STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Men of War and Science"

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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at warp.

INT. ENGINEERING

Engineering is at the peak of alpha shift and is a model of order. The floors are shiny, uniforms are neatly pressed, and everything is running at maximum efficiency. Around the corner comes Lieutenant GREY, who is a perfect reflection of his department. He is in a conversation with KINNAN.

KINNAN
Warp efficiency is at 99.8 percent, Sir.

GREY
Where are the other point two percentage points?

KINNAN
Sir, 100 percent isn't possible.

GREY
Get as close as you can, Lieutenant.

KINNAN
Yes, Lieutenant.

GREY
And I noted you left for your shift three minutes late this morning as well.

KINNAN
One of the disadvantages of living with the boss.

GREY
Make sure you leave on time in future.

KINNAN
Yes, sir.

The two diverge. Kinnan makes a beeline for somewhere else - anywhere else - while Grey continues his rounds. Grey passes a CHIEF who appears to be in his late fifties. Chief is carrying a coffee mug.

GREY
Chief!
CHIEF
Yes, Lieutenant?

GREY
No drinks on duty.

Grey keeps on going, while the chief heads for the replicator. Meanwhile, in another corner of engineering, KINNAN is talking with BOYLE.

KINNAN
What's up with Grey?

BOYLE
What do you mean?

KINNAN
He's... reverted.

BOYLE
(laughs)
Reverted?

KINNAN
Just when I thought he was lightening up on us, he suddenly starts acting like a soldier.

BOYLE
I suppose he's just... being himself.  
(beat)
He used to be in the Marines, you know.

KINNAN
He's told me that. But I would have guessed anyway. I don't see what you see in him.

BOYLE
A lot of people ask me that. But that's why he's stiff like this sometimes. I wouldn't worry about it. He's still worried about the progress of the repairs.

KINNAN
I don't see why, we're ahead of schedule -- we've already completed the work on nearly a third of the decks. I'll be able to move out soon.

BOYLE
You'll be sorry about that.
KINNAN
Yes, won't I just?

BOYLE
(playfully)
Of course you will, you'll see me less.

KINNAN
Yes... I think I'd pay that price at the moment.

BOYLE
He's not that bad.

Kinnan decides to take her advice.

KINNAN
He wants the warp efficiency improved.

BOYLE
It's at 99.8 percent!

KINNAN
I told him.
(smiles)
Don't worry, remember?

CUT TO:

INT. READY ROOM

CROSS is seated at his desk. His commbadge CHIRPS.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE
Captain, there is an incoming transmission from Starfleet Command.

CROSS
Put it through, Commander.

A second later, an image appears on Cross's computer screen. It's ADMIRAL DELFUNE.

DELFUNE
Captain Cross.

CROSS
Admiral. What can I do for you?

DELFUNE
We need you to return to Earth.

CROSS
(a bit worried)
What's happened?
DELFUNE
Nothing. There's a conference you need to attend.

CROSS
Admiral, we're scheduled to pick up equipment for the research facility on Dennos this evening. Can't it wait?

DELFUNE
I'm afraid it can't.

CROSS
I suppose I'll manage in a shuttle.

DELFUNE
No, you won't. The Enterprise needs to come. Lieutenant Grey will also attend the meeting.

CROSS
(somewhat surprised)
Lieutenant Grey? What's the meeting?

DELFUNE
You'll find out when you get here, Captain. Have a good day. Delfune out.

The screen returns to an image of the Starfleet logo.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

TALORA is in command. DOJAR is at tactical, and QUINLAN is at the helm. Cross enters from his ready room.

TALORA
Captain.

CROSS
At ease. Helm, set a course for Earth.

QUINLAN
Yes, Sir.

TALORA
Captain?

CROSS
Admiral Delfune requested my presence and that of Lieutenant Grey.
TALORA
(somewhat surprised)
Lieutenant Grey?

CROSS
(offhand sarcasm)
I'm as dumbfounded as you are. Carry on.

Cross EXITS.

CUT TO:

EXT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS

A beautiful complex of modern buildings, gold in the setting sun.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR

The buildings are as beautiful inside as out. Every few feet are windows, murals, and plants. A handful of officers bustle about. CROSS and GREY come around a bend, searching the walls for something.

GREY
What room did he way?

CROSS
Four-twenty.

GREY
Here we are.

Grey points to a recess in the wall with double doors. They enter.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CONFERENCE ROOM

GREY and CROSS enter to find a moderately lit conference room. Windowless, it is done in wood tones with a long mahogany desk and light paneling along the walls. At the unoccupied head of the table, opposite the doors, is a WALL MONITOR. Around the table are various officers, socializing. Wearing Starfleet uniforms are CAPTAIN JOEL and ADMIRAL PORTMAN, along with a few other officers. Wearing a different uniform similar to that of Starfleet but with a broken green stripe and slightly different insignia are GENERAL BURKE and COLONEL EASTON, accompanied by a few officers of their own. Portman is the first to see Cross.

PORTMAN
Neil! How good to see you. Let me introduce you to the rest of the group.
The officers stop their side conversations and direct their attention to Portman.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
This is Captain Neil Cross of the Enterprise, and his chief engineer, Lieutenant Grey. This is Captain Erika Joel of the Leviathan, and General Burke commands a branch of the Marines. Colonel Easton is the commander of Marine Unit 99.

CROSS
Pleased to meet all of you.

PORTMAN
Neil was under my command a good while back. They don't get much better than him.

(to Joel)
No offense.

JOEL
None taken. I'm honored to meet you, Captain. I've heard a lot about you.

CROSS
I hope it was all good.

They all chuckle

EASTON
Lieutenant Grey used to be in the Marines, I believe?

GREY
That's correct. I served during the Sheliak War.

EASTON
You were involved in the Battle of Marcus, I believe?

GREY
For my sins.

They all chuckle again. DELFUNE enters, and all stand.

PORTMAN
Admiral.

DELFUNE
Admiral, Captains, General, Colonel.
She seats herself at the head of the table (the rest take their seats as well) and presses a button located on the tiny console at his place.

Text appears on the screen behind her: "MARINE INTEGRATION PROJECT."

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

For those of you who don't know, Starfleet and the Marine Corps have been planning the Marine Integration Project for several months now.

CROSS

Marine Integration?

DELFUNE

The Federation has had several wars in the past century. In all of them, Starfleet has transported groups of Marines around. But Starfleet has rarely been involved with them other than that. In conjunction with the imminent deployment of the fleet's new rapid reaction forces, we feel that it would benefit both the fleet and the corps to station Marines on Starfleet vessels.

It is clear from their expressions that BURKE, EASTON, and PORTMAN have known this for a while. But this is news to JOEL, CROSS, and GREY. On their faces, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER
FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

Five Federation starships are stopped in space. One is the ENTERPRISE. A short distance away is another Phoenix-class starship, the LEVIATHAN. The two large cruisers are surrounded by three smaller, needle-like vessels which, although obviously Starfleet in design, represent a clear departure from the traditional construction style. They look well-armed and ready for war and are named SCIMITAR, T'PETHAN and MARSHALL.

DELFUNE (V.O.)

The integration will be executed in phases.

We ZOOM OUT to find that we are actually at:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CONFERENCE ROOM

...and the ships are on the screen on the wall. DELFUNE is speaking to the group from the teaser.

DELFUNE

In the first stage Marines will be stationed on five ships. The Enterprise and the Leviathan will each receive two units, while the Scimitar, the T'Pethan, and the Marshall will each receive one.

CROSS

Where are those last three now?

PORTMAN

They're all in the final stages of construction at Utopia Planitia.

JOEL

How many soldiers will I be housing?

EASTON

Sixty. That includes five officers each for the five units.

BURKE

Each unit has a commanding officer, the colonel, as well as two lieutenants and field lieutenants. Each ship will have a colonel on the command staff.
CROSS
Surely you'll leave that up to the
discretion of the captains? I already
have a security officer and a first
officer aboard my ship who is more
than capable of coordinating military
operations.

DELFUNE
The Marines will be separate. They
will receive orders from a joint
board with members from Starfleet
and the Marines.

Cross looks at Portman. Neither is happy.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR

Cross strolls down the corridor with Portman.

CROSS
I knew there was an idea of closer
coordination between the Marines and
Starfleet... but I had no idea it
had gone this far so fast.

PORTMAN
Neither did I. It's mainly the pet
project of Admiral Delfune and General
Burke.

CROSS
When did you find out?

PORTMAN
Three weeks ago.

CROSS
I still don't know what to think.

PORTMAN
That makes two of us.

CROSS
I'm glad that there's coordination,
but soldiers on the Enterprise?
Can't something be done -- at least
to delay it, until we can work out
something more agreeable?

PORTMAN
I don't know. Admiral Delfune has
the blessing of the powers that be.
And I'm not a power that be.
CROSS
Sure you are. You got me on the Enterprise.

PORTMAN
That was nine months ago, Neil. To be honest, I just don't know how much power I've got anymore. Hell of a way to find out.

CROSS
I suppose I am somewhat of a troublemaker.

PORTMAN
(looking at him wryly)
That makes two of us again.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- LOUNGE

A large, spacious, and comfortable lounge. Various officers sip drinks, read magazines, or just relax in their free time. Generous windows line one wall, affording a grand view of San Francisco Bay. In one seat is GREY, who is chatting away with another OFFICER. Colonel Easton enters.

EASTON
Lieutenant Grey?

Grey looks up.

GREY
Colonel Easton.
(to officer)
Excuse me a moment.
(to Easton)
What can I do for you?

EASTON
You can tell me about the Battle of Marcus.

GREY
The Battle of Marcus?

EASTON
You said you were there.

GREY
I was. It was something else.

EASTON
I had just graduated from the Academy in Calcutta when the Sheliak War was (MORE)
EASTON (CONT'D)
over. I remember reading about the famous skirmish on that far-off planet.

GREY
It's only a few light-years from Bolarus...

EASTON
It seems a lot farther away when you read about it in the newspaper.
(beat)
I want to hear your story.

GREY
Truth be told, I don't remember it that well... but it was hellish. My unit operated out of a Starfleet base.

EASTON
The Marcus Base.

GREY
Well, yes, I guess so. But there was division; we never mixed with the Starfleeters -- apart from Portman, I couldn't even tell you who was serving there at the time. I do remember the Sheliak, though. They're about as far from human as you can get.

EASTON
So I've heard.

They continue their conversation and move down the corridor.

CUT TO:

EXT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- DAY

In the yard in front of the complex, a group of Marines moves in orderly fashion. They walk in two lines, marching to an inaudible beat.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR

In another section of the corridor, PORTMAN and CROSS watch through a window as the Marines go by.

PORTMAN
(pensively)
They're professionals. Professional soldiers.
CROSS
We were soldiers once. During the war.

PORTMAN
We weren't soldiers.
(beat)
Aren't we scientists? Explorers? Who boldly go where no one...

CROSS
...has gone before.

He smiles as he completes the old phrase.

PORTMAN
We were scientists. We went, probably too boldly.

Outside, the Marines pass out of view.

FADE TO:

EXT. MARCUS BASE (FLASHBACK)

Among the hills on a dry, windy planet, a complex of low buildings form an outpost. Here and there, personnel walk outside. The skies are greyish and swirling.

INT. MARCUS BASE -- OPS (FLASHBACK)

The room is large and circular. In the middle is a pit with several consoles. Short flights of stairs lead out in two opposite directions to the regular level and beyond to pairs of doors. The room is compact and complicated; beyond the basic layout it lacks the symmetry characteristic of most Starfleet command centers. But this is Starfleet; there's no doubt about it. Men and women in Starfleet uniforms man the stations, talking amongst themselves. At one end, the doors open; out step CAPTAIN HENRY PORTMAN, in his mid-forties, and LIEUTENANT COMMANDER NEIL CROSS, in his early thirties. Both are younger and carry faces that have seen war but not much of it. But they are solemn as they enter the pit, and their emotion pervades the room. Portman halts in the middle of the pit and puts his heavy hands on the table. Cross makes the announcement to an ENSIGN who is probably on his first assignment.

CROSS
The Sheliak have captured Minzara.

ENSIGN
That's four light years from here...
CROSS
Get me a list of the crew.

INT. MARCUS BASE -- WARD ROOM

Another large room, narrow, with a bay of windows looking out on the best hills they could find. A conference table dominates one end of the room, while the other end has a few chairs. At either end of the room are viewer screens. On the end with no table, Commander Cross posts a casualty list with about one hundred names under the CONFIRMED DEATH list and two hundred more under MIA. A few other officers and crew are present, awaiting the dreadful posting. Cross steps back and says a few words to those present.

CROSS
Captain Velek was a good friend of mine. I know he defended the base well; the Sheliak paid dearly for this victory.

One CREWMAN speaks up.

CREWMAN
Did anyone manage to escape?

CROSS
Minzara had a complement of a dozen shuttles. Five have been accounted for.

Cross searches for more words, but none come to his mouth. He turns and goes.

INT. MARCUS BASE -- CAPTAIN'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

A roundish room with windows looking out on the hills and out into Ops. In the middle is a desk, and off to one side are a couch and replicator. Off to the other side is a HOLOCOMMUNICATOR. Commander Cross and Captain Portman are standing by the Communicator, speaking with an ADMIRAL on the holocommunicator. His image has a bluish tint.

PORTMAN
We can't take many losses like this, Admiral.

ADIRAL
I know that, Henry, but we've got to concentrate our troops on Sheliak space.
CROSS
This was a lone group of ships...

ADIMRAL
The only one to break through. That's how the Sheliak work -- they penetrate in a few places while keeping our forces at bay.

PORTMAN
(angry)
There were too many people on that base!

ADIMRAL
Captain, we're doing all we can.

CROSS
What about the Marines?

ADIMRAL
They've been unsuccessful in Sheliak territory.

CROSS
We can use them for planetside defense, like Marcus Base.

PORTMAN
That would free up at least three dozen ships -- enough to reinforce the lines.

ADIMRAL
We're already considering that. General McRay is taking cadets out of the Marine Academy early. They don't have a lot of numbers.

PORTMAN
Yes, but neither do the Sheliak.

ADIMRAL
Captain, that base we lost was four light-years away from you. The Sheliak will probably go after the Pyrrus Station, but there's a chance they might come your way.

PORTMAN
I know. We're already doing battle drills.

ADIMRAL
Good. Keep on your toes, gentlemen. (beat)
Admiral Parker out.
The image fizzles out, leaving Cross and Portman alone. Portman walks to the window.

PORTMAN
I wonder if...
(beat)
I wonder if in three days, these hills will be crawling with Sheliak.

CROSS
I hope not, sir.

PORTMAN
They're ugly hills -- it's an ugly planet. But it's growing on me just the same.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARCUS BASE (FLASHBACK)

Same as before.

INT. MARCUS BASE -- OPS (FLASHBACK)

Commander Cross is in command of the base's nerve center, and the Ensign we saw before is also on duty. They are working together at the table.

ENSIGN
Okay, I've tapped into the sensor grid.

CROSS
What's going on out there?

ENSIGN
There are about a dozen Sheliak ships, crowded around...
(beat)
It's a fragment of the destroyed starbase.

CROSS
A fragment?

ENSIGN
I can't tell for sure, but a section -- about twelve levels high, perhaps -- remains mostly intact.

CROSS
That's not a pretty thought. Sheliak infesting a Starfleet base...
ENSIGN
(interrupting)
Wait, there's more.

CROSS
What is it?

ENSIGN
The ships are moving now. Five have left the main group.
(beat)
They're headed our way.

This sinks in.

CROSS
Get the Captain.

The Ensign taps a few controls. Seconds later, Portman steps out of his office.

PORTMAN
Is this what I think it is?

CROSS
Five Sheliak ships, headed our way.

PORTMAN
Notify Starfleet command.

CROSS
Ensign, get me a tactical assessment as soon as you can.

The slow mood of Ops has changed into a bustling hive of activity. The viewer changes from a view of the hillsides to a starfield with a tactical map, superimposed.

ENSIGN
I've got it. Three warships and two smaller tactical ships. They'll be here in twenty-one hours.

PORTMAN
How long till the planetary defense system can be activated?

CROSS
Four hours.

PORTMAN
Do it. Cross takes Portman aside.

CROSS
Sir, I don't think we can handle five Sheliak vessels. Three, maybe. Four, probably not. Five, no way.
PORTMAN
We've got the defense system, plus the planetside weapons.

CROSS
It won't be enough, Sir.

PORTMAN
Do we need to call in ships?

CROSS
As many as we can. If the Sheliak take this base, the next stop won't be a Starfleet bombardment.

PORTMAN
Bolarus?

CROSS
Or even Betazed. The Dominion did it, the Sheliak can too.

They turn back to the activities of the room.

PORTMAN
Ensign, tell Starfleet we need whatever reinforcements we can get now.

ENSIGN
I'm working on it, sir.
(beat)
I'm also checking with the Bolian and the Betazoid governments. It'll take them too long to mobilize their fleets.

CROSS
Looks like we're going to have to rely on Starfleet.

He stands there for a second, contemplating the upcoming battle. Then he comes out of his thought.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Well, I've got work to do, Sir.

PORTMAN
Don't forget to get a few hours sleep in there somewhere.

CROSS
(smiles)
Yes, Sir.
Cross exits Ops, while Portman surveys the room.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR (PRESENT)

Back in the twenty-fifth century, Captain Cross and Admiral Portman briefly reflect on the past. Cross comes out of his thoughts.

CROSS
I've got to get back to my ship, Sir. I'm guessing somebody is going to want a tour.

PORTMAN
I've got a few people to contact myself. I'll see you tomorrow.

CROSS
Good day, Sir.

They head in opposite directions, as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise in orbit of Earth.

INT. CORRIDOR

Grey and Cross walk down the corridor, arriving at a section cordoned off by some tape. On the other side we see a GAPING HOLE, with several engineers around it and in it, soldering away. Large sheets of metal are strewn about.

CROSS

Colonel Easton should be arriving in half an hour.

GREY

Understood, sir.

CROSS

You're doing a fine job, here. It's starting to feel like our ship again.

GREY

Returning to Earth has helped, sir, we have much easier access to what we need. I've even recruited a couple of Earth-based engineers to help.

CROSS

You might even find Colonel Easton volunteering his services.

GREY

He might have to if he wants to get his quarters...

Cross looks at one engineer running a device over the bulkhead that is sucking up the discharge from the soldering. He raises an eyebrow.

GREY (CONT'D)

A clean ship makes for an efficient crew. The atmosphere affects their attitudes.

CROSS

Then I suppose that crew morale is at an all-time high, going by those bulkheads. I can almost see my reflection.
Grey looks at the bulkheads, but doesn't see anything.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

NARV OZRAN, Gorn in Starfleet uniform, is manning the controls. Cross, Talora, and Grey enter, right on time.

OZRAN
Captain.

CROSS
At ease, Chief.

OZRAN
You're right on time. Colonel Easton will be beamed up any moment now.

CROSS
Good.

OZRAN
Here he is now.

In a BLUISH SHIMMER, COLONEL EASTON appears on the transporter pad.

CROSS
Colonel.

EASTON
Captain Cross.

Easton looks around.

EASTON (CONT'D)
I can almost see my reflection in the bulkheads. You have a wonderful ship.

Grey beams.

CROSS
You already know Lieutenant Grey. This is my first officer, Commander Talora.

EASTON
Commander.

(smiling)
I was surprised enough when a Gorn beamed me in. But you're a --
TALORA
(uncomfortably smiling)
Romulan. I am here on behalf of the Romulan Empire.

CROSS
And she's representing it well.

EASTON
I'm sure you are, Commander. I met a group of Romulan soldiers once, at a conference. I was so impressed that I invited their commander to a Marine base to show my colleagues. They took a few tips from you, if I recall correctly.

This time, it's Talora who's beaming.

TALORA
I'm sure Starfleet could do the same.

The group EXIT the Transporter Room.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGINEERING

The four enter, and all the Engineering staff stand at attention.

GREY
Welcome to Engineering, Colonel.

EASTON
This is your domain, correct?

GREY
It is.

EASTON
I might have guessed.

TALORA
We have a state-of-the-art engine, capable of slipstream transportation. If we were to measure our maximum speed on the warp scale, you would need six decimal places.

EASTON
Fascinating! My engineers will love this.

Talora glances at Cross, who takes note but does not respond.
RENAISSANCE: "Men of War and Science" - ACT TWO

CROSS
How many engineers do you have, Colonel?

EASTON
Only three, I'm afraid. But they're good ones.

Cross looks at Grey.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

The four enter.

DOJAR is in command from the tactical station, and QUINLAN is at the helm.

DOJAR
Captain on the bridge.

CROSS
At ease.
(to Easton)
Colonel, welcome to the bridge.

Easton surveys the room, and notices Dojar.

CROSS (CONT'D)
In the front is the helm controls. On that side are science and engineering stations, and on the other side are tactical and operations stations. In the center here, with Lieutenant Dojar, is the tactical station.

EASTON
Lieutenant Dojar. I'm Colonel Easton.

DOJAR
What brings you here, Colonel, if I may ask?

EASTON
The Enterprise is being assigned a Marine unit. I'm just here to take a look around.

DOJAR
Oh?

He glances at Cross, who nods.
CROSS
The project is still in the development stages, of course.

EASTON
I'm certain we can work everything out.

(beat)
Captain, I must say, this is an impressive ship. I heard what happened recently, and I was expecting the damage to be much more widespread.

CROSS
You can thank Lieutenant Grey for our quick recovery. He's a fine officer.

EASTON
I saw how engineering was run captain, I can see that.

(beat)
And your crew, Captain. It's very diverse. It's not very often that I meet Romulans, Bajorans, and Cardassians all in the same day.

Dojar shifts uncomfortably, as does Talora. Cross notices.

CROSS
Maybe you need to see the Ready Room, Colonel. Commander, you have the Bridge. Lieutenant, you're dismissed.

A confused Grey and a knowing Talora follow his orders, while Easton follows Cross into his ready room.

INT. READY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Cross and Easton enter.

CROSS
(reserved)
Colonel, I'm glad you like my ship, but...

EASTON
Is something wrong?

CROSS
I have a very diverse crew here, like you said. You haven't even seen all the species we've got here. Last time I checked, there were at least twenty-five. But you will be seeing them every day. Bajorans. Andorians. Cardassians. Gorn. Trill.
EASTON
(smiles)
It's certainly more than I'm used to, I'll grant you that. Most of the Marines are Humans or Vulcans.

CROSS
(beat, slightly angry)
Colonel, let me be straight with you. This isn't the Marines, as you've seen. This is a Starfleet vessel. Many different species. You've managed to offend three of my senior staff already, let alone other crew members.

EASTON
I merely noted the different races...

CROSS
Colonel, you'll find that race is sometimes a factor here. Don't go around treating it like it doesn't matter on my ship.

EASTON
I apologize for that Captain, but I'm sensing there's something more here than just my offending Commander Talora...

CROSS
There's nothing more, Colonel.
(beat)
I didn't mean to be angry, but...

EASTON
I understand.
(beat)
Well, I think I'd better be going. I'll see you tomorrow, Captain.

Easton does a military-style turn and exits. A few seconds later, the door chimes.

CROSS
Come in.

Talora enters.

CROSS (CONT'D)
What is it, Commander?

TALORA
I couldn't help but notice that Colonel Easton seemed agitated when he left your office.
CROSS
I... almost lost my temper with him.

TALORA
What for?

CROSS
Oh, come on, Commander. He offended you, Elris, Dojar, even Chief Ozran. Wait till five dozen marines are aboard.

TALORA
(deadpan)
I suppose they will make the Dominion War seem like a minor disagreement.

CROSS
Well, no...

(smiling)
I doubt it will be that bad. But can you really say that you're looking forward to working with Easton?

TALORA
It's somewhere between Admiral Delfune and the Borg.

CROSS
We'll keep that one off the record.

(beat)
I don't know, I just have a bad feeling about all this. Soldiers? On the Enterprise? Of all the Enterprises, only two have been truly military ships -- this one and the Enterprise-E. Archer, Kirk, Pike... they were explorers. Explorers, Talora. They weren't the first to be called in on a military operation. Captain Picard wrote an entire book on his travels. But putting a Marine unit on the Enterprise means that it will be a first-class warship. As soon as there's a bit of conflict, we'll be called in. No more exploration. When they move more Marines in, science personnel will move out.

TALORA
It's not only the Enterprise.

CROSS
I know, but... it gets to me sometimes.
TALORA
(beat)
Perhaps it is possible for the Marines to put on another ship.

Cross considers the idea, reflection on the past...

FADE TO:

INT. MARCUS BASE -- OPS (FLASHBACK)

Lieutenant Commander Cross and Captain Portman stand in the Ops pit, with the ENSIGN we saw before.

ENSIGN
The Potomac and the Hudson are in orbit. I've got both captains on visual.

PORTMAN
On screen.

On the viewer, the image splits. On either side are the bridges of Starfleet ships, with Commanders PARLER and HEVEK on the screen.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
Commanders.

PARLER
I've got Marines waiting in the Transporter Room.

HEVEK
I as well, Captain.

PORTMAN
We'll start with you, Commander Parler. Give me just a second.

He taps his commbadge.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
Portman to transporter bay. Prepare for transports.

CUT TO:

INT. MARCUS BASE -- CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- LATER (FLASHBACK)

PORTMAN stands in his office.

CROSS'S COMM VOICE
We've got one hundred twenty Marine soldiers here. Colonel Jenner is on his way.
PORTMAN
Thanks.

A CHIME at the door.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
Come in!

The doors part, and COLONEL JENNER and his LIEUTENANT enter.

JENNER
Captain Portman, I'm Colonel Jenner, Marine Corps.

PORTMAN
I'm glad you could come.

JENNER
This is my lieutenant...

A BEAT, while Portman studies the Lieutenant. He's human, with pale skin and a short crop of blond hair. He stands tall and straight as a rail.

JENNER (CONT'D)
Lieutenant Erik Grey.

GREY
Captain.

PORTMAN
Well, Colonel, Lieutenant, I can't tell you how glad I am that you're here. I believe you just got back from the front lines?

JENNER
Yes. My unit was part of the force attempting to take the Kinneriton System.

PORTMAN
Yes, I heard about that one.

GREY
We were lucky -- we didn't lose a single man. Most of the units lost at least a dozen.

PORTMAN
Lucky indeed.

JENNER
Captain, I want to make sure that we all have the luck we had at Kinneriton here, at Marcus Base.
PORTMAN
That makes two of us.

JENNER
May my engineering staff have a go at your systems?

PORTMAN
What for? We have one of the best engineers in Starfleet...

JENNER
(beat)
Captain, if you want a victory, you're going to have to let the Marines help.

PORTMAN
(a bit taken aback)
Certainly. What do you need?

JENNER
Lieutenant Grey?

GREY
We have a dozen tactical engineers who specialize in weapons. If they can modify your weapons grids, it will make a considerable difference in our overall strength.

PORTMAN
I'm afraid we don't have much of that down here. This is a science base. We have an orbital platform, but that's about it. Can you work with that?

GREY
We'll find a way, Captain.

JENNER
If you'll excuse us, Captain Portman, there are some matters to be dealt with.

PORTMAN
Of course. Make yourselves at home.

Jenner nods. He and Grey both do a military turn, and then exit the office.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
(to himself)
I could swear I've seen Lieutenant Grey in some recruitment poster somewhere...
The door chimes again.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
Come in.

CROSS enters.

CROSS
Well?

PORTMAN
The Marines have very kindly offered their services. Read between the lines: they're moving in.

CROSS
Marley's not going to be happy about this.

PORTMAN
This is our base, Commander. Colonel Jenner knows that.

CROSS
Still...
(beat)
Marley's very protective of his systems.

PORTMAN
Well, he is an engineer, isn't he?

Cross laughs slightly, but then his face returns to normal.

CROSS
The Sheliak will be here in a few hours.

PORTMAN
You'd better get to work, Commander.

CROSS
Yes, Sir.

Cross exits. Portman watches him go with a slight smile, almost a parental smile.

PORTMAN
(muttering to himself)
You're a good kid, Neil.

On his far-off expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE (PRESENT)

We fade in to an intense battle. An old Klingon Bird-of-Prey screams past the screen. We can see that it is being fired upon by two of the Starfleet ships we saw earlier, the T'PETHAN and the MARSHALL. They look like smaller replicas of the Enterprise. A flurry of phaser fire blasts the Klingon ship. Its shields flicker, and then the last phaser blast strikes the hull. Also present is the SCIMITAR, the other Federation ship we saw before, and another Bird-of-Prey. The Scimitar fires a volley of torpedoes which strike the flickering shields of the fighter. The first Klingon ship comes to a halt. It's dead in the water, but nobody bothers to finish it off. Soon, the second Klingon vessel does the same.

Then the image pauses, and all five ships come about so that we are looking straight at their ventral sides, as if they were merely images on a computer screen in a...

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CONFERENCE ROOM

The five ships are lined up neatly on the computer screen. Meanwhile, the same group as before is present.

DELFUNE
We approached with three Starfleet ships, and we left with three Starfleet ships and two Reformist ships.

JOEL
You would be able to transport enough Marines over to take over a Klingon ship? I mean, Romulans I could understand, but Klingons?

EASTON
Klingon ships don't require many people, and the Reformists don't have the manpower to fully staff all of their ships anyway.

PORTMAN
This is an interesting simulation, Admiral, but could it work?

Easton glances questioningly at Delfune, who appears to make a decision.

DELFUNE
It already has.
CROSS
(confused)
With all due respect, Admiral, what do you mean, it already has?

EASTON
The three ships you saw there were staffed with Marines two weeks ago. They made a quick visit to the Klingon border yesterday.

PORTMAN
(angry)
I was never told about this!

DELFUNE
Aside from those three crews, only a handful of people in Starfleet were.

EASTON
It was imperative that we keep it secret, Admiral. You must understand.

CROSS
Imperative, Colonel?

PORTMAN
I'm not convinced either.

Delfune tries to defuse the situation.

DELFUNE
This isn't a major matter. This was a test run. Information was given out on a need-to-know basis.

Portman fumes for a second.

PORTMAN
Where are these ships now?

DELFUNE
Starbase 212.

Portman and Cross glance at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- ADJUTANT'S DESK

Behind a desk is seated a young female ADJUTANT in uniform.

Admiral Portman stops at the desk.

PORTMAN
I need to see Admiral Delfune. Now.
ADJUTANT
One moment, sir.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- DELFUNE'S OFFICE

A large, spacious office. The walls are mostly wood paneling, and two wide windows look out on San Francisco Bay. The Golden Gate Bridge shimmers in the distance. Inside, an aquarium stands in the corner, and a row of ship models lines the wall. A group of pictures, probably of Delfune's family, hangs on another wall, beside a few drawings that look like the work of a four-year-old.

Admiral Delfune sits behind the desk, writing on a PADD, when there is the sound of a BUZZER.

ADJUTANT'S COMM VOICE
Admiral Portman is here to see you, sir.

DELFUNE
Let him in, Donna.

A second later, the doors part and Admiral Portman enters. Delfune stands.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)
Admiral. What can I do for you?

PORTMAN
You can tell me what the hell you were thinking when you stationed Marines on three Starfleet ships and sent them into battle.

DELFUNE
I was thinking that it was my prerogative as head of tactical operations for the Klingon border and as head of the integration project.

PORTMAN
Why didn't you tell me? And don't give me anything about need-to-know basis.

DELFUNE
Because, Admiral, this is my project. I talked to my superiors, who thought it would be best to keep it under a tight lid because it might not be widely accepted in Starfleet at the moment. If the mission was successful, more people would accept the integration.
PORTMAN
(angry)
Do you know what I'm thinking? I'm thinking I'm the head of Starfleet personnel along the Klingon border, and the next time you start moving large groups of people around, you'd better notify me.

DELFUNE
(coldly)
I don't answer to you, Admiral. We're the same rank, we work for different people.

PORTMAN
We do? I work for Starfleet, I don't know about you.

DELFUNE
I work for Starfleet as well. This project is for the benefit of Starfleet.

PORTMAN
Then why the hell didn't you tell me?

DELFUNE
Because you wouldn't like it, that's why. I know you. You don't like the Marines.

PORTMAN
I don't like them when they're on Starfleet ships without my knowledge!

DELFUNE
Make your case to the Chief of Starfleet, because I'm not listening, Admiral.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- ADJUTANT'S DESK
Portman exits, practically breathing fire.

ADJUTANT
Good day, sir.

PORTMAN
Go to hell.
ADJUTANT
Yes, sir.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLODECK -- BRIDGE

We're on the Enterprise bridge, but the crew is different. Most are generic, nameless Starfleet officers, but several stations are manned by Marines. Cross and Easton, however, stand at the back. They are detached from the scene, because it is actually a simulation.

EASTON
Captain, I think this simulation will help you to better understand the potential of our two branches of the military collaborating.

CROSS
(reluctant)
Let's see it.

EASTON
Computer, enter battle sequence four.

COMPUTER VOICE
Entering sequence.

Around Cross and Easton, the rest of the Bridge crew comes to life.

OPS OFFICER
Captain, there's a Klingon ship approaching. Vor'cha-class attack cruiser, bearing two-twelve mark four.

CAPTAIN
Bring weapons online.

TACTICAL OFFICER
Phasers and quantum torpedoes online, sir.

The tactical officer is a Marine.

CAPTAIN
Hail them.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
No response, Sir.

CAPTAIN
Fine. Shields up, red alert.
The appropriate KLAXONS and LIGHTS begin to do their work. The lights dim, allowing the crew to focus on their computer screens. Suddenly, the ship rocks.

TACTICAL OFFICER
We've been hit. Starboard bow, Deck 8. No serious damage.

CAPTAIN
Fire at will, Lieutenant.

The tactical officer begins to work diligently at his console. On the viewscreen, the Klingon ship passes into view and it is under heavy fire from the Enterprise. Its shields shimmer. The ship moves out of view. Every few seconds, our ship lurches.

TACTICAL OFFICER
I've broken through their shields.

CAPTAIN
Bridge to Transporter Room One. Are you ready?

COMM VOICE
Yes, Sir.

CAPTAIN
Ops, lower shields. Engage transporter.

The Ops officer works quickly. Meanwhile, the ship LURCHES.

TACTICAL OFFICER
Direct hit, Engineering sector. The hull armor is holding.

OPS OFFICER
We've beamed over twenty men.

CAPTAIN
That's enough. Raise shields.

The ship lurches again.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Hold your fire.

The ship lurches one last time...

OPS OFFICER
The Colonel reports that the bridge has been taken.

CAPTAIN
Good. Begin transporting Klingons over.
OPS OFFICER
Aye, aye sir.

CAPTAIN
End red alert.

The klaxons and lights cease.

OPS OFFICER
The Marines have complete control of the Klingon ship.

Suddenly, everything freezes, except Cross and Easton.

COMPUTER VOICE
Battle sequence completed. Total time: one minute, thirty-five seconds.

CROSS
(stunned)
That was quick.

EASTON
That is one of our better times. I think the worst we've ever done was ten minutes.

CROSS
I've battled the replicator for longer periods of time than that.

EASTON
As you can see, a Marine unit can beam over to an enemy ship. As soon as it has control of the bridge, there is no need to exchange any more fire. It's quite efficient.

CROSS
(a little disturbed)
Yes, I can see that.

Hold on Cross's reaction...

CUT TO:

EXT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS
Same as before.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR

Portman and Cross trudge down the corridor.

CROSS (CONT'D)
It was very disconcerting.
PORTMAN
What?

CROSS
Seeing Marines. On my bridge. I suppose I could live with them down on some lower deck, but in the simulation, most of the Bridge tactical staff wasn't Starfleet! It's almost as if we kept the ship running while they ran everything else.

PORTMAN
Was there was a Starfleet captain in charge?

CROSS
Yes, but...
(beat)
It wasn't the same. I really have a bad feeling about all this.

PORTMAN
(cooly)
You're completely justified, Captain.

CROSS
I take it you're not a fan of the Marines either?

PORTMAN
They're just too different. Besides, it's been made clear to me that I have no part in this project. I'm only at the meetings because it looks good.

CROSS
You can't do anything about this?

PORTMAN
I don't know, Neil. This is Admiral Delfune's project.

CROSS
What about your superiors? Don't your and her supervisors report to the same person?

PORTMAN
Yes, Admiral Korek. But he won't do anything. He likes Delfune.

CROSS
This sounds like some big popularity contest.
PORTMAN
It always has been. And I'm on the losing side.

They continue their march down the corridor.

EXT. SPACE (FLASHBACK)

In the past, another contest rages, but this one has different stakes. Three Sheliak warships -- massive, imposing vessels that dwarf their surrounding ships -- and two Sheliak tactical ships, much smaller, dart to evade enemy fire. Two Starfleet ships are engaging the Sheliak, with limited success. They are almost lagging behind. But the Sheliak are focusing on something else: weapons platforms. Sparsely allocated spheres dish out heavy fire to the attacking warships. A spew of fire hits one of the Sheliak tactical vessels. It careens through space, and then explodes into a million tiny shards.

INT. MARCUS BASE OPS (FLASHBACK)

Commander Cross and Captain Portman watch the raging battle from the Ops pit on the viewscreen. The ENSIGN stands by, relaying information.

ENSIGN
One tactical vessel destroyed. Orbital defense platforms at 78 percent capacity.

PORTMAN
What about our ships?

ENSIGN
Both Captains report a few casualties. The Sheliak seem to be focusing their energy on the orbital defense platform. They've been able to destroy about a dozen units.

PORTMAN
Get me Colonel Jenner.

The ensign taps a few controls.

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
Colonel Jenner here.
PORTMAN
I'm going to order Commanders Parler and Hevek to focus on the smallest ship, since the Sheliak don't seem to be taking notice of them. I want you to commandeer it.

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
Captain, we need to get one of the bigger ones.

PORTMAN
We're starting small, Colonel.

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
Captain, we can skip the tactical ship and...

PORTMAN
This is no time for argument, Colonel. Get ready to beam up to the tactical vessel.

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
Captain, I'm seriously suggesting that...

PORTMAN
(angry under the pressure)
This is my base. Do what I told you!

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
(taken aback)
Yes, Captain.

INT. MARCUS BASE -- TRANSPORTER ROOM (FLASHBACK)
Colonel Jenner and Lieutenant Grey stand in front of dozens of Marines.

GREY
Sir, this is a mistake!

JENNER
I know it is. But we don't have a choice. Get them ready, Lieutenant.

GREY
Yes, Sir.
(to marines)
All right, line up by fives!
As the Marines get into formation, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN:
INT. READY ROOM
CROSS is working at his desk.

SUKOTHAI'S COMM VOICE
Captain, Captain Joel is hailing you.

Cross sighs.

CROSS
Put her through.

He turns his console towards him as JOEL'S face appears on the screen.

JOEL
Captain, just a courtesy call to say we are leaving, and to wish you well.

CROSS
Thank you, Captain, most civilized of you.

JOEL
Looking forward to receiving your new shipmates?

CROSS
Not particularly.

JOEL
Captain, you have to realize this is not going to go away. Admiral Delfune is right, we have to take precautions nowadays. We don't know what's to come.

CROSS
I prefer to welcome the future with open arms rather than a raised rifle.

JOEL
A nice, if rather naive, view of the galaxy.

CROSS
Perhaps.

JOEL
Don't be difficult about this, Captain, I warn you, it could damage your career if you are.
CROSS
I'm glad my career is of such importance to you.

JOEL
I know you have a close relationship with Portman, but there are others out there who are not so pleased with you. Don't give them any more ammunition than they need.

CROSS
I'll keep it in mind. Have a good trip.

JOEL
You too, Captain. Good luck.

They sign off. Cross leans back, disgusted.

EXT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- EVENING

A large grassy area surrounded by buildings, it reminds one of a university campus. A café stands at one corner. It is a buzzing place, full of hustle and bustle. Cadets and officers walk around, enjoying the late spring evening, some sitting at tables, others on the grass, others walking around. Through this GREY and BOYLE walk.

BOYLE
We should come back to Earth more often.

GREY
(distracted)
Mmmm, we should.

BOYLE
What's up with you tonight? You haven't said two words since we beamed down.

GREY
Nothing, I'm just thinking...

BOYLE
About what?

Grey hesitates.

GREY
Well, if you really want to know, about the conduit sealant on deck ten. An engineer from here brought a new one up to try, and I'm not sure it'll work.
BOYLE
Erik, can't you think about something else for once in your life?

GREY
I'm sorry, I can't help it!

BOYLE
I know you can't. Who are they?

They are just walking past a café, and from out of it EASTON has appeared, with a couple of men who are in the same uniform as him. Easton is moving towards Grey.

GREY
That's Colonel Easton, soon to be a member of our crew.

BOYLE
Really?

Easton reaches them.

EASTON
Lieutenant. We were just talking about you.

GREY
(warily)
Really?

EASTON
Of course! Being an ex-Marine yourself, you must be looking forward to having some company once again.

BOYLE
He has quite enough company, thank---

EASTON
(interrupting)
Come in and introduce yourself. After all, you'll soon be serving with these people. I've been telling them your story about the Battle of Marcus.

GREY
Well...

He looks at Boyle. She raises her eyes to heaven.

BOYLE
(disgusted)
Oh fine, you go ahead and enjoy yourself. Don't mind me. Go on.

(MORE)
BOYLE (CONT'D)
I'm sure Rob can use some help in Engineering.

She walks off without another word. As Easton and Grey head inside...

INT. CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

EASTON
Here he is, the hero of the Battle of Marcus. Tell them, Lieutenant, what it was like.

GREY
It was quite something...

FADE TO:

INT. SHELIAK SHIP -- CORRIDOR (FLASHBACK)

Grey, Jenner, and the other Marines are under a barrage of fire as they rush along the corridor, engaging in shooting matches with the Sheliak as they pass them.

JENNER
We need to head for the Bridge. Grey?

GREY
Their bridge is on level seven. About thirty meters ahead.

JENNER
Let's go!

CUT TO:

INT. MARCUS BASE -- OPS (FLASHBACK)

Portman storms in as Cross is watching the viewscreen. On it, they can see the viewpoint of one of the Marines as they hurry along.

PORTMAN
What the hell's going on?

CROSS
Colonel Jenner disobeyed you. He went for one of the big guns.

PORTMAN
What? Jenner, you hear me?
RENAISSANCE: "Men of War and Science" - ACT FOUR

JENNER'S COMM VOICE
Captain, I apologize, but I had to do what I thought was best. We take this ship, we take the battle.

Portman looks on, silently seething.

FADE TO:

INT. CAFE (PRESENT)

Grey is telling the story, surrounded by Easton and three other men, all looking enthralled by it.

GREY
We knew we had to get to the bridge before the Sheliaks could beam any more troops on board.

EASTON
And did you?

GREY
Of course we did. We were the best.

They all chuckle appreciatively.

EASTON
It just goes to show, when it comes to military battles, Starfleet is incompetent.

GREY
I don't know if I'd agree with that.

EASTON
Of course you would. Look at that example you just gave us. If Portman had had his way, the result of the battle may have gone very differently...

GREY
He didn't exactly see it that way. After the battle, he had a few words with Colonel Jenner. He was ordered to leave less than twenty four hours after the battle was over.

EASTON
Starfleet arrogance.
GREY
Perhaps...

FADE TO:

INT. MARCUS BASE -- WARD ROOM (FLASHBACK)

Portman is standing alone when the door opens and Jenner and Grey enter.

JENNER
We are leaving. We could assist with the clean up.

PORTMAN
No, thank you.

BEAT.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
Was there something else?

JENNER
I am sorry we had to take matters into our own hands, but I believe we would not have won otherwise.

PORTMAN
I believe differently. But I also believe that whether you had that opinion or not, you shouldn't have disobeyed orders.

JENNER
You do not understand these matters. I do. That is the difference. And Starfleet would do well to note that difference.

PORTMAN
What are you saying?

JENNER
That as long as we play these war games, we should put the right people in charge.

PORTMAN
The right people being you?

JENNER
Your words, not mine. But in these situations, I believe a change in command protocol would be beneficial...

Portman nods and turns round.
PORTMAN
Dismissed, Colonel Jenner.

Jenner looks at him for a long moment, then nods and leaves with Grey. Portman sighs and turns back.

FADE TO:

INT. CAFE (PRESENT)

As before: Grey, Easton, and the Marines.

EASTON
Jenner was right, of course.

GREY
I thought so too, at the time.

EASTON
Of course he was. The day that Starfleet could rely on its doddering peaceful coda is long past. It's about time they woke up and saw that.

GREY
Some people would say that was a rather nihilistic view on life.

EASTON
Some people would be wrong then. Starfleet has to realize that when we are at war, the Marines have a vital place. And with that place, we should have increased control over what happens.

GREY
I don't think that's necessarily a good...

EASTON
I didn't have you down as a left-winger, Lieutenant.

GREY
I'm not, I just don't think Starfleet should necessarily be so military-bent.

EASTON
Rubbish. Wars demand strong leaders, and that's what the Marines have.

GREY
And who is Starfleet at war with at the moment?
EASTON
We're always at war with someone,
Lieutenant Grey.

Grey looks at him for a minute, concerned.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR

The lights are dimmed, indicating a night shift. CROSS is walking along pensively. He turns a corner, and finds himself in the corridor that is being repaired. Here the full day lights are on, and night-shift engineers are working. To his surprise, he finds GREY standing there too.

GREY
Captain.

CROSS
Lieutenant. It's late, what are you doing still here?

GREY
Oh, Lieutenant Kinnan is working late in Engineering, I don't want to go to bed until he gets back, it'll disturb me.

CROSS
I see. It's looking good.

GREY
Yes, sir.
(beat)
Sir, if I may ask?

CROSS
Yes?

GREY
How do you feel about Colonel Easton?

CROSS
I -- I am sure he's a fine soldier.

GREY
What about the Marines?

CROSS
I...
(beat)
I don't want them on the ship.

Grey nods slowly.
GREY
Neither do I.

CROSS
You surprise me. A military man like yourself...

GREY
Yes, sir. But things change. People change.

CROSS
Have you changed?

GREY
I believe... I have. I used to think that Starfleet's main directive was one of defense, that her primary function in life was as a peacekeeper.

CROSS
Yes. Given your experiences in the past I can see why that would be.

GREY
Yes. But ever since I've been on board the Enterprise, I've seen a different side of Starfleet. The places we've been, the people we've met... this is a ship of exploration, sir.

CROSS
That's what they always tell me.

GREY
It's not a place for soldiers, it's a place scientists, not a ship for killing but a world for discovering life. And, as much as it surprises me to say it, I wouldn't wish it any other way.

Cross nods.

CROSS
You're not the only person to feel like that.

Long beat.

GREY
(quietly)
Don't let them come on board, Captain. Please.
Cross looks at him, not knowing what to say. Then he smiles, pats him on the back and turns to go.

CROSS
Don't worry, Lieutenant. Good night.

GREY
Good night, sir.

As Cross walks off and Grey continues to watch the repairs we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
FADE IN:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CONFERENCE ROOM

Portman and Cross standing, looking at each other grimly.

CROSS
I can hear her. Three, two, one, mark.

On "mark" DELFUNE marches in, looking livid. She holds in her hand a PADD, which she angrily gestures.

DELFUNE
What the hell is this?

CROSS
I assume it's my report, in which I conclude there is no need for Marines on my ship.

DELFUNE
You cannot refuse this, Captain, you do not have the authority.

PORTMAN
No, but I do.

Delfune turns and looks at Portman.

DELFUNE
No, you don't. You don't have any authority any more.

PORTMAN
Perhaps I don't. Perhaps I do. But one thing I do know. You push this thing forward, you insist that the Enterprise takes these soldiers on board, and I will be handing in my resignation first thing tomorrow morning.

DELFUNE
I hardly see why you think that should alter my stance. I won't miss you.

PORTMAN
You know as well as I do this isn't just about you and me.

Long beat.
DELFUNE
I look forward to receiving your pips. Captain, Colonel Easton will be formally joining your crew oh six hundred hours tomorrow. That is all.

Delfune turns and walks out stiffly. Cross looks at Portman.

CROSS
I hope you know what you're doing.

PORTMAN
I do. Now we just sit and wait.

CROSS
Not for the first time.

FADE TO:

INT. MARCUS BASE -- CAPTAIN'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

Portman is writing a report when the door chimes.

PORTMAN
Come.

CROSS enters. He hands a PADD over to Portman.

CROSS
Jenner's field report.

PORTMAN
Should make interesting reading.

He takes it.

CROSS
He recommends the Marines deploy a permanent detachment here.

PORTMAN
Really.

CROSS
He also criticizes your handling of the battle.

PORTMAN
Well, he would, wouldn't he?

Cross looks troubled.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
I know that look, Neil. What's on your mind?
CROSS
It's just that... Jenner did win the battle.

PORTMAN
Yes, he did. But he lost three of his men along the way, because he invaded a heavily guarded ship. If he'd followed my orders, I doubt he would have lost them. The tactical ships had fewer personnel on them, and certainly even fewer who were trained in close-quarters combat. Seizing that ship, we could have done the same things we did on the other ship, but three more men would be returning to their barracks tonight.

CROSS
I know.

PORTMAN
The marines aren't trained to think like that, though. They are trained to think that they are expendable for the greater good. It doesn't matter if A and B and C die, as long as the battle is won. But I can never think like that. For me, one man dying is one man too much. And for Starfleet as well. And that is why...

He waves the PADD at Cross.

PORTMAN (CONT'D)
He won't get far with that.

CROSS
I hope not.

PORTMAN
He won't. Starfleet is war-weary at the moment, Neil. The Dominion war, the Borg incursions, now the Sheliak. We know it's going to be another long push, but we also know that this time we're not dealing with an enemy of the caliber of the Founders or the Jem'Hadar. The top brass want to get back to doing what we do best -- exploring, and making friends. We used to be pretty good at it, you know.
CROSS
I wish I remembered that time.

PORTMAN
You don't have to. You'll see it again, in the future. My father used to have an expression: "Greet the future with open arms, not a raised rifle." I like to think that's possible. And so does Starfleet. They'll turn this proposal down in a second.

He tosses the PADD onto the table.

CROSS
It's good to know.

PORTMAN
It is. The day Starfleet starts to seriously consider having Marines on board our bases and ships is the day we know we're really in trouble. I'll get working on a reply to this. You get to bed. It's been a long day.

CROSS
It has. Thank you, Captain.

He turns and walks out. Portman smiles and looks at the PADD again.

CUT TO:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS (PRESENT)

Grey is sleeping when a chime goes.

EASTON'S COMM VOICE
Easton to Grey.

Grey looks blearily up.

GREY
Grey here. What's going on?

EASTON
Your presence is required.

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CONFERENCE ROOM

The windows show it is very early morning. Grey enters, and reacts in surprise when he sees Cross and Portman sitting on one side of the table, and Delfune, General Burke, and Easton on the other, glaring across.
GREY
What -- what's going on?

DELFUNE
Please sit down, Lieutenant.

He does so.

EASTON
I asked Lieutenant Grey here as a witness to these proceedings. As a former military man, I think he will understand the significance of them. Admiral Delfune?

DELFUNE
We are recording.

EASTON
Thank you. Captain Cross, I formally ask permission for myself and my men to join the USS Enterprise, on Stardate 78783.6.

CROSS
I refuse permission.

DELFUNE
Captain, I order you to take these Marines on board your ship.

PORTMAN
And I disavow that order. The Captain does not have to if he does not wish.

CROSS
I do not wish.

Delfune nods.

DELFUNE
Let the records show that this meeting was witnessed by Lieutenant Erik Grey, serial number SFE7292739-3.

End recording.

The formalities come to an end.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)
You've made a big mistake today. Both of you. I won't forget this.

She stands up and walks stiffly out. Easton turns to Grey.

EASTON
Grey, a word.
Grey looks from one to another, and then stands up and walks out with Easton. Cross breathes a sigh of relief.

CROSS
What happened?

Portman smiles wryly.

PORTMAN
Delfune knows that this is a delicate time for Starfleet, and the Federation at large. With the Klingon situation heating up, as well as the Trills going their own way, the quadrant is in a precarious state of the moment, and Starfleet must preserve its aura of stability, at least to the outside world.

CROSS
(nods)
They couldn't afford to have one of their most admired admirals resigning over an issue like this.

PORTMAN
I wouldn't have put it in quite those terms, but basically, yes.

CROSS
And you knew that?

PORTMAN
Not exactly. I wasn't sure how popular I still was. It's obvious the good admiral has made some calls, and found less support than she might have hoped for.

CROSS
A risky move.

PORTMAN
Not for the first time.

CROSS
Did you see that look she gave us when she left?

PORTMAN
Indeed. I don't expect to receive a birthday card from her this year. Come on, I'll treat you to an early morning breakfast. I think we deserve it...
RENAISSANCE: "Men of War and Science" - ACT FIVE

He puts his arm round Cross' shoulder and they walk out.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS -- CORRIDOR

EASTON is walking briskly down with GREY.

EASTON
I was hoping you would support us.

GREY
I support what is best for the Federation.

EASTON
I thought you were a Marine.

GREY
I was... once.

EASTON
Once a Marine, always a Marine.

GREY
Maybe. Or maybe you stay a Marine until you look out over the edge of your world and see that there is much more to life than just the next skirmish, the next mission.

EASTON
That would be a weakness.

GREY
Or a strength.

EASTON
Starfleet has corrupted you. It is disappointing to see a fine officer go down.

GREY
Corrupted? I prefer to think of it as being enlightened.

EASTON
A shame. A Marine's first duty is to maintain discipline at all times, not allow extraneous thoughts to enter his head.

GREY
Become an automaton?
EASTON
Become a soldier. That is what we are there for.

GREY
As long as that Marine remembers what it is he is working for. It's when they don't that the trouble starts. Goodbye, Colonel Easton.

He salutes him. Easton hesitates, and then salutes back, before turning and walking their separate ways, both down the corridor and into the future. As we watch them go, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END