

**STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE**

**"Foreign Territory"**

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TEASER

FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

SEQ: Pivotal moments from "Day In" and "Between Two Worlds."

QUINLAN (V.O.)  
Previously on Star Trek: Renaissance.

INT. MESS HALL

Quinlan sits at a table looking particularly drunk, talking to HAL. Quinlan is holding a BOTTLE OF VODKA.

HAL  
You know, I think you've had a few  
too many bottles of that.

QUINLAN  
I never really liked synthehol, Hal.  
Hally Hal Hal.

Quinlan laughs.

INT. CORRIDOR

A drunk QUINLAN staggers down the hallway, and bumps into TALORA.

TALORA  
Quinlan.

QUINLAN  
Talora.

They move past each other, but then Quinlan turns around.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)  
Hey, Talora. What was with all the  
snide comments down on the planet  
before?

TALORA  
I do not think now is a good time to  
discuss--

QUINLAN  
2  
I think it's a very good time to  
discuss, ACTUALLY. So, what's up?

TALORA  
I did not think your reactions were  
appropriate to the situation we were  
in.

QUINLAN

In what way? How was I meant to react?

TALORA

I expect members of Starfleet to act in a professional manner.

FADE TO BLACKNESS.

FADE IN:

INT. TALORA'S QUARTERS -- MORNING

The room is dark. In the bed lies TALORA, fast asleep.

COMPUTER VOICE

The time is six-fifteen hours.

Talora's eyes open, not groggy, but ready for morning. She slides her feet over the side of the bed, stands up, and walks past the window to the washroom.

INT. CORRIDOR

Talora emerges from her quarters in a neatly-pressed uniform, carrying a PHASER. As a few crewmen greet her, she responds without emotion.

INT. PHASER TRAINING ROOM

A small, spherical room with a flattened base, about three meters in diameter, that serves as a floor. The metallic walls are a dark gray.

In the middle stands Talora, phaser in hand, carrying an irritated expression on her face.

TALORA

Computer, time.

COMPUTER VOICE

The time is oh-seven-ten hours.

TALORA

(beat)

Begin phaser training. Level one.

COMPUTER VOICE

Level one initiated.

After a BEAT, a panel of the wall begins to GLOW red in the center. It simultaneously begins to hum. Talora makes a calculated turn and fires her phaser at the glow, which immediately goes out. Another beat, and another panel glows green and begins to hum. Talora turns and shoots her phaser at it. More and more panels light up, increasing in speed.

Talora continues firing at the targets.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.

INT. CORRIDOR

An angry Talora steps out of the TURBOLIFT and strides down the corridor.

Crew that pass her address her, but she ignores them. She soon comes to a door and rings the chime. After a BEAT, the door CHIRPS and opens.

INT. QUINLAN'S QUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

QUINLAN has just finished getting dressed, straightening out her tunic, and is en route to the replicator when she sees Talora.

QUINLAN

Oh, Commander. Welcome to the Quinlan residence.

TALORA

I'm in no mood for that, Crewman.

QUINLAN

What can I do for you then, Commander?  
(to replicator)  
Coffee, decaf, black.

TALORA

You'd better make that regular coffee, Crewman. You were late.

QUINLAN

(a bit confused)  
If I recall correctly, my duty shift starts at oh-eight-hundred hours.

TALORA

You're correct.

QUINLAN

I'll be spending the day reconfiguring tricorders. Doctor Elris and Lieutenants Grey and Dojar all need theirs done. You don't use a tricorder, do you?

TALORA

(cold)  
No...

QUINLAN

You can probably tell I'm not looking forward to the task.

TALORA

Then you are in luck. Your tricorder duties will be postponed for a few hours.

QUINLAN

Something more interesting?

TALORA

You failed to report for phaser training this morning for the second time in a row.

It dawns on Quinlan. She looks like she's somewhere between apathy and regret, but not at either extreme.

TALORA (CONT'D)

You will spend three hours in phaser training before you begin your duties every morning for the rest of the week, and I'm putting a reprimand in your file. Consider yourself lucky.

QUINLAN

Commander, I can make it up...

But Talora is on her way out. Almost out the door, she turns to Quinlan.

TALORA

And by the way, if you're looking for more responsibility, I'm sure Lieutenant Dojar wouldn't mind having you on security. You'll be a perfect shot by Friday.

As Talora exits, Quinlan looks on in disbelief.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Talora, Quinlan, CROSS, ELRIS, DOJAR, Y'LAN, and GREY are assembled. Cross is speaking, using the wall screen as his visual aid.

CROSS

Ladies, Gentleman, and Q'tami, I give you...

(beat)

The Torraht Expanse.

Quinlan shifts in her chair.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Twelve sectors of unclaimed territory, full of nebulae that would fascinate any scientist. A week ago, the starship Reliant sent a probe to survey the systems closest to the Federation. Unfortunately, the Reliant was called to the Klingon border...

DOJAR

...And we're here to finish the job they started.

CROSS

Exactly. Subspace radiation between us and the probe means that we can't communicate with it. I'm sending a shuttle to retrieve the probe.

DOJAR

That's dangerous space.

TALORA

The most dangerous areas are closer to the Breen end of the Torraht Expanse. That's where most of the pirates are.

ELRIS

I thought that was controlled by Breen warlords.

TALORA

Exactly.

CROSS

The risk isn't in sending the shuttle so much as in not sending the shuttle. It's an advanced probe, and we can't have pirates taking them apart.

QUINLAN

They're not pirates.

CROSS

They obey no law and have no loyalties. Would you prefer I called them "renegades?"

QUINLAN

I think many of them have a moral standard -- it's just different than yours.

TALORA

We're here to discuss retrieving a probe, not your past, Crewman.

ELRIS

(pointedly)

Exactly.

Talora shoots Elris a look with a hint of an uncharacteristic GLARE.

CROSS

Commander, you're heading this mission.

TALORA

Yes, sir.

CROSS

If that's it, then the rest of you are dismissed.

The crew file out, leaving Talora and Cross behind.

CROSS (CONT'D)

You'll need someone else on the mission too, of course.

TALORA

Lieutenant Dojar will be an excellent tactical advisor.

CROSS

That's not who I was thinking of.

TALORA

Captain?

CROSS

I want you to take Quinlan.

TALORA

Crewman Quinlan lacks about everything necessary for an away mission --

(beat)

responsibility, adherence to the chain of command...

CROSS

Not to mention respect for senior officers.

TALORA

You read my mind.

CROSS

She does have expertise on the area.  
After all, she used to be a pirate.

TALORA

She still may be, Captain, which is  
why I would protest her being on  
this mission.

CROSS

If you thought I'd listen. You'll  
leave tomorrow at noon.

TALORA

(beat)  
Yes, Sir.

CROSS

Dismissed.

Talora turns, and exits.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is stopped.

INT. SHUTTLE

TALORA sits at the controls, and DOJAR is helping her out.

DOJAR

I've uploaded the trajectory of the probe into the shuttle's database, plus a detailed map of the area. Watch out for these plasma currents. They can sweep a probe off course.

TALORA

Thank you, Lieutenant.

DOJAR

No problem, Sir. Good luck.  
(beat, then smiles)  
But you don't believe in luck.

TALORA

I certainly do not. But -- thank you.

DOJAR

(smiling)  
You're welcome.

Dojar steps out of the shuttle, just as QUINLAN steps in.

TALORA

First Officer's log, Stardate 78356.1. Crewman Quinlan was on time today.

QUINLAN

She's early, actually. I've got fifteen minutes.

TALORA

You'll understand if I don't congratulate you. I've been here for an hour preparing the data with Lieutenant Dojar.

QUINLAN

Care to let me in on the information, Commander?

TALORA

(pointing to map on  
console display)

We believe that the probe was swept  
off course by these plasma currents  
here, possibly to this area near the  
Lenkos system.

QUINLAN

All right. When do we leave?

EXT. SHUTTLEBAY

A lone shuttle departs from the shuttlebay.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora is at the helm; Quinlan is at a side station.

TALORA

Shuttle Bavaria to Enterprise. We're  
preparing to jump to warp.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross is standing in the center of the bridge; Dojar mans  
tactical.

CROSS

Acknowledged, Commander. And good  
luck. To both of you.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

(slightly uneasy)

Thank you, Sir. Bavaria out.

DOJAR

They're at warp, Sir.

CROSS

All right. Helm, I believe we have  
a nebula to check out.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is examining a female Bajoran officer named RAYTA.  
Rayta is very pregnant and very eager. She shows a lot of  
respect for Elris, more than she would most superior officers.

ELRIS

(routinely)

Metabolism stable... Skin progressing  
nicely... Skull bones could speed it  
up...

RAYTA

(worried)

That's not going to be a problem, is it?

ELRIS

No. I can give you an injection. And even if I didn't, your baby will come out fine.

RAYTA

(relieved)

Oh, good.

ELRIS

(folding up tricorder)

Well, it look's like your doing quite well. The injection will be ready by tomorrow. I can have it sent to your replicator, Ensign, or you can come here.

RAYTA

Oh, I can stop by.

ELRIS

All right.

(warm smile)

Congratulations, Ensign.

RAYTA

Thank you. Oh, and we've picked a name.

ELRIS

Oh?

RAYTA

(eager)

Well, two actually. We can't decide. Diranna or Adami.

ELRIS

I'm sure you'll figure it out.

RAYTA

Well, Doctor, could I have your opinion?

ELRIS

Oh. Um... certainly. I'd go with Adami, I suppose.

RAYTA

(a little let-down)

Oh.

(MORE)

RAYTA (CONT'D)

Thank you... I'll take that into consideration. I'll pick up that injection tomorrow.

ELRIS

I'll be here.

Rayta walks out, leaving Elris to ponder their exchange.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle whizzes by at WARP SPEED.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora is again at the helm. A mug of TEA sits on the console next to her.

She is silent, almost reclining in her comfortable chair.

Quinlan is working in the rear of the cabin, behind a console.

It's hard work: she's got a panel open and is working on the internal circuitry beneath the console. An open toolkit lies next to her, with several tools lying around. She HUMS to herself.

QUINLAN

You know, when I was at the Academy, I majored in sensor engineering. For my exit project, I created an algorithmic mapping processor that extrapolated star charts faster than the computers we had at the time. I wish I had that now.

TALORA

No doubt that was a long time ago. You can't be expected to remember it.

QUINLAN

Of course not. But it would speed things along.

TALORA

We have several hours till we need to bring it online. I'm sure you'll figure it out.

QUINLAN

Your confidence is heartwarming.

TALORA

I pride myself on my compassion.

Quinlan jabs at the circuitry for a second longer, then removes her tool and wipes off her hands.

QUINLAN

Okay, try something for me, Commander.  
I want to see if my transmission system is still intact, so run a multi-spectral analysis.

Talora complies.

TALORA

I'm not getting anything different than usual.

QUINLAN

Good. You shouldn't. All right, that'll be all for the moment.

Quinlan resumes work. A moment later, she mildly shocks herself.

She recoils instantly.

TALORA

What happened?

QUINLAN

I shocked myself. Don't worry, I'm alright.

She picks up a tool and slowly and deliberately returns to work.

TALORA

Perhaps it was your aim.

QUINLAN

Yes, that must be it.

(beat)

It must really pain you to know that I'm missing phaser practice because of this.

TALORA

You'll have plenty of opportunities when we return.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle at warp speed.

INT. SHUTTLE -- TWO HOURS LATER

Same as before, but there is more of a mess in the rear. Quinlan makes a few adjustments to her circuitry.

QUINLAN

I think I've got it. Let's bring this online.

TALORA

Bringing auxiliary sensor palette online. Beginning power transfer... Activating long-distance mapping... bringing to full resolution.

QUINLAN

Ready?

TALORA

I'm bringing the new system online.

QUINLAN

Well?

TALORA

It would appear that your creation works.

QUINLAN

I'll begin mapping the plasma currents.

TALORA

That would be a good idea. Hopefully, the map will provide us with a good starting path for the probe.

QUINLAN

You got it, Commander.

Quinlan moves to a forward console and begins working.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

You know, I read up on this probe before we left.

TALORA

I'm glad you decided to take the initiative. My log will be full of all these rare occurrences today. Are the stars lined up?

QUINLAN

Permission to speak freely, Sir?

TALORA

Granted.

QUINLAN

Well, remarks like that aren't much of an incentive to be on time or to  
(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)  
do background research. I had  
something interesting to say.

TALORA  
Then I apologize. Now tell me about  
this probe.

Talora's expression suggests that she isn't really sorry,  
and Quinlan ignores this.

QUINLAN  
It was the last of the Tarenek-class  
to be built. Admiral Kurt cancelled  
the project and diverted the resources  
to fortifying protection around Earth.

TALORA  
I believe I heard that. Earth is now  
the one of the most heavily fortified  
planets between Romulus and  
Tzenkethon, I believe.

QUINLAN  
Yeah. It's a shame, actually.

TALORA  
At the time, it was necessary.

QUINLAN  
I meant the cancellation. We haven't  
been sending out nearly as many probes  
as we used to.

TALORA  
I would have thought that you would  
have appreciated the defenses. Very  
surprising.

The shuttle cabin falls silent.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle at warp.

INT. SHUTTLE -- AN HOUR LATER

Same as before.

TALORA  
We're approaching the estimated  
coordinates.

QUINLAN  
Good. It should be somewhere in the  
area.

TALORA

Initiating scans.  
(confused)  
The probe is not here.

QUINLAN

But we predicted its flight path!

TALORA

I'm running further scans. I'm picking up traces of neon exhaust...

QUINLAN

That's standard emissions from this type of probe.

TALORA

The probe was here thirty minutes ago. It shouldn't be far.

QUINLAN

Then it must have been carried somewhere.

TALORA

The plasma currents wouldn't have taken it far.

QUINLAN

That's not what I meant.

TALORA

You think somebody picked it up?

QUINLAN

If I were in this area, I would. Could be valuable.

TALORA

I'm running an extended scan.  
(beat)  
There is only one ship in the area.

I'm running its signature through the database.

She taps some controls, and a diagram of a small ship with a menacing shape appears on a wall screen.

QUINLAN

A medium size fighter. Maybe thirty meters long. Probably Kensettel, from the looks of the nacelles. I'm reading the probe's signature as well.

TALORA

The ship is moving away at warp. We can catch up in about ten minutes. I'm laying in a course.

QUINLAN

I don't know if that's such a good idea, Commander.

TALORA

They have our probe, and we're going to retrieve it.

EXT. SPACE

A medium-sized fighter, like we saw in the diagram, is at low warp. Its hull is dark gray with patches of blue, and the sleek shape suggests that this was built to take ships much larger than it.

Our shuttle slowly creeps up on it, matching its pace.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before.

QUINLAN

Keep us at a safe distance.

TALORA

That's standard procedure, Crewman.

QUINLAN

I'm not kidding. I'm scanning the ship... it's packed with weapons, shields, not to mention our probe.

TALORA

I'm hailing them.

QUINLAN

Commander, be careful.

TALORA

I know what I'm doing.

She taps a control, and an image of Captain KESTOL, a chubby and exotic humanoid alien on an equally exotic bridge appears.

KESTOL

This is Captain Kestol. Identify yourselves.

TALORA

This is Commander Talora of the United Federation of Planets. You have our probe.

KESTOL

The probe is my property.

TALORA

Finders aren't keepers.

KESTOL

Maybe not where you're from, but we aren't exactly at Earth. Or Romulus.

TALORA

Hand over the probe, Captain, or I will take it by force.

QUINLAN

(sotto voce)

Commander...

Talora silences her.

KESTOL

You can forget it.

The channel shuts off.

TALORA

Fire a warning shot.

QUINLAN

Commander! That ship is capable of blowing us to shreds. You remember what I did before Coular?

Talora considers this, but not for long.

TALORA

This shuttle is more maneuverable than the Enterprise. I intend to win this fight.

QUINLAN

But you won't!

TALORA

Don't play fortune-teller with me. Prepare quantum torpedoes. One dorsal, one ventral.

QUINLAN

(sighing)

One dorsal, one ventral.

TALORA

Fire.

EXT. SPACE

Two torpedoes exit from the shuttle. They branch away, then converge on Kestol's fighter, detonating at opposite points of the hull. The fighter shakes, but as the explosions subside, it is still very intact.

A TRACTOR BEAM emerges from the fighter and engulfs the shuttle.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before.

TALORA

We're in a tractor beam.

QUINLAN

Not anymore. I'm repolarizing the hull.

TALORA

The tractor beam's gone.

EXT. SPACE

The fighter fires two red PHASER BEAMS at the shuttle. The first makes the shields flicker; the second penetrates.

INT. SHUTTLE

Same as before.

TALORA

Get those shields online!

But it's too late. The lights flicker and dim. The controls start to flicker as well. The shuttle rocks badly, and lurches again.

QUINLAN

Main power coils have fused. The sensor upgrades finished the job.

TALORA

Switch to auxiliary.

QUINLAN

I can't--

Quinlan and Talora disappear in the red shimmer of a RED TRANSPORTER BEAM, leaving the darkened shuttle cabin behind.

INT. FIGHTER -- CELL

Quinlan and Talora re-materialize to find themselves in a small, spartan cell without their weapons or combadges.

A doorway of sorts offers a view to a corridor that leads out of sight. Quinlan approaches the doorway, only to be blocked by a FORCE FIELD.

She surveys her surroundings. Two cots. Nothing else.

TALORA  
We're in a prison cell.

QUINLAN  
(sarcastic)  
Let's not jump to conclusions.

KESTOL (O.S.)  
Your Commander is right.

Kestol has appeared at the doorway.

KESTOL (CONT'D)  
Jennifer Quinlan, I believe?

QUINLAN  
That's me.

KESTOL  
In Starfleet. With a Romulan, no less. I trust this wasn't voluntary.

TALORA  
(cutting in)  
The Enterprise will find us. You do know that, don't you?

KESTOL  
I'm not so sure.

QUINLAN  
You're not safe, even out here.

TALORA  
And I doubt that the Romulan Empire would be happy about having one of their nationals in captivity.

KESTOL  
We're a long way from Romulan space. You're going to be here for a while. You'll have to pardon the furniture. I'm not much of an interior decorator.

Kestol walks down the corridor, leaving Quinlan and Talora alone.

Quinlan sweeps the austere, monochromatic room one last time with her eyes before selecting a cot to recline on.

QUINLAN

Give yourself some credit. The grey  
and the grey work well together.

On this, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SPACE

The fighter at warp, shuttle in tow in a TRACTOR BEAM.

INT. FIGHTER -- CELL -- NEXT DAY

QUINLAN has pulled out a panel near the doorway and is working at some circuitry. TALORA is standing as close to the doorway as she can without being zapped by the force field, watching to make sure no one is coming down the corridor. She is holding a piece of metal from the cot, fashioned into some sort of weapon.

TALORA

Strange.

QUINLAN

What?

TALORA

It's been a long time since anyone has been back here to check on us.

QUINLAN

Our host could be asleep.

TALORA

Then another crewmember would check on us.

QUINLAN

Not necessarily. Kestol could very well be the entire crew. I went solo on my fighter.

TALORA

That's true. But it's still strange. A good captain would interrupt even sleep to check on prisoners. Are you making progress?

QUINLAN

Actually, yes. I think we can try.

TALORA

Do it, then.

Quinlan connects something in the circuitry, and recoils from the shock.

The force field in the doorway FLICKERS as sparks fly from the exposed circuitry.

Talora extends a hand through the doorway; it passes through unhindered.

QUINLAN  
(as Talora)  
Good work, Crewman Quinlan.  
(as Quinlan)  
Oh, thank you Commander.

Quinlan grabs her own homemade weapon and follows.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

The corridor ends by opening into a smallish room that appears to be the junction of all the main compartments of the fighter. A pair of transporter pads are in an alcove of the junction; a few consoles line the wall. Doors lead to quarters, the cargo hold, the helm compartment, and the engine room.

The room is moderately lit and the floor is grated. Almost every bit of wall space is covered in consoles, monitors, and control panels.

Talora and Quinlan arrive at this junction ready to strike, but find it unoccupied. Talora spots a locker and opens it, finding a stock of weapons.

QUINLAN  
Be careful! Make sure the exit  
refraction hasn't been reversed.

Talora examines her phaser.

TALORA  
It looks all right to me.

QUINLAN  
Let me see.

Talora tosses her the phaser. Quinlan examines it quickly but thoroughly.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)  
Looks good. They're probably okay.

Talora takes another phaser, while Quinlan works on one console and brings up a layout of the fighter.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)  
(pointing to one of  
the doors)  
Helm's that way. We'll take it first.

TALORA  
(reluctant)  
Very well.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

A small cabin with room for two maximum. A console stretches across the front, next to a viewscreen and lots of monitors. Currently on the viewscreen is a picture of the SHUTTLE, fully intact. On a side console, two COMMBADGES have been discarded.

Quinlan and Talora burst in, phasers ready. They are surprised to find no resistance. Quinlan moves forward, to find KESTOL'S BODY slumped over in one of the seats.

QUINLAN  
Commander! It's Kestol.  
(feeling for pulse)  
He's dead.

Talora instantly rushes over.

TALORA  
How did he die?

QUINLAN  
No phaser wounds... No blood stains.

TALORA  
Poison?

QUINLAN  
Or internal problems. His body could  
have just shut down.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is still stopped.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris is fiddling with some equipment next to a bio-bed. Ensign Rayta enters.

RAYTA  
Doctor!

ELRIS  
Oh, hi. I have your injection ready.

RAYTA  
Thank you, Doctor.

As Elris retrieves the hypospray from a locker, Rayta examines the equipment that Elris was working on.

RAYTA (CONT'D)  
If you don't mind my asking, Doctor,  
what's all this?

ELRIS

I'm having some trouble with the cardiac scanners. I don't think they've worked properly since we first left spacedock.

RAYTA

Why don't you get it repaired?

ELRIS

Lieutenant Grey has other priorities. This sickbay isn't the only thing that isn't running smoothly. I suppose a redundant cardiac scanner isn't the most important thing.

(hands Rayta hypospray)

Here's the injection.

RAYTA

I have a friend who works in Engineering. Perhaps he can stop by.

ELRIS

Oh, Ensign, you don't have to do that. I'll get by.

RAYTA

No, I'll make sure it's fixed.

ELRIS

(giving in)

All right, then. Thank-you.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise. Same as before.

INT. SICKBAY -- HOURS LATER

Elris is doing paperwork at her desk when a man in an engineering uniform enters. It's Bajoran CHIEF BELA.

BELA

Doctor?

ELRIS

Chief. What can I do for you?

BELA

I believe you have a cardiac scanner out of alignment?

ELRIS

(slowly)

Yes, that first biobed.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora is examining Kestol's body when Quinlan enters.

TALORA

Anyone?

QUINLAN

The fighter's empty.

TALORA

No signs of foul play. No bruises, skin marks, or anything else. Nothing in the cockpit suggests that he poisoned himself.

QUINLAN

Nobody could have poisoned him either. It must have been something internal.

TALORA

(beat)

We'll put this matter aside. I'm going to send you down to the shuttle.

QUINLAN

(begins to nod, then has a thought)

Wait, that's not such a good idea. The shuttle might be damaged. Life support might not be online.

TALORA

That'll be the first thing you restore. I'll beam down an air bubble.

QUINLAN

What will you be doing while I'm gone?

TALORA

(slightly annoyed)

I will be learning how to work the controls.

QUINLAN

Do you have any idea what you're doing?

TALORA

I'm not switching jobs, Crewman. Prepare to beam down.

QUINLAN

(beat)

Fine, just be careful. It's risky.

TALORA  
(again, annoyed)  
Of course.

INT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle interior is almost pitch black. A single console is flickering.

This shuttle has been dead for a while.

A red shimmer appears, but nothing comes along with it. It's as if thin air is being beamed into the ship.

Another shimmer appears. This time, it's QUINLAN, with her commbadge on this time. She carries a flashlight and a case of power cells. As soon as she inhales, she coughs the air out.

QUINLAN  
Ughh!

TALORA'S COMM VOICE  
Is the air sufficient?

QUINLAN  
It's sufficient, but not much more.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE  
What's the status of the shuttle?

Quinlan attaches a power cell to the flickering console. It comes to life, as do a few consoles around it. She reads the displays.

QUINLAN  
Life support isn't functional.  
Engines off-line.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE  
Is it repairable?

QUINLAN  
Doubtful. I think our late Captain gave this shuttle a few more punches after we were captured.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE  
The air bubble I beamed down will last you twenty-five minutes. Get life support back online, then I'll beam you back.

QUINLAN  
I don't know if I can.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

You're going to have to.

Quinlan considers protesting, but decides not to.

QUINLAN

You got it.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

I've got it?

QUINLAN

(rolls eyes)

Yes, Commander.

Quinlan sets to work, unpacking a few more power cells.

EXT. SPACE

Same as before - shuttle in a tractor beam.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora has hauled the corpse away, and is working at the console. She looks confused, since she has no idea what she's doing.

EXT. SPACE

The tractor beam begins to fade a little, as it weakens in strength. The shuttle sways the slightest bit.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

She touches a few controls. A few lights begin to blink; she hurriedly tries to retrace her steps and reverse her mistake.

The lights continue to blink.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE

What's going on up there, Commander?

TALORA

I'm having a little trouble with the tractor beam.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE

Be careful!

TALORA

(exasperated)

I am, Crewman.

She hits a few more controls, finally reversing her mistake.

EXT. SPACE

The tractor beam is now back at its original strength; a minor tragedy has been averted.

INT. SHUTTLE

Quinlan works diligently in the ill-lit cabin. She moves from console to console, working to restore systems. A half dozen power cells are attached to various consoles around the ship.

QUINLAN

Commander, I've restored life support.  
I don't know how much more this  
shuttle can take, though.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

I'm beaming you up.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora enters from the helm compartment. She touches a few controls, shakes her head, and tries again. Quinlan appears in a SHIMMER on the transporter pad.

QUINLAN

(inhaling)  
Ahh, fresh air.

TALORA

You said you were able to get life  
support back online?

QUINLAN

It took some coaxing, but yes.

TALORA

We will move to the engines next.  
I'll beam down to the shuttle. I've  
figured out how to take us out of  
warp, so you can begin examining the  
probe.

QUINLAN

You're not suggesting that we try to  
ride home in that shuttle?

TALORA

Any trained officer knows that she  
is better off in her own ship,  
especially when in foreign territory--

QUINLAN

We're bound to be attacked!

TALORA

(cooly)

We weren't before.

QUINLAN

That's because you went looking for a fight. Nobody had the chance to attack.

TALORA

You have your orders, Crewman.

QUINLAN

Commander, I'm telling you from experience. That shuttle...

ORA

(cutting her off)

When we do return to the Enterprise, you will receive another reprimand, this time for insubordination.

Talora steps up to the transporter pad, and motions to Quinlan, who angrily blocks her way.

QUINLAN

(angry)

You may be the senior officer out here, Commander, but this is my area of expertise. I know the kind of people that live out here. They're not afraid of the Federation. Starfleet tactics and protocol and what not doesn't cut it out here!

TALORA

(slowly loosing her cool)

You have never tried Starfleet tactics. I'm ordering you to get out of my way!

Quinlan steps aside. Talora takes her place on the transporter pad.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Energize.

QUINLAN

If we get that shuttle online, there will be fighters on our tail within minutes!

TALORA

I'm willing to take that risk.

QUINLAN

You're taking an enormous risk, one  
you shouldn't be taking!

TALORA

If you want to spend the rest of our  
trip in that cell, keep talking.

(beat)

Energize.

Quinlan fumes, but she has no choice. On her angry  
expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.

INT. BRIDGE

It's a shift change. As officers leave the bridge, others relieve them.

GUER is currently in command and DOJAR is just leaving. CROSS enters from the back and all officers stand.

GUER  
Captain on the Bridge!

CROSS  
At ease. Mr. Guer, enjoying the hot seat?

GUER  
(smiling)  
It's much more comfortable, Sir.

Cross laughs, but then his expression returns to normal.

CROSS  
You're relieved, Lieutenant.

GUER  
Yes, Sir.

As they pass each other, Cross asks in a lower voice:

CROSS  
Any news?

GUER  
Still no word from the Commander, Sir.

CROSS  
It's been eight hours since they were supposed to meet us here.  
(beat)  
All right. See you tomorrow, Lieutenant.

GUER  
Good day, Sir.

Guer leaves.

CROSS

Helm. Take us within long-range scanning distance of the coordinates where they were supposed to pick up the probe. Warp 9.

HELM OFFICER

Yes, Sir.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise turns ninety degrees and jumps to WARP.

INT. SICKBAY

Elris enters sickbay and relieves the doctor in charge. As that doctor leaves, RAYTA enters.

RAYTA

Doctor!

ELRIS

Ensign. What can I do for you?

RAYTA

Well, this is kind of a personal thing, actually.

ELRIS

(fleeting frown)

Yes?

RAYTA

My husband and I are having the Ikapa ceremony for our baby tomorrow at nineteen hundred.

ELRIS

(slightly confused)

Ikapa?

RAYTA

The naming ceremony. We pray to the Prophets that the child goes far in life.

ELRIS

Oh. Right.

RAYTA

We wanted you to come.

ELRIS

(surprised)

Oh.

RAYTA  
You can come, can't you?

ELRIS  
Well... Ensign...

A beat -- Rayta is hanging on Elris's every word.

ELRIS (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I can't. I just can't  
make it.

Rayta is very let down.

RAYTA  
Oh. Well, that's OK. I understand.

She turns to leave. As she reaches the door, she turns.

RAYTA (CONT'D)  
If you change your mind, it's in my  
quarters. Deck eleven.

She turns to leave, and Elris considers her decision.

INT. SHUTTLE

Most of the consoles are now functional. TALORA is at the  
helm, working on various systems.

TALORA  
Computer, bring inertial dampers  
online.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Inertial dampers online.

The shuttle jerks a little but stabilizes.

TALORA  
Bring impulse support online.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Impulse support online.

TALORA  
Bring impulse engines online.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Impulse engines online.

Talora's commbadge chirps.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE  
Quinlan to Talora.

TALORA  
(irritated)  
What is it?

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE  
How are you coming down there?

TALORA  
I'm doing fine. You don't need to  
check up on me, crewman.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE  
What's the status of the impulse  
engines?

TALORA  
I've brought them online, if you  
must know.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE  
Warp?

TALORA  
I was about to try that, except that  
you decided to check up on your senior  
officer. Don't do it again.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE  
You got it. Quinlan out.

Talora rolls her eyes and returns to her controls.

TALORA  
Computer, bring warp engines online.

COMPUTER'S COM VOICE  
Fuel injectors are not properly  
calibrated.

Talora works furiously at the controls. After a few seconds,  
she tries again.

TALORA  
Bring warp engines online.

COMPUTER'S COM VOICE  
Bringing warp engines online.

The lights flicker, then go out for a few seconds. They  
come on again, but several consoles are flickering.

COMPUTER'S COMM VOICE  
Insufficient power to bring warp  
engines online.

TALORA

(beat)  
Forget it.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora MATERIALIZES on the transporter pad, and heads for the helm compartment.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Talora storms in. Quinlan is already at the helm, working fast but carefully.

QUINLAN

The probe is intact, for the most part.

TALORA

The shuttle, however, is not. We'll return to Federation space in this vessel. And spare me the I-told-you-so speech.

The console begins to BLEEP.

TALORA (CONT'D)

What's happening?

QUINLAN

(unsure)  
I'm not positive, but I think another fighter is de-cloaking.

EXT. SPACE

Our fighter is at warp, with the shuttle Bavaria in tow. Another fighter, slightly smaller but appearing to pack just as much punch, appears in a slight RIPPLE before becoming clearly visible.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Same as before.

QUINLAN

Yes, now I'm sure. Another fighter. They're hailing us.  
(beat, looks Talora in the eye)  
There's going to be a fight.

Talora taps her commbadge.

TALORA

Talora to Bavaria. One to beam down.

Talora disappears in a SHIMMER.

QUINLAN

(smirks)

A sound decision.

She taps a control, and the face of Human CAPTAIN CORT appears on the viewscreen. About fifty years old with a white beard, he and Quinlan are equally skilled with years of experience.

CORT

(with a slight grin)

Jennifer Quinlan. What a surprise to see you here.

QUINLAN

(cordial, as rivals)

Captain Cort. It's been a while since I've seen you. You've got a bigger ship. I expect your ego has had similar growth?

CORT

(confused)

And I see you're in Starfleet now-- but with someone else's ship--

QUINLAN

I'm afraid Captain Kestol has had an unfortunate accident.

CORT

I'm sure. Unfortunately for you, I'm in need of a fighter like Kestol's. I'm sure you'd be willing to hand it over. I'll permit your shuttle to go freely.

QUINLAN

I don't give up ships. You know that.

CORT

A shame. En garde!

Cort disappears from the viewer. Quinlan taps her commbadge.

QUINLAN

Quinlan to Talora. Get ready.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora is at the helm, ready for battle.

TALORA

We'll see if this still works.  
Computer, bring phasers online.

EXT. SPACE

All three ships drop out of warp. The smaller fighter fires on the larger, its orange disruptor beam hitting it square on the back.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

The fighter rocks. Quinlan scrambles to use the fighter's arsenal to her advantage, but has little success with the unfamiliar controls. She curses under her breath.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora makes a calculation in her head and transmits it to the console.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle lashes out at the smaller fighter. The fighter receives a phaser blast on its port nacelle.

Then a second and a third. The fighter directs its attention to the shuttle, returning the fire in a succession of orange phaser beams.

INT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle rocks, and smoke spews out of several vents. Talora hits a few more controls.

EXT. SPACE

Our shuttle takes a few more shots at the smaller fighter.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Quinlan is still working frantically at the controls.

QUINLAN

Dammit! Why are these things so complicated?

Her commbadge chirps.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

Quinlan, hurry up. I can't take this fighter alone.

QUINLAN

I'm working on it!

She hits more controls, while smoke pours out of vents in her own ship. The ship rocks, but Quinlan's eyes light up.

EXT. SPACE

Our fighter launches three golden, shimmering torpedoes. Each one slams right into its target. A small EXPLOSION rocks the smaller fighter.

A larger one destroys it altogether.

INT. FIGHER -- HELM

Quinlan settles back into her chair, exhaling, but her face is worried.

INT. SHUTTLE

Talora does no such thing. She taps her commbadge.

TALORA

Talora to Quinlan. What's your status?

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE

That fighter packed a hell of a punch. I've taken some heavy damage. Weapons and warp engines are offline.

TALORA

It's worse down here.

(beat)

We'll fix the fighter.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE

Another rather key system was damaged.

TALORA

What is it?

QUINLAN'S COM VOICE

Ships in the area will have noticed the battle.

(beat)

We've blown our cover.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at warp.

INT. MESS HALL

The mess hall is somewhat crowded with officers who have recently gotten off their shift. At one table sits Elris, alone, sipping an exotic DRINK. She looks up often at the doors, as if she's waiting for someone to enter.

And someone does -- Dojar. He goes to the replicator.

DOJAR

Potato soup, hot, extra salt.

He retrieves his steaming bowl of soup from the replicator and searches for an empty table.

ELRIS

Dojar!

His face lights up when he sees Elris. He sits at her table.

DOJAR

I finally got around to trying the potato soup.

ELRIS

Hey, Neil... Captain Cross ate it for years before I would try it. I was in for quite a surprise.

Dojar takes a sip. It suits him.

DOJAR

Not bad, although it could use some more spices.

ELRIS

You'll have to decide on those for yourself.

DOJAR

Some devennera leaves will probably do the trick.

ELRIS

Good.

(beat)

Tell me, have you ever met any of the other Cardassians in Starfleet?

DOJAR

I've met a couple. There are only a dozen or so. One was a year behind me at the Academy, and I met another at a tactical conference last year. Lieutenant... Plarick, I think was his name.

ELRIS

And?

DOJAR

We didn't exactly become best friends. He was more interested in battle tactics. And, you might say, so was I.

(beat)

Sometimes I wish there were a few more Cardassians aboard.

ELRIS

It seems like the Bajorans on this ship are really interested in me.

DOJAR

I can see that.

ELRIS

Why?

DOJAR

You're a symbol to them. You command a good deal of respect on this ship, and I don't just mean among Bajorans.

ELRIS

Thanks, but I'm not sure I deserve that.

DOJAR

Why do you say that?

ELRIS

I'm getting the feeling that the Bajoran crew on this ship have formed a sort of a lower-decks community. Ensign Rayta is one of my patients, and she noticed that some of my equipment wasn't working. Almost immediately afterwards, an engineer is sent up -- and he's a Bajoran!

DOJAR

(smiling)

Sounds like someone's more popular than she knows.

ELRIS

It gets worse. I was invited to a Bajoran ceremony. Faith-related.

DOJAR

Ahh... and you don't practice that faith.

(beat)

Did they know that?

ELRIS

I'm really not sure. I don't wear the earring, but there are Bajorans who practice the faith without the earring for other reasons.

DOJAR

(solemn)

I see. Are you going to go?

ELRIS

I told Rayta no. But... I'm having second thoughts.

DOJAR

Well, I can't tell you what to do. You're important to them, but you also need to be yourself.

(beat)

But from what I've learned, sometimes the greater good is necessary. You might not like it -- but you may find that the pros outweigh the cons.

ELRIS

I'm still not sure.

(beat)

I guess I'll have to think about it.

(beat, smiles)

Enjoy the soup.

DOJAR

I will.

Elris gets up to leave.

INT. FIGHTER -- JUNCTION

Talora steps off the transporter padd and Quinlan is already present. The air is a tad smokey, mostly towards one of the rear doors. Some cables have fallen out of the ceilings.

TALORA

What's behind that door?

QUINLAN

The engine room.

They head towards the door.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Quinlan and Talora enter. Along one wall runs a vertical conduit that is dull purple - the WARP CORE. Various other consoles line the walls.

More importantly, the room is a smoking mess. Several consoles are in ruins. The warp conduit has black blotches - BURN MARKS - in several places. The dull purple pulsates every now and then but is for the most part just plain dull purple.

QUINLAN

We're looking at some serious repairs here.

TALORA

Let's not jump to conclusions.

Quinlan is about to protest, but accepts the jab. Then she stares at the wreckage.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The fighter, dead in the water. The shuttle is nearby, but no longer in a tractor beam.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

TALORA and QUINLAN enter, and Quinlan takes the controls.

TALORA  
What are you doing?

QUINLAN  
I'm scanning the area. Long-range.  
Now that there's been a battle, the  
vultures will circle.

TALORA  
Are they here yet?

QUINLAN  
I think I've got a few passing in  
and out of our sensor range. I can't  
get a clear count, but at least three  
or four. About two light-years away.

Talora makes up her mind, as does Quinlan.

TALORA  
Get to work on the warp drive. You  
have four hours.

QUINLAN  
We've got to restore weapons. There  
are probably cloaked ships nearby  
that would love to attack. Once we  
can defend ourselves, we begin  
repairing warp drive.

TALORA  
We're getting out of here as fast as  
we can, whether you like it or not.  
My order stands. Get to the engine  
room.

Quinlan turns to go, but stops at the door. She turns to Talora.

QUINLAN  
For someone who used to live in places  
like this, my opinion carries little  
weight.

Talora is satisfied.

TALORA

You have four hours. You're wasting  
some of it now.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Same as before. Quinlan storms in. She stops and stares at  
the warp core.

It's completely dead.

QUINLAN

All right. Let's do some healing.

She approaches a console but some wires strewn all over the  
floor block her way. She stoops and brushes them aside.  
Standing back up, she goes to the console and begins to bring  
up information.

She begins to tap controls at a rapid rate, and different  
parts of the screen light up.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

Several panels in the BULKHEAD below the warp core have been  
removed, circuitry exposed. Quinlan is on the floor,  
examining them and experimenting a little.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

She's finished crossing cables and reconfiguring various  
pieces of machinery. Quinlan has returned to the console  
and is checking her work.

Some numbers appear on the screen, but fail to satisfy her.  
She returns to the exposed machinery below the core. After  
fiddling a little, inspiration strikes.

She moves to another panel and removes it. A large component  
that should be lit up isn't. Apparently, that is the cause  
of some problems.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

Quinlan has attached various pieces of equipment to that  
component obviously a very important one. She returns to  
the console and tries again.

She fails.

QUINLAN

Damn it!

Talora enters.

TALORA

Have you made progress?

QUINLAN

I'm working on it.

TALORA

Hurry up.

Talora leaves and Quinlan merely rolls her eyes.

INT. SHUTTLE -- LATER

Quinlan is disassembling another warp core -- the shuttle's. She has removed various panels from the bulkhead and is searching for various pieces of equipment.

She finds one large component and rips it out of the socket.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM -- LATER

Quinlan has returned, component in hand. She replaces the old one from the fighter with the new one from the shuttle and returns to the console.

Her hands fly over the controls, which she's comfortable with now.

But she fails again.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise drops out of warp.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross is in command. On the viewscreen, the starfield indicates that the Enterprise is at impulse.

HELM OFFICER

We've dropped out of warp, sir, and we're at the given coordinates.

CROSS

And?

The officer works at his controls.

HELM OFFICER

I can't find the shuttle or the probe, sir.

CROSS

Long-range scans?

HELM OFFICER

(beat)

Sorry, sir. Nothing.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Y'lan is working at his SENSOR TABLE on some unreadable data.  
Cross enters.

CROSS

Y'lan!

Y'LAN

Captain.

Y'lan presses a key on his table, and the data disappears.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)

What can I do for you?

CROSS

You can help me look for two of my  
crew.

Y'LAN

Talora and Quinlan. They have  
disappeared, I take it?

CROSS

Right. Tell me your sensors can  
help me scan the area for something.  
Romulans. Humans. The probe. The  
shuttle. Anything.

Y'LAN

I'm sure I can find the shuttle. But  
I'm afraid it will take some time.

CROSS

(desperate)

How much time?

Y'LAN

Several hours.

CROSS

Do it.

Cross leaves, and Y'lan returns to his sensor table. Soon,  
the room is bathed in alternating red, yellow, and blue.

EXT. SPACE

The fighter, unmoving in space, and the shuttle nearby.

INT. FIGHTER -- ENGINE ROOM

Quinlan is fiddling with some more equipment when Talora comes in.

TALORA

What's your progress?

QUINLAN

Still nothing. This warp core is dead.

TALORA

(beat)

I should have done this myself.

QUINLAN

Yourself?

TALORA

Yes.

QUINLAN

Why?

TALORA

You aren't up to the job. You waste time with futile tricks.

QUINLAN

Futile tricks?

(beat)

The dilithium crystals have been damaged. The fuel injector is hopelessly misaligned. The phase compensators are both fused, and we don't have spares. I've tried components from the shuttle, but they didn't help either. The best engineers in the quadrant couldn't make this thing work with the resources at my disposal.

TALORA

You have still failed.

QUINLAN

(angry)

Are you trying to make me fail?! To embarrass me? Surely you realize that nobody out here cares and you probably won't get the chance to tell Captain Cross what a miserable failure I am.

TALORA

(cold)

I'm in no mood for this kind of discussion, especially with an alcoholic.

Quinlan explodes.

QUINLAN

(ballistic)

Alcoholic. Alcoholic. That's good, Commander. That's really good. I can't argue with that, so I guess I'll just go back to my bottle of vodka and drown my sorrows, huh? How's that sound? In fact, I wonder if Kestol had any alcohol in store. We could have some right now, you and me.

(beat)

You and me.

TALORA

(beat, coldly)

Apparently, we'll have to restore weapons. Actually, I'll restore weapons. You take the helm.

QUINLAN

Gladly.

She storms out.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

Quinlan storms in and takes a seat. She works slowly but angrily at the controls. A light starts to flash and the console BLEEPs.

QUINLAN

Shut up.

She touches a few more controls, taking care of the problem. The flashing and bleeping goes away.

Quinlan reclines in the chair, with nothing to do but wait for Talora. She taps her commbadge, which CHIRPS.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Begin recording. Crewman's log. No, wait, start over. Jennifer Quinlan's log. I'm stuck on this alien ship, waiting for Talora to do whatever she feels is a good idea, which never is. I'm wondering if I'll ever get back to the Enterprise.

(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

They don't even know we're on a ship like this. And all because of some stupid probe. A little jumble of sensors got us into this mess.

A beat, and then something dawns on Quinlan.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

End recording.

She bolts out of her seat and exits the helm cabin.

INT. FIGHTER -- CARGO HOLD

The probe sits in the cargo hold, taking up most of the room.

It's about a meter and half in height, width, and length, but various pieces of equipment stick out of the roughly spherical probe. In one place is a small console for human access.

Quinlan enters. She approaches the console, which bears the familiar Starfleet interface, and touches a few controls.

QUINLAN

Begin recording.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. SPACE

The FIGHTER, dead in space, shuttle nearby.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

The helm compartment is empty. TALORA enters, looks around, but does not find Quinlan. She is about to go when she notices something on a MONITOR. She taps her commbadge.

TALORA

Talora to Quinlan.

QUINLAN'S COMM VOICE

Quinlan here.

TALORA

Return to the helm compartment.

Talora takes a seat and begins to work at the controls. Seconds later, QUINLAN enters.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Why did you leave?

QUINLAN

I had an idea.

TALORA

What?

QUINLAN

We'll use the probe as a distress beacon. I've entered our coordinates and an encoded message. If the Enterprise stumbles across it, they'll at least have some idea of where we are.

TALORA

(beat)

No.

QUINLAN

Why not?

TALORA

It will likely get taken by another pirate.

QUINLAN

What's the alternative? Send one from our current location?

TALORA

We wait for them to find us. Captain Cross is very creative.

QUINLAN

It'll take them too long! We're sitting dead in space, and the Enterprise has little chance of finding us. There's little chance that if the pirates capture us they'll kill us -- prisoners are a valuable commodity -- so we can be safe until the Enterprise arrives.

The console begins to BLEEP. Both turn their attention to the monitors, where they learn that...

EXT. SPACE

Four sleek WARSHIPS are approaching. They are silver, compact, and MENACING.

INT. FIGHTER -- HELM

QUINLAN

Don't you see? We're going to get creamed. We were creamed before in a fully functional shuttle. Here we are without a shuttle, stuck in this piece of broken metal. The probe is our only chance! We've already attracted enough attention to get those four warships on our tails. We're looking at the shortest skirmish in the history of the galaxy!

Talora's plans are slowly and visibly collapsing in her mind.

TALORA

(desperate)  
It won't work!

QUINLAN

It's our only hope! Commander, think about it.

TALORA

(a little angry)  
I don't like the idea!

QUINLAN

You don't like me!  
(beat, calmer)  
You don't like me. That's right. So what? I don't like you. But I follow your orders.

TALORA

Most of the time.

QUINLAN

You don't have to like me, but face it. My plan is the only one that has a chance of working.

There is a longing beat. Talora weighs the options and makes up her mind. Her cold, calculating personality returns to her face.

TALORA

We'll discuss our personal relationship later. Launch the probe, crewman. We'll put up a brief fight. The Enterprise can track these ships.

QUINLAN

Yes, Commander.

EXT. SPACE

The four warships are closing in. Meanwhile, the PROBE shoots out of the fighter and jumps to warp in a miniature tunnel of stars.

A few phaser blasts chase it but it is soon forgotten.

There is a brief pause. Suddenly, the four warships begin a coordinated attack. Phasers rock the lone fighter simultaneously as the warships circle with deadly cruelty.

A few shots lash out from the fighter and shake a warship. The warship, however, quickly regains composure and the attack continues.

A barrage of torpedoes strikes the fighter, and seriously cripple it. There is another brief pause. Another barrage storms through empty space and the fighter is destroyed in a tremendous EXPLOSION.

INT. ALIEN WARSHIP -- TRANSPORTER ROOM

A strange, alien transporter room. Architecture dominated by blacks and browns, walls lined with trophies and depictions of battles, this is the ship of a society dependent on war. Several ALIEN GUARDS, all of the same strange demonic-looking species, are ready to receive the prisoners.

TALORA and QUINLAN materialize, again weaponless. They are grabbed by several GUARDS, who shout at them in a strange and harsh language.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at impulse.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross is waiting coolly at the captain's chair. Y'lan enters.

Y'LAN  
Captain, I believe I have found  
something helpful.

CROSS  
What is it?

Y'LAN  
The probe has shown up on sensors.  
It had a distress call from Quinlan  
and Talora specifying four Katasarri  
warhips.

CROSS  
Did you find the warships?

Y'LAN  
Am I not Q'tami?  
(beat)  
They are headed towards Breen space  
at a high speed. I have sent their  
positions to the helm.

CROSS  
Thank-you.  
(taps combadge)  
Cross to Engineering.

GREY'S COMM VOICE  
Grey here.

CROSS  
Get ready for slipstream.

Cross turns back to the helm, ready to make the jump.

EXT. SPACE

The four fighters at warp. Suddenly, a tunnel of light  
appears behind them and the Enterprise emerges in a CRACKLE  
of energy.

INT. BRIDGE

Cross shouts out orders. Various officers, including  
SUKOTHAI, work quickly.

CROSS  
Shields up. Ready torpedoes and  
phasers. Prep sickbay.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise quickly catches up to the four warships.

INT. BRIDGE

Same as before.

CROSS

Hail them.

SUKOTHAI

No response.

CROSS

(beat)

Engage.

As the bridge crew complies, we...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise at warp.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

Jennifer Quinlan's log, Stardate  
78361.6. I'm back aboard the  
Enterprise, along with Commander  
Talora, sadly. It was quite a trip.

INT. CORRIDOR

Quinlan walks through the corridors.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

Sometimes, the trip doesn't always  
go as planned. Things go wrong.

INT. CREWMAN'S QUARTERS

A Bajoran ceremony. Rayta and several other BAJORANS are crowded around a small Bajoran prayer orb, engaged in solemn ritual.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

We meet people we don't want to like  
but are forced to.

The ritual is interrupted when ELRIS enters, surprising all. A few smile slightly, and invite Elris in. She is still uncomfortable, not sure what to say.

INT. MISSION OPS

Quinlan enters.

QUINLAN (V.O.)

And we meet people we probably never  
will like.

Talora enters, bringing tension with her.

QUINLAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I suppose we learn to live with it.

Talora approaches Quinlan.

TALORA

(uncomfortably)

You do not have to report to phaser  
training today.

QUINLAN

(sarcastic)

How kind of you.

TALORA

But be there on time tomorrow, or  
you'll have another reprimand.

QUINLAN

You got it.

TALORA

What?

QUINLAN

You got it, Commander.

Talora is about to rebuke her, but decides not to. She turns  
to go.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Commander!

Talora turns back around.

TALORA

What is it?

QUINLAN

Have you ever heard of the phrase  
"agree to disagree?"

TALORA

I believe I have. Why?

QUINLAN

Well... we tend to disagree. But we don't have to get angry about it.

TALORA

What do you propose?

QUINLAN

I propose we agree to... dislike each other.

TALORA

That's an interesting idea.  
(candid)  
But it could work. I don't like you.

QUINLAN

And I don't like you.

TALORA

Then we are in agreement.  
(beat)  
Phaser practice. Tomorrow, 0600.

QUINLAN

I'll be there.

Talora leaves, and after considering the conversation, Quinlan continues with her duties.

EXT. SPACE

As the Enterprise continues her journey, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END