

STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE

"Unusual Circumstances"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

The shuttlecraft is in orbit of the Daystrom Planet. During upcoming log, it pulls away from the planet and goes to warp.

GREY (V.O.)

Chief Engineer's Log, Stardate
78161.7. Returning from Daystrom
Institute Seminar to resume activities
as Chief Engineer of USS Enterprise
NCC-1701-G. End Log.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Lieutenant ERIK GREY is at the back of the shuttlecraft, shifting through various PADDs. At the front and manning the controls is NARV OZRAN (as seen in "Beggars and Choosers") the Gorn transporter chief. Grey is completely submerged in his work, while Ozran sits apprehensively.

For a few minutes, all we hear is the bleeping of Grey's PADDs as he shifts over them.

OZRAN

(trying to make
conversation)

What did you think of Data's speech?

GREY

(irritated, threatening)

Are you trying to humor me, Chief?

OZRAN

(defensive)

Not at all.

GREY

Then return to your duties.

Ozran, discouraged, stares blankly through the window. His panel begins to beep.

OZRAN

Sir...

But before he can finish, the Shuttlecraft shakes. Grey is thrown to the ground and his PADDs fly everywhere. Ozran is unaffected, but we see that something is wrong. Grey grabs the door and hoists himself upright.

GREY

(surprised)

What was that?

OZRAN
(voice now harsher,
more reptilian)
We were hit by a quantum torpedo!

GREY
I didn't know we can any enemies in
this sector!

OZRAN
We don't, or at least we shouldn't
have.

Shuttle shakes violently again. We see that Grey, the senior officer, is assuming command.

GREY
(commanding)
Status report!

OZRAN
(matter-of-factly)
Main power offline, reverting to
backups.

GREY
(concerned)
Who the hell fired on us?

OZRAN
(frustrated)
Two Peregrine fighters, sir. But the
sensors are offline, I can't tell
you any more than that.

GREY
Can you get it back on line?

OZRAN
In a few hours, maybe.

GREY
Damn...

Beat.

GREY (CONT'D)
(thinking fast)
Can we send out a distress call?
Sensor buoy? Escape pod? Anything
which could get us in touch with
reinforcements?

OZRAN
We can do none, sir.

Grey paces around the confines of the ship for a moment and then he looks out into space via the window. A large asteroid hauntingly passes by, and we can see an idea begin to form in Grey's head.

GREY

Take us in to that asteroid field.

OZLAN

Sir?

GREY

We may be able to lose whoever is attacking us in there. See that asteroid over there? We could obscure our sensor output by using the polar interference.

OZLAN

Yes sir, moving us into the asteroid field, full impulse.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

We watch the shuttlecraft swerve deep into the asteroid field. A few of the asteroids dwarf the shuttlecraft, but most are smaller. The shuttle carefully enters orbit of a particularly large one's northern polar region.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Same as before.

OZLAN

There. We are in orbit. We should be unidentifiable to most sensors.

GREY

It's a double edged sword, Chief. The enemy can't get us, but we can't get help.

Grey ponders the situation for a moment.

GREY (CONT'D)

What were the last known co-ordinates of those fighters?

OZLAN

Can't call it up on the computer. The system is pretty fried.

GREY

(snappy)

Can you remember from when you last saw your readout?

OZRAN

Well, they were right behind us,
flanking us but for precise
coordinates -- I just can't say.

A tense beat as Grey contemplates this, gauging the
impossibility of his situation.

GREY

Well, this should buy us a few hours
at most. We better begin repairs.

OZRAN

Agreed.

Grey picks up an engineering tool and begins to perform
procedures on a panel. They seem like second-nature to him,
as if he is performing them unconsciously.

Ozran also begins work on a panel. It was more laborious for
him with his Gorn physique, which does not go well with
delicate work. But we can see that Ozran in his years as an
engineer has adapted to the situation.

He delicately cradles the equipment like alligators cradle
their young in their ferocious maws. Grey has a worried
expression. A few times, he inhales air as if to speak but
then stops himself.

This goes on for a few minutes. Finally, Grey decides to
talk.

GREY

What I don't get is, those are
Peregrine fighters. They are only
used by the Federation - there's no
record of any person or institution
who was not a member using them. Why
did they fire?

Ozran pauses for a moment considering the situation.

OZRAN

I don't know.
(Beat)
But I don't like the look of it.

ON OZRAN WE --

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. ENTERPRISE

A scenic view of the great ship.

INT. ENGINEERING

ROBERT KINNAN (from "Beggars and Choosers") and the rest of the Engineering teams - BOYLE (from "Aftermath") and CHAMBERS, are deep in work.

GRIL DOJAR walks out of a turbolift. Kinnan sees him coming and walks over to him.

DOJAR

Oh, hello Kinnan. Grey told me to make regular checks of Engineering to keep it up to stat.

KINNAN

(sarcastically)

How kind of him. Come on, I'll show you around.

They move from panel to panel. Kinnan indicates each one and Dojar nods.

When they reach a particular panel, Dojar shakes his head.

DOJAR

(points disapprovingly)

The Quantum Induction Core efficiency has fallen by point zero one percent.

KINNAN

(protesting)

But that's literally a minuscule drop! How would Grey notice something like this?

Dojar pats Kinnan on the back sympathetically.

DOJAR

(knowingly)

Trust me, he'll notice.

Kinnan sighs and gets out some Engineering tools, and begins to work at the various panels.

KINNAN

(to Boyle)

Ensign Boyle, pass me that Quantum Flux Stabilizer!

BOYLE

Yes sir.

Boyle takes out a ENGINEERING TOOL and hands it to Kinnan.

He continues to work at the panel.

KINNAN

(to Dojar)

Well, don't just stand there!

DOJAR

I'm not an Engineer, sir.

KINNAN

Maybe not, but we could use an extra hand. Could you keep the containment field aligned?

DOJAR

Right away.

Dojar moves off and begins to work on a panel.

KINNAN

(sighing)

Thank you.

Kinnan bends over to work at his own panel.

KINNAN (CONT'D)

(wearily, to himself)

I better get this done soon

(beat)

Or the Chief'll never let me hear the end of it.

INT. READY ROOM

Inside the Ready Room is Captain NEIL CROSS. Cross is looking at Admiral THEL from his viewer. Thel is an Andorian and looks a lot like the Andorian delegate seen in the fourth Star Trek film.

THEL

(introductory)

Captain.

CROSS

(responding)

Admiral.

THEL

I regret to inform you, Captain, but radicals from the Anti-Tech movement attacked your shuttle in orbit above Daystrom. They used two Peregrine fighters disguised as escorts.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

They moved in the moment Grey beamed onboard and opened fire on the shuttlecraft.

A look of HORROR on Cross's face.

THEL (CONT'D)

It disappeared from our sensors and was possibly destroyed. The radicals destroyed their craft moments later, and the Anti-tech movement claimed responsibility. I am beginning a search operation Captain, but don't hold out any hopes. We're not expecting to find anything.

A long silent moment.

CROSS

I see. The Enterprise can be there --

THEL

(interrupting)

Captain, I appreciate the offer but it is imperative that the Enterprise remain in position to patrol the Klingon border.

CROSS

Sir?

THEL

There has been a steady escalation on the border -- I don't know for sure yet but we at Starfleet want to ensure that the border remains protected.

CROSS

(irritated)

With all due respect sir, there's half the fleet patrolling the border. What difference does one ship make?

THEL

It's the Enterprise. If we have the flagship at the border they'll know we are serious. I suppose I must get underway. Take care Captain.

CROSS

But --

Thel's face is replaced by the Federation logo. Cross sighs.

After a moment of deliberation, he puts himself on shipwide.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

It is my sad duty to inform you that
Lieutenant Erik Grey, Chief
Engineer...

Y'LAN is at the far corner of the Lab. He looks up at the
com system but he is completely unreadable.

INT. BRIDGE

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

...and Chief Petty Officer Narv Ozran,
Transporter Chief...

Slight gasp from SUKOTHAI, the Lieutenant manning Ops.

TALORA, curious but not overtly concerned, observes the
others' actions. Dojar is shaky. It's hit him worse than the
others. GUER moves away from his panel and stands to
attention.

INT. MESS HALL

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

...are missing and presumed dead.

We focus on a table where a few ND characters and JENNIFER
QUINLAN are sitting around a table. They hold hands, and all
look concerned. The Saurian Bartender HAL pauses in mid-
stride while serving a customer, and looks solemn.

INT. SICKBAY

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

A search is still ongoing...

Doctor ELRIS LEA, and assorted NURSES and working in Sickbay.
They pause for a moment, and look up.

INT. ENGINEERING

CROSS'S COMM VOICE

...but we must brace ourselves for
the worst.

All the Engineers pause and stand to attention. Assistant
Chief Engineer Kinnan looks particularly worried.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

The shuttlecraft in orbit of the asteroid.

Ozran is at his panel, tense. Grey is at the back of the
shuttle, trying to repair the systems. A light explosion
goes up in Grey's face.

GREY

There goes the sensors. Pass me the --

Ozran cuts him off.

OZRAN

(tired)

...quantum flux regulator.

GREY

(irritated)

I am capable of giving the order myself, Chief.

OZRAN

But now that the sensors are busted it is obvious what your next course of action will be. I read the manual too, Sir.

GREY

(orating)

With the way Cross runs his ship, you'd think no-one read the manual. It's all about half-brained tricks and wizardry to him. Like some obscure or little known technology can save him from any situation.

(beat)

It's not like that. It's a predictable and unimaginative job, but the work gets done and the ship stays intact.

OZRAN

That it is.

Grey looks at Ozran differently, but in a positive light. We can see Ozran is the first to see Grey's side of the argument. But Grey being the protocol officer he is, he brushes it aside.

GREY

(formal, snappy)

Now where is that quantum flux regulator?

OZRAN

Coming right up.

Ozran fishes through his tool kit, gets the quantum flux regulator and hands it to Grey.

GREY

You know, Chief, I wonder why someone would go to the bother of getting

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)
Peregrine fighters for the sole
purpose of destroying us. It makes
no sense!

Ozran freezes. A bead of sweat trickles down his face.

GREY (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Chief?

OZRAN
(slightly distant,
detached)
It's
(beat)
It's nothing.

Grey gives him a concerned look, but decides not to pry.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

Same as before.

CROSS (V.O.)
Captain's Log, Stardate 78167.2. The
Endeavor has been providing us with
hourly reports on the search. As
the Admiral feared, there has been
no success so far, and Thel maintains
that the possibility of either of my
officers still being alive is slim.
I still maintain that the Enterprise
should join the search, but Thel
won't have it.

INT. ENGINEERING

Cross enters Engineering, with a preoccupied look on his
face. His eyes follow a few of the background engineers.
This goes on for few minutes, and then we see Kinnan, who is
now Acting Chief of Engineering, emerge from the elevator
shaft from the upper part of Engineering. Kinnan sees Cross
and walks over to him.

KINNAN
Captain.

Cross finally turns to look at Kinnan.

CROSS
Lieutenant. You look exhausted.

Cross' opinion is quite correct, judging from the layering
in his eyes and the tired manner he handles himself, it's
quite likely Kinnan hasn't been asleep or taken a break for
some time.

KINNAN

We're working ourselves to the max
down here.

(beat)

It's what he would want of us.

Beat.

CROSS

(slowly)

I understand. How are those
maintenance checks coming along?

Cross' mind is clearly not on the conversation. Kinnan
hesitates.

KINNAN

(Abstractive)

Well sir. Well.

CROSS

I see.

Cross looks around Engineering, noting how empty it feels
without Grey. Even the engineers seem strained as they go
about their business. His expression turns to one of worry.

KINNAN

It hit us hard, sir. Very hard.

CROSS

(leans closer, quiet)

Do they know the chances of Grey's
survival?

Kinnan gives a few concerned glances at his fellow engineers
right and left.

KINNAN

They haven't got the statistics, if
that's what you mean. But most of
them have put two and two together.

CROSS

And how are they coping emotionally?

KINNAN

It's been a tough few hours, sir.
But we're managing.

(beat)

We want to be there, sir. At the
search.

CROSS

(sympathetic)

We all want to be there, Lieutenant.

(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)
(raises voice)
Thank you, Lieutenant. Carry on.

Cross turns, gives one more glance at Engineering, and exits.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is examining a CREWMAN for his check-up. Quinlan is in the corner looking for something through the PADDs. Nurses are in the room, deep in some form of work. After a few moments:

ELRIS
Crewman, you are free to go.

The Crewman nods and exits.

Elris taps her commbadge.

ELRIS (CONT'D)
Lieutenant Dojar, report to sickbay
for your annual check-up.

DOJAR'S COMM VOICE
On my way. Dojar out.

Quinlan gets up from whatever she was doing and sighs.

ELRIS
(to Quinlan)
What are you doing here anyway?

QUINLAN
Leafing through medical PADDs.
(beat)
I thought I'd save you the trouble
and examine myself.

Elris gives her a quizzical look. She's not believing one bit of it.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)
It's the annual check-up. In the
next twenty-four hours all the
officers on the ship come through
the doors of Sickbay!

ELRIS
And?

QUINLAN
It's the best way to pick up every
single event that's happening on
this ship.

ELRIS

(cynical)

Don't you actually do work at all here?

QUINLAN

Don't look at me, it was Cross's idea I would be "Tactical Advisor."

(beat)

All that means is that I attend staff meetings, and when necessary, look up the scum of the universe.

ELRIS

I don't recall 'looking up scum' a priority on anyone's list...

QUINLAN

Exactly. I have to do something to keep myself occupied, and this is it.

ELRIS

You're not much help, in Sickbay or anywhere else for that matter.

QUINLAN

Blame Cross. I didn't want to be here in the first place.

ELRIS

It's so typical of Neil...

They exchange glances.

Dojar ENTERS. Elris points to a biobed, the same one the crewman was sitting on.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(to Dojar)

Over here.

Dojar walks over and sits down on the biobed. Elris begins to scan him over.

DOJAR

(visibly worried)

I wonder if they're okay.

ELRIS

(focusing on tricorder)

Wonder if who's okay, Lieutenant?

DOJAR

Ozran and Grey.

(MORE)

DOJAR (CONT'D)

I wish we were there... just to do something, anything, rather than hang around and wait for a result. I wish --

Elris folds up her tricorder.

ELRIS

Your check-up is complete.

Dojar nods, still preoccupied, and exits.

Elris taps her commbadge.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Crewman Coon, report for your annual medical check-up.

COON'S COMM VOICE

I'm on my way. Coon out.

ELRIS

(to Quinlan)

So, what have you picked up standing around over there?

QUINLAN

Well, Dojar is the fourth person in here you have had for your check-up in here expressing concern about Grey and Ozran in just the last ten minutes.

ELRIS

(wryly)

You think I didn't notice?

Quinlan waves this aside. She's making another one of her "statements" and she isn't going to let anything get in the way.

QUINLAN

My point is it seems like half the ship wants to be at the search party.

Elris nods. She knows this all too well.

ELRIS

Or more.

QUINLAN

And here we are, at the Klingon border. I'm no Counselor, but I know when ship's morale is plummeting
(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

(beat)
and this is definitely one of those
times.

ELRIS

(somber)
It's like it's getting worse by the
hour.

QUINLAN

Yeah, well I'm not letting it get
any worse.

Beat.

ELRIS

You don't mean --

QUINLAN

Yes I mean. I'm taking this to the
Captain.

ELRIS

Jen --

Quinlan exits.

Elris sighs as Crewman Coon enters. Elris points to the
same biobed she has done previously.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(to Coon, distracted)
Over here.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Same as when it was last seen.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Grey and Ozran are still at work. Ozran flinches. Grey stops
doing his work for a moment.

GREY

(irritated)
Can you stop doing that?

OZRAN

(indignant)
You try living with an alien organism
embedded in your chest.

GREY

That continual flinching is extremely
irritating, Chief.

OZLAN

And it is also not voluntary. So I do not see why you are pressing me about this.

Grey pauses, as if embarrassed about what he is to say next.

GREY

(admitting)
I'm tired Chief.

OZLAN

(indifferent)
Oh?

GREY

I'm the Chief Engineer. I don't tire, at all.
(beat)
At least not in front of my subordinates.

OZLAN

I'm sure that very important to you, but I really don't care about you losing face.

GREY

care. As Page 12, Paragraph 16 --

OZLAN

(cutting off)
You've made your point.

Ozlan returns to his work. Grey does not return to his repairs, and waits a few seconds before speaking.

GREY

(voice raised)
Page 12, Paragraph 16, of Efficient Command, states: "A Commanding Officer must always make a positive example to his subordinates."

Ozlan sighs, but decides not to press Grey, not caring enough.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The great ship at impulse.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross is sitting facing the commlink. Thel is on the screen.

THEL

(somber)

We have still had no success in finding any trace of the shuttle. I know you want to be there, Captain, but I am happy to report I have been able to enlist the help of the Daystrom Institute, the Vulcans, the Trill, the Dosi, and nearly every ship nearby. We expect the search to be concluded in a few hours, but we're still doubtful about finding any survivors.

(a beat)

Forwarding the latest data to you now.

CROSS

Thank you, Admiral.

Thel nods.

THEL

Endeavor out.

Thel's face is replaced by the Federation logo. We hear a beep at Cross's door.

CROSS

Enter.

Quinlan enters.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Please, sit down.

Quinlan remains standing.

QUINLAN

Captain, we need to join the search. Now.

CROSS

Our more immediate concern is the Klingons --

QUINLAN

(angry, interrupting)

No, it isn't. You can fool your goons out there, Captain

(motions to the bridge)

with that garbage, but not me. The Klingon build-up is two sectors away from here!

(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

You have your crew investigating
comets and space dust when you know
they want to make a difference and
try to save their friends!

CROSS

(harsh)

I'm sorry. I have my orders, and one
more ship in the search will make
just as much difference as one more
ship here.

QUINLAN

(debating)

But it's where they want to be! The
pressure of knowing their comrades
are in trouble and they can't help
is unbearable for them. If you were
any kind of leader you'd set a course
for that planet now.

CROSS

(angry)

Dismissed.

QUINLAN

Captain --

CROSS

(icy)

That wasn't a suggestion, Crewman.

Quinlan gives Cross one last defiant glare, and then exits.

Cross looks out the window into space, wearing a troubled
expression.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Same as before.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

At the moment, we see only Ozran.

OZRAN

Grey, pass me that quantum flux
regulator.

Nothing.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(concerned)

Grey?

We hear a loud snore. We now look at Grey, fast asleep, still clutching his tools. Ozran walks over and carefully picks up an engineering device, trying not to disturb Grey.

Grey rolls over in his sleep and bumps his head on the panel.

GREY
(groggy, yawning)
Wha?

Grey stretches and gets up. He starts shaking his head. It's clear he has a headache.

GREY (CONT'D)
My head...

OZRAN
(slightly amused)
You were asleep.

Memories suddenly come flooding back to Grey.

GREY
(embarrassed)
Uh, yeah it seems I was. So, where was I?

Uneasy, Grey picks up the nearest piece of equipment and returns to his work.

We see Ozran open his mouth as if to say something, but he then decides against it and he too returns to his work.

ON OZRAN, WE --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The great ship at impulse.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is running a BLEEPING MEDICAL DEVICE over Ensign PETERSON, a Security Officer, who is lying in a biobed.

Elris scans over him for a few minutes before folding up her medical equipment.

ELRIS

Your medical check-up is complete.

PETERSON

Thanks, Doc.

Peterson gets off the biobed, and exits. Elris returns to her desk and begins putting her equipment away.

Quinlan enters.

QUINLAN

(deadpan)

Lea, we need to talk.

Elris is slightly disturbed by the serious tone of her voice, it's quite unlike Quinlan. Elris looks over at NURSE AGOLIVE, the only other person in the room.

ELRIS

Nurse, do you mind?

AGOLIVE

Not at all, Doctor.

Agolive EXITS. Elris turns back to Quinlan, and she motions for her to come to her office. The two go over. Elris sits at one side of the table, Quinlan across from her.

ELRIS

All right Quinlan, what is this about?

QUINLAN

The search.

Elris sighs slightly.

ELRIS

(tired)

The Captain won't disobey orders, will he?

Quinlan nods.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I warned you about that before you even went in there.

QUINLAN

So what are we going to do about it?

ELRIS

Nothing.

QUINLAN

(trying to get at her)

That doesn't sound like the Elris Lea I know.

ELRIS

Look, Jen, we can't force the Captain to violate a direct order. I understand that this is killing the crew -- but he has no other choice. And neither do we.

QUINLAN

(persistent)

So you're backing down?

ELRIS

Look, he's the Captain. I need to have some positive working relationship with him.

QUINLAN

(still defiant)

I thought you were different, Lea. I was wrong.

Quinlan gets up and storms out. Elris looks at the door in quiet anguish for a moment, and then returns to her work.

A few moments later she gets up and leaves and as Agolive returns.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Grey and Ozran are still at work. The panel explodes in Grey's face. More of an exhale of smoke and light burst of electricity than a huge explosion. Grey closes the panel, soot all over his face. He is frustrated.

GREY

(tired)

There goes the sensors.

Grey turns to Ozran.

GREY (CONT'D)

Any luck?

Ozran looks up from his work. His face is also blackened by exhaust, but not as much as Grey.

OZRAN

Not yet.

Ozran goes back to his work.

GREY

Hopefully, one of these other panels is still functioning, and I should be able to continue my work from there.

OZRAN

(pessimistic)

Hopefully.

Grey chooses to ignore Ozran's comment. Grey begins to look and examine the remaining panels in the shuttlecraft. He tries to open them one by one, but they are all closed tight. After a more times, he tries to open one, but it explodes, far more violently than the light explosion earlier.

Grey falls back in agony, and we can see his hand is VERY BLOODY indeed. Grey YELLS in pain, and STRETCHES OUT on the floor, ROLLING back and forth. Ozran BOLTS back from his work, and opens a panel to the rear of the shuttle entitled "MED KIT." He pulls out medical instruments and runs them over Grey's hand.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(frantic)

Steady, damn it!

Grey continues to ROLL, until Ozran grips Grey's chest with his Gorn strength and holds him still. He begins to run a medical instrument over Grey's hand, which we can clearly see has a piece of metal driven right through it.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(informative)

I'll be able to heal the pain, but that piece of metal is too deeply embedded for me to get it out. We'll need to get you to a sickbay before we can do that.

Ozran uses a hypo spray to inject something and Grey lies peacefully now that he is no longer in pain. Ozran wraps a white cloth around Grey's hand.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

I wouldn't recommend working with that hand for a while.

GREY

For an engineer you certainly know a lot about medicine.

OZRAN

One of my last
(anger tinged with
sadness)
"hosts" was a doctor.

GREY

I see.

OZRAN

Now, you just lie there. I'll finish the work.

GREY

But I'm the Chief Engineer!

OZRAN

(mock instance)
"Doctor's Orders."

Grey is irritated at Ozran's attempt at humor, but lies down. Ozran goes back to his panel and begins working again.

It isn't long before it too explodes in his face. Ozran emerges from the panel.

GREY

There goes the work.

OZRAN

Any bright ideas?

Grey thinks for a moment.

GREY

Try the remaining panels. Perhaps one of them still works.

OZRAN

When you tried that, you nearly got your hand blown off.

GREY

True, but it's the only option we have left.

Ozran considers this for a moment. He then bends down to Grey and places his medical kit beside Grey.

OZRAN

Alright, but if one of those panels blows up, use this
(MORE)

OZRAN (CONT'D)
(he points to a medical device)
To heal whatever wounds I have. If that doesn't work, inject me with this
(he points to a hypospray)
Understand?

Grey nods.

Ozran gets back up. He tries to open each of the remaining panels, with considerably more care than Grey's earlier attempt, but they are all fused shut.

OZRAN (CONT'D)
There goes our last option.

There is a silence as the two men think. Grey is the one who finally breaks the ice.

GREY
You know, I never expected to die like this.

OZRAN
No one dies how they expect.
(beat)
No one lives how they expect, either.

Both Grey and Ozran reflect for a few moments. Once again, it is Grey who speaks.

GREY
Do me a favor, Ozran. Call me "sir."

OZRAN
(surprised)
"Sir?"

GREY
We are still on duty, and you haven't called me "sir" or "Lieutenant" since we entered the asteroid field.

Ozran considers the request a little odd, but decides to honor it.

OZRAN
Yes, sir.

Ozran begins heavy thinking, and is deeply concerned about something. Grey looks at him, concerned.

GREY
What?

OZRAN is still deep in thought. He begins to perspire.

GREY (CONT'D)

Chief?

OZRAN

(slowly)

There is something I need to tell
you, sir.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The great ship at impulse.

INT. MISSION OPERATIONS

It's now a hive of activity, compared to its relative sparseness earlier. Ensigns and crewmen are scurrying about, looking over the readouts from the search. We can see a 3D map of the area on the wall as around six of the officers study it, one of whom is Sukothai.

A few officers are studying smaller, 2D readouts. Others are in the corner viewing PADDs.
26 It's clear despite the fact the Enterprise has been ordered to stay across the Klingon Border, that studying the latest reports of the search has become the secondary mission.

Sukothai walks away from the 3-D readout. She goes over to a desk where there is a stack of PADDs. She goes through the PADDs and picks one, and then walks out of the room.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan is sitting in the science lab, unreadable as always.

The science lab looks like many "key" scientific devices have been removed and replaced with strange Q'tami ones.

Lieutenant Sukothai enters the room and approaches Y'lan with the PADD, the one seen earlier.

SUKOTHAI

Here is the latest report from the
rescue mission.

Y'LAN

Thank you, Lieutenant.

Lieutenant Sukothai exits.

Y'lan begins to routinely scan the data with a Q'tami "sensor table" or advanced Q'tami apparatus of some sort.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross is facing the commlink. Thel is on the viewer.

CROSS
(lost all hope)
Any sign of them?

THEL
(somber)
Not a thing. Not even wreckage...

CROSS
(clutching at straws)
No wreckage?

Thel is slightly peeved at being interrupted, but he responds to Cross's hasty comment.

THEL
We weren't able to get a good scan on the Anti-Tech fighters before they self-destructed. It's quite possible that they had a weapon which tore apart the shuttlecraft on the molecular level, rendering any debris unrecognizable. Possession of such a weapon would also explain their self-destruct.

CROSS
(crestfallen)
I see.

THEL
(moving on)
We have scanned nearly the entire system. Everyone in the system has been quite helpful and informative in the effort, but we still couldn't find them. I am forced to officially end the search in one hour.

CROSS
At least you tried.

THEL
But it wasn't enough.
(Beat)
Endeavor out.

Thel's face is replaced by the Federation logo.

Cross turns his chair to face his window, and looks out at the stars. He is very disturbed, and it isn't until this point that it really hits him that he may never see Grey or Ozran again.

A single tear trickles down his cheek. He quickly brushes it aside. He is the Captain, he simply can't show any weakness.

A BEEP at his door. Too deep in thought, he doesn't notice it. The beep sounds again, more persistent than last.

CROSS

Come in.

Elris enters. Cross swings his chair around to face her.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Doctor. What can I do for you?

ELRIS

We should join the search, sir. Now.

CROSS

(realizing)

You're in league with Quinlan, aren't you?

ELRIS

No, sir. But I do believe that it is the right thing to do, sir.

Cross sighs and rubs his temples. It has been a very stressful day.

CROSS

The search will be over in one hour. There's no point in joining now, especially considering that we'd be disobeying a direct order.

(beat)

Elris, I sympathize -- I tried to make Thel reverse those orders myself but he wouldn't have it. And sitting around here on the damn Klingon border is hurting me just as much as everyone else. But this isn't an order which is unacceptable. We are useless over here but we'd be equally useless over there. Troubled minds isn't a good enough reason for mutiny.

ELRIS

Captain --

CROSS

You're dismissed.

Elris would like to debate the point further, but she knows that's the best she will get out of him. She EXITS.

Cross turns to face the stars again, visibly troubled.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan is deep into using his device, which is very strange and alien indeed. The device is emitting "confirming" colors, which are red, green, blue, red, green, blue, in this order.

The colors are quite literally bathing the room. Positive beeps back the colors up.

After a few minutes of this, we get blue, yellow, and a negative beep. Y'lan presses a few buttons and checks this negative beep.

A three-dimensional image appeared of the Daystrom System, showing the planets, stellar phenomena, and the ships which were there when this sensor sweep was made. The 3-D image then focuses on the asteroid field just beyond the Earth-like Daystrom planet.

A section of the asteroid field is flashing yellow. Y'lan presses a few buttons and the yellow vanishes and is replaced by a shuttlecraft. Y'lan then turns off his apparatus and exits.

ON THE TURNED OFF ALIEN DEVICE, WE --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. READY ROOM

Same as before. The door bleeps.

CROSS
(distracted)
Come in.

Y'lan enters.

Y'LAN
Captain, I think you'll want to see
this.

Curious, Cross turns his chair around and Y'lan hands Cross a PADD. Cross presses it, and he sees a something similar to Y'lan's 3-D readout. He mulls over it for a moment.

CROSS
If I read this correctly, Y'lan,
someone deflected the shuttlecraft's
signature and the rescue team were
therefore unable to find it.

Cross looks up at Y'lan, confused.

CROSS (CONT'D)
How did you discover this?

Y'LAN
Someone is confusing the sensors of
the search ships, cloaking the shuttle
if you will. Q'tami sensors can easily
break through this.

CROSS
Well, I doubt Grey would cloak the
shuttle, especially if he's in
trouble.

Y'LAN
He hasn't. The cloak has been
projected from one of these ships.

Y'lan points to the rescue ships.

CROSS
But the shuttle was fired on by ships
of the
(realizing)
Anti-Tech...

Y'LAN

(continuing)

Wouldn't the Anti-Tech have gone for one of the bigger targets? The T'Shara had over a hundred of the top Vulcan scientists and was just as well armed as that shuttle.

CROSS

I guess that just didn't occur to me...

Cross begins looks very somber.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Can you determine which ship is using this device?

Y'LAN

can. It's the --

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

OZRAN

-- Trill.

The shuttle's interior is the same as before.

GREY

(disbelieving)

The Trill fired on us? Why?

OZRAN

(sigh)

My very existence as a joined entity contradicts what the Trill has been told for years about joined Trill. Normally, ten percent of the Trill 31 population can be joined. The fact that a Gorn was successfully joined contradicts this age-old theorem. And the Trill Symbiosis Commission does not want this made public.

(flinch, beat)

Though I'd hardly say I'm stable. Either way, they want me dead.

GREY

So they just blast you out of the sky.

OZRAN

(bitterly)

Just another reason for me to hate being joined.

GREY

Why haven't you ever spoken about this? Why didn't you tell me sooner?

OZRAN

Because there was still a hope of escaping. And if it ever got out, I would be signing by own death warrant.

(pause)

It looks like I am going to die anyway.

GREY

It seems so.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD

Not far from the Asteroid field, we see the searching fleet.

The Sovereign Class Endeavor is spearheading the expedition, moving at a very slow impulse, surrounded by a flotilla of frigates and science ships, all spread out across the field.

One of them is very menacing looking. It's a frigate of Trill design, but modified and armed to the teeth with weapons. It's like every possible nook and cranny in the design has a torpedo launcher or a phaser bank.

It is the flagship of the Trill Symbiosis Commission, the S.S. Odan.

INT. ODAN BRIDGE

There are various Trill manning their stations. The bridge is smaller than the Enterprise's bridge, and with no aesthetic pleasures.

Cramped and utilitarian, 25th century gizmos in place only where necessary. Sitting in the "Captain's chair" is NARLAN REX, a sharp, gruff looking military man to which a scowl is the expression of choice.

THEL'S COMM VOICE

This is Admiral Thel of the Endeavor. I thank you for your efforts, but unfortunately we have now scanned the entire radius with no sign of the shuttlecraft. We can only assume the worst. Thank you for your co-operation. I cannot begin to express my gratitude. Thel out.

A thin, vicious smile spreads across Rex's face after hearing the message. With an uncompromising manner, he swivels his chair around to face the ship's SCIENCE OFFICER.

REX

(concise)

Sciences, do we still have the location of the shuttle?

SCIENCE OFFICER

Yes sir. She never moved.

REX

(demanding)

Are there still life signs onboard the shuttle?

SCIENCE OFFICER

Yes sir.

Rex swivels his chair slightly away from the Science Officer, but not to its original forward position. He mulls over his options for a moment, but only for a moment. Then he turns back to his original position facing the viewscreen.

REX

(commanding)

Are our next two automated Peregrine fighters ready?

The Helmsman works at his console.

HELMSMAN

Yes sir. The Peregrine fighters are in position at the north pole of the Daystrom Planet.

REX

Sciences, activate the fake life sign signals on those ships.

SCIENCE OFFICER

Yes sir.

REX

Good. Helmsman, standby to activate the fighters and have them head straight for the shuttle, destroy it and then go for the asteroid. Sciences, inform me the moment all the search ships are out of range.

SCIENCE OFFICER / HELMSMAN

Yes sir.

REX (CONT'D)

Very well. Now, here is what we do...

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The great ship at impulse.

INT. BRIDGE

The bridge crew are tense and focused. All the senior officers are at their posts. Y'lan is also on the bridge, standing just left of the Operations Panel which is manned by Sukothai. He is deep in thought.

GUER

We have entered quantum slipstream,
Captain.

CROSS

(distracted)

Thank you, Lieutenant.

(beat)

Dojar, can you raise the Endeavor?

Dojar taps at his panel for a few seconds to attempt this.

DOJAR

No, sir. The Quantum Slipstream Drive
is interfering.

CROSS

(optimistically)

Well, I'd rather be there on time
and alert them later than never get
there at all.

A pause. Everyone is quite preoccupied with their own feelings. Talora, however, is not, and rekindles the fire of conversation.

TALORA

The vanity of Starfleet. The Romulan
Star Navy would never risk the
flagship for two crew members. It's
ridiculous!

CROSS

(annoyed)

And what do you suppose we should do
instead?

TALORA

Leave them to die, of course. I'm
sure Starfleet could find quite
acceptable replacements.

DOJAR

May I respectfully remind the
Commander that what we are dealing

(MORE)

DOJAR (CONT'D)
with here is a highly dangerous
internal threat to the Federation.
We cannot ignore it.

Judging from Cross's expression, he didn't want nor need
this help.

TALORA
(irritated)
I retract my statement.

Y'LAN
Captain, shall I remodulate your
sensors to be able to pierce the
cloak I told you about?

CROSS
Yes, Y'lan. I would like that.

Y'lan approaches the Operations Panel. Sukothai steps aside.

Y'LAN
Remodulating now.

Y'lan rapidly types a long and complex pattern into the panel.
Sukothai looks over his shoulder with silent awe.

EXT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Same as before.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Grey and Ozran are against a corner, waiting for their doom.
Ozran begins mumbling.

GREY
What was that?

OZRAN
I said, "Those who have passed before
me into the sky, greet me, for I
approach you."
(beat)
It's the Gorn hymn prior to death.

GREY
You don't strike me as the religious
type.

OZRAN
Then you have poor perceptions. All
Gorn are religious.

Grey considers this. There is a long pause.

GREY
(quietly, softly)
I don't have a religion.

OZRAN
Then what do you think happens after death?

GREY
We die, and then cease to exist.

OZRAN
What a waste.

GREY
(quietly)
Maybe. But the Universe is a wasteful place.

There is another pause. Few if any words need to be spoken now, as they come to the end.

OZRAN
You are reconsidering, aren't you?

GREY
(uncertain)
It's just that, that...
(beat)
Nothing makes sense anymore Chief.
None of it. I've always been so sure of what's going to happen next, but now -- now I simply don't know.

OZRAN
(sympathetic)
You are scared of the uncertainty of the void?

Grey nods.

GREY
(confiding)
I've been in near-death situations before, but I've never felt like this.
(beat)
I suppose, then, I didn't have time to think it over. Maybe those who die quickly are the lucky ones, they don't have time to think about it.

Grey sighs. No more words need to be said.

EXT. ODAN

The Trill starship appears once more.

INT. ODAN BRIDGE

Same as before.

SCIENCE OFFICER

Sir, the Dosi Frigate is now out of sensor range.

REX

(urgent)

Good. Now Helm!

HELMSMAN

Yes sir.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

We are being hailed.

REX

On central viewer.

Same as before. The face of BRUCE MADDOX, who has aged greatly since we saw him last on TNG, is clearly visible on the viewscreen.

MADDOX

This is Bruce Maddox of Daystrom Planet! We have detected two more fighters bearing the markings of the Anti-Tech movement. Our frigates and science vessels have no weaponry -- we beg you to assist!

REX

We'll pursue them. Odan out.

The visage of Maddox immediately vanishes, replaced by the familiar sea of space.

REX (CONT'D)

Helm, pursuit course but make sure the fighters stay out of our weapons range.

HELMSMAN

Yes, sir.

REX

Switch main viewer to the data from the lead fighter.

The image changes to the dense asteroid field. We see images transmitted from the lead fighter.

The images are an endless array of asteroids. After a few moments, the shuttle comes into view.

REX (CONT'D)

(fatalistic)

Weapons, have both fighters lock all
weapons on the shuttle.

WEAPONS OFFICER

Yes sir.

Beat.

HELMSMAN

The fighters are entering weapons
range.

REX

(biting)

Fire!

ON REX'S BLOOD LUSTFUL EXPRESSION, WE

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. ENTERPRISE.

The great ship at quantum slipstream.

INT. BRIDGE

Same as before. Y'lan is now right next to Sukothai, who has returned to manning the Operations Panel.

GUER

Dropping out of quantum slipstream,
sir.

CROSS

Set a course directly for the shuttle,
maximum impulse!

GUER

Aye.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, there are two Peregrine
class fighters firing at the shuttle!

Y'lan's hand comes down on the operations panel and does a rapid succession of movements over it. In just a moment he is finished.

CROSS

(surprised)

Y'lan?

Y'lan backs off, Sukothai returns to her readings.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, all the torpedoes and phaser
shots from the fighters are veering
away from the shuttle.

CROSS

What type of Q'tami magic was that
this time, Y'lan?

Y'LAN

Nothing so complicated, Captain.
Merely a long range code projected
to the torpedoes to scramble their
targeting scanners.

CROSS

Right.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, they are recharging weapons!

CROSS

Dojar, hail the Trill ship.

DOJAR

Yes sir.

(beat)

They are responding.

The screen changes from space to the face of Narlan Rex.

REX

(very well feigned
heroism)

Captain! It's good to see you. The
Anti-Tech were trying to attack
Daystrom but we have forced them
into the asteroid field!

CROSS

Don't play fool with me, Rex. I can
see through that little cloak of
yours, and I know those are your
fighters.

REX

(outraged)

How dare you imply...

CROSS

I have all the sensor data on the
subject right here, pointing
undeniably at you. Now stand down
and let me get...

Rex decides he can't feign any innocence with Cross any
longer.

Rex's face vanishes, replaced by the screen.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, they are firing again at
the shuttle!

(beat)

I have redirected the weapons, sir.

CROSS

Guer, move us in, maximum impulse!

Dojar, fire all weapons at the fighters the moment we are in
range.

DOJAR AND GUER

Aye Captain.

EXT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle is the same as before, but the menacing Trill Starship Odan is not far off from it.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before. Ship shakes lightly.

OZRAN

The turbulence is definitively picking up now.

GREY

(clarifying)

That wasn't turbulence. That was weapons fire.

OZRAN

(surprised)

A fire fight? Here?

GREY

Look!

Grey points at the front window. In a distant silhouette is the Trill starship, a bulky and ominous shape on the horizon. Much nearer and of more immediate concern is two fighters soaring right at the shuttle, much closer to view.

OZRAN

(motioning to the distant ship)

That's the flagship of the Trill Symbiosis Commission. The S.S. Odan.

GREY

(surprised)

They want you dead so much they send out the flagship?

OZRAN

(bitterly)

They will do anything to keep the peace.

GREY

(sarcastically)

You don't say?

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise races towards the Trill starship Odan.

INT. BRIDGE

Same as before.

CROSS

Guer, when will we be in range?

GUER

Four minutes, Captain.

SUKOTHAI

The fighters have stopped charging their weapons.

CROSS

Only because we can nullify those. Mark my words, they're up to something.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, the lead fighter is charging a tractor beam!

CROSS

Y'lan?

Y'lan shakes his head.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Dojar, will we be in weapons range before they charge the beam?

DOJAR

Negative. They will have the beam charged before we get there.

Cross thinks fast. He's running out of time, and options.

CROSS

Guer, warp one!

GUER

(surprised)

Sir?

CROSS

(urgent)

Do it!

GUER

Yes sir! Warp one!

CROSS

On my mark Guer, drop out of warp. Dojar, on the same mark, open fire on those fighters!

GUER AND DOJAR

Yes sir!

A tense moment, and then finally:

CROSS

Mark!

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise drops out of warp, at the same time as the lead fighter engages the tractor beam. The tractor beam latches onto the shuttlecraft, and the Enterprise releases a volley of quantum torpedoes.

The fighter's tractor beam throws the shuttle towards the asteroid. Then the torpedoes impact on both fighters, and they EXPLODE.

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Grey and Ozran sit at the back at the shuttlecraft as the stars whir about them.

OZRAN

(queasy)

I'm feeling dizzy.

GREY

Feel thankful we still have internal dampers or we'd be all over the place.

Ozran looks sick. He moans a bit.

OZRAN

I'm still dizzy.

The mass of the asteroid now fills the windows as they plummet down.

GREY

(grimly)

You won't for long.

INT. ODAN BRIDGE

Same as before.

REX

(bitter)

Status report!

SCIENCE OFFICER

The fighters are both destroyed. We have no other backups!

REX

(thinking)

We are in over our heads! Helmsman, plot a course back to Trill, maximum warp and sensor scrambled!

HELMSMAN

But sir, what of Ozran?

REX

(grim satisfaction)

He will burn up in the atmosphere.

HELMSAN

And if he doesn't?

REX

(cryptically)

I have some...

(beat)

arrangements just in case.

HELMSMAN

Yes sir.

INT. BRIDGE

Same as before.

SUKOTHAI

Captain, the Trill starship has gone to warp!

CROSS

Keep a lock on her, Lieutenant!

Sukothai works at her panel.

SUKOTHAI

I can't sir.

(beat)

They scrambled their course.

Sukothai's panel beeps urgently.

SUKOTHAI (CONT'D)

The shuttle is falling towards the asteroid!

CROSS

(urgent)

Quickly, Mr. Guer, maximum impulse to the asteroid!

GUER

Aye.

CROSS

(desperate)

Dojar, inform me the moment we enter transporter range! We've got to get them out of there!

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

The asteroid grows much larger on the surface. Both Grey and Ozran are becoming more sickly and pale as the gravity tugs against them.

OZRAN
What a way to die.

GREY
(grimly)
It's about time. I've had enough of waiting for my death.

OZRAN
Well, you got your wish.

Sweat trickles down both men's face as the hull of the shuttlecraft begins to burn. Grey finally snaps as the pain becomes unbearable.

GREY
(nearly crying)
I don't want to die!

EXT. SPACE

The shuttlecraft scorches down towards the asteroid, impacting in an explosion on the asteroid's surface.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross watches the shuttle blow up and then grimly turns to his tactical officer.

CROSS
(quietly)
Dojar?

Grimly, Dojar hits his panel.

DOJAR
(morose)
Bridge to Transporter Room.
(beat)
Transporter Room, respond.

Beat.

CROSS
(somber)
I guess that's --

He is interrupted by Ozran.

OZRAN'S COMM VOICE

(mock anger)

What kind of service is this? I would have gotten us out at least a few minutes sooner!

There is a light chuckle of relief among the bridge crew as the tension is released.

DOJAR

(relieved)

Are you all right down there?

OZRAN'S COMM VOICE

A few sings, a broken ego, but other than that, we're fine.

DOJAR

Thank you, Chief. Bridge out.

Cross turns back to the viewscreen.

CROSS

Guer, plot a course back to the Klingon border, maximum warp.

GUER

Yes sir.

CROSS

Dojar, report this incident to Starfleet Command.

DOJAR

Yes sir.

Cross looks over at Talora.

CROSS

(light-hearted humor)

I wonder how the Romulans ever survived if it didn't try to rescue its officers.

TALORA

Interesting. I was wondering the same thing about you humans.

CROSS

We'll never agree on this issue, will we?

TALORA

Maybe not. But we will continue to -- cooperate.

RENAISSANCE: "Unusual Circumstances" - ACT FOUR

46.

Cross smiles and looks back at the viewer.

ON THE RELIEVED BRIDGE CREW OF THE ENTERPRISE, WE

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. CORRIDOR

Grey and Dojar are waking side-by-side down a corridor.

DOJAR

It's good to have you back.

Grey shakes his head in mock disappointment.

GREY

Funny, that was one thing I never thought I'd hear anyone say.

Grey pats Dojar on the back.

GREY (CONT'D)

It's good to be back.

Beat.

GREY (CONT'D)

Care to join me for breakfast, eleven hundred hours tomorrow morning?

DOJAR

Are you serious?

Dojar eyes him with mock scrutiny.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

(mock concern)

Are you sure you haven't been replaced with a Founder? Infected by parasites?

GREY

(smiling)

I'm sure.

(beat)

Well, see you there.

INT. ENGINEERING

Grey enters, refreshed. He bathes for a moment in the familiar sights and sounds of Engineering, and then begins to pace across the room.

Brushing off a speck of dust here and there, examining panels with mock-scrutiny. Various engineers on duty look at Grey with quiet relief. Grey looks at the readouts and makes notes. An elevator shaft stops, and Kinnan gets off.

KINNAN

(overjoyed)

Grey!

GREY
(business-like)
That's "Lieutenant Grey," to you.
Come on, we have work to do.

KINNAN
(surprised)
Work?

GREY
Yes. Lieutenant, have a look at these
warp core readouts. The Quantum
Induction Core efficiency has fallen
by point zero one percent! And look
at this...

Kinnan smiles a bit as Grey goes on -- He's back, at last.

GREY (CONT'D)
Lieutenant, are you listening to me?

KINNAN
What? Oh, yes of course.

Beat, as Grey reconsiders.

GREY
(neutral)
It's good to be back, but we really
have to get back to work here,
Lieutenant.

Kinnan nods.

KINNAN
Yes, sir.

Grey notices that his staff are looking at him. All the work has stopped, and there is a silent elation and relief visible in each one of them.

GREY
(half mock insistence,
half irritation)
Come on people, move! Boyle, Chambers!

The engineers snap out of their daze as Grey begins to issue each one of them orders (but we hear nothing.) We watch as the engineers one by one move off to control panels and begin doing work.

We can see Grey vigorously barking at them as well. He's himself again.

Then he turns to Kinnan with a faint smile, and the two walk over to a panel, and Grey begins computations and adjustments while Kinnan assists.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The great ship at impulse. Alongside her is the Sovereign Class Endeavor. The two ships move synchronously through the void of space.

CROSS (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 78172.7.
According to recent reports, the
flagship of the Trill Symbiosis
Commission, the S.S. Odan, has retired
to Trill. Pursuit is at this time
impossible. Admiral Thel, commander
of this sector, has asked to meet me
in private concerning the Trill
Situation.

INT. READY ROOM

Cross is at his desk, waiting. The door whooshes aside and
Admiral Thel enters.

CROSS

Please, sit down.

Thel does so.

THEL

(straight to the point)
Captain, whatever transpires within
these walls will never leave this
room, understood?

Beat as Cross considers.

CROSS

Go on, Admiral.

THEL

Captain, we will be pursuing no action
against the Trill whatsoever.

Cross is shocked.

CROSS

What? Admiral, with all due respect...

THEL

The Trill Symbiosis Commission tried
to kill two of our officers. Yes, I
know.

Thel draws closer to Cross.

THEL (CONT'D)

(low whisper)

We were very disturbed when we got this report, Captain. The Symbiosis Chief of Staff has explained her actions to me. Captain, there is a truth within the Trill which is so compelling, so shocking, so dangerous to their own internal security,

(beat)

that they must cover it up with a lie.

Beat as Thel waits for Cross to prompt. Cross doesn't like this one bit, but he needs to know.

CROSS

(neutrally)

Go on.

THEL

We have deleted your sensor logs proving Trill involvement and edited the logs of your discussion with the Trill. The official explanation will be the Anti-Tech movement is indeed to blame. They were the ones who used this cloak to trick us.

CROSS

(angry)

Why didn't you just wipe our minds and replace them with the false events too, while you are at it!

THEL

Because we aren't animals, Captain. And because sometime in the future we may need people to know the truth.

CROSS

Yes. A shipload of people knowing the truth when you need it does sound like a convenient pet, doesn't it?

THEL

Captain, I know you are hostile to this, but look at it our way. It's this or a war the Federation really can't afford right now.

(beat)

Even as we speak the Trill fleet is growing. They are modifying their freighters to be warships, they are patrolling their own borders - and yesterday work on the first Trill Orbital Battery begun.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

(beat)

They are becoming a power within a power, Captain.

CROSS

(somber)

Are you saying the Trill are preparing to separate from the Federation?

THEL

They may. Of all the internal fleets, the Trill fleet is the one most rapidly growing. Whether they do or not, I am in no position to reveal the atrocity they committed here today.

CROSS

I thought I knew you, Thel. I remember when you were just and always campaigning for the greater good.

THEL

I haven't changed Cross, just wizened.

Thel points at his Admiral insignia.

THEL (CONT'D)

The world has a whole new meaning when you put this on.

CROSS

Yes. Corruption becomes the norm.

THEL

I'll pretend I didn't hear that, Captain.

CROSS

You can pretend what you like.

Beat.

THEL

(softly)

I'll be going now.

Thel walks over to the door, which whooshes aside, and then exits. Cross turns to face the stars, silently disturbed.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Ozran is at the Transporter controls. Thel walks in, and steps on the Transporter pad.

OZRAN

Sir, can I ask you something before you leave?

Thel nods.

THEL

Of course.

OZRAN

When this happened - that is, when I was joined -

THEL

Ah, yes. You're referring to the cover story I gave you, that the Trill symbiont had to be dangerously genetically engineered for it to be compatible with you, a genetic manipulation which nearly killed the symbiont and was "not recommended."

OZRAN

(bitter)

Yes. You said that with that the Trill Symbiosis Commission would accept it as an adequate cover-up.

THEL

They did.

OZRAN

Then why did they come after me?

THEL

Just a precaution, to ensure the truth was never revealed.

OZRAN

(angry)

How many more "precautions" will they take, Admiral?

Thel raises his hands in a gesture.

THEL

That I do not know.

Ozran's hands fly up the transporter panel.

OZRAN

Energizing.

INT. READY ROOM

The bleep at Cross's door sounds. Cross swivels back.

CROSS

Come in.

Quinlan and Elris enter, both slightly anxious.

QUINLAN AND ELRIS

Captain Cross --

They stop.

CROSS

Please, one at a time. Sit.

Cross indicates to the chairs. Quinlan sits in the one Thel was sitting in moments ago, while Elris pulls up a new chair.

Cross points to Quinlan.

CROSS (CONT'D)

You first.

QUINLAN

(insistent)

We should have been there sooner -
this charade would not have happened.

CROSS

But I would be facing a reprimand. I
stick by my decision, Quinlan.

QUINLAN

Sir...

CROSS

You may go now.

QUINLAN

With all due respect...

CROSS

(sharper, formal)

You are dismissed.

It obviously isn't a request.

QUINLAN

Yes, sir.

Quinlan leaves.

Cross turns to Elris.

CROSS

I can understand Quinlan doing this,
it's her nature. But you?

ELRIS

It seemed like the right idea, sir.

CROSS

Maybe, but it isn't about the search,
is it?

Beat.

CROSS (CONT'D)

I know we aren't... getting along,
but you have to at least trust me,
Doctor. Not as a husband to a wife -
But as a Captain to his subordinate.

ELRIS

Neil - Captain, I just can't give
you that trust. I know your flaws
too well.

CROSS

I see.

(beat)

Elris, I wasn't even behind this.

ELRIS

It makes no difference. You accepted
it.

CROSS

(demanding)

But that isn't why you went against
me, is it?

A silent pause. We can see the regret in both their eyes.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Dismissed.

Elris leaves, and Cross turns his chair around and broods in
front of the stars.

INT. MESS HALL

Grey enters Mess Hall, which is its usual hub of activity.

He walks through the room, uneasy. He never liked recreational
facilities. His eyes scan through the crowd, and then they
lock on to someone.

He walks towards that person hesitantly, and as we come closer
we can see it is Ozran, who is sitting by the bar and enjoying
some form of exotic drink while speaking to the COUNSELOR.

Grey watches, still somewhat hesitant. After a few moments
the counselor leaves. Grey comes closer.

Ozran is still watching the counselor go as Grey approaches, so it's not until Grey is immediately on top of him that Ozran is aware he is there.

OZRAN
Grey - I mean, sir.

GREY
(attempting to be
casual)
Narv.

Ozran is a bit startled at Grey's use of his actual name, and not just that, his first one. Grey sits on the empty stool next to Ozran.

OZRAN
Can I buy you something, sir?

GREY
Water would be nice.

This also registers with some degree of surprise on Ozran's part.

OZRAN
Water?

A little smile forms on Grey's face.

GREY
The year was 2392. The Sheliak war
was well underway...

This breaks the uneasy tension between Grey and Ozran.

OZRAN
(mock annoyance)
All right, all right, I don't need
the history lesson. Hal, one glass
of water please.

HAL
Coming right up.

Hal goes under the counter.

GREY
It looks like we didn't die after
all.

OZRAN
(slightly amused)
You got your wish.

Grey fidgets a bit - He's a bit embarrassed by the last comment he made. Ozran takes a slurp of his exotic drink.

OZLAN (CONT'D)

If it helps any, I was scared out of my wits too.

GREY

(surprised)

Really?

OZLAN

Mmm-hmm. Too scared to utter a word. So now I'm back, alive, to continue living in this hellhole.

Beat.

OZLAN (CONT'D)

(deadpan)

I envy you, Grey. You have no idea the eternal battle which wages with me in every living moment. The cycle never ends.

Grey nods.

GREY

Yes, I've been wondering about that. Why were you joined?

Ozlan pauses, contemplatively, as if recalling something particularly painful:

OZLAN

I was piloting a shuttle which was to ferry my previous host, Tarnis Ozlan, to a conference. One other Trill, her valet, was present. We hit a spatial disturbance. Our systems were damaged. Tarnis was killed, but her symbiont lived. The symbiont had to be transferred to someone else. Since the valet was the only person able to perform this task, I let him join me to the Trill - on the assumption it would be temporary. But it was three days before help came... and by that time, we were joined for life.

(beat)

And it's been a source of eternal pain ever since.

GREY

Haven't you been taking counseling sessions about that?

OZRAN

Yes, the counselor has tried to help me.

Grey nods.

GREY

The new counselor - the one who came onboard last week?

OZRAN

That's the one. She's very sympathetic.

(beat)

It's helped, but it the battle within doesn't stop.

GREY

I know how you feel.

OZRAN

(annoyed)

How could you possibly know how I feel?

Hal appears from behind the counter. He waves the glass of water in front of them.

HAL

You still want this?

GREY

Yes, please. Over here.

Hal gives him his drink and then moves off to tend to another customer.

GREY (CONT'D)

Because I have to live with that. I have always looked to the quick and easy road to success, and only now I realize who I trampled along the way.

(beat)

People like you. I'm ashamed of myself. I should be a real leader, not just someone who never shows a flaw, but who can get down to his team, to understand them as well, to treat them with respect and not as simple tools.

A pause, as the two consider the eventful day.

OZRAN
 (lightening the mood)
 I suppose I'll have to tell those
 who have gone before me to cancel my
 reservation, eh sir?

Grey lightly smiles.

GREY
 Please. Call me Erik.

Grey takes a sip of his water.

OZRAN
 Sure, Erik. As the Gorn proverb tells
 us, "The path ahead will be full of
 rocks, but the Clan will prevail."

GREY
 (humored)
 How touching.

Grey finishes his water, slogging it all down in a gulp.

OZRAN
 (lightly)
 You took that quick.

GREY
 In the Sheliak War, we had to learn
 to consume our rations as quickly as
 possible.

Beat.

OZRAN
 Another?

GREY
 Please.

WE PAN OUT THE WINDOW --

EXT. ENTERPRISE

Until the Enterprise herself is in full view. We pull away
 from Grey and Ozran inside to a shot of the Enterprise flying
 off into the distance. We linger on the

SHOT OF THE FADING ENTERPRISE FOR A LONG BEAT, THEN -

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END