

STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"When on Pakled..."

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. ROMULAN OFFICE

The room seems to be stereotypically Romulan, painted grey with little in the way of lighting. We can see a male Romulan, TARMAK, seated at a desk. His fore head ridges seem particularly pronounced because of his receding hairline.

On the monitor in front of him, we can make out a Gorn, GREKOR who from the appearance of his hide seems to be quite aged.

TARMAK

(sounding slightly
desperate)

What if we removed our claim to the
Cadian system?

Grekor chuckles.

GREKOR

(imperiously, but
definitely enjoying
himself)

Whilst the resources present in that
system would prove very useful to
the Gorn Kingdom, it is not enough
to sway our decision.

Tarmak drums his fingers on his table, looking increasing
irritated and embarrassed.

TARMAK

Grekor, I have told you how vital
this mission is to the Empire. The
very thought of the Pakleds...

GREKOR

(interrupting, still
getting a kick out
of it)

I'm sorry Senator, we will not allow
you passage.

TARMAK

(with contempt,
bordering on pleading,
and trying to show
neither emotion)

We could help you silence the G'gek
Nation, we know they have been a
problem for the Kingdom these last
few years.

Grekor LAUGHS.

GREKOR

(mockingly)

Your Intelligence is outdated. We recently entered talks with the G'gek.

TARMAK looks away from the screen, a snarl upon his features. He is positively livid. He composes himself and looks back at the screen, his face appears to be perfectly calm.

TARMAK

(trying to keep a game face)

Very well Grekor. It seems we will have to accept your refusal for our entry into your space.

Grekor allows a faint grin to fleet by his face.

GREKOR

I am glad you have realized we will not change our minds.

(with contempt)

Oh, and Senator? Don't be naïve enough to send a cloaked ship into our territory. If you do, you won't hear from it again. If you can't keep your cloaking devices from them, what match are you against us? Grekor out.

The comm link is broken. TARMAK slams his fist against his desk, frustration clearly evident on his face. Sighing he leans back in his chair.

TARMAK

Computer, open a channel to the Praetor's office.

ROMULAN COMPUTER

Channel open.

The face of the Praetor appears on the screen.

TARMAK

It appears, Praetor, that...

(beat)

...drastic measures will have to be taken in order to effect the retrieval.

PRAETOR

Do what you feel is necessary, Tarmak. We need that cloak back.

TARMAK

Understood.

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PRAETOR

Be sure you do. Praetor out.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

Stars streak past as the Enterprise travels at warp.

INT. BRIDGE

Commander TALORA is seated at the center of the Bridge, reading through a PADD. Behind her, manning Tactical, we can see a young female security officer, RIGBY. QUINLAN is seated at the helm. With a whoosh, the turbolift doors open, and Captain CROSS steps out.

RIGBY

(Shouting)

Captain on Deck!

CROSS

As you were. Ensign Rigby, on this ship, you don't have to do that every time you see me. If you did I think I'd be deaf by now.

RIGBY

Understood Sir.

Smiling at her, the Captain walks down towards the Command Chair, where Talora has turned to face him.

TALORA

Captain, it appears you are twenty minutes early for your shift.

CROSS

I couldn't sleep. What's that you're reading?

TALORA

My report.

CROSS

Anything of interest?

TALORA

Apparently Petty Officer Ekestam is pregnant.

CROSS

Really? They only got married last month, I'm surprised they're rushing into having children.

TALORA

As am I, but then you humans seem to rush everything. Aside from that rumor...

QUINLAN

(interrupting)
Just doing my duty.

TALORA

(continuing)
Aside from that rumor nothing of real interest has...

RIGBY

(interrupting)
Captain, we have an incoming hail from Romulus.

CROSS

It seems you spoke too soon. On screen Ensign.

TALORA

(under her breath)
Can I not get a word in edge ways today?

The image on the view screen of stars streaking by is replaced by the image of TARMAK sitting in his office.

TARMAK

Greetings, Captain Neil Cross of the U.S.S. Enterprise. I am Tarmak of the Romulan Senate.

CROSS

Senator, what we did on Sangeattan Three was perfectly within our jurisdiction...

TARMAK

No, no, we're not calling about that.

CROSS

Well, I assume there's some reason for you to hail us, after all, it's not everyday we hear from the Senate.

TARMAK

Yes, I'm afraid there is. Whilst performing a routine patrol of the Tallarn system, one of our D'deridex class vessels was ambushed. It's cloaking device has been stolen.

TALORA
 (concerned)
 Who were the aggressors?

TARMAK
 (pained)
 They were...
 (beat)
 Pakleds.

Cross turns to face Rigby, making a signal for her to mute the talking on the bridge. She misunderstands, and the screen goes blank.

RIGBY
 Communication cut, sir.

CROSS
 (under his breath)
 Close enough.

RIGBY
 Thank you, sir. I aim to please.

Cross IGNORES Rigby's comment.

CROSS
 (louder)
 Pakleds? How in the galaxy did Pakleds manage to outsmart a Romulan Commander?

We can see Talora grimacing, not willing to fully believe that her people would be so foolish.

TALORA
 Perhaps... they were working for someone else who told them what to do. Or maybe they were disguised as Pakleds.

CROSS
 I can understand you wanting to protect your people's pride but the Senator said they were Pakled. I guess Romulan Intelligence is over rated. Rigby, get Tarmak back.

TARMAK reappears on the view screen, looking slightly annoyed at being cut off.

CROSS (CONT'D)
 I apologize for that Senator...
 (looking at Rigby)
 We had one or two technical problems.

RIGBY

I don't get it sir. My console is working fine.

Again, Cross IGNORES her.

TARMAK

Captain, the Gorn Kingdom refuses us access to their space. Your government on the other hand, has permitted us to borrow you and your ship. And there is a route through the Federation to the Pakled system which bypasses the Gorn entirely.

CROSS

Then why don't you send a Romulan ship through Federation space?

The look on Tarmak's face once he realizes he overlooked something really, really obvious is priceless, but he covers it up quickly.

TARMAK

(flustered)

That had, uh...

(embarrassed)

...not occurred to us, Captain. But it's a bit late to think about that now.

(beat)

How quickly can you reach the Pakled system?

CROSS

Conn?

QUINLAN

At maximum warp...

(beat)

A week.

TARMAK

The Enterprise is equipped with Quantum Slipstream capabilities, I urge you to use them.

CROSS

What precisely do you want us to do once we arrive there Senator?

Tarmak looks at Cross as if to say: "What are you, stupid?"

TARMAK

(slowly, as if to a
child)

We want you to retrieve our cloaking
device.

CROSS

(slightly mockingly)

That you lost to the Pakleds?

TARMAK

(getting annoyed)

No, Captain, I want the one that
fell into a black hole.

CROSS

(deadpan)

Oh. Which black...

TARMAK

(now really annoyed)

Of course it's the one stolen by the
Pakleds!

(beat)

Captain, I'm sending you all
information that is relevant to your
mission. Please proceed immediately.

CROSS

We'll set off right away, Senator.

(slightly sarcastic)

And don't worry, we'll get your
cloaking device back.

TARMAK

(irritated)

Tarmak out.

CROSS

Whatever happened to Romulan
superiority?

TALORA

It is alive and well and living on
Romulus.

CROSS

Lieutenant Quinlan, set a course for
Pakled.

QUINLAN

Course set, sir.

CROSS

Power up the Slipstream Drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise drops out of Slipstream, slowly drifting towards a distant planet.

CROSS (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 78662.6.
After a request made by the Romulan Senate, the Enterprise has proceeded to the Pakled System, in the hopes that we can find the missing cloaking device.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross sits in the center chair, listening to DOJAR deliver his report.

DOJAR

(tired)

Sir, I've scanned every ship in this system. There is only one match for the configuration of the Pakled ship the Romulans say stole their cloak, and there are no life signs on it, or any sign of a cloaking device.

CROSS

Could the device be cloaked on the ship?

TALORA

I find it hard to believe a people as slow-witted as the Pakleds would be capable of activating one of our cloaking devices.

CROSS

Don't forget they did steal it from you in the first place. Perhaps you shouldn't underestimate them. Now is there any way you can alter our sensors to detect the device?

TALORA

Captain, I can not willingly hand over such sensitive information. Even if the Federation is our ally.

CROSS

Commander, may I remind you that you are serving on a Federation starship, on a mission on behalf of your government, I think they'll allow you to divulge information, just this once.

TALORA

(reluctant)

I suppose on this occasion it is actually for the Empire

With that, she rises from her seat and heads to the tactical station, where Dojar politely stands back.

TALORA (CONT'D)

(half-mockingly)

Captain, there is still nothing being picked up by sensors.

As Talora steps back down Dojar returns to his station.

CROSS

All Senior Staff to the Conference Room.

(to himself)

I have a cunning plan...

CUT TO:

INT. BRIEFING ROOM

Cross, Talora, Quinlan, Dojar, GREY, ELRIS, and Y'LAN are all gathered around the table.

CROSS

As I'm sure you've all heard by now, we've been assigned a mission from the Romulan Government.

(struggling to keep a straight face)

One of their Warbirds was ambushed by Pakleds, who stole their cloaking device.

Dojar and Elris don't know where to look, trying desperately not to let Talora see them smirking. Even Grey has a slight smile on his face, when Talora spots him he quickly returns to a more or less blank expression.

CROSS (CONT'D)

This...

As he speaks an image of a male Pakled appears on the wall viewer.

CROSS (CONT'D)

...is Nemblog, the...

(beat)

...Apparent mastermind behind the cloaking device's theft. Because we can't detect the Cloak on Nemblog's ship we'll be beaming down.

TALORA

Doctor, all six officers participating on the mission will require surgical alterations to make us appear...

(slight disgust)

...Pakled.

ELRIS

Understood, I'll see that Agolive makes preparations once we've finished the briefing.

Dojar sits forward, concern showing upon his features.

DOJAR

Captain, is it wise to take the entire senior staff on an away mission?

GREY

I agree Captain, it is against regulations to endanger the entire senior staff like this.

CROSS

Normally, I wouldn't risk my most experienced officers on a mission like this.

(beat)

However, not to seem arrogant, these are Pakleds. I need each of you on this mission, because you are the best at your jobs.

TALORA

I concur, this crew is the best available. A Romulan crew would be more efficient for this task, however.

GREY

And a Federation crew would not have let the Pakleds get hold of the technology in the first place.

TALORA

(angry)

My people did not let them take our cloaking device, they were...

QUINLAN

Outwitted?

TALORA

Yes...

(beat)

No!

CROSS

Fascinating as this exchange of...

(beat)

Cultural ideals is, I have a briefing to finish. Now I know you'll be really upset about this Commander, Lieutenant, but you won't be working together on the planet. Quinlan, you're with Dojar. Grey and Elris you'll be working together. That means you're with me Talora. Any questions?

DOJAR

Y'lan, can we not employ your Q'tami sensors to locate the device?

Y'LAN

Perhaps I could help you put on your barbaric animal skins at the start of your work cycle? Or perhaps could digest your food in that antiquated manner you employ? Some specimens...

CROSS

I think we'll take that as a "no."
If there's nothing else, I'll see you in sickbay in an hour.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise has entered orbit of Pakled, slowly circling the planet.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross is standing facing the viewscreen, exasperation on his face. In front of him, filling the screen and quite blurry is a male Pakled, with silver hair. This is ABNEB, the Pakled head of state.

ABNEB

We are strong. You are weak.

CROSS

(under his breath)

Would you care to test that theory?

(louder)

Abneb, all we want to do is beam down and look around the bazaar.

ABNEB

We are strong.

Cross signals for the screen to be muted, and it is, as Dojar is manning the station rather than Rigby. Cross covers his eyes with his hand, dragging it down over his features.

CROSS

Does anyone have any ideas as to how we get permission to beam down?

QUINLAN

I've had some... er, dealings with Pakleds in the past sir, I may be able to convince him.

CROSS

Try it.

The sound comes back on.

ABNEB

(oblivious)

...rch for things to make us go.

QUINLAN

(slowly)

We are weak. You are strong. We search for things to make us strong. We wish to join you.

ABNEB
(considering)
You may join us.

With that the screen returns to a view of the planet.

QUINLAN
(under her breath)
Still got it.
(louder)
Permission to be smug, sir?

CROSS
Denied. These negotiations have
made us late. Sukothai, you have
the bridge.

Cross, Talora, Dojar and Quinlan step into the turbolift.

CUT TO:

INT. SICKBAY

Elris and Grey are talking, both of their faces altered to match the facial characteristics of the Pakled. Grey is also wearing drab, mostly brown Pakled clothing.

ELRIS
So how are things between you and Sarah?

GREY
Okay, I think. The next time she speaks to her parents, she wants them to meet me over subspace.

ELRIS
Ah, well don't worry about it Erik, I'm sure you'll impress them.

GREY
She's expecting a message tonight. So hopefully before then this mission will be over and I won't look like
(indicates face)
this.

Just then, Cross, Talora, Dojar and Quinlan enter. All of them look at Grey and Elris, and then take a second glance.

QUINLAN
(sarcastically)
There's something different about you two. Have you done something with your ears?

GREY

No, we've had our faces altered to make us look like Pakleds. Can't you see that?

QUINLAN

I was being sarcastic, Erik. Remember sarcasm? It's that big chasm where the Russian leaders are kept.

GREY

Oh.

(catches on)

Hey, those are Tsars, and it is not.

QUINLAN

(mutters)

Why do I bother?

GREY

(just hearing her)

I don't know. Your idea of wit is nothing but an impeccably timed statement, perfectly delivered in order to mock the recipient.

QUINLAN

Should have known you'd have the definition down to a tee.

Cross moves between the two stopping their conversation and facing Elris.

CROSS

That's enough, people. Doctor, if it wasn't for the Starfleet Uniform, I'd mistake you for a Pakled.

ELRIS

Yes, Agolive does a very good Pakled. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go get changed.

GREY

And I'll go make sure the Quartermaster has our supplies waiting for us in Transporter Room One.

With that the pair turn and leave, and AGOLIVE enters the main part of Sickbay.

AGOLIVE

Right, who's next to go under the knife?

The senior officers just stare at her shocked, and nervously eye the exit.

AGOLIVE (CONT'D)

It's a figure of speech.

(beat)

Really.

(beat)

It is.

They don't change their stance, no one moving towards Agolive to volunteer.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

NARV OZRAN is sitting next to Grey, still with Pakled facial features, on the steps of the transporter platform. In front of them are six heavy looking backpacks, with radio like antennae projecting from them. Grey pulls one towards him, opening it up for the pair to look into.

GREY

Look at this. This really is bad workmanship.

OZRAN

I think it looks...

GREY

(interrupting)

Take this as an example...

(points into pack)

This relay should go

(moves hand)

here, it would make it far more efficient, and then this connection

(points)

would be redundant.

OZRAN

(slightly annoyed)

As I was trying to say, I think for...

GREY

And the weight. Making it out of a semantium alloy would reduce the weight greatly.

OZRAN

(growling)

Lieutenant, with all due respect, shut up.

GREY

Why is it that no one ever says anything respectful once they've said that.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)
 (noticing the annoyed
 look he's getting
 from Narv)
 Okay, what did you want to say?

OZLAN
 Just that it looks authentically
 Pakled, and that you have to remember,
 not all species were introduced to
 space as gracefully as ours.

GREY
 I didn't think the Gorn did anything
 gracefully.
 (beat)
 No offense.

OZLAN
 I was thinking more of the Trill,
 but the Gorn Kingdom has some of the
 most renowned ballets in the Quadrant.

GREY
 (laughing)
 Gorn ballet. I think I've heard
 everything now.

OZLAN
 I'm not joking. Have you never heard
 of Salamander Swamp?
 (beat)
 So it loses a little in translation.

GREY
 Pull the other one. It has nacelles
 attached.

OZLAN
 Erik, you're far too cynical. One
 day I'll show you one of my holo-
 programs.

GREY
 I'll look forward to it.
 (under breathe)
 ...Like I look forward to a shuttle
 trip with you.

OZLAN
 Pardon?

GREY
 (to the same rhythm)
 Is that a new uniform? It looks
 good on you.

Ozran looks at Grey, not sure whether he heard him right either time. Before he can press Grey further on the issue, Cross, Talora, Elris, Dojar and Quinlan enter, disguised as Pakleds and wearing Pakled clothing. Grey stands up, lifting the pack with him.

OZRAN

You six make quite a sight, I wish I had a camera.

TALORA

Chief Ozran, if you had such a device, you would find yourself eating it.

OZRAN

Ah. I see you're not as scared of my people as your Senate seems to be.

TALORA

The Romulan Senate is not afraid of the Gorn Kingdom. We were trying to be diplomatic.

OZRAN

And here was me thinking Romulan diplomacy was nothing more than a way to get close enough to someone to wedge a knife firmly between their shoulders.

CROSS

Chief, ever heard the saying "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned"?

OZRAN

No.

CROSS

Didn't think so.
(indicating the pack)
What are those?

GREY

They're the Pakled equivalent of a communicator and tricorder. Bulky, crude, and heavy. Its one step up from stone knives and bearskins.

CROSS

Spock. USS Enterprise, 1701. 2267...
Almost.

GREY

Sir?

CROSS

I've been reading up on Kirk and his crew as of late. Commander Spock said something not unlike your last statement.

GREY

Oh.

DOJAR

They remind me of the old communications backpacks my instructor made us train with at the academy.

(picks up a backpack)

Although I think they were lighter...

Everyone grabs a pack and places it on their back, before heading towards the transporter pad.

CROSS

We're beaming down to the main city. Grey, Elris, you'll be investigating the Bazaar. If Nemblog's as smart as he seems to be, that would be the best place to sell the Cloak. Dojar, Quinlan, apparently Nemblog's home is a Farm, so you'll be going there to look for him. Commander Talora and myself will search the city streets.

(beat)

Remember we need to return the cloaking device intact.

TALORA

I'm sure you and I will find it quickly Captain. After all, who could be better at retrieving a Romulan device, than a Romulan?

QUINLAN

Who could be better at losing a Romulan device than the Romulans?

CROSS

(loudly)

Chief, when you're ready.

Talora turns to face Quinlan, and she seems very angry, but before any more words can be exchanged, Narv sweeps his hand down on the console, and the six officers begin to fade into a familiar blue beam.

OZRAN

Transporter Room One to Bridge, the Away Team, is... well, Away.

SUKOTHAI'S COMM VOICE
Acknowledged, Transporter Room.

OZRAN
Now back to my life fulfilling work
of running diagnostic scans of the
Transporter System, oh joy of joys.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise continues its orbit of Pakled, as we watch we focus on the bridge module.

INT. BRIDGE

SUKOTHAI is sitting in the center seat, and behind her at Tactical is Ensign RIGBY.

SUKOTHAI
Anything to report, Ensign?

There is a pause, and Sukothai gets no response. She turns around to look at Rigby.

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)
Ensign Rigby, anything to report?

RIGBY
Oh, sorry ma'am. No, nothing comes to mind.

SUKOTHAI
So you're not even detecting the Away Team's signals?

RIGBY
Oh. Well, yes. I thought you meant anything interesting.

SUKOTHAI
(under her breath)
It seems Academy standards have slipped.

The turbolift doors open, and Y'lan moves out onto the Bridge.

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)
How can we help you Y'lan?

Y'LAN
I am here to observe.

SUKOTHAI
As long as you keep it to audio recordings, I see no problem with that.

Y'LAN
I have already made this understanding with Captain Neil Cross.

SUKOTHAI

I know, I was just confirming that I had no problems with it.

Y'LAN

It would not be any concern of yours whether I did or not.

SUKOTHAI

Y'lan, when you record someone without their permission, it is their concern. You do remember what happened when you left those Q'tami sensor devices all over the ship?

Y'LAN

Of course. I accept your point.

Y'lan moves to the back of the bridge, towards an unoccupied console, where he begins to speak into the device he brought with him to the bridge.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)

As heard in that last section of speech, the specimen known as Sukothai has tried to assume the role of Alpha in the Captain's absence.

SUKOTHAI

Y'lan! Give me a break.

Y'LAN

How can I give you a break from your work cycle? As you have just demonstrated, you are in charge.

SUKOTHAI

I didn't mean I wanted a break. It means get off my back.

Y'LAN

I am not on your back.

SUKOTHAI

It's a figure of speech! Like quit bugging me.

Y'LAN

I am not bugging you, you gave me permission to record the actions occurring here.

SUKOTHAI

(getting annoyed)
I mean leave me alone.

Y'LAN

(into device)

As you can see from the previous transaction, the language of these specimens is extremely imprecise, leading to confusion in an observer.

(to Sukothai)

Why do you say things you do not mean?

SUKOTHAI

When I say this, I mean every last word; Y'lan, get off of the Bridge and do not even consider returning until the Captain is back. Rigby, escort Y'lan back to his Lab.

RIGBY

Yes, ma'am.

Y'LAN

You can not do that. Captain Cross has granted me permission to record anything I choose.

SUKOTHAI

Yes he has, and you can complain to him when he returns about my hindering your research. Until then you will not set tentacle upon this Bridge.

Rigby moves out to Y'lan, trying to herd him into the turbolift despite his attempts to get past her. Rigby enters the lift with him.

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)

By the Great Bird of the Galaxy, how can one being be so annoying?

CUT TO:

EXT. PAKLED FARM

Dojar and Quinlan are pushing their way through a field of crops, which rather than being a healthy green, are brown and looking less than well.

QUINLAN

Remind me to thank Narv for beaming us into the center of a maze of maize.

DOJAR

Don't worry, I will.

They push their way through into a clearing, where they can see a Pakled family seated having a picnic. Dojar briskly walks up to them.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Excuse me, I was wondering if you could help us locate the farm house belonging to a Mr. Nemblog?

The family just stare at Dojar, horrified by the way he is speaking. The two children burst into tears, and start screaming, because of how scared they are. Quinlan runs her hand down her face before stepping up to the family herself.

QUINLAN

His mind is weak. Nothing makes it go.

(under breath)

Way to blow it. Now they think you're retarded.

The father stands up, his eyes full of sadness.

NEKTOL

I am Nektol. This makes us sad. Join us.

DOJAR

Ah, but we really must be going.

Nektol takes Dojar by the arm, and seats him on the ground. He then beckons to Quinlan, who visibly annoyed also joins them.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Do not say another word, Dojar.

Nektol opens up the picnic hamper, and pulls out a large rodent, which seems to have been fried. First he offers it to Dojar, but when he declines, it is offered to Quinlan, who takes it. Dojar watches, as she bites into it.

DOJAR

(whispering)

How can you eat that?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

You can eat anything if it's fried.

(louder)

We thank you. But we must go.

Nektol looks to his wife MELK, who shakes her head.

MELK

We like to help. We look after you.

Quinlan shoots Dojar an angry look, and Dojar smiles at the two people who seemed to be becoming his adopted parents.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAZAAR

There are stalls stretching into the distance as far as the eye can see. Hundreds of Pakled civilians roam up and down the streets, searching for things. Amidst this scene ELRIS and GREY walk down the street, using the Pakled tricorders to try and locate the cloaking device. Grey walks up to one stall, which seems to be selling engineering parts. On the other side of the table is a particularly bloated Pakled, KADOG.

KADOG

I wish to help.

GREY

I search for things to make us go.

Kadog hands Grey a book. Looking at the title Grey looks dumbstruck. We can see it is called "Things to Make Us Go." Quickly flicking through it, he looks horrified.

ELRIS

(whispering)

What's wrong, Erik?

GREY

(whispering)

I think this is a book on Pakled Warp Theory. If it is, I'd dread to be on one of their ships.

KADOG

You wish to buy? Make you smart.
Make you strong.

Grey hands over some currency and takes the book. As he does so, his tricorder points towards one of the crates stacked up on the table and beeps.

GREY

In that box, what is there?

KADOG

Pradium. It is strong.

GREY

(concerned)

Pradium? Pradium is bad. It makes you weak. You need a stronger box.

KADOG

You are wrong. Pradium makes you strong.

ELRIS

(whispering)

What're you arguing about?

GREY

(whispering)

Pradium is a dangerous isotope, that gives off high levels of radiation if not stored correctly.

ELRIS

(whispering)

I assume its not stored correctly?

GREY

(whispering)

I'd be more surprised if it was.

CUT TO:

EXT. PAKLED STREET

Cross and Talora walk casually down the street, looking at every passer by, and scanning every house.

CROSS

Can you tell me again what made you think we'd find the cloaking device?

TALORA

What makes you think we won't?

CROSS

We've been wandering these streets for an hour now with no joy. Call me a pessimist, but I'm not holding my breath.

TALORA

If you were, you'd find it much harder to be openly pessimistic.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. PAKLED STREET

Cross and Talora are again standing in a street, but not the same one they were in before. Talora is occupied with her tricorder, when it starts beeping.

TALORA

(hurried)

Sir, I've detected Rhivatar radiation.

CROSS

And this is important because?

TALORA

It's emitted by a cloaking device.
Permission to track it?

CROSS

Sure, why don't we just split up so
we're by ourselves on an alien planet.

TALORA

Thank you sir, its appreciated.

Before Cross can say anything else, Talora disappears around the corner.

CROSS

If any one else had said that, she'd
have taken it as sarcasm.

(beat)

How can anyone move so fast wearing
one of these backpacks?

CUT TO:

EXT. PAKLED FARM

Dojar and Quinlan are still sitting down, not enjoying themselves at Nektol's picnic. Dojar is digging into the ground with a spoon.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

What are you doing?

DOJAR

(whispering)

I'm digging an escape tunnel. They
won't mind, I'm retarded, remember?

Quinlan watches the two Pakled children running around in the sunshine and listened to them.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Back in my pirate days, I'd never think twice about ripping off a Pakled.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Why are you telling me this?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

I was just thinking about how its not their fault. They were introduced to space travel before they were ready.

DOJAR

(whispering)

This is why we have the Prime Directive.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

For all the good it does. A lot of times it's violated because a Captain thinks it should be. They might as well rename it the Prime Suggestion.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Look, I'd really like to get out of here, so that when we have to hand in a report it doesn't just read, "We had a nice picnic."

QUINLAN

(whispering)

I just wish I could do something to make up for all the wrongs I committed against their people.

DOJAR

(whispering)

What wrongs? What did you commit against their people?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Well... I once undercharged a Pakled waiter. Does that count?

DOJAR

(whispering)

No, not really. Everyone undercharges waiters.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

That's only because they take extra
anyway.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Well, it doesn't matter anyway. You
weren't responsible for them getting
the warp drive so soon.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

That's not the point.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Then what is the point?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

I want to help them.

DOJAR

(whispering)

By doing what? Helping them advance
their technology even further?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

It's my duty as a Starfleet Officer
to...

DOJAR

(whispering)

Poke your nose where it doesn't
belong? What kind of duty is that?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

As Kirk said, "Poking our noses in
is our business."

DOJAR

(whispering)

He said that?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Something like that, anyway.

(looks back at the
Pakleds)

I must help them.

DOJAR

(whispering)

What exactly do you intend to do?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Help them understand their technology more.

DOJAR

(whispering)

They have hacked together Cardassian, Romulan, Klingon, Bajoran, Dominion, Federation, and Ferengi technology into fully workable ships. They can steal Romulan cloaking devices. I think they do quite well.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

What about their speech?

DOJAR

(whispering)

You humans. Everything must walk and talk like you before it's normal, eh? They think our speech is redundant. They speak that way by choice.

QUINLAN

(whispering)

Still, there must be something...

DOJAR

(whispering)

We were ordered to find the cloaking device, Lieutenant. Remember?

QUINLAN

The others will find it.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Err, are you really sure that "cunning plan" Cross, "by the book" Grey, "Medic" Elris, or...

(beat)

WELL...

(beat)

Talora, would stand a better chance at finding the cloaking device than us?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

I suppose you're right.

DOJAR

(whispering)

Of course. Well, the question is now, how do we escape?

QUINLAN

(whispering)

I have an idea. Something that worked on Orion...

Quinlan walks up to the Pakled family, Nektol and Melk.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me?

NEKTOL

Yes?

QUINLAN

Me and my friend need to go. Our bladders are weak. Can we use the bathroom?

MELK

Yes. It is a thing that makes us go.

Quinlan then walks off with Dojar.

DOJAR

That was your plan?

QUINLAN

It worked, didn't it?

DOJAR

Yes, but...

QUINLAN

But nothing. Sorry if you'd prefer a heroic dash against the odds, but sometimes the simplest route is the best.

DOJAR

I suppose. The Orions really fell for it?

QUINLAN

Well, half and half. They let us go to the toilet, provided we did it in their presence...

We pan back to NAKLOT and MELK.

NAKLOT

The toilets are the other way.

Melk shakes her head.

MELK

They are not smart.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAZAAR

Grey is embroiled in his argument with Kadog. Elris is holding a tricorder, scanning everyone that goes past.

GREY

(tired and annoyed)

Pradium makes you weak. It needs to be hidden, it will keep you strong like that.

Elris turns back and scans Kadog, looking at the results with concern.

GREY (CONT'D)

(practically yelling)

This is wrong.

(waving book)

This does not work.

Elris pulls a hypospray out of her pocket, spends a moment adjusting the setting and then applies it to Kadog's neck.

GREY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

What did you just do?

ELRIS

(whispering)

He had radiation poisoning. I cured him. What's wrong with that?

GREY

(whispering)

Prime Directive?

ELRIS

(whispering)

Whoops.

Kadog by now has had time to interpret what just happened, and has interpreted it wrong.

KADOG

You attacked me. You tried to make me weak!

Grey and Elris exchange a look, before running off down the street into the crowd.

GREY

You know this is your fault don't you?

ELRIS

Yes.

GREY

As long as we're clear.

As they carry on running, they see another figure running towards them holding a tricorder outstretched in front of them. As it grows closer we can see it is TALORA. She soon passes them, totally oblivious.

ELRIS

Wasn't that Talora?

GREY

Let's not think about that right now.

We change camera angles to follow Talora. She looks at the tri-order again and turns left down a side street.

TALORA

It should be right here.

Looking up, she stares ahead, not sure of what to make of the thing in front of her. We can see what basically amounts to a Pakled garbage truck, huge exhausts stretch out from the back. She aims her tricorder at the exhausts.

TALORA (CONT'D)

(disappointed)

Well that would explain the Rhivatar I detected...

EXT. PAKLED CITY LIMITS

A lonely sign stands marking the edge of city. It seems to be torn from the hull plating of a ship, and the letters U.S.S. can be made out faintly underneath the bold Pakled writing. Dojar and Quinlan slowly walk towards the city, their clothes are now torn, and neither looks too happy.

QUINLAN

You know, I think I'd rather have stayed at the picnic.

DOJAR

How was I to know we'd meet a gang of bandits on the way here?

QUINLAN

You didn't.

(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

But had you let me do the talking,
we could have avoided the fight.

DOJAR

Need I remind you whose genius made
us run through that giant nettle
patch?

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise continues in orbit of Pakled.

INT. BRIDGE

Sukothai and Rigby are still on duty, awaiting any word from
the surface.

RIGBY

I spy with my little eye, something
beginning with "S."

SUKOTHAI

Space.

RIGBY

How did you guess?

SUKOTHAI

(tired)

Because it's been space the past
five times. Next time I have to make
sure I get assigned to the Away
Mission.

RIGBY

And miss out on all this fun, ma'am?

SUKOTHAI

Yes, but I'm sure I'd manage. Somehow.
Is there really nothing to report?

RIGBY

Well...

(beat)

No.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. PAKLED STREET

Cross seems to be walking the streets at random now, not really sure where to look. Ducking into a door way he taps the comm-device fitted into the strap of his pack.

CROSS

This is your Captain speaking. What's your status?

GREY

(comm-voice, out of breath)

Elris and I are headed away from the Bazaar. One of the merchants there thinks we tried to poison him, doesn't he Elris?

ELRIS

(comm-voice, also out of breath)

Erik, if you want to survive your next medical, I'd shut up right now.
(beat)
Much better.

DOJAR

(comm-voice)

Sir, we're headed into the city, away from my adopted parents.

CROSS

Adopted parents?

QUINLAN

(comm-voice)

We'll tell you about it later.

TALORA

(comm-voice)

I must also report a lack of success Captain.

Cross scratches thoughtlessly at one of his facial ridges a moment, then looks to his side where he sees NEMBLOG. Pointing his tricorder at the building he smiles.

CROSS

Rhivatar...

Silently he follows, pushing open the wooden door in time to see Nemblog ascending the stairs to the roof.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Cross to Away Team, I've found
Nemblog.

Cross follows Nemblog, arriving on the roof. Nemblog is standing, seemingly tapping at thin air, until the cloaking device appears, barely balanced upon the building's parapet.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Nemblog. Stop.

Nemblog whirls around to face Cross, a puzzled look on his face.

NEMBLOG

I am strong. Go.

CROSS

No I am strong. You are weak. Give
me the cloaking device.

NEMBBLOG

You speak wrong.

CROSS

Nemblog, please give me the Device.

NEMBLOG

(panicking)
Speak normally!

CROSS

I am speaking normally!

Cross moves to approach him, but in his panic, Nemblog backs into the device. For a moment it wobbles backwards and forwards, before gravity takes hold, and pulls it down to the street below. There's a panicked yelp as a passer by below hears a crash, and turns around to find the rubble of the Device landed barely feet away from him. Nemblog leans over the edge watching, and Cross moves over to look.

NEMBLOG

(slow, even for a
Pakled)
It is broken. It will not make us
go.

Cross just turns his head to look at Nemblog, we can see that he's barely restraining himself from hitting the Pakled.

CROSS
(defeated, through
gritted teeth)
Cross to Enterprise. Beam us up.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The ship pulls out of orbit.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Ozran pushes his hand up on the Transporter Console, and six shimmering blue columns appear, rapidly forming into Cross, Talora, Elris, Grey, Dojar and Quinlan. They all look tired and frustrated, everyone but Cross looks around expecting to see a cloaking device.

OZRAN
What? No one brought me a souvenir
back?

Grey throws his copy of "Things to Make Us Go" at Ozran.

OZRAN (CONT'D)
What's this?

GREY
Pakled Warp Theory.

OZRAN
Sounds... like it induces brain
damage.

GREY
I knew you'd like it.

TALORA
(perplexed)
Where is the device?

CROSS
Its on Pakled. In pieces.

DOJAR
Pardon?

CROSS
Nemblog knocked it off the side of a
building.

The other five members of the senior crew rub their faces into their hands.

GREY
Can we get to Sickbay and get
(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

(indicates face)

this off?

TALORA

I concur, having to spend any longer like this than necessary could be classed as some kind of punishment.

CROSS

Yes. Let us go.

DOJAR

Please don't do that.

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Y'lan walks down the corridor, when he spots Cross and company leaving the Transporter Room he moves over to them.

Y'LAN

Ah. You are the humanoid species known as Pakleds, are you not?

CROSS

Y'lan, it's us.

Y'LAN

Could I borrow a section of hour cycle, to ask of you some questions?

CROSS

Y'lan, its me, Cross.

Y'LAN

So the rumors about your species are true. Your intelligence is sub-average for a humanoid. Do you honestly believe that someone with your facial structure is a human?

CROSS

Y'lan, we're busy.

As the crew scurry down the corridor away from Y'lan, the Q'tami raises his recording device and speaks into it.

Y'LAN

It would seem as well as having a particularly low intelligence rating, Pakleds also suffer from severe anger when confronted with a superior intellect.

He turns and walks down the corridor, continuing to make recordings.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is at warp, headed away from Pakled.

INT. BRIDGE

Sukothai is still sitting at the center seat, with Rigby still standing behind her. Sukothai is slumping forwards in her seat, waiting to get off of the bridge. The turbolift doors open, and Cross and Talora step out.

RIGBY

Captain on deck.

CROSS

I said you didn't have to do that,
Ensign.

Sukothai stands up as Cross moves towards her.

SUKOTHAI

Finally, I never thought I'd be so
glad to be relieved of command.

CROSS

So nothing interesting has happened?

SUKOTHAI

(looking at Rigby)

No, sir. We had to escort Y'lan off
the bridge, though.

Cross just chuckles and takes his seat. Talora moves down and takes her seat as well, whilst Sukothai moves over to ops.

TALORA

(leaning in close)

Captain, you should do it now.

CROSS

I should...

TALORA

...and you will.

CROSS

Yes.

TALORA

Don't worry Captain. You are strong.

Cross glances sideways at Talora.

CROSS

Rigby, open a channel to Senator
Tarmak.

RIGBY

Aye, sir.

Moments later, Tarmak appears on the viewscreen.

TARMAK

Greetings, Captain. I trust you
have secured the Cloaking Device?

CROSS

Well...

We pull away from Cross, moving to the right hand side of the bridge. We can see both Cross and Tarmak, still displayed on the view-screen, but we can no longer hear the exchange. The Romulan senator looks visibly angry, Cross stands up and makes the same signal he made to Rigby earlier, and the screen goes blank again. Seconds after the screen goes blank we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END