

STAR TREK

RENAISSANCE

"Last Exit on Yesterday"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. ENTERPRISE - QUARTERS

Panning across the room, we see a pile of neatly folded clothes sitting on a chair, a futuristic suitcase and then the figure of ATHERTON looking engrossed in a padd. The young man, in his early 20s, with wavy, slightly curly black hair and a full on beard that is thickening out. Atherton continues to be engrossed in his book, so much so that he starts to lean back in his chair.

This entire situation is interrupted by the red alert siren. Atherton is startled by the siren and loses his balance on the chair, causing it to fall back.

Not hurt, Atherton is clearly embarrassed by what just happened, even though there is no one else around to see it.

FEMALE COMM VOICE

Spacey to Atherton.

Atherton looks over to the comm panel beside his bed and walks over to it. He clears his throat before pressing one of the buttons.

ATHERTON

Atherton here.

SPACEY COMM VOICE

Report to Transporter Three at once,
Doctor.

Atherton frowns, surprised by this call.

ATHERTON

On my way.

The channel closes and Atherton walks over to his uniform.

INT. ENTERPRISE - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Full of activity, various people walk over to the transporter padd with the figure of LIEUTENANT SPACEY standing there, padd in hand.

Moments later, and in uniform, Atherton walks into the room, getting the attention of Spacey.

SPACEY

Ah, Mr. Atherton, nice of you to
finally join us.

ATHERTON

Sorry, I, uhh... Got lost.

Atherton smiles, trying to make the best of this embarrassing situation. Spacey doesn't look amused at all, which doesn't help Atherton.

SPACEY

You're not the first and I'm sure
you won't be the last.

Spacey looks at the transporter chief.

CHIEF

Four minutes left before the storms
prevent transport.

Spacey nods in acknowledgment and looks down at her padd.

SPACEY

Your presence has been requested on
the planet, report to Doctor Elris
as soon as you arrive.

Atherton frowns.

ATHERTON

But I'm not due to start working
till next week.

SPACEY

Well... that's been changed due to
the current circumstances.

ATHERTON

What circumstances?

Spacey puts her hand on Atherton's shoulder and ushers him
towards the last space on the transporter padd.

SPACEY

All I do is oversee crew and cargo
requests by my superiors. They need
a Doctor, you're the only one left
on the Enterprise, which means you
get the call to go down there.

ATHERTON

But I'm not even a Doctor yet, I'm
just an interning medical student,
here to learn.

SPACEY

Don't worry, on a day like this, you
will.

Spacey looks to the transporter chief and nods as Atherton,
and the five other figures on the transporter padd,
dematerialize into the transporter matter stream.

INT. CAVERN - DAY

The six figures dematerialize out of the transporter matter stream. Atherton is immediately shocked by the activity around him.

All kinds of Starfleet personnel are down there, amongst the carnage of the hectic atmosphere. They are treating some Aliens that we've never seen before, known as the Iskau. The Iskau people are in pain, suffering and shouting out in some incoherent form of communication, which isn't even words.

More and more of the Iskau arrive all the time, showing that this situation is getting worse all the time.

Atherton stands there, not sure what to do as the other people that transported down with him immediately get to work as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Atherton continues to stand there, almost frozen when a voice shouts out to him.

QUINLAN (O.S.)

Hey.

Atherton looks to his side as Quinlan walks over to him.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

You a Doctor?

ATHERTON

Yeah... I suppose.

Quinlan frowns, looking for more information or rather more of an assertive answer.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

I'm the new interning medical student.

QUINLAN

That's good enough.

Quinlan grabs Atherton by the arm and drags him over to a spot where an Iskau male (roughly 50 in human years) is sitting down, with half of his leg missing and bleeding badly. Once again, Atherton is a bit stunned at what he sees.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

He's losing a lot of blood and there's no one else available.

Atherton nods in acknowledgment as he takes a deep breath. Quinlan hands him a small case of medical equipment. Atherton grabs it, opens it and scans over what's left of the leg with a tricorder. Quinlan stands over him as he frowns at what he's seeing.

ATHERTON

I can't make any sense of these readings.

QUINLAN

Nor can any of the others, no one has ever studied the Iskau before.

Atherton continues to work away at the tricorder as the Iskau male starts to make what seems like delirious noises, due to the amount of pain.

ATHERTON

Without studying these readings further, I can't be certain on the best possible course of action.

QUINLAN

You haven't got time to study the readings further. He's dying, kid, and you've got to do something fast.

Atherton looks reflective for a moment before he nods in acknowledgment and gets out a pain killer from the case. He injects the patient with Tri-Solinol and then begins to use a dermal regenerator to heal the wound.

Quinlan turns around and starts to walk away, with the camera following, as she walks towards CROSS, who is standing over some officers, working with padds as they try to communicate with the Iskau.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Latest reports say there are now thirty four of the Iskau in critical condition.

CROSS

Fatalities?

QUINLAN

Twelve, and increasing.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

We still haven't had any luck in being able to communicate with this species yet. Ensign McArthur here is the best we've got and she isn't getting anywhere.

McArthur stands up to address Quinlan.

MCARTHUR

Our preliminary studies show their vocal cords are of a unique nature, I'm not even sure if they can speak.

QUINLAN

They seem to be making enough noise.

MCARTHUR

Still, that doesn't mean we'll be able to communicate with them.

Quinlan nods in acknowledgment as McArthur gets back to her work.

QUINLAN

What about Dojar or Y'lan?

Cross takes a moment to ponder that choice.

CROSS

Looks like we might have no choice but to ask for their help again.

(beat)

I've sent a message to Councillor Greene in regards to this entire situation, explaining that our attempt to hand over this planet was interrupted.

QUINLAN

How do you think he'll feel about us staying to help the Iskau?

Cross sighs.

CROSS

We're not breaking the prime directive by interfering with the Klingons, we're staying out of their way, we're not exposing the Iskau to the Enterprise technology and this planet still, officially, belongs to the Federation.

QUINLAN

Try telling that to the Klingons.

CROSS

I would if I could get through to them. Both sides are still jamming all channels. The only one available is the Starfleet emergency channel, which they're not aware of.

Beat.

QUINLAN

What about the Iskau? They're the ones suffering in this private little war that has stumbled into their backyard.

CROSS

I know, but we can't go out there with the Klingons waging war.

Quinlan scoffs.

QUINLAN

This entire situation is such a mess.

CROSS

I can't argue with you there.

The conversation grinds to a halt as Cross and Quinlan take a moment to look at everything that is happening around them.

QUINLAN

So, in the meantime, the casualties
are going to just keep coming in?

Cross doesn't say anything, which is an answer in itself.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

There go my dinner plans.

Quinlan walks away as Cross stands there and takes a momentary breather. Then, all of a sudden, the lights and power go down for a moment before coming right back up.

With the camera following, Cross walks over to an area where GREY and another Engineer are working at a generator.

CROSS

Report.

GREY

We're experiencing power fluctuations,
the circuits are starting to burn
out.

CROSS

Can you keep it going?

GREY

Yes, but I'm going to have to order
more replacement parts from the
Enterprise.

CROSS

Get on it.

Grey nods in acknowledgment and walks over to a quieter part of the area. He taps his commbadge.

GREY

Grey to Cuthbert, I'm going to need
more...

ELRIS (O.S.)

(shouts - interrupting)

I need some help over here!

Grey quickly dashes over to Elris, the camera following, to see an Iskau male (roughly 30 human years), with huge lacerations on his chest, having some kind of seizure and yelling out in pain.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Hold him down.

Grey, along with some other personnel, try to restrain the Iskau male as Elris gives him a sedative. It appears to have no affect.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Damn their tolerable immune system.

(beat)

I'm going to have to do this without anesthetic, hold him down.

The Iskau male continues to actively struggle as Elris attempts to heal the lacerations on his chest.

GREY

Hell of a time for Toran to get the Bajoran flu.

ELRIS

Tell me about it.

Elris continues to use a dermal regenerator to heal the lacerations.

In the background, we can see Atherton still working away on his patient.

The camera switches over to him as he continues to heal the leg wound. Moments later, he smiles as he finishes his work. Standing up and looking around, Atherton takes a deep breath.

ATHERTON

(mutters)

That wasn't so bad.

Still admiring his work, CARTER appears from out of nowhere and startles Atherton a bit.

CARTER

You a Doctor?

ATHERTON

Well...

Carter grabs Atherton by the arm and quickly drags him away, not even giving him a chance to answer.

Walking down a quiet and isolated tunnel of the cave, Carter takes a quick look around.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

Why have you brought me over here?

CARTER

Just to ask you, as a Doctor, what are your thoughts on this current situation?

Atherton frowns as Carter, discreetly, holds a recording device to his side.

ATHERTON

I don't know what you mean.

CARTER

The situation, with the Klingon civil war. The two sides fighting over this planet, willingly relinquished by the Federation to the Klingons, with the indigenous species, the Iskau, caught in the middle and suffering as a result.

Beat.

ATHERTON

Well, of course, it's bad whenever any sentient species has to suffer like this.

CARTER

And, as a Doctor, I'm sure it's personally frustrating to be the ones cleaning up the mess that have been made by Federation Politicians.

Atherton takes a moment to think about his answer.

ATHERTON

Well...

CARTER

It's not nice to see people, whatever species they may be, dying like this, is it?

ATHERTON

No, of course not.

CARTER

So, you must surely condone any acts that would lead to this kind of situation. A situation that has sentient beings dying every minute! Correct?

ATHERTON

Yes, of course, death of the innocent is never just, or morally right.

Carter smiles.

CARTER

Thank you for your time.

Carter turns around and walks away leaving Atherton slightly confused by what has just happened.

The camera follows Carter enters into another tunnel and becomes across the familiar figure of TALORA.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Commander, any comment to make on this situation?

TALORA

This is not the time for your antics, Mr. Carter.

CARTER

I was actually hoping for something new from you, Talora.

Talora gives Carter an evil look and walks away from him. The camera follows her as she walks towards Quinlan, who is trying to communicate with a young female Iskau (roughly 20 in human years).

TALORA

Any luck?

Quinlan shakes her head.

QUINLAN

But then, I don't know what else to expect, if McArthur can't do it then I sure as hell can't.

(beat)

That's if it's even possible.

(beat)

I just saw her here, she looked scared and alone.

Talora frowns.

TALORA

From what I've seen of them, I'm not even sure they can feel that.

Quinlan shrugs her shoulders.

QUINLAN

Maybe they can't, but I just thought I'd keep her company. Try and be of some help.

Talora nods in acknowledgment.

TALORA

Actually, that's what I've come to speak to you about. There may be a way for you to help more of them.

Quinlan looks intrigued.

TALORA (CONT'D)

The Enterprise has managed to intercept a transmission that two more Reformist Negh'var ships are on their way, carrying thousands of more troops.

QUINLAN

I thought they were blocking all channels!

TALORA

Clearly, this is a message that the Reformists wanted us, and the Imperialists, to hear.

Quinlan sighs.

QUINLAN

It's a damn shame that this planet happens to be so rich in resources.

TALORA

Resources that both Klingon sides want in hope of gaining the upper hand in their war.

QUINLAN

The way this situation is developing, this entire species is going to be wiped out in no time.

Quinlan and Talora glance at the female Iskau, who watches on, with no apparent idea of what they're saying.

TALORA

I agree. The Klingons have managed to cloud most of the planet from sensors, but the Enterprise did manage to get some preliminary sensor readings of these resources.

(beat)

There's a large village located right at the point where Verterium is at its richest.

QUINLAN

Explains all the nearby casualties.

Talora nods in acknowledgment.

TALORA

And that's not it. The population of this village is estimated to be in the region of 3000.

(beat)

These extra Reformist troops are being assigned to join the fight in this area.

Quinlan looks slightly aghast.

QUINLAN

We can't let the Iskau be condemned to death like that! Especially not considering the entire circumstances of this situation.

TALORA

Once again, I agree.

Talora takes a look around to see if anyone is close by to hear what she is about to say.

TALORA (CONT'D)

(discreet)

Start formulating the plan for a rescue mission.

QUINLAN

You think the Captain will go for it?

Talora goes to answer, but is interrupted by a huge scream from a newly brought in casualty. Talora looks back at Quinlan.

TALORA

I think the Captain doesn't want to see anymore people coming through the door like that.

With the camera moving over to this new victim, Elris appears on the scene. The Iskau female has several lacerations on her body.

Elris points to a space on the floor.

ELRIS

Put her over there.

The Starfleet personnel do just that as Elris gets her tricorder and starts scanning her injuries.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

She has several key ruptured organs.

(MORE)

ELRIS (CONT'D)

We're going to need four units
trianoline and two units of
triptacedrin.

A hypospray is held out quickly to Elris who takes it and administers the first drug, followed quickly by the second. Elris looks at the owner of the hand and nods at the Iskau female beneath them.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Get the autosuture and start closing
those flesh wounds.

NURSE

Yes, Doctor.

Elris picks up the tricorder again and scans the woman. She shakes her head in frustration and puts the tricorder back down a bit forcefully. Reaching over, she grabs a tool from the medkit.

ELRIS

We need to get this internal bleeding
stopped.

The tricorder starts beeping frantically and Elris looks at it.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Neural stimulators, now!

The assistant reaches over and quickly places the stimulators on the Iskau woman's forehead. The tricorder beeping eases slightly. Elris leans over her and works with the subdermal regenerator to close the internal wounds.

Again, the tricorder starts to beep frantically.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(frustrated)

This isn't working!

(beat)

I need another two units of
trianoline.

The tricorder is passed over again and Elris leans over to press it against the woman's neck. As she is doing that, the Iskau's hands reach up and grabs Elris' wrist as their eyes meet.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

This same woman is sitting down on the side of the street, with her head bowed down.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Again, the same Iskau female, who is this time running around in some kind of manner.

Nearby, in the same area, is an Iskau male who seems particularly interested in this one running female. He continuously stares at the female, unknown to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A closer version shows the woman raise her head and look over at the camera.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

It's a beautiful, nice clear day as the camera shows the amazing sight of looking down a mountain from the perspective of this same Iskau female.

A side angle shows her stand on the edge of the mountain and look behind. There stands the same Iskau male as seen in scene from before.

She turns around and steps off the edge of the mountain.

The view changes as the mountain fills the shot as the Iskau female falls from the top of the mountain, shooting through the air quickly to the ground. She's just about to hit the ground when...

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Elris blinks as the Iskau female lets go of her hand and lies back down, her eyes now closed as if she has gone unconscious. Elris takes a quick moment to digest what just happened before looking back down at her patient.

ELRIS

No.

(beat - adamant)

I'm not going to lose this one.

With renewed energy, Elris quickly closes the internal wounds. Moments later, as she finishes up, she grabs hold of a tricorder and sighs a breath of relief.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

She's stabilized.

Elris looks over at the nurse and smiles, with relief.

NURSE

Good work, Doctor.

Elris nods in acknowledgment and slowly walks away, to take a breather, as KASDAN walks over to her.

KASDAN

It's beginning to slow down now,
Doctor, there's one hell of a blizzard
out there that no one's going to get
through.

Elris nods in acknowledgment as she takes a deep breath and walks over to a corner of the tunnel. She leans up against the wall and rubs her eyes as she contemplates on everything that has happened so far.

She then notices Atherton, treating some minor wounds on a young Iskau female (roughly 14 in human years).

Atherton continues his treatment as Elris walks over to him.

ELRIS

Mr. Atherton?

ATHERTON

Yes?

Atherton looks around and sees it is Elris. Standing up quickly, he seems a bit flustered.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

Sorry, ma'am, I didn't realize it
was you.

ELRIS

That's okay, and there's no need to
call me ma'am. Doctor will do fine.

ATHERTON

Yes, Doctor. Please... call me
Athers.

Elris smirks slightly and then crouches down to check over the young Iskau female that Atherton was treating.

ELRIS

Nice work on the burn.

ATHERTON

Thank you, Doctor.

ELRIS

I'm sorry that I had to throw you
into the frying pan like this, but
we had no other choice.

Atherton nods in acknowledgment.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

But you've come to learn and these are the kind of situations where you'll learn the most. It's going to be a real baptism of fire for you, Mr. Atherton.

(beat)

Today is just one of those days.

Elris walks away, with Atherton following behind, as they begin to check over all the nearby patients of that area. The camera pans out to a wide shot of this tunnel where patient after patient after patient can be seen as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - DAY

In a quiet part of one of the tunnels, Cross walks to a place where his laptop computer is. He sits down and activates the laptop.

Councilor JOHN GREENE appears on the screen.

GREENE

Captain Cross, I've just reviewed your latest report on this situation.

CROSS

Yes, sir?

GREENE

I must say, Captain, this situation is nothing short of a disaster. Something your record shows you are more than accustomed to.

Cross nods in acknowledgment.

GREENE (CONT'D)

Whether that's a good or bad thing in this current crisis is yet to be determined.

(beat)

I see you have requested that the Federation council review this entire incident, including whether this planet should be in the hands of the Klingons.

CROSS

Yes, sir, as my report shows with the medical statistics, the indigenous race of this planet are suffering because of the Klingon civil war.

GREENE

An event that we cannot get involved in, as stated by the Prime Directive.

CROSS

Councilor, we became involved the moment we agreed to hand this planet over to the Klingons.

(beat)

We can't take this situation lightly, the future of the entire Iskau race could be at risk.

(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)

(beat)

Is the Federation council willing to condemn this race to death?

GREENE

I think that's a little over dramatic, wouldn't you say, Captain?

CROSS

No, sir, I would not. With all due respect, Councilor, you're not here, I am.

Greene seems to be slightly offended by that comment.

GREENE

I will present this report to the council as I believe they will be interested in hearing what has developed.

CROSS

I appreciate that, sir.

GREENE

In the meantime, don't do anything stupid, Captain.

The channel closes as Cross sits there and sighs.

CROSS

(mutters)

I can't promise anything.

Staring at the screen, Cross ponders on this entire situation.

Elris, with Atherton following behind, is walking along a tunnel, looking at patients. She comes across the Iskau female from the end of the last act. The female is in a world of her own as Elris has a quick check on her condition with a tricorder.

Moments later, Elris walks away and arrives to see a young Iskau baby, being cradled by a watchful Iskau female (roughly 30 in human years). Elris looks at Atherton and holds out her hand towards the Iskau.

ELRIS

Mr. Atherton.

Atherton clears his throat and moves towards the baby. The Alien mother starts to back off, naturally concerned. Atherton glances at Elris for a moment, who nods at him for encouragement.

This time, he moves in slowly and with a forced smile on his face that looks scary rather than reassuring. The mother doesn't react this time as Atherton gets out his tricorder and starts to scan the baby.

Atherton continues to study the readings as Elris patiently waits.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Well, Mr. Atherton?

ATHERTON

I'm finding these readings to be quite stumbling. I'm not sure what it is.

ELRIS

Do you know what it isn't?

Atherton looks at Elris, confused.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Draw your conclusions by ruling out what it can't be.

ATHERTON

But that could take forever.

ELRIS

Not when you've got the knowledge and experience to be able to rule out dozens of possibilities at once.

Beat.

ATHERTON

I don't think I have that ability yet, Doctor.

Elris smiles.

ELRIS

By the time I'm finished with you, you will.

(beat)

But, for now, your diagnosis please.

Atherton takes a deep breath.

ATHERTON

Well, the lack of destrinum would seem to indicate the early stages of malnutrition.

Elris nods in agreement.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

Also, the levels of nesticam would indicate that the baby has some kind of viral infection.

Elris puts her hand out for the tricorder, which Atherton passes to her. She looks over the readings and nods to herself.

ELRIS

Very good, Mr. Atherton.

Elris hands the tricorder back as Atherton smiles, proudly. He looks over to the Iskau female, who is still giving him a rather concerned look.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Now your diagnosis of the mother, please.

Atherton scans over the mother.

ATHERTON

Once again, readings indicate some malnutrition.

Atherton frowns as he discovers something else. He takes a moment to look over the readings.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

I'm also noticing something else.

(beat)

I see it in the baby too. It seems to me to be... antibodies.

Elris smiles, amused.

ELRIS

Antibodies?

Atherton clears his throat, embarrassed, as he feels he has made something out of nothing. Elris holds out her hand for Atherton to hand her the tricorder.

Elris, still amused, looks over the tricorder readings as her amused look turns into concern. She continues to look over the readings as Atherton waits.

ATHERTON

Was my diagnosis wrong, Doctor?

Elris continues to read and then looks up, at no one in particular, deep in thought, and walks away. Atherton stands there, alone, looking out of place and feeling awkward.

Quinlan is still trying to communicate with the Iskau female from before when her attention is diverted to DOJAR, who dematerializes out of the transporter matter stream.

QUINLAN

Gril.

Dojar sees Quinlan and walks over to her.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Boy, am I glad to see you. Have you been briefed on our problems here?

DOJAR

I have.

Quinlan hands Dojar her padd and extends her hand towards the Iskau she was talking to.

QUINLAN

Then be my guest.

Dojar examines the padd and reads it over for a moment. He then places it down and bends down to look at the Iskau. Quinlan watches on as the Iskau female looks into Dojar's eyes and starts nodding in understanding. Quinlan is completely miffed by what is happening, but she just continues to watch.

Cross, with Talora at his side, is walking through one of the tunnels, looking at a tricorder.

CROSS

Is this a joke?

TALORA

No, Captain.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

I was afraid you were going to say that.

Cross continues to read before, moments later, handing the padd back to Talora.

CROSS (CONT'D)

It's a good plan.

Talora takes a moment to look down at the padd.

TALORA

Does this mean you're rejecting my proposal?

CROSS

I'm not about to send Starfleet officers into an area where a Klingon civil war is being waged. We're doing enough good here as it is.

TALORA

But we can do so much more.

(beat)

Sir, you know the Klingons won't hesitate for a second in killing anybody that gets in their way.

CROSS

Exactly, and that's why you're not going out there.

Cross goes to walk away, but Talora stands in front of him to cut him off.

TALORA

But we won't get in their way, Captain.

CROSS

You can't be sure of that, Talora, no one can.

(beat)

We were sent here to facilitate the actual process of handing this planet over to the Klingon government. Once the Reformists turned up to spoil the party, I saw no other choice but to help the Iskau, who are caught in the middle.

(beat)

Even if they didn't know it, they were part of the Federation before and, officially, they still are.

TALORA

Then we are obligated to help them in any way we can.

CROSS

The only reason the Klingons on either side don't bother us is because we don't bother them.

(beat - adamant)

I've spoken to Councilor Greene and he's speaking to the Federation council about this situation. Hopefully, they'll do something about this mess they've created.

TALORA

Do you really think they will?

Cross sighs.

CROSS

I don't know. But, until they get back to me about it all, we can't get involved any further, I'm sorry.

Cross walks away, with Talora letting him this time.

Grey and another Engineer are working away at the generator, replacing circuits and more as Elris walks by. The camera follows her as she looks over information gathered from several tricorders. She looks in quite a hurry before she makes her way past Talora and over to Cross.

ELRIS

Neil.

Cross notices the concern on her face.

CROSS

What is it?

ELRIS

You need to see this.

Elris hands over the tricorder to a confused Cross. In the background, Talora walks towards to the two of them, intrigued by what is happening.

CROSS

What am I looking at?

ELRIS

I could be mistaken, but to me it looks like Ransallis.

CROSS

Isn't that a sexually transmitted disease?

ELRIS

Yes, and I've discovered it in about 70% of the people here. 85% of them were female, the other 15% were children.

Cross looks slightly shocked.

CROSS

Children?

Elris nods in acknowledgment.

ELRIS

We know from personal experience that a disease like this spreads by ignorance, lack of knowledge or understanding of what it is.

(beat)

These people don't know what it is, they don't have the reasoning to understand.

TALORA

You said 85% of the cases were female.

Elris turns around to see Talora standing there.

ELRIS

Yes, most likely through mating with different partners or... rape.

Cross sighs.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Either way, these people have a disease that is widespread and will kill them all, unless treated as soon as possible.

Cross rubs his eyes as he takes a moment to contemplate on what he's just heard.

CROSS

So, what are you suggesting, Doctor?

ELRIS

We need to help these people.

Cross looks at Elris, almost in disbelief of what she's just said.

CROSS

Just like that?

ELRIS

We certainly have the capability.

CROSS

Yes, but what about the Klingons?

Elris scoffs.

ELRIS

What about them? These people, this sentient species is dying, Neil, and, not only that, but their home is being destroyed as well. What chance, what kind of chance do they have unless we help them?

CROSS

This isn't really a Federation planet anymore, Lea, and, because of that, I'm not sure it can be considered a Federation matter.

ELRIS

Then why are we even bothering to stay here?

CROSS

Because I'm sticking my neck out to try and make this transition as easy as possible.

ELRIS

Who for? For the Iskau? For the people that you are staying to help, but are also refusing to help?

Elris scoffs, amused by what she is hearing.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

That's a complete contradiction, Captain.

CROSS

No, it's a line. A line on what I can and can't do.

Elris goes to speak, but stops herself. She stands there and shakes her head with disappointment.

TALORA

My proposal still stands, Captain.

CROSS

I think this situation only goes to show that your idea has no real warrant, Commander.

TALORA

On the contrary, if we can save those lives, we could bring them here, treat them, educate them and let them relocate away from the fighting.
(beat)

It would give them a chance for their species to survive. If anything, it just adds more credence to my proposal.

CROSS

If we can actually communicate with them.

TALORA

I'm confident Dojar will be able to do that, sir. And then we'll be giving him people to communicate with.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

A lot of people have died here today, Talora.

(beat)

As cold as it might sound, I don't want people I know to be coming back to the Enterprise in a bodybag.

TALORA

Captain, if the actions of thirty people can save the lives of thousands, and possibly an entire race, isn't it worth the effort?

Cross takes a moment to think before he nods at Talora, giving her his approval. She nods back in acknowledgment before walking away.

Dojar stands up, breaking eye contact with the Iskau female that Quinlan was trying to communicate with earlier. Quinlan is still standing there, keenly watching.

DOJAR (V.O.)

These people have intrepid souls, worthy of further study.

Y'LAN (V.O.)

It is not their role in what's to come.

DOJAR (V.O.)

I foresee they could become a calming influence on the universe in a few millennia. They have a remarkable understanding of the universe, in a way that no race now could understand.

Y'LAN (V.O.)

Their potential may exist, but their path to fulfill it does not.

DOJAR (V.O.)

That can be changed. They can be nurtured to provide hope and peace to others.

Beat.

Y'LAN (V.O.)

No.

Dojar looks slightly disappointed as Quinlan continues to watch him closely.

TALORA (O.S.)

Jen.

Quinlan and Dojar both turn around to see Talora arrive on the scene.

TALORA (CONT'D)

The Captain has approved our plan.

Quinlan looks surprised.

QUINLAN

Really?

TALORA

We leave in one hour, get the team together.

Quinlan nods in acknowledgment and quickly walks away. Talora gives Dojar a quick, respectful smile before walking away herself.

Atherton walks around, looking for Elris, as he accidentally walks into a few other Starfleet people on his way.

He finds his way into the morgue area and sees Elris there, scanning over the bodies with a tricorder.

ATHERTON

(wheezy)

Doctor.

Elris looks up as Atherton clears his throat.

ELRIS

Something wrong, Mr. Atherton?

ATHERTON

No, Doctor.

(beat)

It's just that I've never seen, or been around, this many dead bodies before.

Elris looks around at them all and then back at her tricorder.

ELRIS

You get used to it.

Atherton nods slowly in acknowledgment, putting his hands behind his back as he stands there, once again feeling out of place. Elris looks over and notices him moments later.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Something I can do for you?

ATHERTON

Actually, I was wondering if there's anything I could do.

ELRIS

You can help me with this database I'm compiling.

Elris picks up a tricorder and throws it at Atherton, who catches it and looks over the results.

ATHERTON

A database of sexual diseases? Is that what I saw earlier?

ELRIS

Yes, I didn't get a chance to tell you about that.

Elris looks Atherton right in the eye.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Well spotted. You noticed something that no one else did today.

Atherton smiles, proud, as he looks down at his tricorder. Elris, with another tricorder, finishes her studies on another body.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

That's the study on patient twelve finished. Nothing more conclusive identified, now onto patient thirteen.

Elris uncovers the Iskau male (roughly 50 human years) from earlier, the one with the mutilated leg that Atherton was treating.

Atherton looks shocked as he sees the dead body. Elris starts to scan the corpse and frowns at what she is reading.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

This is strange, he appears to have died because of excessive bleeding from an open artery. Yet, there are evident signs that the wound was tried to be closed.

Atherton starts to back away, in clear shock. Elris looks at him and frowns.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Mr. Atherton, are you okay?

Atherton takes a last look, turns around and dashes off.
Elris stands there, confused, and wonders.

Talora and Quinlan, dressed in harsh terrain fieldwear, walk up to Cross.

TALORA

We're ready, Captain.

Cross nods in acknowledgment.

CROSS

Whatever you do out there, don't get
killed.

Talora and Quinlan just look at each other, the tension of
this situation really shining through.

QUINLAN

You know me, sir, I can't make any
promises.

Cross smiles in response as Talora and Quinlan walk over to
their parties.

TALORA

Okay, people, let's roll out.

Talora and Quinlan lead the way as the parties walk out of
the front of the cavern. Cross stands there and watches as
Dojar walks up to his side. Cross looks over at him.

CROSS

Am I ever going to see them again,
Dojar?

Dojar looks at Cross, almost surprised by that question.
Instead of answering, he turns around and walks away. Cross
watches him go and sighs.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(mutters)

That's what I was afraid of.

The last of the parties walk out of the cavern as Cross stands
there and ponders on his decision as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAY

The blizzards rage on the planet surface, making it almost impossible to see as the Starfleet contingent, lead by Talora and Quinlan, make their way up a hillside.

Half of them struggle with their footing as the hillside just gets steeper and steeper. With a howling wind, throwing all kinds of snow and ice into their faces, they eventually reach the top.

Talora and Quinlan stand there and look down the other side to see a one of a kind village in the valley.

As they stand there and admire the beauty of it all, they notice explosions on the other side of the opposite hill. Looking at each other, they know time is of the essence.

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Elris is walking around the area, searching all over the place. She stumbles across Carter, who is trying to communicate with a confused Iskau male and female (both roughly 40 in human years).

ELRIS

What are you doing?

CARTER

Trying to get an exclusive interview.

Elris frowns.

ELRIS

Carter, they can't understand a single thing you're saying.

CARTER

It doesn't matter, as long as I can still get a quote. I can improvise with the rest.

Elris shakes her head as she dismisses the entire thing and walks away.

Looking over at a dark corner, she sees Atherton sitting there, hands clasped together, and head bowed down. She walks over to him.

ELRIS

You okay?

Beat.

ATHERTON

I'm not sure.

Elris sits down next to Atherton and just looks ahead.

ELRIS

Did you know that man?

Atherton sighs.

ATHERTON

Yes, I killed him.

ELRIS

What do you mean, you killed him?

ATHERTON

I was the one who treated his injuries, or at least I tried to.

ELRIS

I see.

Beat.

ATHERTON

He died because of me.

Elris looks over at Atherton.

ELRIS

Look at me right now, Mr. Atherton.

Atherton, with the shame visible on his face, looks over at Elris.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

You didn't kill that man, you tried to help him. You're only a medical student and you found yourself in a difficult situation, which, ideally, you shouldn't be in unsupervised.

(beat)

It's not your fault.

(beat)

If anyone's to blame, it's me.

Atherton scoffs.

ATHERTON

You hadn't even met me yet.

ELRIS

Still, you're my student and it's my job to make sure you don't get out of your depth.

Beat.

ATHERTON

It doesn't matter. I never felt comfortable with the situation and I knew it, yet I went on anyway. I should've got someone else.

Elris shakes her head.

ELRIS

Being a Doctor is by no means the easiest or most comfortable job in the galaxy. It's always about finding yourselves in difficult situations where you have to think on your feet. You put their lives in your hands, willingly, and, at the same time, you put their faith and trust in you.

(beat)

It's a great responsibility, one which takes a great deal of character to accept.

(beat)

The fact that he died, as sad as it may be, doesn't mean as much to me as the fact that you tried to save him. That shows me you have the character needed to be a Doctor.

(beat)

All you have to do is believe it yourself.

Atherton, deep in thought, looks over at Elris as she stands up and walks away. He takes a moment to think about everything she has just said.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

A mature Iskau male (roughly 60 in human years), appearing to be the Chief of the tribe, is followed by a group of younger Iskau. He walks about the Village, which is somewhat covered from the blizzards, by rather unique looking crafted shelters.

The Chief looks around and notices the group of Starfleet officers dashing out of the blizzard and into the village. Naturally concerned, he yells out to his people, who react swiftly, armed with their own crafted weapons.

Standing on guard, they wait as Talora and Quinlan stop in their tracks, about ten metres away from the

Iskau.

QUINLAN

(subdued)

What do you suggest we do now?

TALORA

Try to communicate.

Talora walks slowly towards them, holding her hands up as a gesture of non-hostility.

TALORA (CONT'D)

We are not here to hurt you.

There is no response or movement by the Iskau.

TALORA (CONT'D)

We are your friends.

Again, no response or movement of any kind. Talora looks to the other hill, knowing she doesn't have much time.

Talora looks at the Chief, points at him and then points in the direction of where they came.

TALORA (CONT'D)

You go that way.

She points at herself and then in the same direction.

TALORA (CONT'D)

We go that way. You go with us.

The Chief looks at some of the other Iskau people, not sure what to make of this situation.

They are then disturbed by a loud explosion nearby. Looking in the direction of where it's coming from,

Klingons can be seen running down the hillside, still engaged in battle with each other. Huge masses of fights spill towards the Village.

Talora looks at the Chief, grabs his hand and points in the direction from which they came. This time, the Chief looks more concerned.

TALORA (CONT'D)

We must go, now.

She starts to pull him in that direction, but the Chief resists and easily manages to get himself free from Talora's grip. Quinlan moves towards Talora.

QUINLAN

They can't understand us, Talora,
we've got to literally drag them out
of here.

TALORA

We won't win their trust then and
they will most likely resist.

QUINLAN

Do we have a choice?

Talora ponders over the answer to that question for a moment
and then nods in acknowledgment.

TALORA

You're right, let's do it.

Quinlan turns back to address the Starfleet personnel.

QUINLAN

Okay, people, let's get the Iskau
people out of here by means of gentle
persuasion.

The Starfleet personnel move towards the Iskau, grabbing
their hands and gently trying to usher them away.

All of the Iskau resist and start to show their resentment
towards the Starfleet people.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

This isn't working, Talora.

Talora looks over to the hillside to see the Klingons are
now battling each other on the edge of the village.

TALORA

And it looks like we've run out of
time.

Talora looks concerned as she watches the Klingons battle
each other.

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Elris is doing her rounds again as she walks up to the Iskau
female who nearly died at the end of act one.

The woman is staring at the ground, looking like she's not
interested in the world around her. Elris sits down and
watches over her.

ELRIS

What did I see? What happened to
you?

(beat)

Whatever happened, it's over now and
there's no need to worry.

(beat)

I'm a Doctor and I help people.

(MORE)

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I help them to get better, just as
I'm going to help you.

The woman doesn't alter her demeanor in any way as Elris sits there and sighs. Rubbing her eyes, the nonstop nature of the day has clearly caught up with her as she starts to doze off.

DISSOLVE TO:

VISION

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Elris finds herself standing on top of the same mountain as before, on this calm day with the sun piercing the clouds and snow covering every space of the surface. She smiles as she admires the beauty of the picturesque view.

Caught up in the moment, Elris slips a bit and quickly recovers from nearly falling down the mountain. She sighs a huge breath of relief and peers down to see how far she would've fallen.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

There is a big party atmosphere as Elris finds herself in the Iskau village we've just seen the Klingons arrive at.

Iskau people come dashing by, dressed in little to no clothing, as Elris looks up at the sky to see small flakes of gentle snow falling.

Not sure of what's happening in the village, Elris walks in the direction of where the most noise is coming from.

Arriving in a fairly open spaced area, lots of the Iskau are running around, dressed in almost no clothing, in a sort of carnival atmosphere.

Intrigued by what she sees, Elris can't determine that the Iskau are doing anything else but just running about the area.

One noticeable group standing out is a group of males (roughly 25 in human years), looking like they are scouting the area for females. Then, all of a sudden, one of the males stands out with some kind of red aura around him.

Looking intrigued by this, Elris watches on as this male seems particularly interested in this one running female. He continuously stares at the female, unknown to her.

Looking closer, Elris notices that this female is in fact the one from the end of act one, but in a healthier state than she knows her now.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Klingons battle one another all over the place, in all kinds of different manners. The hand to hand combat battles move inside some of the buildings, disturbing Iskau who chose to hide inside there. Some of them, unfortunately, get caught in the middle and pay for it with their lives.

Talora and Quinlan both try to usher the Iskau away from the fights, carefully watching the developments. Having seen what the Klingons are like, the Iskau seem more willing to trust the Starfleet personnel now, who use their experience to keep out of the way even though all hell has broken loose.

QUINLAN

I don't know how much longer we can stay in the middle of this.

Talora goes to speak when one of the hutts nearby explodes, throwing rubble onto them. With smoke covering the area, Talora and Quinlan both move away as other hutts explode causing it to be very hard for the two to communicate.

TALORA

(loud)

I think it's time for some aggressive negotiations.

Quinlan frowns.

QUINLAN

And what does that mean?

Talora looks around the nearby area, grabs one of the Iskau males in a more aggressive manner than earlier. She grabs him by his clothing and pulls him away from the fighting.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Works for me.

Quinlan moves into the smoke and grabs a few of them herself. As she does so, a few other Starfleet officers come over to her.

KASDAN

What now, Lieutenant?

QUINLAN

Aggressive negotiations.

Kasdan and the other officers frown as they look at each other.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Just grab the Iskau and physically
drag them out of here.

Quinlan drags her lot away as the Starfleet officers continue to do the same.

VISION

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Elris continues to watch as the female from the end of act one notices the man watching her. Feeling a tad embarrassed by the attention, the female looks away as the man starts to walk towards her.

The two of them enter into what looks like a conversation, but with no noticeable words or anything. However, somehow, Elris seems to know that they are communicating as she continues to watch. As it continues to unfold, Elris starts to look concerned even though there is no visible reason why.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

In slow motion, Elris, admiring the view, loses her footing a bit, but doesn't react to it whatsoever.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Elris moves closer and closer as the two Iskau continue their conversation. The look on the Bajoran's face shows a certain amount of worry and concern.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Still in slow motion, Elris starts to lose her footing some more, which this time gets her attention.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Standing right in front of the couple, unknown to them, Elris looks very concerned and shakes her head, urging for something not to happen, but there is no idea what.

A few moments later, the female turns around and walks away. The male Iskau stands there and watches her walk away from the area.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Once again in slow motion, Elris is looking down at her feet as they slip out from under her, bringing her dangerously close to the edge of the mountain.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Elris stands there and watches as the female gets further and further into the distance.

The male, standing next to her, is also watching on as he starts to walk after her, which causes great concern for Elris who stands there, feeling pretty helpless.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

The battle continues as Klingons battle each other everywhere in sight. The majority is hand to hand combat, but parts of the village explode all around them.

Iskau people are caught in the middle as some try to protect their homes, some fight the Klingons head on and others are trying to escape. The Klingons show no concern for them as they take them down like they're nothing to them.

Starfleet personnel physically drag the Iskau up the hillside, away from the battle, with a lot of other Iskau people following, carrying their injured.

Back in the battle, Talora and Quinlan are watching over the last of the evacuation. With the last Starfleet people moving out, Talora and Quinlan prepare to leave until Talora notices a group of Iskau caught in the doorway of their home.

With Klingons all around, this family, that includes children, want to get through the Klingons but are too scared to move.

Talora stands there and gets hit with the guilt of leaving them behind. Taking a deep breath, she gets out her phaser and darts into the heat of the battle, weaving between the battling Klingons.

Running into trouble at one point with Klingons picking her out (being a Romulan doesn't help), Talora has to use her phaser and stun a few Klingons.

Arriving at the family, she grabs hold of them and drags them away from the fighting. However, not being that easy, Talora is forced to use her phaser some more.

These actions haven't exactly endured her to some Klingons, who have now picked her out, unknown to her, and made a charge for her.

Nearly clear, Talora continues to try and get the Iskau away from danger.

Quinlan, moving up the hillside and away from the fighting, looks around to see Talora isn't with her.

Looking back down the hill, she sees Talora battling through the last of these Klingons as she just about gets clear.

However, Quinlan also notices a couple of Klingons coming towards Talora from the fight. Seeing this, she darts back down the hill towards them.

QUINLAN

(shouts)

Talora!

With the Iskau family now clear of the danger, Talora looks to her side to see a couple of Klingons right upon her position.

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Cross walks back to the tunnel where his laptop computer is located. He sits down and activates it as Councilor Greene appears on the screen.

GREENE

Captain Cross, just to let you know, the Federation council has been debating the current situation and has decided it is for the best if you leave the planet immediately.

CROSS

What about the Iskau?

GREENE

I'm sorry, Captain, but the Federation will officially declare the planet as Klingon territory in twelve hours. You have that long to get the Enterprise out of there, or the Klingons will take any actions they see fit for violation of their territory.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

I understand.

Greene leans forward in his chair.

GREENE

You seem disappointed.

(beat)

Honestly, Captain, what else did you expect?

CROSS

Something better.

Cross sits there and reflects on what he's just been told.

JUMP CUT TO:

VISION

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Elris walks down the street, the same street that the Iskau woman from the end of act one walked, and so did the man. As she does this, she gets this huge sense of worry and trepidation.

She stops for a moment and takes a deep breath as a thought hits her mind.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

In the slow motion moment, Elris is on the edge of the mountain and trying to keep herself from falling down it.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Elris stands still and looks ahead as the man from before walks out from the side, just down the street, and then away.

Taking a deep breath, there is a sense that Elris knows what to expect and takes a moment to prepare for it.

Walking down the street, she turns off to the side and sees the Iskau woman sitting on the floor with her head bowed down.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Finally being unable to keep her balance, Elris falls off the edge of the mountain and falls through the air towards the ground.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAVERN - DAY

Elris wakes up with a bit of a fright and looks down at the female, who is still motionless.

Trying to get a grip on what happened, Elris turns around and notices Dojar standing on the other side of the area. Looking at him with a curious frown, she is trying to piece it all together.

CROSS

Lea...

Elris turns her attention to Cross.

CROSS (CONT'D)

We just received a garbled communication from Jen, there are several casualties coming in.

Elris takes a moment to get her thoughts together before she stands up.

ELRIS

Do you know how many?

Cross shakes his head.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Then we better get this place prepared.

Elris starts to walk away, with Cross following. She walks over to a row of non fatal patients, who are quite close to the entrance/exit of the cavern.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Let's get all these non fatalities moved to the back corridors, clear this space out for the new casualties. Also, get all trained medical personnel here on the double. Let's make sure we're ready for this, people!

People start moving all over the place as Elris stands there and ponders on what's to come.

FADE OUT.

THIRTY MINUTES LATER

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - DAY

In the same place as before, Elris, Cross and all kinds of other personnel stand there, prepared, in silence, waiting as they stare at the exit.

As they wait, Atherton walks towards the crowd and stands by Elris, getting her attention. He nods at her to acknowledge the fact that he took on board what she had to say.

The whole group of them stand there and wait, waiting for the worst to come as they fully expect it to. The atmosphere becomes tense as the waiting just goes on and on when...

Starfleet personnel come dashing into the cavern, looking like they've been through hell, with all kinds of Iskau casualties, who don't look any better.

Elris dashes forward and starts giving orders as she checks over the immediate condition of some of the patients, she points at places for them to be and assigns certain people to them.

QUINLAN (O.S.)

Lea!

Elris looks over to see Quinlan and Kasdan carrying through the injured Talora! Elris looks down and sighs as the camera starts to pan out, revealing the chaos of the situation at hand as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - DAY

The camera moves through the cave, showing the many casualties that are happening all over the place.

It's not long before we see Quinlan and Kasdan carrying Talora over to a free bed unit. Elris, Atherton and Cross all follow them over in quick pursuit.

ELRIS

Mr. Atherton, I want you to begin internal scans. We need to find out the extent of her injuries.

ATHERTON

Yes, ma'am.

Atherton moves off to do exactly that.

ELRIS

Can we get her back to the Enterprise?

CROSS

Storm has hit, there won't be a transporter window for another twenty minutes.

Elris sighs as she starts to check over Talora's condition with a tricorder.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Lea?

Elris turns to a nurse nearby.

ELRIS

Get me a Cortical stimulator and five units of tri-cordrazine.

QUINLAN

Lea, is she going to be okay?

Elris gives Quinlan a quick glance as she continues to work away.

Cross moves over to Quinlan, puts a hand on her shoulder and ushers her away slightly.

CROSS

(subdued)

What happened out there?

Quinlan sighs.

QUINLAN

It was a mess, sir, a complete mess. Klingons and Iskau everywhere, our people everywhere, explosions, fights, screams, cries, deaths, just about everything you'd expect from a Saturday night at the Bonestall Recreation facility.

Beat.

CROSS

And Talora?

QUINLAN

She was trying to save a trapped family and aggravated enough Klingons to become a target herself.

(beat)

It was one hell of a heroic act.

Quinlan looks over at Talora, giving a look of both admiration and sympathy.

Elris and Atherton are still hard at work.

ATHERTON

Doctor, I've done the scans. She has bleeding in several places and there's evidence of trauma to her heart. She's got a buildup of fluid in the heart cavity.

ELRIS

Get the cardial trauma unit over here.

The cave shakes from a nearby explosion, causing a lot of cries and screams from the Iskau. Moments later, the lights and power go out.

A few emergency lights come on as, in the relative darkness, Cross marches through to see Grey.

CROSS

(demanding)

Erik, what the hell is happening?

GREY

The generator has failed, damn power coupling ruptured.

CROSS

How long till you have it fixed?

GREY

Bar anymore problems with this thing,
about ten minutes.

Cross sighs.

CROSS

Do what you can.

Cross darts back through the area, bumping into a few people
as he arrives back to Elris.

CROSS (CONT'D)

It's going to be about ten minutes
before Erik has the power back online.

ELRIS

Well, that's a problem because Talora
doesn't have ten minutes!

Cross stands there and, in one of those rare moments, is
dumbfounded by what to say.

Elris stands there and thinks to herself for a moment.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm going to have to do this
without much technology, just like
some good old frontier medicine.

(beat)

Mr. Atherton, assist me.

Atherton looks nervous as Elris gets handed an exscalpel
from the nurse and starts to cut into Talora.

CROSS

Lea, are you sure about this?

ELRIS

If I don't do anything, Neil, she's
going to die.

(beat)

I'm not going to let that happen.

Cross and Quinlan stand there and anxiously look on as Elris
goes to work.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Ever see live surgery before, Mr.
Atherton?

ATHERTON

(staring)

Umm... no, this is definitely a first.

Elris finishes making her first cut into Talora's body.

ELRIS

Have the drainage tube ready. We need to get this done quickly.

ATHERTON

The power's not working.

Elris looks up for a moment.

ELRIS

(calmly)

Then get a hypospray and reverse the flow.

Atherton nods in acknowledgment and quickly gets things set up as well as he can. Abruptly, Talora's body goes rigid and starts jerking around.

ATHERTON

(shocked)

She's having a seizure!

ELRIS

Four units of nesticam!

The nurse quickly loads a hypo and presses it to Talora's neck. The seizing slows and then stops. Elris continues her incisions.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Dammit... I... can't get to the proximal pericardium.

(beat)

I just need to get back there.

Elris wipes her brow as she tries to delicate work. The others look on closely as the pressure builds up on Elris.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Dammit.

She frantically wipes her brow again.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(frustrating)

I can't see it!

CROSS

Calm down, Lea, you'll find it.

(beat)

Just calm down and take your time.

Elris takes a moment to pause as she takes a few deep breaths. Then she gets back to it, but, before she can finish her cuts, the tricorder begins bleeping frantically.

ATHERTON
Her heart's fibrilating!

ELRIS
Cardiac stimulators!

The nurse hands the tool over and Elris grabs it, her hands bloody. She presses it against the relevant area.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Stand clear!

Pressing the button, she shocks Talora's heart.

ATHERTON
No affect!

ELRIS
Charging again. Stand clear!

Again, the charge rips through Talora's body, this time shocking her heart back into it's normal rhythm.

ATHERTON
Normal rhythm.

Elris continues to make her incisions, now moving quickly and more confidently as her adrenaline starts to kick in. Changing the settings on the exoscalpel, she leans in to cut around the area to get to the heart.

ELRIS
I'm in. Give me the hypospray.

Atherton hands it over and Elris presses it gently against the wall surrounding the heart. The press of a button triggers the withdrawal of the fluid from the area. Atherton watches as the clearish fluid fills the tube at the end of the hypo.

ATHERTON
Her condition is stabilizing.

Elris takes a deep breath, looks over at Cross and smiles. He returns her smile as she looks over at a relieved Atherton. Quickly, Elris moves repairs the area around the heart.

ELRIS
Would you close her up please, Mr. Atherton?

ATHERTON
Me?

Atherton moves in closer to Elris, not wanting others to hear what's being said.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

(subdued)

Are you sure, ma'am? Remember what happened earlier.

ELRIS

(discreet)

Mr. Atherton, you need to accept the fact that you made a mistake. All you need to do is make sure you learn from them because it won't be the last mistake you'll ever make in your career as a Doctor.

(beat)

You learn all the time, depending on all the different situations and circumstances, just like I did today.

Atherton nods in acknowledgment as Elris hands over a dermal regenerator. He takes it and starts to close the opening.

Elris turns around and walks back over to Cross.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Oh, and Mr. Atherton?

Atherton looks up.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

For the last time, don't call me ma'am. That's one mistake you should've learned from a lot earlier.

Elris, Cross and Quinlan walk away as the power around them comes back up.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I just knew that was going to happen.

The three of them smile at each other for a moment before remembering the scene around them.

There's Iskau people in pain everywhere, Starfleet officers trying to help them and all kinds of general chaos.

Elris then notices someone of particular interest, who she moves over to. It's the Iskau male she saw in the vision! She stares at him lying there, with bad burns and lacerations that are causing him a lot of pain.

NURSE

Doctor?

Elris looks over at the Nurse and then back at the man. She immediately dashes back into action as the camera starts to pan out, revealing that this crisis is by no means over.

FADE OUT.

SIX HOURS LATER

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Elris is doing CPR (compressions) on a young male Iskau (roughly six human years old), with Atherton and others standing nearby.

They just watch on as Elris continues to work away.

ATHERTON

(subdued)

Doctor?

There is no response as Elris continues to do the CPR, very caught up in her work.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

Doctor Elris?

Once again, there is no response as Atherton walks over to Elris and stands in front of her.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

Doctor, he's gone.

Elris doesn't respond as the desperation on her face starts to increase. Gradually, she starts to slow the compressions down until she stops altogether and looks around to see people, both Starfleet and Iskau, watching her.

She wipes her brow and looks at Atherton, who is not sure what to make of this all.

Elris just looks at him for a moment before walking away.

The camera stays on Atherton as he looks down at the kid and sighs.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

(mutters)

What a first day on the job this has been.

Elris walks through the scene, with her head bowed down, when she notices Dojar nearby, looking down at a young Iskau male (roughly four human years old). She walks over to him.

ELRIS

What do you see, Dojar?

DOJAR

Potential.

Beat.

ELRIS
And what did I see?

Dojar turns to Elris and gives her a rather expressionless look, as if he is not going to give away any information.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
I know it was you, Gril, I don't know why, but I know you wanted me to see something.

Beat.

DOJAR
It wasn't me, Doctor.

Elris frowns.

ELRIS
Then who?

Dojar looks down at the Iskau female. Elris frowns as she follows his lead.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
It was them?

DOJAR
They don't know, or understand, their own potential. They are not even aware of it.
(beat)
You saw her pain, not because she wanted you to, but because that's who she is, it's who she has become.

ELRIS
She got raped, Gril. That's not something she is, or has become, it's something that has happened to her!

DOJAR
You do not understand.

ELRIS
Then explain it to me.

Dojar stands there and continues to look at the Iskau.

DOJAR
They were full of potential.

Elris frowns.

ELRIS

Were, what do you mean were? Why are you talking about them in the past tense?

Dojar gives Elris that expressionless look again.

DOJAR

Yes.

Dojar turns around and walks away as Elris stands there and thinks to herself.

Cross and Quinlan are walking side by side, through the different tunnels of the cavern. The scene around them is quite different now as everyone has been treated and the emergency is over.

QUINLAN

Storm has hit again, no more casualties will get through here for a while.

Cross nods in acknowledgment.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

The Enterprise reports that the Reformists have taken this area within a 200 mile radius. The Imperialists have retreated for the moment.

CROSS

They'll be back.

QUINLAN

Yes, but, in the meantime, there is a break in the fighting. A chance for both sides to lick their wounds.

CROSS

And the Iskau as well.

Cross stops and looks around.

CROSS (CONT'D)

It's time for us to be leaving.

Quinlan frowns.

QUINLAN

Captain?

CROSS

We've pushed our luck out here, Quinlan, and we've been lucky enough not to come out of it with a bloody nose.

QUINLAN

I'm sure the Iskau wouldn't agree with that assessment.

CROSS

We've helped them all we can. If we could communicate with them, we could help them some more, but we can't.

QUINLAN

What about Gril? Didn't he have any luck?

Cross shakes his head.

CROSS

Not that he told me.

Quinlan sighs.

QUINLAN

It feels wrong to abandon them like this.

CROSS

We can't stay here forever. We have to draw a line somewhere and leave.

Cross walks away as Quinlan stands there and looks around. She notices the young female she was trying to communicate with earlier. The female, dressed in heavy clothing, is about to leave the cavern.

Quinlan walks up to her quickly.

QUINLAN

Hi.

The female looks at her and stops moving.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

I know you can't understand me, but I just wanted to say goodbye, and good luck out there.

Of course, there is no response.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Just remember the two rules I've devised for this planet. Stay away from horny men and Klingons.

(beat)

Actually, they're good rules for any planet.

The young female approaches Quinlan slowly and moves in to kiss her on the lips.

Quinlan is mildly surprised as the female walks away and exits the cavern.

Quinlan quickly clears her throat.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Then again, maybe you just need to worry about the Klingons.

Quinlan smiles to herself and walks away.

FADE OUT.

TWO HOURS LATER

FADE IN:

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Elris walks through the cavern, with her arms folded. Coming across the Iskau male that she saw in the vision, she looks down at him.

As she does so, he looks up at her.

ELRIS

You're going to live.

Naturally, there is no response.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Just don't ask me if you deserve to.

Elris walks away from him and into another tunnel. Seeing the female from the end of act one, she just looks at her from a distance.

ATHERTON (O.S.)

Doctor?

Elris turns around to see Atherton standing there.

ATHERTON (CONT'D)

I've received my orders to return to the Enterprise. I guess I'm not needed down here any longer.

ELRIS

Oh, you're needed down here, Mr. Atherton, we all are.

(beat)

We just can't stay.

Atherton nods in acknowledgment.

ATHERTON

I just thought I'd report to you
before I go, make sure I'm not needed
for anything else.

Elris shakes her head and goes back to staring at the woman.
Atherton nods to himself and starts to walk away.

ELRIS

Athers?

Atherton stops and looks back as Elris turns to him.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

You're going to make a great Doctor.

Atherton looks a bit stunned as Elris turns away again. He
stands there and smiles to himself for a moment before walking
away.

As he walks away, he does a subtle little punch in the air
to express his delight with that comment, something that he
makes sure no one else can see.

The camera switches back to Elris as she walks slowly towards
the woman until she is standing right beside the bed. She
bends down to her and grabs her hand, stroking it gently.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

The woman doesn't change her look as Elris kneels there and
thinks to herself.

Cross walks into the tunnel where his laptop is located and
activates it.

Councilor Greene appears on the screen, sitting in his office.

GREENE

I wondered how long it would be before
you contacted me again, Captain.

CROSS

I just thought you'd like to know
that we've evacuated two thirds of
our personnel and the last of us
will be leaving soon, as per your
orders.

GREENE

I understand. Your protest is noted.

CROSS

I haven't actually logged a protest
yet, sir.

GREENE

No, but I know you will. I didn't get this far into politics without being able to read people's faces and expressions.

Beat.

CROSS

Yes.

(beat)

My protest will be against this entire chain of events, right from the Federation council deciding to give this planet to the Klingons, for whatever reason, to all the people that have died here today, and to all those who will die here tomorrow.

Greene doesn't react as he sits there, with a certain amount of disdain on his face.

GREENE

You have one more hour to leave Klingon space, Captain.

CROSS

One more thing, sir. I just thought you'd be interested in seeing something from here.

Cross taps away on the laptop. At the other end, Greene's laptop beeps, acknowledging that a transfer is in progress.

GREENE

What is it?

CROSS

Something you have to see for yourself, sir, as my words will never do it enough justice.

Cross closes the channel and walks out of the corridor.

Walking through this deserted area, except for the Iskau, he arrives at the bed where Talora is sitting up, looking a lot better than the last time we saw her. Quinlan and Grey are also stood around the bed.

CROSS (CONT'D)

You're looking well, Commander.

TALORA

Wish I could say I felt that way, Captain.

Cross smiles.

CROSS

All part and parcel with being a hero.

At that point, Elris appears on the scene and stands around the bed with the others.

TALORA

I'm not a hero.

(beat)

I just did what I thought that was right.

QUINLAN

You're a hero to the family you saved. They're still alive and in one piece because of you.

(beat)

You made a difference.

CROSS

We all did.

Cross looks each one of them in the face.

CROSS (CONT'D)

I've never been prouder of you all.

There is a beat of silence as each one of them ponders on what has happened here, what they've each had to do.

QUINLAN

It's just a shame we can't do anymore.

GREY

This is Klingon space now, Jen, the council have made their decision. The situation is well and truly out of our hands.

Quinlan scoffs and shakes her head in disgust.

QUINLAN

Bureaucrats.

ELRIS

As far as I'm concerned, this entire situation has been an eye opening event.

(beat)

For the last few years, we've each been involved in something that has made us wonder what kind of times we're living in.

(MORE)

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

Right from day one, we've had the Q'tami, Delfune, the Klingons, the Dominion and so much else to contend with.

(beat)

All these people, all these events have been tied in with one factor over and over again.

(beat)

Us, and the Federation we live in.

(beat)

What has happened here is wrong, people have died, and will continue to die, because some people, for whatever reason, have decided they must.

(beat)

I refuse to write their lives off as an expendable pawn in this intergalactic chess game.

(beat)

I refuse to let those kind of conspiring bureaucrats decide the fate of so many others.

(beat)

So, if I ever learn who is responsible for something like this, I'll let them know that I oppose who they are, and what they stand for.

(beat)

Because I certainly don't want to have to go through another day like today again.

Cross, Talora, Quinlan and Grey all look at Elris in a reflective manner as they digest their thoughts. Just as they do so, they are interrupted by more injured Iskau people walking inside the cavern, looking for help.

INT. COUNCILOR GREENE'S OFFICE

Greene sits there, his hands clasped together as he watches the footage Carter filmed on the planet. He sits there and doesn't look too impressed as he sees Starfleet officers work frantically to save the lives of the Iskau people. There is a certain look of arrogance and disdain on his face.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Elris takes a look at Cross, who sighs, and gulps at the fact that they can't help those people. The Iskau people spot our intrepid heroes and walk towards them, slowly, as the five of them bow their heads in sadness as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END