

**STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE**

**"The Call of Duty"**

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. ENGINEERING

ERIK GREY and OTHER ENGINEERS are present, including those named.

Grey walks towards ROBERT KINNAN. He glances down at the panel Kinnan is at and finds instant disapproval.

GREY

(snappy)

Kinnan, increase the engine core efficiency! It's dropped by one point five percentiles!

Grey strides over to ANDREW CHAMBERS and has a look down at his station. He grunts disapprovingly.

GREY (CONT'D)

The shield ratio could be one percent higher. Increase it!

GREY begins to walk off...

CHAMBERS

But sir, that's impossible.

Grey, slowly, turns around. He is not amused.

GREY

What did you say?

Chambers, seeing the look on Grey's face, begins to backtrack immediately.

CHAMBERS

I -- I mean it's near impossible, sir. It, uh, takes too much reworking one percent isn't worth that effort!

We PAN TOWARDS Grey's face, and see...

FADE TO:

INT. MAKESHIFT BASE (FLASHBACK)

Grey's face -- but ten years younger this time. He's wearing a Marine uniform. And this time he isn't mad, but scared. It is clear that this is a FLASHBACK. In the distance, we can hear the usual sounds of battle, phasers firing, people shouting, and the scream of the dead -- intermingled with decidedly not human but still organic noises.

The base itself looks quickly assembled. It is basically a tent with Starfleet equipment set up on the dusty ground. There is another man across from Grey, working on the controls. A bed -- or slab that works as a bed -- is present.

GREY

Do you have that power base yet?

MAN

Yes. I just got it linked up.

GREY

Good. Let's get this thing online, then,

MAN

The next step would be to decide the percentage ratio...

He is cut short, as an INJURED MAN races inside. He is clutching his chest, from which blood oozes out.

INJURED MAN

They're coming! They're coming!

He collapses onto the bed.

GREY

Goddamn... we still don't have the shield up!

MAN

Keep working!

More sounds of battle can be heard now, although this time they are far too close for comfort.

MAN (CONT'D)

I'm setting the ratio of the shields at 74%. With our current power base and no time for fine tuning, it's the best we can get.

We can hear a flicker outside as the shield RAISES.

Promptly followed by an explosion.

MAN (CONT'D)

They're bombarding the shields!

Another explosion.

GREY

They won't hold together much longer.

A third explosion.

Grey begins to frantically work at his console.

MAN

Erik! What are you doing?

GREY

The shields are falling far too fast!  
We've got to increase the shield  
ratio!

MAN

No, Erik, don't! It's too risky!  
While you're doing that we may lose  
the shields altogether!

GREY

We will anyway if we don't do  
something!

Another explosion.

Grey works at the panel fiercely.

GREY (CONT'D)

Our power base is draining too fast!  
I can't raise the percentage over  
any more than five percent!

MAN

Then don't! It won't make a  
difference! It's crazy!

Grey ignores him and continues to work.

MAN (CONT'D)

Erik!

Another explosion.

GREY

One more blast like that will finish  
us!

Grey continues to work at the console as frantically as he  
could And then another explosion.

MAN

Oh my...

It is not that later accompanied by the sound of vessels  
sweeping above them.

MAN (CONT'D)

(almost deliriously)  
The runabouts! At long last, the  
runabouts!

We can hear PHASER FIRE and VOLLEYS of TORPEDOES.

MAN (CONT'D)

We're saved. But we'll have to rebuild  
the shields from scratch...

GREY

No. We won't.

The other man looks at Grey, expecting an answer.

Grey looks down at his panel and smiles.

GREY(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

They held together. By one percent.

We fade from his face to...

INT. ENGINEERING

The Grey of our present. He eyes Chambers coldly. We get  
the impression that he is actually restraining himself.

GREY

Mr. Chambers, I do not appreciate  
your evaluation of what is possible  
and not possible. If I say it is  
possible, I know it is possible  
because it has been done. I did not  
say it was easy. But it is your job.  
Now get to it or get off this ship,  
you understand?

CHAMBERS

(frightened)

Y-Yes sir!

Grey looks down at him, domineering, for a moment longer  
before turning on his heel and EXITING.

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

Grey is reading a small manual titled "Efficient Command."

The comm channel chirps.

GREY

Grey here.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

Lieutenant, we are receiving a  
personal message for you from Starbase  
290.

GREY

Put it in here.

TALORA'S COMM VOICE

Very well. Bridge out.

Grey walks over to the screen in his room, and it flickers to reveal a human in his late-twenties. He wears a Starfleet Uniform.

MAN

Hi Erik.

Grey squints, as if recalling something.

GREY

Mike? Mike Hauder?

The other man smiles.

HAUDER

The one and only.

GREY

It's good to see you, Mike. I haven't seen you since  
(beat)  
the Sheliak War...

HAUDER

That's what I'm here to talk about.  
As you may or may not know...

Hauder points down to his three pips.

HAUDER (CONT'D)

I'm a Commander now. Adjutant to Admiral Chiang of Starbase 290, to be exact. I pulled some strings with the Admiral and he's agreed to host the first reunion party ole Company A, 113th.

ON GREY'S SURPRISED FACE WE...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. SPACE

The majestic starship Enterprise sweeps into view, and flies past the camera towards a large, 25th century equivalent of Spacedock. This is STARBASE 290.

GREY (V.O.)

Chief Engineer's Log, Stardate 78574.1. The Enterprise happened to have been passing through the system of Starbase 290, and the Captain, Neil Cross, has agreed to my temporary leave on the said station. For my absence I have appointed Lieutenant Robert Kinnan to temporarily succeed me.

INT. CORRIDOR

Grey walks down the hallway.

Y'LAN (O.S.)

Lieutenant!

Grey turns around and sees Y'LAN coming up towards him.

Y'LAN (CONT'D)

Lieutenant Grey. I have been informed that you are going to what your fellow shipmates describe as a "reunion."

GREY

(neutral)

That's correct.

Grey begins to walk down the hallway again, and Y'lan follows him.

Y'LAN

What is the point of these reunions?

GREY

To meet old friends.

Y'LAN

But how is that relevant? You operated with them adequately before, but why this continual contact after your "company" -- I believe the human military term is -- has long since been abandoned? Is it not counter-productive?

GREY

Y'lan, there are some things we human beings do that are not intended to be purely productive -- or productive at all. We're not Q'tami...

Y'LAN

Yes. You are most certainly not.

Grey reaches the doors to the TRANSPORTER ROOM and steps in. Y'lan goes his separate way.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

NARV OZRAN is manning the Transporter controls, and SARAH BOYLE is also present.

OZRAN

Well, I've got the coordinates they want you to beam you to. It's one of the Mess Halls of the Starbase.

Grey thinks a moment before speaking.

GREY

Ozran...

OZRAN

Hmm?

GREY

What did you do during the War?

Ozran SHRUGS. The question has caught him by surprise but he thinks nothing of it.

OZRAN

Well, I served most of the war under Captain Thel on the U.S.S. Endeavour. We saw the occasional piece of action  
(beat)  
we were even there for the Battle of New Hokkaido.

GREY

Which one?

OZRAN

(proudly)  
Both.

Ozran looks down back to what he was working at.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

I've got the coordinates locked in now.

(MORE)

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

You know, you could have just taken a shuttle.

GREY

(jokingly)

What, with you? Is it just me Ozran, or does something always go wrong when you're onboard one of those?

OZRAN

(jokingly)

Who said I'd be there? What do I look like to you, your chauffeur?

(beat)

Well, I better not keep you late...

BOYLE

How long will you be gone?

GREY

The entire reunion runs for two weeks, but I'll only be there a few hours each day.

BOYLE

Well, goodbye.

Grey and Boyle embrace and kiss, and then part.

OZRAN

(mock-impatience)

Sir, unless you're fond of being fashionably late, I'd recommend you'd stand on the transporter pad.

GREY

All right, all right!

Grey steps back and stands on the transporter pad.

GREY (CONT'D)

Energize, Chief.

CUT TO:

INT. STARBASE MESS HALL

Much larger, roomier, and luxurious than the Mess Hall on the Enterprise-G. There are many people present. Hauder is standing at the door.

The doors part to admit Grey.

HAUDER

Erik! How nice it is for you to join us.

GREY

The pleasure's all mine, Mike.

They shake hands.

The door parts again to admit someone else.

HAUDER

Elena! Elena, over here!

He moves off.

Grey shifts amongst the crowds, somewhat uncomfortable. He spots two VULCANS, male and female, fairly old for their species. He walks over to them.

GREY

Are you Strovok's parents?

MALE VULCAN

We are.

GREY

Could you tell me where Strovok is? I can't seem to find him anywhere...  
The two Vulcans exchange glances, before looking back at Grey.

FEMALE VULCAN

Strovok is dead.

Grey stands, somewhat stunned, on the spot for a moment.

GREY

(subdued)  
I'm sorry.  
(beat)  
How...?

FEMALE VULCAN

He was part of the Starfleet force trying to broker a peace between the Selay and the Anticans.

She breaks off, unable to continue, and showing very, very subtle outward signs of strain. The Male Vulcan extends his hand over her shoulder before looking at Grey.

MALE VULCAN

He got caught in the crossfire.

Grey thinks a moment before replying.

GREY

He was a good officer. He always did his duty, and he did it to the fullest. I wish I'd known him better.

He walks off, away from the Vulcans -- and accidentally bumps into someone else.

He looks at that person and gulps.

GREY (CONT'D)

My apologies, Colonel Battenberg.

We pan around to see that that person is DAVID BATTENBERG.

He is a sour-looking man in his early forties and is confined to a 25th century equivalent of Captain Pike's chair.

BATTENBERG

I'm not a Colonel anymore. Retired after the war.

GREY

Then my apologies, Mr. Battenberg.

Battenberg waves it away. He's almost humored at this.

BATTENBERG

Call me David.

Grey is somewhat surprised.

GREY

During the war, you always insisted on being referred to as "sir" or "Colonel"...

BATTENBERG

Yes. I used to do a lot of things like that back then...

Battenberg begins to move towards a table. Grey hesitates.

Battenberg looks back.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

C'mon, over here!

Grey follows him.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Pull up a seat.

Grey does so.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Chief Engineer of the Enterprise, is it now?

GREY

You know?

BATTENBERG

I've kept an eye on every former member of A Company after the war. Well, except Karl...

(beat)

but you know what happened to him.

Grey nods.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

I suppose that knowing you all is the one good thing that came out for me from the Sheliak War.

This takes Grey completely by surprise.

GREY

What? Si- David, you're a war hero!

BATTENBERG

I'm also dying.

Long beat. Grey is quite literally left speechless.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

You heard me. Remember that scouting mission just prior to Tau Cygna? When the Federation wanted me to check out the Sheliak defensive systems? I don't know what the hell they bombarded my ship with, but it caused no damage at the time, so I took no notice of it. But I know now that they seeped some kind of chemical into the ship. We have no name for it, but those Sheliak call it...

Battenberg purses his lips, and says with effort

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Tu'nahcangla.

(beat)

It's a virus that slowly eats away at an organism, gradually reducing the capacity to move your body. (nods downwards towards feet) it starts there, and then works its way up. It accelerates aging and breaks down resistance to other viruses. There is no known cure.

(MORE)

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Even the Sheliak don't have one. If I'm not dead in another ten years, I'll be the next best thing.

Grey is left speechless for a moment.

GREY

Sir

(beat)

David

(beat)

We all knew something like this could happen when we signed up. But we were willing to die for the cause. Many people died in the Sheliak War.

(beat)

But we all knew what they died for. For the Federation. We've lost people before in wars, often very good people. But that doesn't make those wars any less right.

BATTENBERG

"To die for the cause."

(snorts)

Oh, it sounded high and mighty at the time. So long as the dying part is only done by the guy next to you.

(beat)

That happened, too. Remember that Transporter malfunction that killed Jenner?

Grey nods.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

He saw out Ipsus, Minzara, Ullia and Marcus Base.

(beat)

only to be killed by a transporter malfunction. And he wasn't alone. There were many more...

(beat)

You remember them all though, don't you?

Grey, SOLEMN, nods.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Well, you were lucky. You didn't have to tell their families. You didn't have to see the agony on their faces. The pain. The suffering. What war is worth that? What cause is really worth fighting for? And is there anything worth dying for?

GREY

You knew all this, David. You knew, even before you enlisted, what war was like. You knew that death happened on the battlefield, and the painful results. And that you could die. But you were always confident, always optimistic, always encouraging. What changed?

BATTENBERG

I didn't know that it happened. I simply thought I did. There are some things you have to see before you really believe it, or even know it. You can hear that millions of people are slaughtered, but what do you know? A statistic. A little thing scribbled on paper. Like a word from an unfamiliar language, you can say it, but you sure as hell can't understand it.

(beat)

If only the Tellarites had abandoned their homeworld...

GREY

It was their homeworld! The home of their culture, their society...

BATTENBERG

It was a bloody orb, Grey! A beautiful orb, maybe, a testimony, maybe, but it was just an orb! How could that be worth anyone's life, let alone everyone we lost for her!

GREY

They knew what they were signing up for. They were willing to die for the cause.

BATTENBERG

I know. I know. But that cause was worthy for no deaths, even those willing to give them. Oh god Grey, if you could have just seen their faces...

Silence. Grey and Battenberg simply stare at one each other for a few moments.

Grey then STANDS.

GREY

Good day, Mr. Battenberg.

Grey walks off.

Grey, somewhat aimlessly, wanders around the room until he finds one woman at a lone table, staring into her drink. This is NICOLE GRANGER.

GREY (CONT'D)  
May I sit down?

Nothing.

Grey taps her.

GREY (CONT'D)  
Nicole? Are you all right?

She looks up.

GRANGER  
(absently)  
Erik? Yes, I'm fine. Sit down.

Grey sits down. Granger returns to looking despondently into her drink.

GREY  
(concerned)  
Nicole... what's the matter?

She looks up again.

GRANGER  
(quiet, surprised)  
You didn't hear?

GREY  
Didn't hear what?

GRANGER  
About John.

GREY  
John? Your husband?

Granger nods.

GREY (CONT'D)  
What about him?

GRANGER  
He was there when the Sheliak took  
Ipsus...

She pauses, choking back tears.

GRANGER (CONT'D)  
...there were no survivors.

GREY

I'm sorry  
(beat)  
I never heard.

GRANGER

No. I don't suppose you would have.  
(beat)  
It wasn't known until after the war.  
You'd already been reassigned by  
then, hadn't you?

Grey NODS.

GRANGER looks back into her cup.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

(forlorn)  
Seeing them...  
(beat)  
all here, together...  
(beat)  
with their families...  
(beat)  
it, well, it brings a lot of things  
back. A lot of things back. Some  
things that may have been better  
staying away.

Grey NODS.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

(to herself)  
John...  
(beat)  
John...  
(beat)  
Why did you have to go? Why did you  
have to die?

Granger, as if coming to a realization, looks up at Grey.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

You don't mind if I dump this on  
you, do you?

GREY

Not at all.

GRANGER

There wasn't even a body. Maybe if  
there was a body ... but no, they  
wouldn't let me have that either.  
Why? Why him? Why at all? The war?  
Why a war at all? There I times  
when I wonder if it was worth it.

(MORE)

GRANGER (CONT'D)

No, there are not times. I wonder whenever I think of it. I wonder whenever I think of him. Why? What is the reason? There is never an answer. Perhaps there is no answer. Perhaps even those that start it do not know themselves.

GREY

(cautious, not wanting  
to upset or provoke)

There are always reasons for a war.

GRANGER

Oh, there are always reasons. Excuses, they should call them, excuses, because that's all they are, excuses for carnage, excuses for destruction. I could never understand those who want war. Why would someone want something so painful? So destructive? But then I think maybe they're fine with that, so long as it doesn't happen to them. Yes, its easy to advocate war if it doesn't effect you. That's what they're like, aren't they? So they make excuses.

GREY

(very uncertain of  
himself)

There are sometimes good reasons for war.

GRANGER

(becoming increasingly  
more rambling and  
emotional)

There are never good reasons for war. It's criminal, that's what it is, its criminal. There should be no war. There is no reason for war...

(beat)

if they all just agreed to have no wars there would be none of this. None of this pain, death, destruction, suffering, nothing. What's it for, anyway? Politics. It's always about politics. What worth is Politics? Why should Politicians be able to do this at all? Why must so much suffer for their desires? It's criminal. You'll go to jail for it so long as you aren't a Politician. Power, that's all they want. Power.

(MORE)

GRANGER (CONT'D)

Why should people die for their power?  
What right had they to take away  
John? What right?

GREY

(treading carefully)  
War is criminal... but people don't  
always agree. There are sometimes  
people who want more than they  
deserve. People who want to commit  
criminal acts, and if we don't fend  
against them they'll only commit  
more.

GRANGER

There is never a good reason! If  
they want to commit criminal acts,  
why should we commit more? We should  
have never gone to war! There is no  
good reason no, there is no reason  
to ever go to war! If there had never  
been a war, John would be here!

GREY

Nicole...

GRANGER

Don't! You don't understand. You  
could never understand. You didn't  
lose anyone. You didn't lose anything.  
You're just like those Politicians.  
War is fine to you so long as it  
only hurts other people!

This hurts Grey.

GREY

Nicole...

Granger stands up and angrily stalks off.

Grey sits, absolutely riveted. We can see from his expression  
that he is pained, very deeply.

We turn over to the doors of the Mess Hall, which part.

Hauder walks over to greet the new guest (who we can't see.)

HAUDER

Welcome!

Instantly, his jovial attitude is replaced by utter surprise.  
He stands, utterly confounded, on the spot.

VOICE

What's the matter, Mike? Cat finally got your tongue? If I knew this would finally shut you up, I would have done it years ago.

Everyone looking in that direction also falls silent, and soon the entire room is silent and all eyes are on the unseen guest.

Grey, who is within earshot, immediately turns around, also utterly confounded and surprised.

HAUDER

But we haven't heard...

VOICE

Can you blame me for keeping a low profile?

HAUDER

(stammering)

But...

(beat)

But...

(beat)

Where have you been? How did you know?

VOICE

Oh, here and there. And I have my contacts.

GREY

(mumbled, to himself)

Karl...

The owner of the voice walks past Hauder, and we can see it is KARL SCHANN. He is approximately the same age as Grey, and has a similar, though jet-black, hair. He wears black overalls which are both unmarked and very plain. He has a slight twinkle in his eyes, and he looks both very easygoing and very ruthlessly shrewd.

Schann looks around the utterly silent room.

SCHANN

Don't end the party on my account.  
It's what I'm here for.

The conversation begins, somewhat muted, once again, and raises back to an appreciable fraction of its former norm, but many eyes are on him.

Schann spots Erik, who is still staring at him. He strolls over and sits down.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

One would think you've seen a ghost.

GREY

Maybe I have.

Schann laughs.

SCHANN

Come now. There's nothing that unusual about me.

GREY

You disappeared for six years. I'd call that unusual.

Schann SHRUGS.

SCHANN

I needed a change of scenery. One which isn't full of the stinking filth that is the Federation.

GREY

What?

SCHANN

(bordering on contempt)  
I'm sorry, I'd forgotten.  
(nods to Grey's uniform)  
You're still the President's good little boy, aren't you? The model officer, if I recall...

GREY

(coldly)  
I wouldn't be so high-handed about it if I were you. Not so long ago, you were the same.

SCHANN

In the past, yes, I was. But people change, and often their opinions change with them. I thought like you then, but not now. I had a revelation.

GREY

What revelation, Karl? What could possibly make you turn your back on everything you knew and believed in? What could make you turn your back on your friends, and not just them, but your family? What could make you turn your back on the Federation? What could make you turn your back on everything?

SCHANN

Oh, I can remember it clearly, as if it was yesterday. Not long after the war, I went to Elrakenor.

GREY

The Cardassian world in the former demilitarised zone which was seceded to the Federation after the Dominion War?

SCHANN

The very same. I and a contingent of others were there to act as a bodyguard to the Governor-General. It was horrible. There were Cardassians, everywhere, all of them starving. Their clothes worn and tattered. They shuffled about the pathetic den which was the capital of the planet. They starved. They writhed. They lived and died in poverty. The only mercy was the shortness of their lives. And where was the Governor? Where was the leader of these masses? I'll tell you where, because I was assigned as part of his guard myself. He sat all day in his luxurious palace, eating sumptuous banquets and lolling in plenty. I once asked him about the situation, about the terrible poverty.

(exaggerated imitation  
of a pompous voice)

"Awful thing, isn't it?" He said in-between bites of a rather too large sandwich, of course. "But then now, there's nothing we can do. Why, there is so much of them and so little of us!"

(beat)

It was then I knew. It was then I realised. The Federation likes to think of itself better than the powers of old. More justice, more righteous, more civilized. They're very self-righteous now, I'll give them that. But it is not one inch better than them. The only difference is it cons people into accepting it.

GREY

I don't think you know the whole story, Karl. As I recall, the Governor of Elrakenor at that time was one Richard Irwin.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

He was sentenced to prison because of his abuse of power. You can't condemn the entire Federation for the actions of one man.

SCHANN

No, that I can't. But it wasn't just one man. And it wasn't just the lower corps either. No, this extends all the way back to the President himself. I'm sure you're familiar with the Benzar Incident.

GREY

That was different.

SCHANN

Really? In what way?

GREY

The Federation could not jeopardize its peace with the Romulans, particularly after we were coming so close to further agreements and the Federation was not prepared for Romulan aggression.

SCHANN

The Federation could have taken Romulan aggression Erik, and don't try to counter that because you know they could've. We had more resources, manpower and equipment, plus the likely support of the Klingons and the definite support of the Cardassians. But what did we do instead? We sacrificed our beliefs over our lives. As if the Federation ever really believed in her high-sounding mottos to begin with.

GREY

The Federation has always believed in its philosophy.

SCHANN

Then what does it say when it compromises them?

GREY

We've never compromised them.

SCHANN

Do you really think that, Erik? Don't be so naive.

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

What about our aggression towards the Dominion? What about ignoring the rights of our own settlers, forcing them to become Maquis? And don't even get me started on the Prime Directive, which has only been honored in the breach.

GREY

Those are mistakes...

(beat)

Except for the Prime Directive, but the decision on those occasions was taken by the Captains, not the Federation.

SCHANN

I can't think of much Captains that didn't break it, though. And what happened to them? Imprisonment, even for a short term? A verbal warning? A slap on the hand? No, none of those. Nothing. As if they were meant to circumvent that philosophy. Not that I'm surprised. Philosophy is the Federation's guise. A drape which it can put over itself to justify its existence, and to be a rallying banner when ever they feel like it, but they'll ignore that it ever existed too when convenient. Perhaps it should just rename itself as an Empire once and for all and do away with this charade.

GREY

I don't know were you get your ideas, Schann, but they are grossly misinformed. I don't know were you've been, but you've been away too long. It's clouded your mind. How can a state be possibly be said to be using philosophy as a veil when the examples of its benefits and its operation can be seen everywhere, to the smallest detail? Look around you! The Federation believes in democracy. You can see people being elected on some planet or other any day of the week. The Federation believes in collectivization. Everywhere you go, you can see the public only nature of this society!

SCHANN

Where the Federation can apply its philosophy without affecting Imperialism, it does very freely. But when it clashes, which side gets ahead? Let's take Bajor as an example. Just a year ago, there was a massive demonstration in the capital for the right to have a vote on whether or not Bajor should stay in the Federation. Not only did the government refuse to have such a ballot a perfectly democratic ballot but the police dispersed the protesters. If that isn't imperialism, Grey, I don't know what is.

(beat)

The Federation has run its course. Whatever of its ideas and philosophy it had honestly believed in the beginning has all but evaporated. Whatever morals and ethics it had once held high have vanished. It is a bloated imperial power, corpulently enforcing its crushing will on all those who live in it as long as it still can. There is no hope for this despicable state, Grey, if there ever was a hope. The sooner it dies, the better.

GREY

Don't you dare...

SCHANN

I'll do as I like. Or would you like to compromise your "freedom of speech" now?

Schann smiles an arrogant, smug smile.

Grey STANDS and angrily -- but, to a more subtle degree, sadly -- EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. ADMIRAL'S READY ROOM

This is the READY ROOM of the Admiral of Starbase 290. It is similar to Cross's only much larger. Sitting in the centre of the room, reading a PADD, is ADMIRAL CHIANG XIANGFAN.

The door BLEEPs.

CHIANG

Enter.

The doors slide apart to reveal Commander TALORA, who steps in.

TALORA  
(formally)  
Admiral.

Chiang looks up. He glances at Talora's rank designation.

CHIANG  
Commander. How may I help you?

TALORA  
I am Commander Talora, sir. I ordered a shipment of Romulan Ale that was to be delivered to this station before reaching my ship.

CHIANG  
(recalling)  
Talora... Talora.

CHIANG turns around to a computer screen.

CHIANG (CONT'D)  
Computer, in which cargo bay is the property of one Commander Talora?

COMPUTER  
Cargo Bay 5.

CHIANG  
You heard the computer. You can collect it there, and if you have any problems finding or transporting it, just contact me.

TALORA  
Thank you, Admiral.

Talora turns to go.

CHIANG  
Wait...

Talora turns around.

Chiang squints, as if realizing something.

CHIANG (CONT'D)  
Commander ... Talora, wasn't it?

Talora is somewhat surprised.

TALORA  
Yes sir.

CHIANG

You didn't serve with a Commander  
Brevok, did you? Brevok...  
(beat as he recalls)  
of the Dornok?

TALORA

(uncertain)  
Yes, sir, I did.

Chiang lies back into his chair. It seems as if he's grown a decade older. He sighs, deeply.

TALORA (CONT'D)

Sir?

CHIANG glances up again.

CHIANG

(quiet, emotionally)  
You killed my daughter.

On Talora's reaction, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

Spartan as ever. Grey and Boyle are sitting at the table. Boyle is halfway through some chicken, while Grey is fingering, almost absent-mindedly, a bowl of rations.

BOYLE

This is delicious. How did you know I liked this?

Beat.

BOYLE (CONT'D)

Erik?

GREY

Hmm?

Grey looks up.

BOYLE

You haven't touched your rations yet. You'd be finished them by now.

GREY

Why, yes I have.

Grey dips his spoon into the rations, picks it up and swallows the spoonful whole, but he still seems to be "not-all-there."

GREY (CONT'D)

(forcing it somewhat)

Mm. It's quite good.

Boyle sighs.

BOYLE

(impatient)

Erik.

GREY

Yes?

BOYLE

What's wrong?

GREY

What do you mean, what's wrong? Everything's fine.

Boyle arches her eyebrows with a knowing look.

GREY (CONT'D)

All right! All right! It's the reunion.

(beat)

I'm not wanted. Not welcome. Not able to have discussions with those who I had erstwhile considered my mentor and friends. It's, well, my evaluation of the Sheliak War. I always thought it was a good war, a just war, a war worthy of fighting.

(beat)

They used too, once. But now I'm shunned because my opinion hasn't changed like theirs has.

BOYLE

Ah.

GREY

(slightly annoyed)

"Ah"? Is that all you have to say?

BOYLE

(somewhat off-guard)

Uh...

(beat)

Well, yes. Why, should I have said something else?

GREY

Well, if that's it, why ask me in the first place?

BOYLE

What do you mean, not ask you?

GREY

If you have no advice or anything worthwhile to say...

BOYLE

What am I supposed to do? Read your mind? It could have been anything! I was concerned, because it wasn't like you!

Beat.

GREY

I'm, I'm sorry.

(beat)

It's been a long day. I didn't mean to lash out at you like that. I just feel so frustrated...

Boyle nods.

BOYLE

I understand. If something like that ever happened to me, I'd feel awful.

GREY

Has something like that ever happened to you?

Boyle SHAKES HER HEAD.

BOYLE

No...

(beat)

Well, not anything on that scale, anyway.

GREY

I see.

BOYLE

It sounds awful...

GREY

You have no idea.

Grey takes another bite of food.

BOYLE

You're right, you know that? I don't. I do have no idea. But you are friends, right? Or at least they were...

GREY

That's right.

BOYLE

Well, friends often get into arguments, don't they? And aren't things usually sorted out?

GREY

The arguments are never on this scale.

BOYLE

I know that. But that doesn't mean doesn't work

(beat)

does it?

GREY

It depends.

BOYLE

On?

GREY

How it is sorted out. Who is sorting out. And how people react to the sorting out.

BOYLE

You make this sound very complex.

GREY

It is.

BOYLE

I'm sure there's some way.

GREY

I can only hope that there is, Boyle.  
I can only hope that there is.

BOYLE

You did say that you were good friends during the war. Can't good friends sort things out between each other?

GREY

Yes, we were. We were very good friends.

(beat)

No, we were more than friends. We were comrades-in-arms, and that, Sarah, that means a lot. It goes deeper than friendship. There is something about it... that makes us better friends than we could have been otherwise. I can't really explain it any more than that. It meant a lot to us.

(beat)

Or, at least, it meant a lot to us then. During the war. I have heard that it lasts well after wars. But this, it seems, is not the case with us. Our opinions have divided us... or, at least, broken me from them.

(beat)

If there was one thing Karl -- my former friend, Karl Schann, whom I served with -- was undeniably right about... it's that times change.

(beat)

And people change with them.

BOYLE

(somewhat out of her depth)

Oh.

Silence for a moment. Then:

GREY

So, how was your day?

EXT. SPACE

A shot of Starbase 290, with the Enterprise-G in orbit.

CUT TO:

INT. ADMIRAL'S READY ROOM

Same as before. Talora looks shocked.

TALORA

Admiral...

Long beat. Talora's features contort, as if she's unsure of what to say.

Chiang eyes her, steely.

Finally, Talora gets what she needs to say and the courage to say it.

TALORA (CONT'D)

...I offer my deepest sympathies on your loss.

CHIANG

(bitter, with some tears)

Your "deepest sympathies," Commander? What good are your deepest sympathies to me

(beat)

to her?

(beat)

Sympathies are a great thing after the event. It is so easy to be sympathetic, and to be apologetic, once the deed has been done. It makes you wonder, doesn't it, why the deed was done at all in the first place?

(beat)

Spare me your sympathies, Commander. Spare me your empty condolences. I would have preferred had you been more rational, taken that second of caution which could have saved my daughter's life, then all the sympathies in the galaxy!

TALORA

Admiral...

CHIANG

Not another word! Not another word!  
Go, and do not return!

Chiang turns his chair to face the stars.

Talora, almost numb, stands there for a moment, and then  
EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

Spartan, as always. Boyle is gone and Grey is standing by a replicator as a still unfinished dish of rice dematerializes. His expression is one of someone not all there, adrift in thought.

He walks over to his chair, still at the table, and sits down.

He gazes expressionlessly into an unseen void. He looks far more stiff and rigid than he usually does, more drawn in upon himself than we've ever seen him. We PAN IN on his face. His eyes are looking off at something in the distance, something we can't see...

FADE TO:

EXT. FOREST (FLASHBACK)

We pan from his face to see that is a dense forest. Grey is now wearing a marine uniform and is ten years younger. He and many more marines are hunkered down on the ground inside foxholes. Grey is sharing his foxhole with Schann. There are whirrs overhead and an EXPLOSION nearby as a shell smacks onto the ground.

GREY

(shouting over the  
noise)

Don't they ever tire of this?

SCHANN

(shouting back)  
Evidently not!

Another explosion.

GREY

(still shouting)  
Why do they even bother? Our scrambler  
is preventing them from getting an  
accurate lock on anybody!

SCHANN  
(also still shouting)  
Maybe they want to get lucky!

Another EXPLOSION.

GREY  
(shouting)  
Sheliak believe in luck?

SCHANN  
(shouting)  
Well, they have to believe that  
they'll hit us eventually or they  
wouldn't be trying this then, would  
they?

Another EXPLOSION, further off.

GREY  
(still shouting)  
I didn't think it was possible, but  
their aim seems to be getting worse!

SCHANN  
(also still shouting)  
I never understood how something  
with no hands could aim at all! How  
do they pull the trigger?

Another explosion, considerably closer.

GREY  
(shouting)  
That landed near Edmonds and Strovok!

SCHANN  
(also shouting)  
What's that you said about aim?

GREY  
(shouting)  
This isn't a joking matter, Karl!  
They could be dead!

SCHANN  
(shouting)  
So? Nothing like humor to brighten  
up the mood! If they're dead there's  
nothing we can do about it!

GREY  
(disgusted shouting)  
You're depraved!

SCHANN  
 (in good humor,  
 shouting)  
 Oh, totally!

GREY  
 (shouting)  
 Aren't you even concerned?

SCHANN  
 (shouting, still good-  
 naturedly)  
 Why, of course I'm concerned! But  
 until this shelling stops there is  
 nothing we can do, so we might as  
 well keep our heads high while its  
 on!

Another EXPLOSION.

SCHANN (CONT'D)  
 Not literally, of course! Besides,  
 I'm sure they're okay. Strovok could  
 survive a tornado provided he found  
 a logical excuse for it!

GREY  
 (semi-humored)  
 It's not Strovok I'm worried about,  
 its Edmonds...

SCHANN  
 (shouting)  
 That's the spirit, Erik! That's the  
 spirit!

Another EXPOLSION.

SCHANN (CONT'D)  
 (shouting)  
 Of course, I'd be worried about Redman  
 anyway! Imagine being stuck in a  
 foxhole trying to make conversation  
 with a Vulcan!

GREY  
 (shouting)  
 Yeah, they're the only people who  
 can think of a good excuse for not  
 laughing to your jokes!

SCHANN  
 (shouting)  
 Sampson laughs!

GREY

(shouting)

Sampson would laugh at anything!

(beat, and then quieter)

Wait, shouldn't there have been  
another shell by now?

SCHANN

(normally)

You want one of those things now,  
Erik? I'd thought someone as bland  
as you would have a death-wish, but  
I didn't know it would be this strong!

Grey, who is now suddenly not in the mood, motions for Schann to be silent. Schann quietens down. There is a long beat were no sound is heard.

They then begin to speak in whispers while previously they had been shouting.

GREY

I don't like the sound of that...

SCHANN

(jokingly)

Sound? What sound?

This time, Grey ignores Schann's attempt at humor.

GREY

The Sheliak usually don't stop  
bombarding a position until their  
out of ammo, they've finished their  
quota for the day ... or their troops  
have entered the area.

(beat)

They couldn't have finished their  
quota, and if they'd run out of ammo  
this soon they would have been more  
conservative with it.

SCHANN

The meat grinder ain't the place for  
you, Erik. Why, you should be back  
up with the generals at the base!

GREY

(semi-mock annoyance)

Must you always do this?

SCHANN

Oh, constantly.

GREY

It gets very irritating.

SCHANN

(smiles)

Glad I could be of help.

Grey shakes his head, good-naturedly. Behind them, there's a crack.

GREY

(suddenly more alert  
again)

What's that?

He turns in the direction of the crack, which is the same as the direction the shells came from.

SCHANN

It's probably nothing.

GREY

I'm not so sure. Let me check.

Grey lifts his head over the foxhole.

SCHANN

(suddenly urgent)

Erik, don't!

Schann lurches forward and grabs Grey, pulling him down back into the foxhole -- as a Sheliak disrupter blast whizzes over the precise spot he used to be.

GREY

(panting)

My... god.

Schann releases Grey.

They pause for a moment, neither moving, as the firing continues.

SCHANN

(breaking the silence)

Dying is for recruits, Erik, didn't  
you know that by now?

Grey shakes it off and crawls back into his previous position.

GREY

Well, its just as well I put my head  
up when I did, otherwise you'd be  
thinking there was no one there.  
Hell, you probably would anyway,  
Karl -- you wouldn't recognize a  
Sheliak if it stood right next to  
you and said what it was!

SCHANN

Well, you could have been killed. A bit of an extreme way to go about proving me wrong, isn't it?

GREY

And instead I'm alive with you. Talk about unlucky.

SCHANN

Well, don't worry. Since I'm rarely ever wrong I doubt you'll need to do that again.

GREY

You're only rarely ever wrong because you rarely ever say anything of consequence...

SCHANN

Well, someone's got to say a load of nothing. It's my duty as a patriotic Federation citizen.

Another shot flies overhead.

GREY

C'mon. War waits for no man.

SCHANN

What if I paid him?

The two maneuver to a better position. Grey aims his phaser and takes fire. We CLOSE IN on his face as he concentrates...

FADE TO:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

...and PAN OUT to reveal Grey a decade older, but still deep in concentration, but concentration of a far different kind.

He continues to think for a moment.

GREY

Computer, begin Chief Engineer's Log, Stardate 78576.8.

COMPUTER VOICE

Affirmative.

GREY

No, wait ... Computer, create a new log: Erik Grey's Personal Log.

COMPUTER VOICE

Affirmative. New Personal log created.  
Password required to activate.

GREY

Alpha Iota Charlie Gamma Echo.

COMPUTER

Confirmed.

GREY

Personal Log, Stardate 78576.8.

Long beat as Grey carefully considers what he is going to say. We can see him mouth some words. After a few seconds:

GREY (CONT'D)

"You never step into the same river twice," Heraclitus once observed. I wonder if he had any idea just how right he was, and how wide of an application that phrase could apply. Things are always changing, moving, shifting, transforming. And not just things. People change... physically, emotionally, and sometimes they even change in their core -- they change the ideas that make them who they are. Things are in a constant state of flux, for better or worse.

(beat)

And for worse it seems to be. In times past, in the river that can no longer be crossed, we were comrades-in-arms. We shared our hardest times together. We were united, we were indivisible, inseparable. It was as if we had one mind, sometimes. Orders could be issued without words being spoken. Opinions passed without a sound emanating. We could see it in the creases of each others faces, in our expressions, and in our eyes. We were close.

(beat)

In the river that can no longer be crossed. But time has passed. And time has done what the Sheliak could never do. Time has splintered the Company. Time has separated us. Somehow, after the war, the opinions that had driven us through the war, the unshakable beliefs that had held us together, rapidly began to diverge. They began to see the world in a whole new light.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

They began to look on things differently, and the hopes and dreams which we had all had during the War vanished as if overnight. They all changed. They all became different. They all turned around utterly in their assessment in the world. All of them. Except for me.

(beat)

I never changed. There was no revelation.

When the war ended I had kept the appraisal of it I had had at the outset. Nothing seemed to challenge my opinion. I had no indication or inclination to change it such a decision was the furthest thing from my mind. What was it they saw that I did not? What sudden transformation did they observe that I did not? What did I miss? How could they do this?

(beat)

Was it a revelation at all? Did they really see more clearly than I did? Did they really begin to understand better than I did? Or was their vision more clouded than mine? Clouded by bitterness? By loss? By uncertainty? I do not have the answers, and I do not claim to have the answers. It is the answers that I seek, but I wonder if anyone even my comrades themselves can truly tell me the answer.

(beat)

All I know is that my comrades, those friends whom I held dearest in war, have turned their back on me. And they have turned their back on me because I failed to re-evaluate the war as they did. They turned their back on me because I remained truthful to what I and they once were. They turned their back on me because I had not changed. What had once been the norm for us all is now a point of scorn, a bitter dividing line between them and myself.

(beat)

The river has moved on. Things have changed. But change is not always beneficial.

(beat)

Computer, end log.

RENAISSANCE: "The Call of Duty" - ACT TWO

39.

On Grey we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. BRIDGE

GRIL DOJAR is at Tactical, SUKOTHAI at Ops, BILLINGS at CONN, and TALORA sits in the Captain's chair. Talora looks dazed, as if deep in thought.

After a few seconds Dojar's console beeps and he looks down.

DOJAR

Sir, Engineering reports that the fluctuation on the starboard nacelle has been stabilized.

No response. Dojar clears his throat.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

(a little louder)

Sir, Engineering reports that the fluctuation on the starboard nacelle has been stabilised.

Still no response. Dojar walks away from his Tactical Station and strolls down the bridge until he reaches Talora. He taps her on the back. She jolts upright and moves to face him.

TALORA

(slightly impatient)

Yes?

DOJAR

Engineering reports that the fluctuation on the starboard nacelle has been stabilized.

TALORA

(irritated)

You could have told me that from your station.

DOJAR

I did sir. Twice.

TALORA

(slightly embarrassed)

Oh. Uh, well then, carry on.

Dojar furrows his brow, concerned.

DOJAR

(quieter)

Talora, this is not like you. What's wrong?

TALORA

Nothing is...

DOJAR

You should know better then to say something like that. See me at the Mess Hall and we'll talk.

Before Talora can respond, Dojar departs back across the bridge to his station, and Talora begins to contemplate what he said.

CUT TO:

INT. STARBASE MESS HALL

Approximately the same as before, but people are in different positions and many are wearing different clothes. There are various groups of people across the room talking in mainly a hushed, reserved fashion.

The door swings aside. Some people look up as Grey, solemn, strides into the room. He spots Granger right next to the door, her face to the window. He begins to walk over to her but a futuristic wheelchair suddenly barges in his way. It is Battenberg.

BATTENBERG

(quiet, nasty rebuke)

Don't even think about it. She doesn't want to talk to you... and after what you said to her, I'm not surprised.

GREY

But I want to...

BATTENBERG

(cuts him off, angry)

Don't pain her any more then you already have. Why, I'm surprised you had the nerve to come back here at all.

GREY

Why? What did I do?

BATTENBERG

You know what you said. You know what you claimed. There's no cause that deserves a life, Grey, you should know that. And to come in here and say otherwise -- what were you thinking?

GREY  
(silently)  
We need to talk, David.

BATTENBERG  
(sharp)  
That's Mr. Battenberg to you.

GREY  
(not seeming to be unfazed)  
Alright. Mr. Battenberg.

BATTENBERG  
And I have nothing to say to you.

GREY  
(quoting)  
"You got a problem with something, you bring it to me."

Battenberg SCOWLS.

BATTENBERG  
That was a decade ago. And there was a war on, and we were actually a company.

GREY  
They're still your words. And somehow, despite all that has happened, I doubt that that has changed.

Battenberg shakes his head.

BATTENBERG  
(resigned)  
All right son, alright. You always had a way with these things...

Battenberg moves over to a table. Grey follows and sits down.

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)  
Well, shoot.

GREY  
Very well. Why? Why the change? Why change at all?

BATTENBERG  
You know why I changed.

GREY  
But you didn't tell me everything. There was something more, wasn't there?

BATTENBERG

And how would you know that?

GREY

I know that because regardless of everything that has happened over the past ten years, you are still David Samuel Battenberg, the man who would never give more information than he thought absolutely necessary.

Battenberg sighs.

BATTENBERG

All right. You're right, you know that, there was something more.

(beat)

After the War, after I had witnessed so much carnage, after I had been diagnosed with Tu'nahcangla,

(beat)

after I had sent those unbearable condolences...

(beat)

I began to look at things differently. How I had acted in the War, I mean. How I had "courageously" fought for the Federation. Callously putting not just my life on the line, but the lives of many others. You know, I never even stopped to think about those implications. How I had sent so many men and women to their deaths. I just wrote them off to often very risky attacks. I through them into the meat grinder. I just signed them off like they were some kind of commodity or product, convinced that they were willing and able to do it and it was for the greater good and glory of the Federation. Glory. What worth is glory for a lifetime of experiences, pleasures and pains, heights and sorrows, in all its luminous forms? How can it possibly compare one to one life, let alone the many lives I squandered? I collaborated with the hell that is War. To me, the rulebook was gospel.

(snorts)

The rulebook. What a bible. A bland, informative book, which tells you so little. It commands you how to act and how to think, and it commands you to do the bidding of War, when war arises.

(MORE)

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

Does it tell you to abstain from all this pointless, sacrificial carnage on the altar of uncaring gods for comparatively worthless and irrelevant plots of land to enter the possession of selfish, callous governments who don't truly care how many of their supposedly protected and assured flock would be killed in the meantime? No, it tells me to attack, what to attack, were to attack, how to attack. I followed that goddamned thing to the letter. To the letter.

(beat)

When the war was over, I began to realize how erroneously wrong my actions had been. I began to realize how outrageous and unpardonable had been the crime I had been in.

(beat)

I began to hate myself. And so I vowed to put it right. I vowed to undo what I could, which was little, and try to prevent it from happening again. My conscience will never be free, Grey. I sent those people out to die. The Sheliak may have been the ones who fired on them, but it was my decision that would be there for them to fire at.

GREY

I admired you back then, Mr. Battenberg. I still do.

BATTENBERG

Admire? What is there to admire about me then?

GREY

Your courage. Your determination. You held us together. When all seemed lost, you were there keeping us going, refusing to let us for a second loose hope. Nothing could faze you. Nothing could shake you. You didn't so much as flinch when the Sheliak broke through the lines at Iotia Beta and threatened to cut us off both from the sky and ground and massacre us entirely, the only thing you thought about was our new defensive perimeter. You never gave up hope. You acted like there was no possible way hope could be lost.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

That you could withstand anything. You were our only beacon during those tense days and weeks. When things worsened, you never broke. You were a true leader. What wasn't there to admire about you?

BATTENBERG

That's nothing to be proud of. I was a military leader. I was a murderer.

GREY

Isn't it something to be proud of? What you accomplished? What you achieved? We were fighting a just war...

BATTENBERG

Don't go into that again.

GREY

A war, then. We were fighting a war. People were going to die, we all knew that. You couldn't change it, I couldn't change it. As far as that was concerned, there was nothing that we could do. We had signed up to the Federation Marines. We weren't conscripts, forced against our will. We were volunteers. We wanted to fight this war, even if it meant that we might die. Perhaps you think that the cause we were ready to die for wasn't worth it. Perhaps you even think that had we seen things the way you do now we would agree with you. That doesn't matter. Because we didn't. We were going to fight this war and people were going to die. Those were two constants, Battenberg. You couldn't change that. We needed a leader. Had you not been there after Jenner's death, I can only guess who would have assumed command of the company. Maybe he or she, whoever he or she would have been, would not have been as great a leader as you had been. Maybe more people would have been lost. Maybe the whole company.

(beat)

You did what you had to do, Battenberg. You did what you wanted to do. And you did a good job of it, too. We always had the utmost respect for you.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

(beat)

I knew many of the people who died very well. Some of them were very dear to me indeed. But I never blamed you for their deaths. They held you in respect as I did. They admired your determination like I did. And somehow, I don't think they would have wanted you to do this to yourself, least of all on their account.

BATTENBERG

There is nothing there for me to be proud of. Maybe more people would have died had I not been there maybe less. Who is to say? What is important was that I collaborated. I was ready and willing to go to war. I should have abstained from it all. I should have set an example. Had I done that I could have maybe made a small difference. A real difference. A positive difference. Maybe if I did that I could sleep easy at night. At least I would have not participated in the killing.

GREY

I've lost people under my command before. Some people think that that is normal. That it's routine. Part of the job.

(beat)

I don't. I have lost sixty-four people under my command. Sixty-four. I remember them all by face and name. I remember where and when, and how it happened. These are things I will never forget as long as I live.

(beat)

Was it easy to live with? No. Do I blame myself? Sometimes. And perhaps I really was in cases responsible for their deaths. But if I had a chance, would I change things? In some cases, yes, I would. In others...

(beat)

It doesn't matter what I think, Battenberg, and it doesn't matter what you think. It's what they think. If they want to put their lives on the line, no matter how much anyone might disagree, who are we to argue? They know the risks.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

And they are willing to nevertheless do this. They believe in the cause, even if you won't. And it is their right. I have lost many people under my command. It hurts me deeply. I can never truly get over it, and if I ever get used to it I will have lost my humanity. But I understand the reasons for it, and I can live with myself for the choices I have made, even if often they were not the right ones.

Battenberg shakes his head, slowly, in semi-good humor.

BATTENBERG

You know who you sound like?

GREY

No. Who?

BATTENBERG

You sound like me, back in the old days.

GREY

I am honored.

BATTENBERG

You shouldn't be.

(beat)

It doesn't matter what you say Grey, it doesn't matter how you put it and spice it up, the facts remain the facts. I collaborated in the killing of people for some worthless ideal. I can never forgive myself for that.

(beat)

Now I know what I felt was wrong about you. Now I know what I detested, I couldn't put it in words before.

GREY

You can't treat yourself so harshly.

BATTENBERG

(coolly)

Can't I? I will be the evaluation of who I was then, Grey. But, on the other hand, I doubt even I would have treated Nicole so harshly.

(beat)

Now, I've answered your question. Is there any more "problems" I have to address?

Grey stands.

GREY  
None. None at all.

BATTENBERG  
(empathic)  
Good.

Grey begins to walk away from Battenberg when he hears a familiar voice...

SCHANN  
(mockingly)  
If it isn't the President's good  
little boy!

Grey turns around. SCHANN, still wearing black overalls, is sitting very casually at a table with a glass of an unidentifiable brownish-orange liquid. He smirks and raises his glass.

GREY  
Schann.

SCHANN  
I didn't expect to see you back here.

GREY  
(slowly, carefully)  
Sometimes things happen that you  
don't expect would happen.  
(beat)  
Sometimes things you hoped would  
never happen.

Grey walks over to the empty chair next to Schann.

GREY (CONT'D)  
May I?

Schann shrugs.

SCHANN  
Why not?

Grey sits down. Schann takes another swig of the liquid he has.

SCHANN (CONT'D)  
Have you seen the light, Grey?

GREY  
That's what I'm here to discuss.

SCHANN  
So you have seen the light.

GREY

It depends on how you define light.

SCHANN

Oh. I didn't think so, to be honest.

(beat)

You were just one of those people.  
If you decide that the sky is white  
you'll hold onto that opinion even  
if it was proved otherwise.

GREY

You proved nothing.

SCHANN

Would it have made a difference,  
Grey?

GREY

Maybe it would.

Schann SCOFFS.

SCHANN

You've clung to your little fantasy  
for so long, Grey, you've clung to  
your fantasy no matter how many  
obvious faults even you could see.  
You covered them up, you ignored  
them, you acted like they weren't  
there. Who says you would change  
now?

GREY

There were no faults.

SCHANN

Really? Then explain the Bajoran  
incident, Grey! You snuck away under  
the pretension of being outraged to  
avoid it, as I recall...

GREY

That wasn't a pretension.

SCHANN

I don't know who you're fooling,  
Grey, but its not me.

GREY

It was not a pretension.

Schann, nonchalant, shrugs.

SCHANN

Fine, fine.

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Call it what you want, what do I care? But you still evaded the issue.

GREY

The people demanding a vote were a minority. An extreme minority.

SCHANN

Does it matter?

GREY

Yes. As a matter of fact, it does. Democracy is a government for the many, by the many. We can't have everyone demanding a vote on everything. The pressure must be truly great enough before such an action can be taken. Why bother taking a vote if only a small amount of people are interested?

Schann theatrically claps his hands.

SCHANN

Bravo! Bravo! Wonderful. For someone debating an utterly impossible to defend point, Grey, you did a fine job. But the truth is the truth and here as always it is inescapable. The extreme minority clearly thought that freedom stood a chance on the polls. Why not test that, given the sufficient following? And why break them up with armed guards? A bit extreme for a minority, don't you think?

GREY

The first reason was simple. They wanted the vote the day after. It would be impossible to really get such an election underway Bajor-wide, and the few people informed who would turn out to vote would have been those very extremists. It's an unfair twisting of democracy. And as for your other point...

(beat)

No one is perfect. We can't all be held accountable for one person's actions. The official in charge of policing the Bajoran capital took that decision on her own initiative, without prior authorization by the government.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

She thought that the protesters were trying to kill the Governor. She was wrong, and it was a mistake.

SCHANN

And just when I thought I'd heard the most devious and insidious propaganda the Federation could ever fabricate...

GREY

(losing it)

It's not propaganda, damn it Schann! It's the truth! Every word of it the truth. You said the truth is inescapable, didn't you? Well, you're damn right its inescapable. This is the truth, the solid truth, and there is no denying it. It just isn't your truth. Doesn't fit in with your world view. And therefore it must be wrong, is that it? Is that it, Schann? Are you always right? Is your opinion not just opinion -- but fact? Must all other opinions be lies? I'm not amused.

SCHANN

Truth? You call that the truth? There is a simple truth, Grey. There were protesters. They were protesting for a ballot. The governmental response was to open up on them with police. It has happened thousands upon thousands of times in Earth's history, let alone the other millions of other occurrences throughout this galaxy. And yet the reasons have always been the same. It has been the action of a dictatorship or imperialist government trying to suppress the will of the people they rule. And you're trying to tell me to swallow that a suspiciously similar circumstance occurred on Bajor, and it occurred for entirely different reasons -- something that has never, ever happened before?

GREY

And you say I am twisting words. Could you give me something more solid then past, separate incidents? Do you have any real answers to validity what occurred then and there?

SCHANN

I'd call that a real answer, Grey.  
To me, the answer is extremely  
obvious, and it is equally obvious  
that there is only one.

GREY

Yes, the answer is obvious...

Schann rolls his eyes.

SCHANN

I can't convince you, and I can tell  
you here and now you'll never convince  
me.

Schann takes another swig of his drink and begins to idly  
look out into space. Grey contemplates. Silence for a moment.  
Then:

GREY

Schann ...  
(beat)  
What happened? Why did you change?

SCHANN

Why did I change? I changed because  
I began to realize what the universe  
and the Federation that inhabits it  
is really like. It's not a pretty  
place, Grey. It's a not a place which  
has any serious room for your wishful  
idealism. It's a hard, cold place.  
If there is a god, he is indeed a  
heartless one to trap us in a hellhole  
like this. And our governments are  
overly corrupt and decadent, caring  
only for themselves and their power  
and aggrandizement. They appeal to  
the people not because they care  
about the people, but because they  
need the people to form the basis  
for their power. They need the people,  
but they'll never admit it. They'll  
never also admit that they give the  
people nothing solid in return. The  
Federation is by the people, for the  
government, and it is a truth, while  
obvious, is so dark and insidious  
that no one would dare utter it.

(beat)

No one, that is, but me. I saw it.  
I saw it all. I saw it all clearly...

(beat)

flawlessly...

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

(beat)

In short, Grey, I saw it how it was. Everything, in its terrible, blunt, but sadly true reality. I saw the Federation as the dying, ravenous beast and scourge of men that it really is, like any empire before it, and perhaps like any empire that will exist after it. I saw the true, horrible terrors of our society as they were, in all their grotesqueness. Not how you see it, or how others would like it to be.

(beat)

I saw the truth, Grey. You still cling to the fantasy. You find it easy to brush the truth aside. Maybe you're afraid of the truth, what is really out there. Maybe you're simply not ready for the truth, unable to possibly take on the terrible burden of knowing what the truth is.

(beat)

Do you have any more questions, Grey?

Grey, silent, shakes his head.

GREY

No thank you.

(beat)

They've all been answered.

Grey gets up and EXITS, looking every bit as forlorn as when he did it the first time.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL

Talora is sitting a table near the window, lost in thought. An expression of deep emotion is evident on her face. Silently, Dojar joins her. He clears his throat.

DOJAR

Ahem.

Talora turns to face him.

DOJAR (CONT'D)

(reminding)

We need to talk. Remember?

TALORA

I told you...

DOJAR

I know what you told me. But I also know that it isn't true.

(beat)

If you can't tell me, Talora, who can you tell?

Talora reluctantly nods.

TALORA

I suppose it would be better if I talked to someone.

Dojar sits down.

DOJAR

All right, Talora, what is it?

Talora turns back and looks at the stars, searching for the words to describe it.

TALORA

(softer than usual)

It all began nine years ago. I was on the Romulan Warship Dornok. I was the Weapons Officer of that vessel. We were on a routine survey mission to the Federation-Klingon-Romulan border. We were studying the gravity of a large planetoid when it happened.

(beat)

It was like it came out of nowhere. A static electricity storm, I believe Sciences called it. It hit the ship full force. Sensors were knocked offline. We spun widely for a second but the Helm soon stabilized our starship. Our sensors were off, but our cameras were not...

(beat)

...and how I wish they had been. Maybe if they did, none of this would have ever happened. We picked up some kind of starship on the camera, but the storm was interfering too heavily to tell what it was. There was an explosion. We were hit. To this day, I do not know what hit us or why. Perhaps it was a larger and more dangerous stretch of the storm which had hit our ship. But whatever it was it made no difference, for our Commander, Brevok, deduced that the unknown craft was responsible.

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

(beat)

He ordered me to open fire, to disable the other vessel. I did so, but something went wrong. Maybe I applied too much power to the torpedoes. Maybe the storm caused a disturbance that unbalanced the power ratio. Maybe the ship was weaker than I had estimated. Maybe there had been a power build-up in their warp core I had unwittingly ignited.

(beat)

Who is to say? But whatever the reason, it happened. I fired. And the other ship exploded.

(beat)

The explosion quickly tore apart the storm, and within minutes it had fully dissipated. But we knew the terrible truth even before the sensors were back online. We could see, through the camera, the remains of the ship. Its designation and style were clear and unmistakable.

(beat)

It was an unarmed craft. But that was not the worst of it. It was a Federation Science Vessel. Crew complement: sixty-three.

(beat)

Brevok may have ordered me to fire, but he wanted the ship disabled. I was the one who, through inability to carry out that task, destroyed it.

(beat)

Sixty-three people...

(beat)

Sixty-three names. Sixty-three faces. Sixty-three lives. All gone in an instant. All gone...

(beat)

because of me. It haunts me, Gril. It may not haunt my waking hours, but when I'm asleep it haunts me. It haunts my dreams. Those faces. Those people. Sixty-three.

(beat)

I've lost others under my command. I've killed others during battle. But it was never the same. It was never this bad. Those that died under my command, hard as it was, were people willing and ready to die.

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

Those that I killed in battle were trying to do the same to me. But there is no such excuse here...

A single tear streaks down Talora's face, but she quickly brushes it aside. Dojar saw it, though no others did.

There is a long beat.

DOJAR

Talora... I can understand your loss and pain, but why did it resurface here? Why now? You never showed the slightest sign of it before.

TALORA

I am a Romulan. If an emotion is disadvantageous to my present situation I suppress it. But you're right. There was a reason.

(beat)

It's a small galaxy, Gril. A very small galaxy. Do you know the commander of the Starbase out there, Admiral Chiang?

DOJAR

I've heard of him.

TALORA

His daughter was on that Science vessel.

Beat.

DOJAR

Oh.

TALORA

He won't forgive me. Maybe he's right. Maybe I don't deserve forgiveness. But it is something I want, Gril. It is something I want very much.

(beat)

So, now you know.

DOJAR

Talora...

(beat)

What Chiang said might not be set in stone. Like as he has done with you, it must have gave him many memories rushing back. Something which was painful for him. He is reacting emotionally and at the present.

(MORE)

DOJAR (CONT'D)

Eventually, he should forgive you.  
It's only a matter of time.

(beat)

The question is, how much time he  
needs...

On Dojar we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

Spartan as ever. Grey is pacing back and forth, back and forth.

A chime sounds. Grey stops in front of the door. He turns his back to the door and faces the stars streaking outside his window.

GREY

Come in.

Dojar steps in, followed by Ozran.

DOJAR

(simultaneously with  
Ozran)

Well, what is it you want?

OZRAN

(simultaneously with  
Dojar)

Why do you need me?

They stop and look at each other.

DOJAR AND OZRAN

(to each other, in  
union)

He called you here too?

They look back at Grey.

DOJAR

Grey, what is going on?

GREY

(not looking at them)

Sit down.

DOJAR

Could you tell us what's going on  
first?

GREY

I will in a moment. Sit down.

Dojar and Ozran look to each other, back at Grey, and then pull up some chairs.

Beat.

GREY (CONT'D)

You two are the only people left who are close to me.

(beat)

You two are the only two I can still call friends.

OZRAN

What about Sarah?

GREY

You know full well she is not merely my friend.

(beat)

Besides, she cannot help me, as she has herself admitted.

DOJAR

Help you? In what?

Grey turns to face them.

GREY

You know that there is a reunion. Things have hardly gone as planned.

(beat)

Once, me and all the marines agreed on our rather optimistic and positive assessment of the war. But now, after time, some of my dearest friends have changed their minds to a more cynical outlook for various reasons. Now, I suppose I could live with that, if the opinions hadn't resulted in immediately alienating me from them. These people had been some of the best friend I ever had. Now it's hard to have a proper conversation with them.

DOJAR

And where do we come in?

GREY

I want your advice. Right now, I'm ready to try almost anything.

Dojar shakes his head.

DOJAR

I thought the Enterprise had a counselor...

GREY

You think a counselor would provide the answer I really want?

DOJAR

(not entirely joking)

What type of answer would that be?  
The one you want to hear?

GREY

The answer that works. The helpful  
answer. One I can actually use.

DOJAR

Well, counselors are for the  
disturbed. Maybe you should give her  
a call.

Grey chuckles, slightly.

Ozran clears his throat.

OZRAN

Well,

(beat)

I had a similar situation with my  
brother, Nev Hadl. We were not just  
friends, we were family. And Gorn  
families are closely-knit even by  
your standards.

(beat)

Now, as you may or may not know,  
accession to the leadership of Gorn  
clans is hereditary. Previously, it  
had entailed inheriting an entire  
state, but the nature of clans has  
changed much since the Olden Days.  
The different leaders of the Gorn  
clans form the Council of the Gorn  
Kingdom and elect a King from their  
number. They also own the ancient  
homes of their clans. It's kind of  
the equivalent to, say, a Federation  
senator.

(beat)

My father was the head of the Hadl  
clan. When he retired, I, as his  
oldest son, was set to succeed him.  
But it was not to be.

(beat)

Nev turned on me. Challenged me to  
the Harodyh, the ritual battle between  
two contenders for the control of a  
clan.

(bitter)

He was the last person I expected to  
oppose me. But he was physically  
stronger than I was, and it seems  
that his ambition was more important  
to him than his family.

(MORE)

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

He won, and became the head of the Hadl clan. We had a fierce argument after the battle. We broke totally. He thought he was better suited to be a clan leader, but I knew all he wanted was the power and I was shocked he'd trample on me his own brother, no less, to get it. I could not believe his treachery. And he attacked me for taking power while he, for some reason, was better at it. What did he expect me to do when Father died? Abandon my responsibilities like nothing had happened?

(beat)

I, by Gorn Law, was obliged to take a different career other than politics, and now I'm here.

Grey nods.

GREY

I see. How did you resolve that?

OZRAN

I haven't spoken to Nev in fifteen years.

GREY

That's not very helpful, Narv.

Ozran SHRUGS.

OZRAN

I think it is. Maybe there are some disputes that can never be resolved. It can be a hard thing to accept, but sometimes you just have to let go.

GREY

Well, I'm not willing to give up. Not yet.

OZRAN

But if no other solution presents itself, this could be your only option.

GREY

Maybe.

(beat)

Dojar? You have any ideas?

Dojar THINKS before replying.

DOJAR

I know of one solution. But it won't be easy to do.

GREY sits down on a chair.

GREY

I'm willing to listen.

DOJAR

It seems from what you've told me that you've not just lost their friendship, but also their respect.

GREY

That could be judged the case, yes.

DOJAR

When something like that is lost, Grey, it is lost. It cannot be mended or repaired immediately. If you are to regain their respect, you must earn it.

(beat)

You must earn it like you did before. You must re-prove yourself, show your worth to them once more. What you have done for them in the past, no matter how great, has not been enough to win over their respect once more therefore, you must assume that what you are doing you are doing in many ways from scratch. And if it is the views that divide you, then let the views stay divided.

(beat)

Let the views stay divided. The people must no longer be. It is possible to be a friend of someone who looks at something in an entirely different fashion, that is the richness of life. And if they will not cease to let their views get in the way of you and them, then you have a hard decision to make.

(beat)

You may either leave them as they are, lacking respect and uncaring of you, or you may compromise your own views for their friendship.

(beat)

I didn't say it would be easy, Grey, but you're in a hard situation. It's quite honestly the only thing I can think of. And if that doesn't work, perhaps you should take Ozran's advice...

Grey NODS.

GREY

At this stage, I think that anything is worth a try, Dojar. This means a lot to me. Anything else either of you could think of?

DOJAR

Um...  
(beat)  
No.

GREY

Ozran?

OZRAN

Not really, no.

GREY

Very well then. Thank you both for your advice.  
(beat)  
Would you like something to drink?

CUT TO:

INT. ADMIRAL'S READY ROOM

Same as before. Chiang has his back to the door, facing the stars.

Talora ENTERS. Chiang can see her reflection on the glass.

He sighs.

CHIANG

(subdued)  
Commander, I believe that you have no cargo left onboard the Station.

Talora walks into the room and the doors behind her close.

TALORA

(quietly)  
That's not what I'm here to talk about.

CHIANG

I thought as much. But I hoped otherwise.

Chiang turns to face Talora.

CHIANG (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Talora clears her throat.

TALORA

What is done cannot be undone.  
Decisions made, however regretted,  
cannot be unmade. And sometime we  
cannot even begin to guess the  
consequences of a decision that we  
have made.

CHIANG

(interrupting)

I think you know what happens when  
you open fire.

TALORA

We had thought that they were  
attacking us, and our aim was to  
disable them.

CHIANG

That doesn't make a difference. My  
daughter is still dead.

TALORA

You're right, it doesn't make a  
difference. She is still dead. And  
it was my action that made her to  
be.

(beat, with more  
emotion)

But I did not want it to happen.  
There were sixty-three people on  
that ship, including your daughter.  
Sixty-three lives that I never wanted  
to take. And when I killed them, I  
lost a part of myself. I committed a  
terrible act, and by doing so it in  
a small part erased who I am. It is  
a stain on my life which I know will  
bear for its remainder. I may not  
have suffered as much as you had,  
and my plight cannot possibly compare,  
but I suffer.

(beat)

I suffer because I know I was the  
one who killed them. It is a fact I  
cannot bear. There are very few  
decisions I have made which make me  
feel so damned and so wrong. No,  
there are no others. What I did there  
is something absolutely terrible. It  
inflicted pain on those sixty-three,  
their friends, their families, and  
all who knew them.

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

I was the cause of a horrible pain I cannot even begin to understand, and the fact it was I who was the cause, I who made you suffer so much...

(beat)

I am haunted by this fact at night. My pain is nowhere near your pain, my sorrow pales towards your sorrow, but I suffer. There are times I feel I cannot live with myself for what I've done. Maybe I shouldn't live with myself, but it is still not easy to do so. I can never really look at myself in the same light ever again for what I committed. How could I possibly now do something good which could even begin to compare to the suffering I have been the vessel of? What use is my life at all if it gives out more pain than it does joy? What worth is my accomplishment compared to my error? If, by giving my life I could save one of them just one of them, let alone all sixty three I would do so. It would go some way to healing the pain I have inflicted. The knowledge of what I have done...

(beat)

to them

(beat)

to her

(beat)

to you

(beat)

...and to all of their families is something which makes me appalled at my act. Admiral, this is not a burden I bear easily, even if the burden is nothing compared to the burden you carry, and these are deaths I cannot write off easily they are deaths I will likely never write off at all.

(beat)

I beg you, I implore you, for one thing and one thing alone. It will help me to rest a little easier. It could be seen as selfish of me to ask for what I am about to ask for, but it is in many ways the only way I can make peace with myself. It is the only way I can really live with myself, even though I will never be able to really recover from this act I have committed and how could I?

(MORE)

TALORA (CONT'D)

(beat)

I beg you for your forgiveness.  
These were acts I never wanted to  
do, these were acts I would have  
prevented any way I could had I known  
the results.

A long, tense, BEAT. Chiang, his face virtually unreadable but clearly very emotional, looks down on Talora. Talora, humbly, looks up at him, her cheeks still wet with tears.

Chiang observes her for another lingering BEAT. Finally, he stands.

CHIANG

(emotional)

Forgiveness? So that you can sleep  
easier? Don't try to lecture me on  
pain, Commander. Don't try to lecture  
me on loss. I know loss, and I know  
the true meaning of pain. Sixty-three.  
That's a nice number.

(beat)

Let me give you another: Twenty-two.  
My daughter was twenty-two years old  
when she died.

(being to cry, but  
still very angry)

Twenty-two. At the very beginning of  
adulthood. At the beginning of the  
richness that is life. Cut short.  
Cut short by you.

(beat)

Don't talk to me about your sob  
stories about not being able to live  
with yourself, Commander. You killed  
my daughter. You try living with  
your only offspring dead before you  
are. You try living with the light  
of your life, you very reason for  
being, dead.

(beat)

I am haunted at night, too. I see  
the face of my daughter in my dreams.  
And I wonder why her? Why not me? I  
would very much love it to be me,  
and that, Commander, that I believe  
with all my heart and all by soul.  
To not be able to life with yourself  
pales to barely living at all. You  
drained the purpose out of my life.  
You drained my meaning to live.

(beat)

And now you talk of forgiveness. So  
that you can sleep easier.

(MORE)

CHIANG (CONT'D)

So you can live with yourself. As if you were the true victim of this attack. As if you were a victim at all. They were the victims. They were the ones whose lives ended. I am the one who has lost his daughter, not you. You sleep well enough, Commander. And your sleep is far less troubled than mine. Your life is far more rosier, and you won't hear me acting sympathetic to someone who deserves no sympathy.

Chiang turns his back to her, and faces the stars.

CHIANG (CONT'D)

(sharp)

Go.

TALORA

Admiral...

CHIANG

(angry)

Go.

Talora gets up and, slightly dumbfounded, stands on the spot for a moment, dazed. But it is only a moment.

TALORA

(wavering)

Y-yes sir.

Talora sniffs, turns on her heel, and EXITS. Chiang contemplates the stars.

CHIANG

(murmuring, his voice barely a whisper)

Kaihui...

(beat)

it should've been me...

(beat)

why did you go?

(beat)

your mother was right...

(beat)

space was no place for you...

(beat)

why must you die?

(beat)

why you? Why not me?

(beat)

why at all?

RENAISSANCE: "The Call of Duty" - ACT FOUR

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On Chiang's troubled expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. STARBASE MESS HALL

Approximately the same as before, but people are in different positions and many are wearing different clothes. There are various groups of people across the room talking in mainly a hushed, reserved fashion.

Grey ENTERS, striding with a determined purpose. He walks PAST Granger. He walks PAST Battenberg. And he walks PAST Schann.

BATTENBERG

(to himself)

What's he doing here?

He walks over to a table with two empty glasses on it and a spoon. Grey picks up the glass and spoon and taps the glass with the spoon.

GREY

May I have your attention please?

May I have your attention please?

The conversation dies down until the room is silent.

GREY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(beat)

The Vulcans have a saying, "Infinite Diversities in Infinite Combinations." There has been nowhere that I've ever been that this phrase so aptly applied to then Company A of the 113th.

Applause.

GREY (CONT'D)

Don't applaud me yet, I'm only beginning.

Laughter. Grey smiles, and then turns serious again. He waits until the laughter has died down and again has the audience's attention.

GREY (CONT'D)

The people of our company came from many different backgrounds. From upper class families on Earth to colonists on our frontier, from Humans to Vulcans, we were extremely diverse in our outward appearances, previous

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

history and opinions. No two marines were alike. Indeed, there was only one thing that all the marines of the company held in common: We answered the call of duty.

(beat)

But that was no small thing that we held in common. The call of duty joined us, the call of duty bound us together. We became one. We became inseparable. We were more than friends, we were comrades. We were family. And it was that spirit that kept this company alive during Iotia Beta. It was that spirit that kept the company alive during Alexandrinopolis. Nothing could divide us. When the Sheliak started pounding us, we were united. When they broke through our lines, we were united. When we seemed to be on the brink of destruction, we were united.

(beat)

But peacetime has done to the company that was unthinkable in wartime. And it was not the physical separation I refer to here we had faced it many times against the Sheliak, and that never broke our spirit or, in the end, divided our company. No, I talk about something much worse. As time progressed, and we began to go our separate ways, some among us began to change. They began to change their evaluation of things. They began to see things in a different light. There is no problem with doing this, and no problem with someone changing their minds, but the effect on the company was severe.

(beat)

The opinions divided us. They made us fight each other, petition each other. When they arose, the call of duty which we had all answered seemed long, long forgotten. Comrades turned to opponents. Family turned into competition. Words shattered what could never have been shattered by guns. The greatest threat to our unity was, it seems, never external, but internal. It cannot be said that this is another Iotia Beta or Alexandrinopolis, but it is still a serious problem to not just one or

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

two of us, but the entire company.  
Just a problem of a different sort.

(beat)

Nothing should be able to divide  
Company A. There was a time that  
nothing could, and it is because of  
that very time we are here. We are  
here to remember the past. Let us  
also, in some small way, emulate it.  
Preserve it. Over time, we will  
change. We will grow older, we will  
move on, and, yes, our opinions and  
evaluations may too change with time.  
But there's one thing that should  
never change. The one thing that  
brought us here. Our unity. Divided  
some are by opinions, divided we  
will be by space, but never should  
we let any of these barriers divide  
us on a personal level. None of this  
should stop us from being the comrades  
that we once were. We should resist  
that just like we did the Sheliak,  
and we will be successful just as  
we always were.

(beat)

All of you here who served in Company  
A answered the call of duty. And I  
ask you all now to answer my call.

Grey stops speaking. The entire room breaks into an  
appreciative APPLAUSE. Grey nods, smiles, and puts down both  
glass and spoon. After a few moments, the room largely returns  
to its original atmosphere. Grey walks through the room.

BATTENBERG (O.S.)

Grey!

Grey turns around and sees Battenberg, who is speeding up to  
him on his wheelchair. Battenberg moves until he reaches  
Grey.

GREY

Yes?

Battenberg shakes his head and sighs, deeply. He looks up  
into Grey's eyes.

BATTENBERG

I don't really know how to say this,  
but, you were right. I am an old  
man, Grey. An old man.

(beat)

I know I am not old in terms of age,  
and I don't look old, but I feel

(MORE)

BATTENBERG (CONT'D)

old, and perhaps that is all that matters. Maybe it's the Tu'nahcangla, I don't know, but I feel it. I am an old man who looked back on his life and felt bitter. Bitter at the roads I could not take. Never to have a family, never to have children. I was dying, and I was dying at an unusually young age. I had sent people to death who were even younger. To my eyes, my short career was not a pretty one, and the suffering I had so long inflicted had finally began to come to me. In my bitterness I began to hate it all. And I still do, rightly or wrongly it is no longer the time to debate.

(beat)

But I made a mistake when I let that become between us. You and me. You are a fine officer, Grey, and there's no doubt about that. It was a pleasure to serve with you during the War. You never said a bad word about me, and, differences or no differences, I should not have reacted as I did.

(beat)

Can you find it in your heart to forgive a bitter, useless old man?

Grey places a hand on Battenberg's shoulder.

GREY

I do not intend to forgive a bitter, useless old man. I forgive a brave man who served as both my mentor and my inspiration for my career. I forgive the finest officer I have ever served with.

BATTENBERG

If I was an inspiration for your career, Grey, then perhaps some good came out of those years after all. You still have "Efficient Command"?

GREY

I find some time for reading it every day.

Battenberg chuckles.

BATTENBERG

Grey, I'm glad it worked for you better than it worked for me.

GREY

Please. Call me Erik.

BATTENBERG

And call me David.

They smile. Grey, considerably brighter then before, leaves Battenberg. Grey shifts through the crowds, as if searching for someone. He sees someone offscreen and walks over to that person.

As he moves towards we can see that it is Granger. She is looking into her glass, utterly lost in her thoughts. Grey becomes more cautious, uncertain, and solemn.

GREY

(quietly)

May I sit down?

Granger doesn't respond. Grey stands for a moment, waiting a response, until ultimately he sits down.

For a long BEAT Grey observes Nicole in silence.

GREY (CONT'D)

(silently)

Nicole...

She doesn't respond.

GREY (CONT'D)

Nicole...

(beat)

I know how you feel over John's death. Believe me, I would feel the same way. His death was terrible, and it was a loss to us all.

(beat)

Yes, it was a product of the war. It is a sad fact that people die in wars. That is why they must be avoided at all costs. That is why, in a perfect universe, there would be no wars.

(beat)

But we are not in a perfect universe. Sometimes there is a real reason for war, for fighting. Sometimes it is to prevent even greater evils taking place. I know that this will not be much consolation, but people such as John are, like all civilians, caught in the crossfire.

(beat)

We did not kill him. The Sheliak did.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

And there were others, many others, that the Sheliak hoped to kill. I don't like his death or the death of anyone who died in that war any more than you do. But sometimes wars need to be fought. Sometimes to destroy a greater evil a lesser must be conducted.

(beat)

I cannot hope to justify John's death to you or anyone else. I can only hope to explain it.

A long BEAT. Granger continues to look into her glass. It is as if she has not heard him.

For a longer BEAT still, Grey sits in silence and awaits a response.

GREY (CONT'D)

(softly)

I'll be going now.

Grey STANDS and leaves her.

He does not get far until he hears a familiar voice from behind him.

SCHANN (O.S.)

Can I speak to you for a minute?

Schann round up from behind Grey.

GREY

(neutral)

Schann.

SCHANN

(good humor)

That has to be one of the most boring speeches I have ever heard.

(beat, more serious)

You know, Grey, I suppose you're right. Back at that speech, I mean. We were united and all during the War, and there's not much reason to change that now. I turned on the organization that started this war. I turned my back on all the reasons for it. But there is I no reason for me to turn on the friends I made during it. I can hate the Federation without hating you. And I see no need to hate you.

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Sure, I think that you're terribly naive to cling to your utopian visions, but what is that to hold against a man? You're not the one making those visions, and you aren't the one twisting them. My quarrel is not with you, but with your state, when it boils down to it. Why should you be caught in the crossfire? What is this to part friends?

(beat)

And so on. No bad feelings, eh?

GREY

No bad feelings at all, Schann. You are entitled to your opinion just as much as the next person, regardless of what that opinion might be.

SCHANN

I don't know about that. After all, who knows? The next person might be you.

They laugh.

GREY

It's good to have you back, Schann.

SCHANN

You too, Grey. You too.

(beat, more humorously)

Say, I don't suppose I could convert you, eh?

GREY

Not on your life.

Schann looks down to the 25th century equivalent of a wristwatch.

SCHANN

Time flies. My transport leaves eight minutes. I better get down to it.

GREY

Where are you headed?

SCHANN

Where my will takes me.

GREY

When will I next see you?

SCHANN

And here was I thinking you were  
dreading the day...

GREY

Maybe I just want to be prepared.

They both slightly laugh.

SCHANN

Not until the next reunion, at the  
least.

GREY

Until the next reunion, then.

SCHANN

Until the next reunion.

Schann EXTENDS HIS HAND.

Grey takes it, and they SHAKE.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Well, time flies. I must run.

Schann turns to leave and walks a few paces.

GREY

(from behind him)

Do you still consider a Sheliak  
bombardment to be the best time and  
place to work on your act?

Schann shakes his head in amusement.

SCHANN

(still facing away)

Why? Can you think of any better?

Schann LEAVES.

Hauder walks up to Grey, drink in hand.

HAUDER

Erik!

Hauder shakes Grey's hand with his non-drink holding hand  
empathically.

HAUDER (CONT'D)

(in a fairly good  
mood, acting like a  
host)

Haven't seen you much. How are you  
doing?

We PAN backwards from that direction until...

INT. STARBASE BAR

We pass through a glass window, through which we can see but not hear Grey and Hauder talking.

We continue to back-pedal until we have reached a bar, which is apparently an adjoining room to the Mess Hall. ELRIS LEA and JENNIFER QUINLAN are sitting on barstools and watching what is happening in the other room. Both have drinks, and Quinlan takes a swig from hers.

ELRIS

You ever seen him act like that?

QUINLAN

Hmm?

ELRIS

Grey. You ever seen him like that?

QUINLAN

What, talking very animatedly? He's like that the whole time down in Engineering.

ELRIS

I don't mean that.

QUINLAN

Then what do you mean?

ELRIS

Look how happy he is. It's so unlike him.

QUINLAN

You think so? I've heard that when he's alone with Sarah...

Elris shakes her head.

ELRIS

Fine then. Unlike him in public.

QUINLAN

I suppose he is.

ELRIS

I wonder why that is.

QUINLAN

The reason seems pretty simple to me.

ELRIS

Oh?

QUINLAN

(slightly more serious)

He's in his element. You've seen the way he acts all the time. He acts like he's in the marines. He acts like he's in the middle of a war. He acts like they did, no doubt, during that Sheliak War of theirs. His actions are enigmatic and even erratic to us, but there, there he's with those who are like minded.

(beat)

There he's in his element.

Quinlan hiccups and looks slightly dazed. Elris eyes her with semi-mock concern.

ELRIS

I -- think you've had too much of those, Jen.

Quinlan swaggers slightly.

QUINLAN

I've had enough when I say I've had enough.

Pointedly, Quinlan takes another swig, finishing off her current drink. She sways a bit.

ELRIS

And that is?

QUINLAN

When I wake up in Sickbay.

ELRIS

You can't act like that anyone.

QUINLAN

And why not?

ELRIS

You have to drive the ship now. You know what they say about drunken drivers...

They laugh good-naturedly.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise is circling Starbase 290. It turns away from the station and jumps to warp.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Sitting around the table are Talora, Dojar, Grey, Elris, Quinlan and Y'lan. NEIL CROSS is also present, at the center of the room and standing.

CROSS

...and that's the situation. Comments?

Beat.

CROSS (CONT'D)

All right then. Dismissed. Talora, Grey, stay here.

Talora and Grey stand, as Dojar, Elris, Quinlan and Y'lan EXIT.

Grey turns to face Cross, as does Talora.

GREY

(formal)

Sir.

CROSS

(compassionate)

Lieutenant...

(beat)

I heard about what happened. How do you feel?

GREY

Fine, sir. Just fine.

CROSS

If you want to talk about it, my door is always open.

GREY

Thank you, sir, but no thank you.

CROSS

All right. Dismissed.

GREY

Yes sir.

Grey turns on his heel and EXITS.

Cross looks at Talora. She seems impatient.

TALORA

Sir, I am needed on the bridge...

CROSS

Dojar is capable of handling things for a few minutes.

(beat)

Word of mouth travels fast, and it didn't just bring me Grey's misfortune. About...

A beat as Cross considers how to put it.

CROSS (CONT'D)

About Admiral Chiang...

TALORA

It will not happen again, sir.

CROSS

I'm not concerned about that. I am talking about your...

(beat)

emotional well-being...

TALORA

I am free for a mental examination with the counsellor at eighteen hundred hours tomorrow. If you so require, I can schedule...

CROSS

You're not going to talk about this either, are you, Talora?

TALORA

No sir. Nor am I under obligation to do so.

CROSS

Until this begins to effect your performance.

TALORA

Yes sir.

CROSS

Then I assume that the incident Dojar reported to me was an isolated affair?

TALORA

Yes sir.

CROSS

If such an incident happens again,  
maybe I will want you to see a  
counselor.

(beat, more informal,  
softer)

Talora...

(beat)

I can understand your pain.

(beat)

Dismissed.

Talora turns on her heel and EXITS, leaving Cross alone.

CUT TO:

INT. GREY'S QUARTERS

Same as always. The door opens and Grey enters. His expression  
is dazed, blank.

Apparently deep in thought, he walks through the room until  
he reaches his bed that he then sits down on.

He then lies on the bed and looks up towards the ceiling,  
and sighs softly. He thinks for a moment.

GREY

Computer...

(beat)

begin Personal Log.

COMPUTER

Personal Log activated.

Beat.

GREY

Countermand, Computer.

COMPUTER

Request countermanded.

Grey stares intently at the ceiling, as if he is seeing  
something that no one else is or could. And from the glint  
in his eye, we can see that he is not looking at the ceiling  
at all but something beyond it, something different  
altogether. An ever so slight smile forms around his lips.

WE PAN IN ON HIS FACE, UNTIL...

FADE TO:

EXT. FOREST

His face becomes a decade younger. We PAN BACK from his face  
to reveal that he is lying on the ground in the middle of a

forest. It is clear that this is a flashback. Many of the marines, including Battenberg, Schann and Granger, are present. All of them are talking highly animatedly (although we hear nothing). Grey is talking with them and seems to be enjoying their company immensely.

We PAN UP from this scene through the trees to the starry sky as seen through the dense leaves and trees. We then PAN RIGHT THROUGH the foliage until the sky is clear and we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END