

STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Faction Protocols"

**Written by
James Sampson**

This teleplay is originally from
www.startrekrenaissance.com

"Star Trek" and related names are registered
trademarks of Paramount Pictures, Inc.
This original work of fiction is
written solely for non-profit purposes.
Copyright 2002 by The Renaissance Group
All rights reserved

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. CORRIDOR

GREY walks along it, holding a bottle under his arm. He presses the CHIME of a door, which is opened by a disgruntled-looking BOYLE.

BOYLE
I'm not happy with you.

GREY
Good evening.

He enters into...

INT. BOYLE'S QUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

The lighting is dim, and in the center is a table that looks half-prepared for dinner. There is a candle burning, and three sets of plates, but not cutlery. In the kitchen area there are several plates of food strewn about. During the following dialogue, Boyle is bustling about, getting things ready, and Grey helps laying the table.

GREY
Smells good.

BOYLE
Don't start, Erik, I'm not in the mood.

GREY
No, seriously, it does. The replicator never ceases to amaze me.

BOYLE
Replicator? Erik, this is a dinner party.

GREY
Yeah?

BOYLE
We might be living in the twenty-fifth century, but it is still considered good manners to actually cook the food you serve at a dinner party.

GREY
Really?

BOYLE
Yes.

GREY

Oh.

BOYLE

Not that I expect our guest to notice, of course. I don't know why you even invited him.

GREY

We're meant to be showing him what a traditional Terran dinner party is like.

BOYLE

Why?

GREY

Because... because he expressed interest in it, that's why.

BOYLE

No, he didn't, Erik. You're a terrible liar.

GREY

I am not lying. He said he did.

BOYLE

I wish you hadn't asked him. I don't like him.

GREY

Exactly, that's another reason I did ask him. I think it's an excellent opportunity for you two to get to know each other.

BOYLE

I don't want to get to know him. He gives me the creeps, the way he stares at you, and I never know where he's going to put his hands next.

GREY

I hardly think he's going to try and make a move on you.

BOYLE

Why not? You did.

GREY

Well, yeah. But that's different.
(beat)
Look, I just thought it would be a good idea...

BOYLE

Oh yeah, you and your "good ideas." Like the time you thought it would be a good idea just to, and I quote, "quickly check the calibration of the fuel manifolds" when we had booked that little restaurant on Xelis Prime and we were still there the following morning? Like the time you thought it would be a "good idea" to ask the manager of the hotel we were in if you could help with their drainage problem and we spent all weekend up to our knees in shi-

GREY

Sarah, please.

(beat)

I thought you enjoyed helping them. We saved those holiday makers a nasty shock.

BOYLE

Erik, we were those holiday makers! You just don't think sometimes.

GREY

I'm sorry, I was just interested in the problem, from a technical point of view.

BOYLE

A technical point of view. Yeah, that'd be right. That's another thing, you're so blinkered to technology.

GREY

I am not.

BOYLE

Yes, you are. Tonight was another example. You come in, smell good food cooking, immediately you assume it's the replicator that's done such a wonderful job.

GREY

Well, I am an engineer...

BOYLE

Yes, you are. I'd like to see how you managed without it for a change.

GREY

Don't say that, that usually leads to a big calamity on the ship where

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

every computer goes down and the crew is forced to rely on its wits to survive, usually while facing an alien menace. And I'm not in the mood for that tonight.

BOYLE

All right, pop quiz. We're in a shuttle that's, say, hit by an electrical storm. All the power goes out, and...

GREY

(interrupts)

An electrical storm wouldn't do that. Any storm that powerful would also fry

BOYLE

Erik, the storm is a plot device.

GREY

Well, at least get it right.

BOYLE

(warningly)

Erik!

GREY

Sorry. Continue.

BOYLE

So we're forced to crash on a remote planet, covered in foliage. You know, real Amazonian rain forest kinda place.

GREY

How did we get from the electrical storm to the planet?

Boyle gives him a WARNING look.

GREY (CONT'D)

So, we're on this planet...

BOYLE

We survive the crash, but night is drawing in, the temperature is rapidly dropping, and all around us in the shadows things with sharp teeth are going "roar." What do you do?

GREY

I... would... try and fix the shuttlecraft's systems?

BOYLE

No! No, you wouldn't.

GREY

Yes, I would.

BOYLE

Well, yes, you would, but any normal person would gather twigs and make a fire for the night, to keep predators away and cook whatever rations are in the shuttle.

GREY

But if you fixed the shuttle...

BOYLE

You wouldn't be able to in the darkness. It's better to survive until the morning when you can see what you are doing.

GREY

It's a stupid question. Besides, you'd have phasers to fight off predators.

BOYLE

The EM storm has shorted them.

GREY

Oh, it's an EM storm now, is it?

BOYLE

Erik, the point is, you're single minded. I'd just like it if you... broadened your outlook a little bit. You know, looked beyond the warp core.

GREY

What would happen then?

BOYLE

You'd realize what a stupid idea this dinner party is for a start.

The door CHIMES.

GREY

Too late to back out now...

Boyle gives him another look. She goes and opens the door. In the corridor is Y'LAN.

BOYLE

(hostess voice)

Hello, Y'lan, delighted you could
come. Please come in.

Y'LAN

I can only stay for two hours. My
table needs some sonic emitter
adjustings. Lt. Grey will assist
me.

BOYLE

That's wonderful.

As she ushers him in, she turns and gives Grey a really nasty
look. He smiles nervously as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BOYLE'S QUARTERS

A few minutes later. Y'lan is staring at Boyle and Grey as they eat silently, his own plate untouched in front of him. There is an awkward silence, at least on the humans' part. Boyle looks pissed and Grey looks slightly uncomfortable. We have a long BEAT.

BOYLE

So, Y'lan... how's life?

Y'LAN

What do you mean?

BOYLE

I mean... how are you finding life on board the Enterprise?

Y'LAN

It is everywhere on the vessel. You go into the corridor, and there is some form of life there. It is no challenge to find it.

BOYLE

That's not quite what I meant.

GREY

I, er, didn't realize you didn't eat, Y'lan.

Y'LAN

A simple observation would have told you that you have never seen me consuming nutrition.

GREY

Yes, but...

He falls into silence. Another long beat.

GREY (CONT'D)

So, what's wrong with your science table?

Boyle slams down her plate.

BOYLE

For Christ's sake.

She gets up and storms to the kitchen area. Grey looks up.

GREY

Would you excuse me for a minute?

He gets up. We see them in the background arguing furiously, but we only hear the hiss of their whispers, their arms waving, as in the foreground Y'lan takes out a small device and starts to scan the room. Boyle suddenly notices this, and turns back.

BOYLE

Excuse me, what are you doing?

Y'LAN

I am taking readings of your quarters.

BOYLE

Well, don't!

GREY

Sarah...

BOYLE

He can't just do that... Y'lan, I'm sorry, will you please leave?

GREY

Sarah! He's our guest!

BOYLE

Why not? He won't care anyway.

GREY

But you can't...

Suddenly there is an almighty sound of an EXPLOSION and the whole room shudders violently, sending them all flying. The red alert alarm starts sounding. Y'lan ends up on top of Boyle, and she quickly removes his tentacles from her. Erik hurries over.

GREY (CONT'D)

You all right?

BOYLE

Yeah...

GREY

What were you saying about a calamity?
(taps comm badge)
Grey to bridge? What's happened?

INT. BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

The bridge is a hive of activity, bathed in the glow of red alert. TALORA and CROSS are at SUKOTHAI'S station as she taps away furiously at her console.

CROSS

Something's hit us, Deck 6, looks like the Shuttlebay. Dojar and a team are heading down there now, if you want to join them. Containment field's in place...

GREY'S COMM VOICE

On my way.

INT. BOYLE'S QUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

As before. GREY hurries to the door.

GREY

Y'lan, care to join me?

Y'LAN

Is the meeting at an end?

GREY

Meeting...? Oh, yes, it is.

Y'LAN

I will be of more use in my laboratory.

GREY

Sarah?

BOYLE

I'll head for Engineering too, I guess. Be careful.

GREY

You too.

They EXIT the room.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR

DOJAR and a security team, including LESMI and JONESS, walk slowly along it, phaser rifles drawn. The red glow of the corridor is accentuated by the smoky atmosphere. They get to the Shuttlebay door.

DOJAR

(whispering)

On three. One, two... three.

Joness activates the door, which opens. They swing into the opening...

INT. SHUTTLEBAY -- CONTINUOUS

It is pitch black, apart from a small harsh blue light at the far end which is flickering rapidly, lighting the room in a strobe effect. The guards move in, the torch beams on their rifles not really helping much. They creep slowly, looking around. As they get closer, they see that a SMALL CRAFT at the far end is the source of the blue light. They approach carefully, whispering.

LESMI

What kind of craft is it?

JONESS

Looks like a transport carrier of some kind.

DOJAR

Quiet. Jones and Harris, take the left. Lesmi and Phillips, the right.

They slowly surround the craft. Dojar taps his comm badge.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Dojar to Engineering. We could really do with some lights up here.

INT. ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

KINNAN is working at a console as people are rushing about. As he speaks, BOYLE enters.

KINNAN

We're working on it.

BOYLE

Hey, Rob, what's going on?

KINNAN

We can't get even emergency lights on in the Shuttlebay. Something's jamming it.

BOYLE

Let's see...

She bends over the console.

CUT TO:

INT. SHUTTLEBAY

As before. The craft is surrounded. DOJAR taps his comm badge, which then AMPLIFIES his voice.

DOJAR

Alien vessel. We have you surrounded.
Please come out slowly, or we will
board your vessel by force.

Nothing.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

This is your last chance. I'm going
to count to five, and then we will
board.

He gestures to LESMI and JONESS, who are nearest the door,
to get ready. They raise their rifles.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

One. Two. Three.

At the entrance to the bay, GREY arrives and cautiously peers
in.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Four.

They inch closer. Grey is looking round, and looks up.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Five. Now!

GREY

Dojar, above you!

They look up, and we see on the ceiling FOUR Q'TAMI, clutching
the roof and looking down silently.

DOJAR

Oh crap.

The Q'tami very swiftly descend, the nearest one whipping
out a tentacle and knocking Harris's rifle from his hands.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Open fire!

The guards dive for cover as they fire, the phaser fire
streaking around the Shuttlebay. The Q'tami ignore them and
swiftly exit the bay, past Grey. Dojar and the team quickly
exit.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

You all right?

GREY

Yeah, they didn't touch me.

DOJAR

All right, follow them. Computer, seal off Deck Six, Corridors 7-Beta to 11-Alpha.

COMPUTER'S VOICE

Acknowledged.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

Cross, Talora, and Sukothai as before.

DOJAR'S COMM VOICE

We have four, possibly five Q'tami, loose on the ship, Captain.

CROSS

Say that again? Q'tami?

DOJAR'S COMM VOICE

Affirmative, Captain. We're in pursuit. They're still on our deck.

CROSS

(tapping his comm badge)

Cross to science lab. Y'lan, you want to explain this?

INT. SCIENCE LAB -- CONTINUOUS

Y'LAN is working at his table.

Y'LAN

They are not members of the Hegemony, Captain.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Then what?

Y'LAN

They are members of the Faction, obviously.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Why are they attacking us?

Y'LAN

Uncertain, Captain. I am trying to ascertain some data now.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR

Dojar, Grey, and the security team move along it, Grey using a tricorder.

GREY

The forcefields are up, but I'm not picking up any life forms in them...

DOJAR

You know what the Q'tami are like, always eluding our sensors.

They turn a corner, and we see a section of corridor barricaded off by a SHIMMERING BLUE FORCEFIELD. There is nothing in the forcefield, but the FLOOR is completely blown away -- we can see underneath it, and down through the Jefferies Tube into the corridor below.

GREY

Oh my God.

DOJAR

(taps comm badge)

Captain, I think we have a big problem here.

CUT TO:

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan is still tapping away when the door opens, and the SILHOUETTES of the Q'TAMI are seen outside. Y'lan spins around.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Step away from the table, Y'lan.

Y'LAN

Why are you here?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Step away.

Y'LAN

No.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

All right.

He raises a tentacle with a small weapon in it and FIRES. Y'lan shrieks and rises up the wall as the beam slices through his table, blowing it apart completely. The Q'tami enter the room, and point the weapon up at Y'lan.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

We don't want to hurt you, but you must come with us.

Y'LAN

Why?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Please.

CROSS (O.S.)

Put that weapon down.

They turn around. CROSS leads the group, including Dojar, Grey and the guards. He enters with a rifle raised.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Put that weapon down, and get the hell off my ship.

Q'TAMI 1

Captain, this does not concern you.

CROSS

You're on my ship, I'd say it does.

Q'TAMI 1

We are doing what is for the best.

CROSS

I find that difficult to believe.

Q'TAMI 1

We cannot leave without Y'lan. I'm sorry.

CROSS

Then so am I.

He raises his weapon. One of the other Q'tami launches itself at him, forcing Cross to fire, slicing off its tentacle. The Q'tami Captain raises a weapon and fires it -- a BRIGHT PULSE FLASES into the entire room. HARRIS tries to fire at him, but the phaser does nothing. He frowns. Another tries, with similar results.

HARRIS

Weapons are down!

Amidst the confusion, Y'lan scurries across the ceiling to the exit. The Q'tami Captain reacts and fires at him, blowing a MASSIVE CHUNK from the wall, but missing Y'lan.

Y'lan scoots through the new hole in the wall into the corridor. The rest of the Q'tami launch themselves at the group, who have to leap and get out of the way. The attackers disappear after Y'lan.

CROSS

Don't let them out of your sight!

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Y'lan hurtles down it, and after a moment we see Q'TAMI 1 following. He raises his weapon, and SHOTS. He hits the floor underneath Y'lan, which suddenly collapses under itself. Y'lan, shrieking, falls through the floor and Jefferies Tube to the next deck down, and the Q'tami follow, still shooting. The deck that Y'lan lands on only lasts a moment, before another blast of the weapon collapses that floor too, sending him crashing down again.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

Talora and Sukothai are looking at their console.

TALORA

Captain, we're picking up massive structural damage on decks six, seven, and eight. What's going on?

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Cross, Dojar, Grey, and the guards peer down the holes.

CROSS

I wish I knew, Commander. Lieutenant, is there any way we can negate the effects of that weapon?

GREY

Captain, I've never seen a disintegrator with that much power before. I can't think of any way to contain it.

CROSS

Dammit.

GREY

(starts tapping at his tricorder)

That's not the worst of it. Look at this.

He holds it up -- it shows a schematic of the ship, with a trail on it.

GREY (CONT'D)

According to this, if they continue
on their present course...

CROSS

Yes?

GREY

Captain, they're heading for
Engineering.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGINEERING

Boyle and Kinnan are working away amidst the supernumeraries.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Engineering, this is the Captain,
you need to evacuate now. This is
not a drill.

The crew look at each other and then begin calmly filing out
into the corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

The crew ENTERS from Engineering, and they move down as Cross,
Grey, and Dojar hurry down it. BOYLE grabs GREY.

BOYLE

Erik, what's going on?

GREY

Engineering's under attack. Kinnan,
I need you.

KINNAN

Sir.

BOYLE

What about me?

GREY

You get away from here.

BOYLE

But...

GREY

I don't have time to argue, Sarah,
just do what I say.

He walks on. Boyle hesitates for a moment, then follows him
anyway.

INT. ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

Cross, Grey, Dojar, Boyle, Kinnan, and the guards file in and Grey seals the door. Then he notices Boyle, frowns, but says nothing.

DOJAR

All the corridors in their path are evacuated, Captain.

CROSS

Good. How quickly can we shut down the core?

GREY

Twenty minutes.

CROSS

How long have we got?

DOJAR

About thirty seconds.

GREY

Sir, we can raise an EM field around it, to try and reflect the damage from those weapons.

CROSS

Will it work?

GREY

I don't know, but nothing else will.

CROSS

Do it.

GREY

Lieutenant.

KINNAN

Got it. Sarah, help me.

They work on their consoles.

DOJAR

Team, get the weapons.

The security detail head to a WEAPONS LOCKER, and hand out the phaser rifles. But HARRIS presses a button and shakes his head.

HARRIS

These are dead too. That pulse must have taken the whole ship.

CROSS

Damn! Stand back then... If worse comes to the worse, use them to hit the bloody things over the head.

They pull back and wait. For a moment the only sound that can be heard is the beeping of Grey and Kinnan working on the machines, then suddenly there is a blasting noise. Then a louder one.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Here they come. How's that field going, Lieutenant?

GREY

Nearly done, Captain.

The ceiling suddenly IMPLODES, sending debris down. Just as it's going to hit the warp core, a blue FORCEFIELD shimmers into life, and the debris is deflected off it. One large piece of metal flies through the air and hits Boyle, who screams as it knocks her down.

GREY (CONT'D)

Sarah!

As he hurries across, he has to duck as Y'lan is thrown through the ceiling. Y'lan passes right through the forcefield, hitting the core. He clings onto it as the other Q'tami gracefully descend onto the floor.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Captain.

CROSS

You raise your weapon in here, we won't hesitate to fire.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Your weapons are inactive. Ours aren't.

He raises his weapon to Y'lan.

CROSS

You fire now, you'll destroy the ship.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

I am afraid there are bigger things at stake here than just this ship.

Y'LAN

Wait!

He slowly clambers down from the core and lies on the floor, his tentacles splayed out.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Thank you.

He walks slowly over to Y'lan.

CROSS

Y'lan, what are you doing?

Y'LAN

This is the Q'tami position of surrender, Captain. I cannot allow the Enterprise to be destroyed.

CROSS

But...

The Q'tami Captain places a bracelet on Y'lan's tentacle and then speaks as if to air.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Mission accomplished. Return to ship.

Then all the Q'tami, Y'lan and the attackers, shimmer out of existence. Cross instantly taps his comm badge.

CROSS

Talora, did you get a trace?

INT. BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

Talora and Sukothai, as before. Sukothai looks at Talora and shakes her head.

TALORA

No, Captain, we didn't.

INT. ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

As before. Cross looks around at the mess, as Grey cradles Boyle's unconscious form and Dojar, Kinnan, and the guards look on, amazed at what's happened.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

We've lost them.

ON CROSS'S FACE WE...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

An establishing shot of the Enterprise, stationary in space.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM

Grey and Elris walk in, as the rest are sitting down: Cross, Talora, Dojar, Quinlan, Sukothai, and Kinnan.

GREY

Sorry.

CROSS

It's all right, lieutenant. How is she?

GREY

We were lucky, sir, she's going to be okay. Some internal bleeding and a couple of broken bones. Doctor Elris says she'll be out in forty eight hours.

CROSS

I'm glad to hear it.

Grey and Elris sit.

CROSS (CONT'D)

All right, what do we know?

Talora takes a PADD.

TALORA

This evening at approximately twenty hundred hours a vessel, whose origin we have yet to identify, crashed into the Shuttlebay. No scanning instruments detected it prior to the collision.

CROSS

Why not?

SUKOTHAI

Q'tami in origin.

GREY

I'm not sure that's true.

CROSS

Explain.

GREY

It just didn't match what we've seen of previous Q'tami vessels. Nothing about it was the same.

CROSS

Y'lan did say it was the Faction.

QUINLAN

But we've met the Faction before. They didn't have ships like this.

TALORA

The subsequent attack has left a gaping hole in the Enterprise's internal structure. Lieutenant?

GREY

We estimate it's going to be between eight and ten weeks before the ship is close to fully operational again. The power of that weapon was incredible.

ELRIS

The plus side is, we had practically no casualties. Beside Sarah Boyle, we only had the security team's bruises. No one else.

CROSS

Fortunate indeed. Okay, what can the ship do?

GREY

We can go to warp, but we can't use the slipstream until we get some of the decks stabilized. I don't think the inertial dampeners are up to it. Also, I don't think we want to be in a fire fight any time soon.

CROSS

We'll set a course for the nearest Starbase.

(beat)

Now, the big question. Why?

QUINLAN

To take Y'lan.

CROSS

For what reason?

GREY

Captain, the Faction are opposed to the Hegemony on principle. I don't think they need a reason.

CROSS

Why Y'lan, though? Why not more important Hegemony members?

TALORA

How do we know they didn't?

QUINLAN

Good point.

TALORA

I think speculating on motives at this juncture is a waste of time.

QUINLAN

Is there any way of contacting the Hegemony?

GREY

The only way we know of is through Y'lan, or his table, and they made sure they destroyed that.

CROSS

Can you repair it?

GREY

(doubtfully)

I can try. I doubt it though.

CROSS

Have a look at it. Lieutenant Kinnan, you take charge of repairs until we get to the Starbase.

KINNAN

Yes, sir.

GREY

One of Sarah -- I mean, Lieutenant Boyle's -- qualifications is in structural engineering. She'll be able to help you once she gets out.

CROSS

Sukothai, do we have any leads on where they transported Y'lan to?

SUKOTHAI

None.

(MORE)

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)

Modern transporter technology has a theoretical limit of a eighty thousand kilometers, but we don't know how far in advanced of that the Q'tami can go.

GREY

Judging by that weapon, it could be anywhere.

QUINLAN

Not very helpful. The only possible lead we have is that ship. If it isn't Q'tami based, they have to have got it from somewhere. An analysis of it might prove useful.

CROSS

Alright, you and Sukothai work on that. One of our family is missing, and we must get him back. What's the nearest Starbase?

TALORA

232. It'll take ten hours to get there.

CROSS

Set a course and alert them we're coming. Dismissed.

They all NOD and stand up, filing out. Talora hangs back.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Commander?

TALORA

Captain, a word.

CROSS

Yes?

TALORA

I think we should be rethinking this.

CROSS

Why?

TALORA

(hesitates)

I wonder... whether we should be looking for him at all.

CROSS

You had better have a very good reason for saying that.

TALORA

You know as well as I do that Y'lan has a... tarred reputation as far as this ship is concerned.

CROSS

Referring to Macana?

TALORA

To Macana, and the incident involving the spying equipment -- hell, even the time he had those visions when Quinlan was arrested was peculiar. The bottom line is we don't know if we can trust him.

CROSS

I agree completely.

TALORA

(stops dead)

Pardon?

CROSS

I agree completely. I think there are issues of trust as far as Y'lan is concerned.

TALORA

You do?

CROSS

Yes. But at the moment it doesn't matter. Commander, Y'lan is a member of this crew and as such we have a responsibility to him. He was taken from us against his will and we have to get him back.

TALORA

Do you think he'd feel the same if situations were reversed?

CROSS

Absolutely not.

TALORA

Then...

CROSS

Commander, two wrongs don't make a right.

TALORA

Captain, Y'lan must surely have been able to pick up the Faction ships as
(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

they got closer, and yet did nothing about them.

CROSS

He was with Grey at the time. And Grey tells me Y'lan's been having trouble with his table lately.

TALORA

What about that telepathic link they all have?

CROSS

The whole point of the Faction, according to Y'lan, is that they don't have that link anymore.

TALORA

According to Y'lan.

CROSS

I am not leaving him.

TALORA

Then at least let me start an investigation.

CROSS

The attack is already being thoroughly investigated.

TALORA

Into Y'lan. While he's away.

CROSS

Commander, I cannot condone an investigation into a crewman when he is unable to defend himself.

TALORA

Captain...

CROSS

(with heavy emphasis)

It would be wrong to take advantage of his absence when he wasn't there to protest.

TALORA

Do I have security clearance?

CROSS

No.

TALORA

All right. Thank you, Captain.

She begins to exit the room. Cross calls after her.

CROSS

If you're caught, I'll have to place
an official caution on your record.

TALORA

I know. Sir, if I find anything?

CROSS

I credit you with having enough
intelligence to know what to do. I
don't think Dojar's going to be that
busy until we get to the Starbase.
Just a thought.

Talora NODS and walks out. Cross looks out of the window,
frowning.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK ROOM

Complete and total BLACKNESS. We see nothing, but after a
moment hear scrabbling.

Y'LAN

Where am I?

Q'TAMI VOICE

On our ship.

Y'LAN

Why have you brought me here?

Q'TAMI VOICE

That will be explained.

Y'LAN

Why haven't you terminated me?

Q'TAMI VOICE

We wish you no harm.

Y'LAN

Then...

Q'TAMI VOICE

All will be explained shortly. In
the meantime, you are being
regenerated.

The room adopts a low GLOW that implies heat. We see Y'lan
curled up in a corner, almost in a defensive posture. The
room is completely blank except for him -- no doors, no
windows, just blank metallic walls.

Y'lan slowly gets to his feet and looks round the room, but there is nothing of interest. Finally, he sits in the middle, and allows the rays to wash over him.

CUT TO:

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Grey is working at the remains of the table. A lot of large pieces with blinking lights are scattered about, and he is running an instrument emitting a pulse over one. Quinlan enters.

QUINLAN

Hey, how's it going?

GREY

Slowly. It would help if I knew the slightest thing about this mess.

QUINLAN

What are you doing at the moment?

GREY

Trying to find the computer core. If it has one. You all right?

QUINLAN

Yeah, I'm just wondering what this is.

She bends down and holds up a small piece of metal with an old-fashioned Starfleet insignia on it.

GREY

Wow, haven't seen one of those for a while. Where'd you find it?

QUINLAN

In the Q'tami ship. Sukothai unearthed it. What is it?

GREY

It's an old style SDR.

QUINLAN

SDR?

GREY

Ship Data Recorder. It keeps a running log of all the events on a ship so if something happens to the ship, you can use this to find out what.

QUINLAN

I thought we didn't have them any more?

GREY

We don't, we use the secondary computer core nowadays. These haven't been in service for... must be getting on a hundred years. Let's see if anything's recorded on it. Hand me that tricorder.

Quinlan does so. Grey runs it over the box. The tricorder makes a couple of protesting blips.

GREY (CONT'D)

Nope, it's wiped.

QUINLAN

Damn.

GREY

Quite impressive really, they're meant to be impregnable to any form of erasure.

QUINLAN

Back to the drawing board.

GREY

Yeah. No, just a second. Here.

He starts to get excited, and picks up the same tool he was using before. He runs it over the box, and fires off a couple of quick pulses. The box comes apart in his hands, revealing a lot of cables inside.

QUINLAN

Now you've broken it.

GREY

No, look.

He points at a small series of figures in a bottom corner.

GREY (CONT'D)

Each box had an individual serial number so it could always be traced. You can use this to find what craft that is out there.

QUINLAN

Erik, you're a genius. I'd kiss you if I didn't think Boyle would thump me.

GREY

I don't think she has a thump in her at the moment.

QUINLAN

You been to see her?

GREY

Not since this morning, been trying to wrestle with this.

QUINLAN

It's now sixteen hundred hours.

GREY

I know.

QUINLAN

Well go and see her, take a break.

GREY

A good officer does not forsake his duties for personal reasons.

QUINLAN

Maybe not, but a good person does. Now get your butt up there before I start thumping you. Go on!

She points aggressively at the door. Grey looks at her.

GREY

I suppose five minutes...

QUINLAN

Damn right, five minutes.

He gets up and walks out. Quinlan taps her comm badge.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Quinlan to Sukothai, I think we may have a lead.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLODECK

Talora stands in the empty grid.

TALORA

Computer, begin playback, Stardate 78695.6.

INT. HOLODECK -- ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

Around her, ENGINEERING shimmers into existence, just after the attack.

Several MEDICS are seen attending to Boyle in the corner, while Grey watches on anxiously.

TALORA

Computer, back ten minutes.

The image changes to after the Q'tami have broken in, and Y'lan is on the warp core.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Play.

HOLOGRAPHIC Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

I am afraid there are bigger things
at stake here than just this ship.

HOLOGRAPHIC Y'LAN

Wait!

As before, Y'lan splays his tentacles out.

TALORA

Freeze.

The image does so. Talora slowly walks around it, looking first at the Q'tami captain, and then at Y'lan. She notices that Y'lan is clutching something in one of his tentacles. She frowns, and bends down, looking at it.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Computer, selection. Mark.

She draws her finger around the object, and a small transparent globe appears around.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Computer, identify object in
selection.

COMPUTER'S VOICE

Objects in selection. Biomass of
species Q'tami. Transmitter, of
type unidentified.

TALORA

Computer, delete biomass in selection.

Y'lan's bit of tentacle in the selection disappears. She looks at what looks like a small round disk for a moment grimly, then stands up.

TALORA (CONT'D)

(taps comm badge)

Talora to Captain.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Cross here.

TALORA

Captain, relating to our conversation
earlier.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Yes?

TALORA

I've found something...

Off her expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise flies along at warp.

INT. READY ROOM

Talora is standing in front of Cross, who is looking at an image on his PADD.

CROSS

The bugs.

TALORA

Yes.

CROSS

He was still using them.

TALORA

Indeed. That, it would appear, is why he was so eager to get to Engineering.

CROSS

Why?

TALORA

Replaying the event in the holodeck, it would appear he deactivated the last one just before he surrendered.

CROSS

You have to admire his presence of mind.

TALORA

Captain, this is a serious breach...

CROSS

I know. But it doesn't change the fact we must get him back.

TALORA

Captain?

CROSS

Once we've got him, that is the time to start asking questions. But I don't think we should tell the crew.

TALORA

Why not?

CROSS

In the last twenty four hours our world has been ripped into, our ship violated, one of us taken. We're feeling pretty vulnerable at the moment, and I don't think this is the sort of thing that is going to improve morale. Do you?

TALORA

No, sir.

CROSS

Can you find them all?

TALORA

Yes. Using this one, we can find the frequency it's broadcasting on.

CROSS

Do so, and make sure they're put away, permanently this time.

TALORA

Yes, sir.

CROSS

Quinlan thinks she's found a lead on the craft the Hegemony used.

TALORA

Oh?

CROSS

An old cargo vessel apparently. We're trying to track down when it was last seen.

TALORA

It would appear the trail is heating up.

CROSS

It would appear so.

She nods and exits. Cross looks pensively at the PADD image of the bug.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Y'lan... what are you up to?

CUT TO:

INT. Y'LAN'S CELL

It is completely dark, but it gradually begins to lighten. Y'LAN is in one corner. We see in the opposite corner the Q'TAMI CAPTAIN, slowly materialize. Y'lan eyes him, but doesn't move.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You cannot contact the Hegemony.
There is a barrier around the ship.

Y'LAN

Yes.

The captain scuttles closer to Y'lan.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You are injured.

Y'LAN

Several shards of material caught in
me.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

We will treat them.

Y'LAN

Unnecessary. They do not pose a
risk to my existence. Why am I here?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Protection.

Y'LAN

Elaborate.

The Q'tami captain walks around the edge of the room slowly and deliberately, encircling Y'lan.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You were placed on board the
Enterprise. For what purpose?

Y'LAN

To study the bipeds.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

For what purpose?

Y'LAN

We are evaluating them.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Do they wish to be evaluated?

Y'LAN

That is not our concern.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

And what will happen when this period of evaluation is over?

Y'LAN

I... am uncertain.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

The Hegemony did not tell you?

Y'LAN

I follow the wishes of the Hegemony.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Do you not care about the people on the ship?

Y'LAN

They are interesting specimens.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Is it work you've done before?

Y'LAN

No, I was a terraformer.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Then why were you put on the ship?

Y'LAN

The bipeds were familiar with me. One on the vessel found me when I was in stasis.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

This stasis?

The room SHIMMERS around them, and coalesces into...

INT. STASIS CHAMBER (FLASHBACK) -- CONTINUOUS

The chamber Y'lan was found in. We see CROSS walking around it as Y'LAN and the Q'TAMI CAPTAIN watch.

Y'LAN

What is the purpose of this?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

This moment lives on in your mind.

Y'LAN

I can recall every moment of my life.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

But some you recall more vividly.
Something troubles you about this
one.

Y'LAN

No. It is no more relevant to any
other incident in my existence.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

No. It is much more relevant. One
thing has troubled you since this
day, one thing the Hegemony has never
explained to you.

Long beat, as Y'lan watches Cross slowly releasing himself
from the chamber.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Why did they never come for you
before?

Y'lan looks on at the image silently.

CUT TO:

INT. SICKBAY

Elris and AGOLIVE are pottering about in the background, as
Grey is in the foreground talking to Boyle, who is on a
biobed.

GREY

It's like putting together a jigsaw
when you don't have the original
picture to work from.

BOYLE

Very poetic, Erik.

GREY

I'm sorry, it's on my mind.

BOYLE

Evidently.

GREY

What's that mean?

BOYLE

It's all you've talked about since
you've been in here.

GREY

Sorry.

BOYLE

Obsessed.

Grey gives her a look.

GREY

How much longer you here?

BOYLE

Another day. Don't ask me why.
Can't wait to get out of here, the
food's disgusting.

GREY

Not home cooked then?

He gives her a smile, but Boyle is not amused.

BOYLE

Don't bring that up.

GREY

I won't.

Grey's badge chirps.

KINNAN'S COMM VOICE

Kinnan to Grey, we need your help on
deck ten. A gel pack just exploded.

GREY

On my way. I'll see you later.

BOYLE

I won't be anywhere else.

They kiss, and Grey leaves. Elris sidles over.

ELRIS

Just need to check your vitals.

BOYLE

Okay.

Elris starts to run a medical tricorder over her.

ELRIS

So, I couldn't help noticing you and
Grey were... having words?

BOYLE

Sorry, did we shout?

ELRIS

You shouted. He skulked off. Trouble in paradise?

BOYLE

No. I just wish he wouldn't talk shop twenty four seven. He's such a stick in the mud.

ELRIS

He certainly does things by the book. He makes the captain look positively rebellious.

BOYLE

(with a cheeky smile)

Oh yeah? So how are things between you and Captain Cross these days?

ELRIS

(stiffly)

The Captain and myself are fine.

BOYLE

So you going to get back together?

ELRIS

Not that I'm aware of.

BOYLE

Not even a little spark of romance again?

ELRIS

Why are you so interested?

BOYLE

It's not just me. You and Cross are the talk of the ship.

ELRIS

What?

BOYLE

Oh come on, it's great fun. It's the classic will they/won't they? scenario. I even think Hal is taking bets on it.

ELRIS

Really? And what are the odds?

BOYLE

Eight to three against. Not that I've put any on, you understand.

ELRIS

No. Well you can tell Hal, and anyone else, that I would appreciate it if everyone kept their big noses out of other people's business. I do not appreciate my personal affairs being used as a cheap thrill for people to gossip over. Your vitals are fine.

She snaps the tricorder shut slightly too hard and walks off, seething. Boyle looks around.

BOYLE

Can't wait to get out of here...

CUT TO:

INT. STASIS CHAMBER (FLASHBACK)

Y'lan and the Q'tami Captain as before. Cross has vanished, and Y'lan's chamber stays empty.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You were the first Q'tami to survive such a long period in a stasis chamber.

Y'LAN

I am aware of this.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Are you aware of why the stasis chambers were not used before?

Y'LAN

They were unnecessary. Q'tami do not need to live in stasis.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Then why were they developed?

Y'LAN

For contingencies such as the incident above Coular. When the Faction attacked.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

We didn't attack you. Watch.

The scene dissolves and changes to...

EXT. SPACE (FLASHBACK) -- CONTINUOUS

A Q'TAMI SHIP is in orbit of Coular, the planet from the pilot. A beam is emanating from it down to the planet below, and the area it is hitting is slowly changing color to a reddish brown.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Your ship.

Y'LAN

Yes.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

There were people on that planet.

Y'LAN

(dismissively)

Bipeds.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Does that make them any less relevant?

Y'LAN

They were interesting specimens.

Suddenly, another Q'tami ship appears, and begins FIRING on the first. The first hardly has time to react, and only manages to get one shot off before a corner of it BURSTS into flames and in a slow, almost graceful, arc, it begins to spiral down to the planet below.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)

You attacked us because we were terraforming the planet.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Watch.

Y'lan turns back, and sees the second Q'tami ship wait a moment. We see a flash on the surface where the first crashes, as the second assumes the first's position, and starts to terraform again, almost as though nothing has happened. The image freezes, the flash of the explosion suspended in the picture.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Would the Faction do that?

Y'LAN

This image has been corrupted.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You know it hasn't been.

Y'LAN

The Hegemony had no reason to do this.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

They did. They just didn't want you to know.

Y'LAN

Why?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You will see... soon enough. For now
you must rest. Your injuries will be
attended to. We will meet again soon.

The captain shimmers into nothingness, but leaves the image
of the planet in the room. Y'lan walks over to it, and runs
his tentacle over the flashpoint, looking slightly perturbed
as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise slowly approaches Starbase 232.

CROSS (V.O.)

Captain's log, stardate 78701.1. We have reached Starbase 232, and expect to be remaining for at least a week.

INT. CORRIDOR

There is a gaping hole in the floor. ENGINEERS are working along it, soldering bits together and generally trying to restore it. In the foreground, Grey and Kinnan are collaborating on something.

CROSS (V.O.)

Lieutenants Grey and Kinnan are going to be working with station engineers and they assure me by the time we leave we will at least be able to use the slipstream drive again. Meanwhile, we are working on a possible lead concerning the whereabouts of Y'lan.

INT. READY ROOM

Quinlan and Dojar are showing Cross and Talora a schematic on a wall console.

QUINLAN

It's an old Trill merchant ship, named the Zhintar. Last owner one Lezar Brin.

CROSS

How long ago?

QUINLAN

Seventy years. But do not fear, for Sherlock here has been hot on his heels.

DOJAR

Lezar Brin died some fifty five years ago. However, the symbiont lives on, in a doctor named Gana Brin. I contacted the Trill Council and managed to track her down -- she's working on Earth.

CROSS

Did you speak to her?

DOJAR

With difficulty. Apparently, she's one of those Trills who doesn't like talking about their former hosts -- at all. Finally, I had to pretend to have a condition she's a specialist in.

CROSS

What's she a specialist in?

DOJAR

Inter-species STDs.

CROSS

I'm sure you did it very well.

DOJAR

Anyway, after a lengthy talk I managed to find out Lezar wasn't able to sell the ship off, so he abandoned it.

CROSS

Where?

QUINLAN

The Hellion Expanse. It's basically a big junk yard for traders who want to get rid of their old craft.

CROSS

I've heard of it. For years environmentalists have been protesting about it, but because it's in an out of the way area, no one's bothered. How far away is it?

QUINLAN

That's the best part. It's under ten light years from here.

Cross nods slowly.

CROSS

Check it out. Take Grey with you, he knows a bit more about detecting Q'tami energy signatures than you.

QUINLAN

Yes, captain. Thank you, Captain.

Quinlan and Dojar turn to leave.

CROSS

Good work.

Quinlan grins at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is docked at Starbase 232. As we watch, a SHUTTLE departs from the Enterprise's shuttlebay and heads off into warp.

INT. SHUTTLE

Quinlan is at the helm, Grey is working on sensors, and Dojar is sitting, reading a PADD.

DOJAR

According to this, Dyson Corps bought Hellion last year.

GREY

Makes sense. It's a fine source of scrap metal.

DOJAR

We really need to get permission to go in.

Quinlan gives him a look.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

(hastily)

I won't say anything if you don't.

QUINLAN

ETA is just under an hour at present speed. Erik, how's it coming?

GREY

Slowly. The Q'tami don't actually give off that much thermal energy, it's hard to configure anything to pick them up specifically. It would be easier to pick up a quantum phase distortion in a warp core manifold.

He looks up, smiling. The other two give him blank looks.

GREY (CONT'D)

Sorry, engineering joke. Sarah keeps telling me I should lighten up somewhat.

QUINLAN

Nice try.

Grey looks a little crestfallen.

CUT TO:

EXT. Y'LAN'S CELL

The image of the planet has vanished. Y'lan is sitting in near-darkness. The Q'tami Captain appears again.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
Your wounds are healed.

Y'LAN
Yes.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
You are not permanently damaged.

Y'LAN
I do not have my connection to the Hegemony.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
Neither do I.

Y'LAN
You choose to be without it. I do not.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
You intrigue me. I have shown you that the Hegemony have lied to you, and yet you still wish to be with them.

Y'LAN
I do not believe what you have said. Why would they do this?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
The stasis chamber. Were you aware of its actions?

Y'LAN
It suspends all biological functions.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
Including your link to the Hegemony.

Y'LAN
It is unimportant during stasis.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN
But afterwards... When you were released, did you experience any difficulties re-establishing the link?

Y'LAN

I... was initially unsure of it.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

But when you were again... did you notice anything different?

Y'LAN

No.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Interesting.

The room image changes again, until it turns into a large display of seemingly random images: there are double helixes, bubbles of matter, seemingly areas of the room that are sliced open, all in a weird aqua light.

Y'LAN

What is the purpose of this?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

The dimensions. Eleven independent aspects together make up our existence. Most species move through either four or five.

Y'LAN

Most.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

As Q'tami, we understand more about the higher dimensions than most, if not all, inferior species. This is what makes them inferior.

Y'LAN

Not just that.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

We are constantly finding new ways to exploit our greater knowledge. Constantly exploring.

Y'LAN

I am aware of this.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Some dimensions are less malleable than others, though. Time, for example.

One of the double helixes more closer to the two Q'tami. They are constantly revolving around each other. The captain is able to manipulate the images by just touching them.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

We have always been aware that time moves in two discrete circles -- our own interpretation of it, and the true reality. But we have never known how to exploit it.

Y'LAN

It is unnecessary to try and exploit it.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

But is it? These two helixes represent the individual and the true passage. Let us say one of them is Y'lan. Your image of the passing of time.

Y'LAN

I do not imagine my image is any different to any other Q'tami's.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

No, you wouldn't. But what happens when your interpretation of time stops for a period?

Y'LAN

In the stasis chamber?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Exactly. Your interpretation freezes. Like this.

He grasps one of the helixes. The other helix continues to revolve, moving on, while the one the captain holds stays still, obviously.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Until the time Captain Cross releases you, and you move on again.

He releases the helix again, and it starts revolving around the other one.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

But real time has moved on. By two hundred years. And for all the other Q'tami too.

Y'LAN

Why is this relevant?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

It is relevant because you are two hundred years out of time. In everything.

Y'LAN

I still do not understand.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

The Hegemony knew this is what would happen when they put you in the stasis chamber. They wanted this to happen.

Y'LAN

Why?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

You are a Q'tami two hundred years in the past. Even though you are in the present to us, in your own personal time you are not. And when you communicate with the Hegemony using the link, you are communicating with the past. Your link is, as the bipeds would say, out of date.

Y'LAN

Why would the Hegemony want this?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Because now they potentially know everything that will happen in the next two hundred years. They know everything that will happen on your ship and to the galaxy as a whole. All down to you.

Y'LAN

Why would they not tell me?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Why should they? They wanted a clean report. If you had knowledge that you were doing this, it might have affected your actions, however inadvertently. This way, there was no risk attached. And that is why we cannot let you leave.

Y'LAN

Why?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

The knowledge you send them is too powerful. If the Hegemony knows everything that is going to occur, they can use it to manipulate events to their own end. They can continually rewrite history until they get it to their satisfaction.

Y'LAN

That would be a good thing.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

For the Q'tami, yes. For anyone else, it is more uncertain. And we cannot take that risk. For this reason, you must remain our prisoner here.

Y'LAN

The Hegemony will rescue me.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

They will not find you. As long as you stay in this room, you do not know where we are. And that is how it must stay. I am truly sorry. The Hegemony used you for their own ends, and now we must do the same. For the protection of the universe, this is how it must be.

(beat)

It would appear that some of your "interesting specimens" have come in search for you. I must attend to this.

He slowly shimmers away into nothingness, as we look at Y'lan's face.

CUT TO:

INT. SHUTTLE

As before. Quinlan at helm, Grey and Dojar at rear consoles.

QUINLAN

Ladies and gentlemen, this is your pilot speaking, we have arrived.

The shuttle breaks out of warp.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Wow, look at it.

EXT. SPACE -- CONTINUOUS

The Hellion Expanse is, just as it has been described, a massive junkyard. Hundreds of old ships and parts of ship hang motionless in space, rather like a strange asteroid field. We see the SHUTTLE approaching at slow impulse.

INT. SHUTTLE -- CONTINUOUS

As before.

QUINLAN

Why didn't I know about this place
when I wanted to hide for a while?

DOJAR

I'm guessing it's because no one
told you about it?

Quinlan gives him a look.

QUINLAN

Erik, anything you have would be
useful round about now.

GREY

Just a second.

He makes a final correction on the console.

GREY (CONT'D)

Okay, I think this may work. I've
recalibrated the array to sense any
changes in the residual biodensity
of the...

He looks up at Quinlan and Dojar's faces which are again
blank.

QUINLAN

Erik, we don't care what you've done.
Just do the scan.

GREY

Right.

He presses a button, and it suddenly blips. He looks up
triumphantly.

QUINLAN

You got them?

GREY

There's definitely something up there.
Quite a lot of somethings, in fact.

DOJAR

Well done.

QUINLAN

Where are they?

GREY

A couple of seconds as I triangulate.
There. About fifteen kilometers,
dead ahead. That ship there.

Quinlan looks out of the window to where Grey points.

QUINLAN

That looks like a Cardassian design.

They both look at Dojar.

DOJAR

It is, it's a Haklon-class. Old transport vessel. They haven't been in service since before the Bajoran Occupation ended. They... used to be used to transport people from one planet to another.

QUINLAN

People?

DOJAR

Bajorans. The Guls used to refer to them as cattle ships.

QUINLAN

All right, Dojar, you know them, how do we get into them?

DOJAR

Well, I...

Suddenly there is a blip on the console.

QUINLAN

We're being hailed.

GREY

(hastily)

Raising shields.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN'S COMM VOICE

Federation ship, this is the Faction speaking. You will desist from any attempts to rescue Y'lan. Not doing so will result in your termination.

QUINLAN

No deal. We want our crewman back.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN'S COMM VOICE

We do not wish to harm you.

QUINLAN

Well, that's good. We don't wish you to harm us either. Give us what we want and we'll leave.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN'S COMM VOICE

Not possible.

QUINLAN

Lieutenant Grey, prepare to fire.

She shakes "no" to Grey quickly, to show she is bluffing.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN'S COMM VOICE

You will only bring about your own deaths.

QUINLAN

Not the first time we've heard that, sunshine. We have three quantum torpedos aimed at your starboard bow. You have ten seconds to comply before we blow you to Q'tami heaven.

She cuts off the transmission and looks at the other two.

GREY

Nice try.

QUINLAN

Do we have three quantum torpedos?

GREY

No. We didn't have time to load any before we left. We have the phasers, though.

QUINLAN

Just as good.

She presses a console button.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Time's up. What's it going to be?

Without reply, all three suddenly hear a familiar whine and they shimmer into nothingness.

INT. PRISON CELL -- CONTINUOUS

It is almost completely dark as Quinlan, Grey, and Dojar appear together. They look around.

QUINLAN

I'll take that as a no, then.

Off their reactions we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

A shot of the Hellion Expanse, favoring the Cardassian ship in the foreground, with the shuttle drifting in the distance.

INT. PRISON CELL

As before; Quinlan, Dojar, and Grey. They are looking round.

GREY

Comms are getting through, but we can't risk beaming through any shields this ship has raised.

DOJAR

They beamed us in.

GREY

Yes, and probably instantly raised shields again. The signal from the shuttle would get scrambled.

QUINLAN

Dojar, think. How did the Bajorans used to escape?

DOJAR

They didn't. They died.

GREY

Not terribly helpful.

QUINLAN

There's an escape route to every prison, this one is no different.

DOJAR

Each cell is completely sealed, just for this reason.

QUINLAN

How did they get air in?

DOJAR

There are microholes dotted all around. Too small to exploit.

QUINLAN

So, what, they transported in here?

DOJAR

Yes, they -- wait a minute. Yes, they did, they transported in.

QUINLAN

Why are you looking at me like that?
I thought we already established we
can't transport out of here with the
shuttle.

DOJAR

Not with the shuttle's transporters,
no. Remember, this ship is from the
early 2300s. The transporter
technology was much less advanced
than it is now. They had backups,
in these cells, to keep the integrity
of the beams.

QUINLAN

Great! Where?

DOJAR

I... don't know.

QUINLAN

Start looking.

The lights start to brighten. The Q'TAMI CAPTAIN shimmers
into view. They quickly stand in a line and try not to look
guilty.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

I hope you're here to negotiate your
immediate surrender.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Why do you persist in troubling us?
We only want what's best for you.

DOJAR

What's best for us is to have our
man back!

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Ce is not a man. Your words
illustrate how little understanding
you have of our culture.

QUINLAN

Can we at least see him?

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

I do not think that would be for the
best.

QUINLAN

We would feel a lot happier returning
to our ship if we had seen that Y'lan
was being treated properly.

Beat.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

One of you may.

DOJAR

I'll go.

GREY

I should go -- I know him best.

DOJAR

(pointedly)

No, I think it would be best if you stayed here.

GREY

Oh. Yes, indeed. Carry on.

The Q'tami captain and Dojar transport into nothingness.

INT. Y'LAN'S CELL -- CONTINUOUS

Y'lan is sitting pensively in the corner as Dojar shimmers into view. Y'lan stands.

Y'LAN

Lieutenant.

DOJAR

Y'lan. You all right?

Y'LAN

I am adequate.

DOJAR

Can we talk in here?

Y'LAN

I do not believe our presence here inhibits our vocalizations.

DOJAR

That's not what I meant. Are they listening?

Y'LAN

There are no listening devices here. The Faction did not see the need for them.

DOJAR

Why's it so dark in here?

Y'LAN

You forget, the Q'tami do not need light to see.

DOJAR

Right.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CELL

Grey and Quinlan are scanning the walls.

QUINLAN

Smooth as a button. Nothing.

GREY

There must be some way of detecting it. Wait.

He detaches his comm badge and begins to pry it open.

QUINLAN

What are you doing?

GREY

A sonic pulse might do the trick. Open your comm channel.

QUINLAN

(taps her comm badge)
Quinlan to Grey.

GREY

All right, give me the badge.

Quinlan hands it over. Grey begins to bring the two together and then walks along the wall.

GREY (CONT'D)

If there's anything electronic in these walls, the badges will give off a high pitched moan on their natural frequency.

He starts to run them over the wall. After a few moments, a whine does start to emit from the two badges.

GREY (CONT'D)

Got it. Here, help me to find the edge to pry it off.

Quinlan comes and bends down, running her fingers along the wall.

GREY (CONT'D)

Here's the edge. Can you run your nail in it?

QUINLAN

No.

She shows him her hands.

GREY

Perfect, I get the one woman on the ship who chews her nails.

He pulls and finally the panel comes off. The console that is revealed is unmistakably Cardassian in origin, and is still functioning.

GREY (CONT'D)

Bingo. I think we're in business.

QUINLAN

It still has power.

GREY

Of course it does. The ship is active, thus it has power. Ah-ha, here's Dojar, so I'm guessing that strange reading next to him is Y'lan. Let's try.

He pushes some buttons, and they watch as Y'LAN and DOJAR materialize in front of them.

GREY (CONT'D)

Anyone call for a rescue?

DOJAR

Let's get out of here.
(taps comm badge)
Dojar to shuttle. Lower shields.

COMPUTER'S COMM VOICE

Acknowledged.

QUINLAN

Now all we have to do is find the shield generator.

GREY

We don't need to. We just have to shut the power down on the ship. Right, Y'lan?

Y'LAN

Correct.

GREY

Dojar, engineering is usually at the bottom of the ship, correct?

DOJAR

Yes.

GREY

All right, let's try this corridor here...

He presses a button and they transport out...

INT. CARDASSIAN CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Grey, Quinlan, Dojar, and Y'lan shimmer into view. They look around. It is almost completely dark.

QUINLAN

Which way?

Y'LAN

There is a heat source in that direction.

GREY

Let's go.

Suddenly there is a SHRILL SHRIEK behind them.

GREY (CONT'D)

Let's go quickly.

They begin to run, as two Q'TAMI appear in pursuit. They run into...

INT. CARDASSIAN ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

The core is glowing, but there is no sign of anyone in there.

QUINLAN

Erik, you and Dojar quickly work. We'll hold them off.

DOJAR

This way.

They start working on a console as we hear the shrieks of the Q'TAMI getting closer.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

You know, you'd think they'd have decided to...

Suddenly Q'tami appear all around them, transporting in.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

...transport in.

GREY

It doesn't matter anymore. There.

He pushes a button, and the core goes dead.

GREY (CONT'D)
(taps comm badge)
Grey to shuttle. Energize, now!

The four disappear as the Q'tami make to pounce on them.

INT. SHUTTLE -- CONTINUOUS

Grey, Quinlan, Dojar, and Y'lan transport in.

DOJAR
Get us out of here, Quinlan.

QUINLAN
Aye, aye, sir. Hang onto your seats.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle goes to warp, as the Cardassian ship slowly turns around. It pauses, and then goes to warp as well.

INT. SHUTTLE

As before; Grey, Quinlan, Dojar, and Y'lan.

DOJAR
The Q'tami are in pursuit.

GREY
Those old ships power up quickly.

Y'LAN
They are fast because they want me back.

QUINLAN
You don't say. Quinlan to Enterprise.

INT. BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

Talora is on duty; Sukothai at Ops.

TALORA
Enterprise here. Report, Lieutenant.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE
We've got Y'lan back, but we have a rather unhappy Haklon freighter in pursuit, filled with pissed-off Q'tami. We'd really appreciate some assistance.

TALORA
Understood. On our way. Helm, set a course.

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Captain Cross to the bridge.
Engineering, what is our status?

INT. ENGINEERING -- CONTINUOUS

Kinnan and Boyle are walking urgently around to the induction core.

KINNAN

Commander, we are not battle ready.
I would heavily recommend we do not
engage any enemy.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

Understood, Mr. Kinnan, but it is
not an option. Do what you can.

Kinnan looks at Boyle.

BOYLE

Suddenly I wish I was back in
Sickbay...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The SHUTTLE is in warp, closely followed by the Cardassian ship, which unleashes a couple of energy bolts at them, which barely miss. The shuttle responds, but misses by quite a margin.

INT. SHUTTLE

AS before; Quinlan, Dojar, Grey, and Y'lan.

DOJAR

I hate firing at warp.

QUINLAN

Who knew Cardassian freighters were
so nippy?

DOJAR

They were in a hurry when they wanted
to offload Bajorans.

QUINLAN

We're being hailed again.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN'S COMM VOICE

Shuttle, stand down. We will not
stop until we get Y'lan back. It is
for your own...

Quinlan presses a button.

QUINLAN

Ah, shut up. I wish he'd stop saying that...

GREY

Why do they keep saying that's it for our own good, Y'lan?

Y'LAN

They did not tell me anything.

QUINLAN

You're a secretive bunch, you Q'tami, aren't you?

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

The bridge is dimmed in the hue of red alert. Talora at command, Sukothai at Ops. Cross ENTERS.

CROSS

Report.

TALORA

We're rendezvousing with the shuttle in approximately three minutes.

CROSS

How's our status?

TALORA

Not good. Lieutenant Quinlan reports that the Q'tami are in a Haklon-class ship.

Cross crosses over to Sukothai.

CROSS

Sukothai, what have we got on them?

SUKOTHAI

Looking now, sir. There, Haklon-class ships. Commissioned 2312, last one constructed in...

CROSS

I'm not interested in a historical survey, I want to know their tactical weaknesses.

SUKOTHAI

Give me a moment, sir.

(MORE)

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)

The Cardassians were never very forthcoming on their ships bad points.

CROSS

Indeed. Cross to Dojar.

INT. SHUTTLE -- CONTINUOUS

As before; Quinlan, Dojar, Grey, and Y'lan.

DOJAR

Dojar here, captain.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

Do you know anything about these ships at all?

DOJAR

Not my line of expertise, Captain. The only thing I can tell you is that most civilian ships of that period were well known for having weak dorsal plating.

INT. BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

As before; Cross by Sukothai's station, Talora by him. Whedon is at the helm.

CROSS

Weak dorsal plating? Sukothai, anything?

She types away at her console.

SUKOTHAI

The only thing I have is that the construction of these ships were hampered by the lack of kelindide at the time.

CROSS

Kelindide?

SUKOTHAI

They used it primarily in the hull plating on the nacelles.

CROSS

So, a good place to fire would be... the dorsal nacelle?

TALORA

If that whole area is weak, it could start a chain reaction.

WHEDON

Captain, we're in range of the shuttle.

CROSS

On screen.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle is still at warp. The pursuing ship has noticeably caught up with them, and begins to fire a constant stream at them. They are caught suddenly, and a chunk is ripped away.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

As before; Cross and Talora both standing, Sukothai seated.

CROSS

Ozran, get them out of there!

On the screen the shuttle suddenly EXPLODES.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Ozran, did you get them?

QUINLAN

He got us, Captain.

SUKOTHAI

Sir, we're being hailed.

CROSS

On screen.

The blackness of space is replaced by the image of the Q'TAMI CAPTAIN.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Captain...

CROSS

I am not in the mood to talk to you. Do not attempt to board our ship, believe me when I say we can blast you out of the sky in one shot. Consider yourself lucky we do not do so.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

Captain, please listen to me. Please. You do not understand what you are dealing with here, I...

CROSS

Where have I heard that one before?

As he speaks, Y'lan, Quinlan, Dojar, and Grey all enter the bridge.

Q'TAMI CAPTAIN

He will...

Suddenly, the screen goes blank. Cross turns to see Y'lan standing by Sukothai's console.

Y'LAN

Captain, they will attempt to board again. They are on a mission to annihilate the Q'tami, and will not be stopped.

CROSS

Y'lan, I...

SUKOTHAI

Captain, I'm picking up a transporter beam.

Y'LAN

We must not allow them to board again. They will surely destroy the Enterprise.

Beat.

CROSS

Sukothai, fire at the dorsal nacelle, one torpedo.

SUKOTHAI

Aye, captain.

Cross turns to the screen and watches. The torpedo streaks out of the Enterprise, and hits the nacelle. Just as they said it would, the nacelle explodes, and triggers similar explosions all along the ship, which after a moment or two detonate the whole ship. The freighter becomes a fireball. Cross turns back to Sukothai.

CROSS

Did any get on board?

SUKOTHAI

Scanning... no sir, none.

CROSS

Thank you. Stand down red alert.

He turns and looks at Y'lan, and then retreats to his ready room.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is once again docked at Starbase 232.

CROSS (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 78720.3. We have now spent a little over a week here, and repairs are continuing apace. Lieutenant Grey believes we will be ready to leave in another ten days, and that we will be able to repair the damage to the decks en route.

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

We see Kinnan moving in, and Grey and Boyle welcoming him.

CROSS (V.O.)

Decks ten through sixteen are still off limits, and crewmen whose quarters are on those decks have been reassigned. It goes without saying that others have been never less than willing to assist. Meanwhile, I am determined to resolve the situation with Y'lan once and for all.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross is sitting at his desk, looking pensive. The door chimes.

CROSS

Enter.

Y'lan enters.

Y'LAN

You requested my presence, Captain?

CROSS

Yes, I did. We know you've continued spying on us, Y'lan.

Y'LAN

I am aware of that fact, Captain. All of my devices have been removed by Commander Talora.

CROSS

Yes. Y'lan, we trusted you, and you betrayed that trust.

Y'LAN

Trust is... not a Q'tami concept.

CROSS

Perhaps not, but on this ship we do not follow Q'tami rules, we follow Federation ones. I don't like having a member of this crew whom I cannot rely on.

Y'LAN

Captain.

CROSS

Until further notice, I am having you under surveillance twenty four a day. Lieutenant Dojar has drawn up a rota, and in addition you are to file a report every day detailing your activities. Is that understood?

Y'LAN

Yes, Captain. Is that all?

CROSS

That is all.

Y'LAN

This concept of betrayal, it was foreign to me before now.

CROSS

Everyone on your world follows the common good, I suppose?

Y'LAN

Exactly. We do what we are asked to do, and nothing more. If information is not relevant then we are not given it.

CROSS

That is a very alien concept to us, Y'lan.

Y'LAN

Yes, captain. Although I admit... recently I am finding it easier to see your point of view.

CROSS

Being amongst us is finally rubbing off on you, eh?

Y'LAN
Rubbing off on me?

CROSS
Never mind.

Y'LAN
Captain.

He turns to go.

CROSS
(looking out the window)
Y'lan.

Y'LAN
Captain?

CROSS
Are you a threat to this ship?

Beat.

Y'LAN
I am not.

CROSS
That's all I wanted to hear.
Dismissed.

As Cross stares pensively out of the window, Y'lan exits and we end with his featureless expression as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END