s too late.

From this we

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

SMASH CUT IN:

INT. SICKBAY

Continuous from end of act four.

CLOSE ON ELRIS. She looks TOTALLY BROKEN and seems to be stood in a moment that she can’t get out of, just stood watching the Doctors and Nurses trying to help her dying husband. She’s finally reached an epiphany, and now her chance to try to make up with Cross may be taken away. TEARS RUN DOWN HER FACE as she WATCHES IN SILENCE, unable to do anything unable to help.

Elris WATCHES AS CROSS BEGINS TO FLAT LINE, and NURSES RUSH BY HER with RESUSCITATION UNITS.

INT. A MEDICAL BAY (FLASHBACK)

Cross and Elris stand side by side looking at a monitor which displays no life signs.

Elris LOOKS DOWN AT THE DEAD BODY OF A BABY BOY, still wrapped in a blanket, still with color in his face... still warm.

Elris turns to Cross and Buries HER HEAD in his arms and CRIES OUT LOUD, a TEAR ROLLS DOWN CROSS’S FACE as he HOLDS ELRIS and looks down at his baby son, motionless. Dead.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris CONTINUES TO WATCH THE RESUSCITATION EFFORT. She looks at the MONITOR BEHIND CROSS which displays NO HEART BEAT, NO LIFE SIGNS. Atkinson LOOKS AROUND at the staff and nods.

ATKINSON
That’s it. It’s over. Does everyone agree?

The MEDICAL TEAM NOD.

ELRIS
No! How can you give up on him like that?

Again, into SLOW MOTION. Elris RUSHES OVER TO CROSS’S BED and JUMPS ON TOP OF IT, and begins to MANUALLY TRY TO RESUSCITATE HIM. She BEATS HIS CHEST begging him to breathe before:

INT. SICKBAY

Elris CONTINUES TO WATCH THE MEDICAL TEAM, less rushed working on Cross, the medical display behind them STILL SHOWING LIFE SIGNS.
Elris is SWEATING and TEARS CONTINUE TO ROLL DOWN HER FACE as she watches. Atkinson WALKS OVER.

    ATKINSON
    Doctor.

Elris NODS.

    ATKINSON (CONT'D)
    I think we’ve got a treatment...

    ELRIS
    (interrupts)
    Then what are you waiting for? Give him it!

    ATKINSON
    If you’d let me finish, Doctor.

Elris QUICKLY NODS.

    ATKINSON (CONT'D)
    I think we may have a treatment. But... I’m not holding out much hope for success.

    ELRIS
    Why?

    ATKINSON
    (slowly)
    Two reasons. I’m unsure whether or not the treatment will be effective and it may already be too late.

There’s a BEAT. Elris REMAINS SILENT.

    ATKINSON (CONT'D)
    We’re going to give him the treatment... but that’s all we can do for now. We just have to wait and see what the outcome is.

Elris NODS.

    ELRIS
    Of course.

Atkinson NODS and is about to walk away, when:

    ELRIS (CONT'D)
    Doctor?

    ATKINSON
    Yes?
ERLIS
Is there anything I can do?
(expecting him to say no)
I mean... anything.

ATKINSON
Yes.

ERLIS
Just taking readings, loading hyposprays... anything. I just want to help.

ATKINSON
I said yes, Doctor.

ERLIS
You did?

ATKINSON
Monitor the Captains readings, let’s see how he reacts to this treatment.

Atkinson WALKS AWAY, leaving Elris STANDING ALONE, looking at the room Cross is in. She SWALLOWS, and SLOWLY WALKS INTO THE SURGICAL BAY, where Cross is unconscious.

She takes a LOOK AT HIS READINGS and takes a SEAT NEXT TO HIM, and HOLDS HIS HAND.

ERLIS
So... you finally got what you wanted, you and me alone for a few hours. I know this won’t be the same, but I’m going to talk to you anyway. I have to.

(beat)
I can’t just let you die without telling you how I really feel.

(beat)
What I’ve never told you before.

(A long beat)
You know? This would be a lot easier if you talked back.

(another beat)
Guess not, huh? So... where do we start?

(beat)
Daniel.

(beat)
You would have been a great father, you know. You’d have always been there for him... taught him how to survive. Not like me. I killed him.

(MORE)
ELRIS (CONT'D)
I killed our son because I was stubborn enough not to let anyone else help him.

(shakes her head)
I never even let you see him again until it was too late. I’ve never been able to understand that. I’ve always been... so proud of myself that I haven’t let anyone else’s pride or self confidence get in the way of that.

(beat)
And look where we are now because of it. I suppose if you were really here you’d be just encouraging all of this... but I remember a time when you used to pull me back out of these... self inflicted guilt trips.

(smiles)
You’d tell me that I did what I thought was right and that will always be right. The way it was meant to be. But it’s never going to be right, is it? Deep down you always knew that. I always knew that.

(beat)
And then we broke up.

(looks grim)
It was never your fault. If we still had Daniel we’d have always been there for each other. We’d have been a real family. We’d have had the best of both worlds. I guess that was what changed it all. What put you back in to work...and

(beat)
what pushed you away.

FADE TO:

A MONTAGE. Elris remains by Cross’ bed side, TALKING to him, HOLDING HIS HAND. The camera MOVES AROUND the room for the different shots as we see NURSES OUTSIDE the room APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR as time goes by. We see a nurse come in to see Cross as Elris CONTINUES TO HOLD HIS HAND. And eventually, we finally FADE IN to real time, as Elris CONTINUES TO TALK.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
And now we’re here. Everything that we’ve been through has led us to the Enterprise. To what we have

(beat)
or don’t have now. I need you as a friend, Neil. I can’t just keep pushing you away time after time.

(MORE)
ELRIS (CONT'D)
(frowns)
I always thought it was you who was responsible for us breaking up, but it wasn’t. It was me. I was responsible for us breaking up. I finally said it.
(beat)
And you’re never going to see anything become of it.
(beat, then defiant:)
You’re never going to die inside me, Neil. You mean too much to me whether I like it or not.
(more tears)
You mean more to me then you’ll ever know.

Elris CLOSES HER EYES and LEANS DOWN TO HIM, where she RESTS HER HEAD ON HIS CHEST. She LISTENS TO HIM BREATHE. She listens to him live. After a LONG BEAT she finally LIFTS HER HEAD UP, and sees Cross’ EYES ARE OPEN.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Neil?

Cross lets out a WEAK GROAN. Elris RUNS OUTSIDE.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Doctor!

Elris GOES BACK INSIDE and sits next to Cross. Cross WEAKLY SMILES. Elris HESITANTLY SMILES BACK as Atkinson REACHES THE DOOR. Elris STANDS and EXITS.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

ELRIS (V.O.)
Medical log, stardate 78418.3.
Captain Cross has been released from Sickbay after two days of recovery. He should be fit to return to duty in the next week.

INT. CROSS’S QUARTERS

Cross is SAT on the sofa looking out into space, with a PADD IN ONE HAND and a CUP OF HOT CHOCOLATE in the other. The door CHIMES.

CROSS
Come in.

The doors OPEN and Elris ENTERS.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Come to check up on me?
ELRIS
Not exactly.

Cross REMAINS SILENT.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
While you were unconscious... at the end. I talked to you.

CROSS
I know.

ELRIS
And you remember what I said?

CROSS
Some of it.

ELRIS
What do you remember?

CROSS
I remember someone who realized some of the mistakes she’s made in her life... and how she needs to correct parts of herself to stop them from happening again.

Elris NODS. There is a LONG SILENCE as both LOOK OUT INTO SPACE.

ELRIS
About Daniel?

Cross LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE.

CROSS
I don’t remember. But do you really want to bring it up again?

ELRIS
No. But we have to talk about him. (beat)
You know that there can never be a full reconciliation between us both, don’t you?

CROSS
Perhaps.

ELRIS
But we can be friends.

CROSS
And where does Daniel come into all of this?
ELRIS
He’s part of our past... we can’t ever let him go.

CROSS
But it’s the future that counts.

ELRIS
And he’s part of that. Y’lan told me that we don’t think about the future as much as we do the past
(beat)
...but the past influences the future just as much as the present does. Daniel will always be a part of us... and that’s why we can never fully make up our differences.

Cross JUST NODS. There is a LONG BEAT as both STARE INTO SPACE once again, contemplating what may have been.

CROSS
So. Friends?

ELRIS
(smiles)
Friends.

Cross SMILES, but both STILL LOOK UNCOMFORTABLE. Elris is right, they can’t just brush the baby aside, but they can get on with their lives. Elris STANDS.

CROSS
Going already?

ELRIS
I’m needed back in Sickbay.

CROSS
(nods)
Would you like to meet up later... for a drink?

ELRIS
Great. Twenty-one hundred?

CROSS
Sounds good.

ELRIS
I’ll see you then.
Cross SMILES and goes back to his PADD. Elris takes one last LOOK AT CROSS and then EXITS leaving Cross alone, once again, with a PADD, his chocolate and his thoughts. On Cross looking out into space we

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END