

STAR TREK

RENAISSANCE

"A Friend"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

A wide shot of a wide area of space. Immediately we can see the Enterprise, but she is not alone. There is a Sovereign-class vessel in the vicinity, a Scimitar, a large, bulky cargo transport, a Liberty-class vessel with distinctly Trill additions. There are also a numerous amount of civilian ships, some of them from distinct cultures -- Cardassian, Vulcan, Bolian...

But what undoubtedly catches the eye the most is the STARBASE that looms over them. In size and shape, it is very similar to Earth's Spacedock: Similar, but not quite. The curves are less curved, more angular, making the station's circles look more like octagons.

Two large, menacing spikes, each on either side of the main octagon, stick up through the air and down. They seem to have some military purpose. The painting of the station is less brighter than others, veering towards a darker shade of grey.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE

As we know it. NEIL CROSS sits in the Captain's chair, TALORA sits in the First Officer's, JENNIFER QUINLAN at Tactical, NATHANIEL STOLT at CONN, and BRIAN CALE at Ops. Our camera angle keeps the viewscreen in view, where we can see the Starbase and most of the ships in its vicinity.

All eyes are on Talora.

CROSS

What?

QUINLAN

You can't be serious.

TALORA

I'm perfectly serious.

Cross relaxes, smiles. He can take this.

CROSS

All right. How much did they want, then?

TALORA

Two thousand tons.

No, he can't.

CROSS
(incredulous)
Two thousand tons!

Gravely, Talora nods.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Why on Earth would the Whagosh want
that much earwax?

TALORA
I don't --

Talora is suddenly cut short by a DEAFENING ROAR. On the
screen we can see the cargo transport EXPLODE.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

SMASH CUT IN:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE

Continuous from the end of the teaser. Cross bolts to his feet.

CROSS

Bridge to Transporter Room! Lock on to any life signs onboard the S.S. Manila and beam them onboard immediately!

The explosion dies down.

OZRAN'S COMM VOICE

(grim)

Captain... I'm detecting no life signs.

We cut to the viewscreen, where there are a few chunks of horribly twisted debris, but nothing more. By now, everyone in the room is either working at their consoles or gazing into space incomprehensibly.

CROSS

(quietly)

My god...

(louder)

Quinlan, have any of the other ships in the vicinity been damaged?

QUINLAN

Checking, sir.

(beat)

The S.S. Stonn is reporting damage to its shields... nothing else, sir.

CALE

Sir?

Cross, slowly, tears himself away from the awful sight and looks at Cale.

CROSS

Yes, Lieutenant?

CALE

The explosion doesn't look like it was caused by an internal failure or a warp core breach, sir. According to these readings and the blast patterns...

He pauses.

CALE (CONT'D)

Some kind of bomb placed in the rear end of the ship.

CROSS

What kind?

CALE

Whatever it was, it wasn't antimatter, sir.

Cross nods, turns away.

CROSS

Thank you, Mr. Cale.

He moves towards the viewscreen again.

QUINLAN

Captain, I'm getting a transmission from the Admiral of Starbase 478. He wants to speak to you.

CROSS

In my ready room, Quinlan.

Cross is already moving in that direction.

QUINLAN

Aye, sir.

Cross EXITS into his Ready Room. We hold on the bridge for a BEAT. It is deathly quiet. (There is no music in this scene or either of the next two scenes.)

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

A silent shot. The ships and Starbase are essentially in the same positions as before. The S.S. Manila is the main exception, having been shred into two main half-melted, twisted parts, with a number of other scattered shreds. There is now a salvage ship next to it, and if we look closely we might make out dozens of tiny people in spacesuits working along the debris.

DISSOLVE, SLOWLY:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM

Cross is standing, looking out the window. His right hand is clenched, hard. We hold on him for a moment of absolute silence.

There is a chime behind him.

CROSS

(low)

Enter.

The door parts, and ERIK GREY emerges. He looks more than a little shocked.

GREY

Sir.

Cross half-turns, sufficient to look at Grey.

CROSS

The Admiral requested that the Enterprise send all the scientific and engineering personnel we can spare over to Starbase 478 to assist in the investigation. Cale's already picked his scientific team and went. I want you to assemble an engineering team to do likewise.

GREY

Yes, sir.

Cross turns back, to look out the window. Grey strains to see what exactly Cross is looking at - and then sees it. A twisted lump of metal floating in the space beyond.

GREY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

That's it?

There is the faintest of nods from the Enterprise's captain.

CROSS

That's it.

(beat)

You're dismissed.

Grey nods.

GREY

Sir.

He EXITS. Cross continues to stare out at the remnants of the Manila. We close in on a side view of his face, facing the infinity of space...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STARBASE 478 -- CONFERENCE LOUNGE

Similar to the Enterprise's lounge, only substantially larger and more comfortable. The colors are all subdued, and most of them are light or dark shades of grey.

Standing in the room is Cross, two other men, Starfleet, captain rank -- one of them late twenties, the other mid forties. Third and finally is a female TRILL, wearing the uniform of the TRILL NAVY (as seen in "Unusual Circumstances.") It is faded brown overalls, drab and unimpressive but unmistakably military.

They are all standing near a large conference table, that could seat about thirty-five people.

The elder captain extends his hand to Cross. They shake.

LÖNNROT

I'm Captain Harri Lönnrot of the starship Endeavour. Neil Cross, the Enterprise, I presume?

CROSS

(nods)
Neil Cross.

They release.

LÖNNROT

Well then,
(indicating the younger captain)
-- this is my colleague, Captain Marten Sorenson of the Acinaces.
(to the Trill)
You are?

TIRAX

(flatly)
Tirax. Senior Commander Ezel Tirax.
S.S. Curzon.

LÖNNROT

(nothing daunted)
Tirax.

CROSS

(to Lönnrot)
Captain... when is the Admiral arriving?

LÖNNROT

Actually, he should be here any minute now.

We hear a door open.

VOICE (O.S.)

Indeed I should.

We cut to behind Lönnrot, were we see a figure in a Starfleet Admiral's uniform.

He has a blue face, white, glossy, thin hair, two antennae... his face is angular, his mood deadpan, his expression humorless, and he's got a squint.

In short, Admiral THEL.

THEL
(indicating conference
table, in a dry
monotone)
Please be seated.

Thel strides over to the seat at the head of the table and sits down. Lönnrot sits at the seat to one side of Thel, the YOUNGER CAPTAIN (SORENSEN) at the other. Cross sits only a short distance from both, and the Trill (Tirax) pointedly sits near the very end of the table.

THEL (CONT'D)
Lönnrot already knows most of what I
am about to tell you.
(to Sorenson)
I meant to debrief you personally on
your arrival, but with this
occurrence, you will be told in this
conference.

SORENSEN
(confused)
Told what --

Thel waves to Sorenson to be quiet.

THEL
The evidence compiled so far indicates
that the attack on the S.S. Manila
was carried out by Benzar Stands
Alone And Together, a splinter group
of the Benzar Liberation Movement.
(beat)
I know this to be otherwise.

Thel nods to Lönnrot, who works at one or two controls with his panel. Behind Thel a map of this sector of space emerges. The words "BREEN BUFFER ZONE" appear in a number of languages over a chunk of space that Starbase 478 appears in the middle of. At the top of the map are the words BREEN.

THEL (CONT'D)
The Breen are a secretive race that
allow little foreign contact beyond
a limited trading franchise. There
are only two things of importance we
know about them.
The first is that they have a highly
unusual system of government: On any
(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

matter of national importance, each Breen casts a single vote, and the majority of votes dictate their action. They have, apparently, no formal leaders, these votes are processed mechanically. Any Breen citizen can propose a motion. Their foreign ambassadors and representatives are chosen on this basis, and they are the only Breen that hold power as we understand it. It's a very odd system but, apparently, it works.

(beat)

The second thing we know is that the Breen will do anything, short of open war, to take back the Breen Buffer Zone.

Little red squares begin to appear across the Buffer Zone map. At the bottom of screen there is the map, which identifies them as "Breen-related attacks, with date."

THEL (CONT'D)

Almost from the moment this area was acquired after the Dominion War, there have been terrorist attacks on vital facilities and supplies needed to maintain Federation control of the Buffer Zone. The terrorists have been distinctly diverse in nature: renegade Jem'Hadar, Cardassians, Anticans, Orions, Bajorans...

(beat)

Not one Breen national. The only Breen nationals we know of being dangerous are a bunch of petty pirates near the Torraht Expanse that thrive on disrupting trade to the Breen worlds. The Breen have themselves launched quite a few expeditions to destroy this inconvenience -- we can hardly qualify them as Breen operatives.

(beat)

And yet, all the targets these foreign groups have attacked, without question, were disruptions to the Buffer Zone that would make it easier to facilitate Breen re-occupation. The Manila, for instance, was transporting vital supplies to both this starbase and all the other outposts in the Buffer Zone.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

(beat)

Clearly, the Breen have been using some kind of extensive extra-national core to achieve their objectives while exempting them of all official blame. Even now, the evidence we have so far is purely circumstantial, which prevents us from even formally accusing the Breen of these attacks.

The red squares are beginning to appear with greater rapidity.

THEL (CONT'D)

(noting the screen)

As you might have noticed, the attacks have steadily increased in occurrence as the years go on. It started with one or two attacks every five years.

(beat, for emphasis)

Since I took over command of this starbase almost a year ago, there have been four attacks, excluding the Manila. I am telling you all this so that you shall remain vigilant throughout your stay in this sector.

Thel nods to Lönnrot, who powers down the map, which has now finished displaying red squares. The red squares are dispersed right around the entire zone, but are heavily concentrated around Starbase 478 and the other outposts.

THEL (CONT'D)

Are there any questions?

TIRAX

The Trill Navy shall pursue and punish anyone who perpetrates terrorist actions against our interests or the Federation's.

THEL

(indifferent to Tirax)

Any questions?

Beat.

THEL (CONT'D)

Good. You are dismissed. Cross, remain behind.

Cross nods. He looks like he expected this. Sorenson and Tirax get up and EXIT. Lönnrot does not move. Thel's already squinty eyes narrow a bit.

THEL (CONT'D)
(impatient, not looking
at him)
Lönnrot?

LÖNNROT
Sir?

THEL
(still not looking)
You are dismissed.

Lönnrot is noticeably surprised. He stands, nods.

LÖNNROT
Aye, sir.

He walks off towards the door. Before he EXITS, he shoots Cross a look as if to say "What the hell does he want you for?"

The room falls into silence. Thel looks over to Cross, Cross to Thel. Thel evidently expects Cross to speak first.

CROSS
I thought this was a Starfleet briefing.

THEL
It was.

CROSS
Then why have a commander from the Trill Navy?

THEL
Her rank is the equivalent of Starfleet captain, and Trill Navy officers are required to sit in briefings relevant to them. This briefing was for all the starship captains currently in orbit of this Starbase... her position qualified.
(beat)
An interesting choice of words, though, if you noticed them: "our interests and the Federation's."

Beat.

CROSS
(realizing)
You called me here to discuss the Trill, didn't you?

Thel folds his hands.

THEL

I am sure you recall the last time we discussed this.

CROSS

(coldly)

I could hardly forget it.

THEL

I did what was required to be done to preserve the Federation's peace and stability. But I am under no illusions as to the direction Trill autonomy is going.

CROSS

Oh?

THEL

Every year, the Trill government build more and more military facilities, and buy more starships. There is already not one but three Trill-owned orbital batteries circling Trill. The Trill do not just have a navy, but they have an army. The highly influential symbiosis commission controls part of both. All Starfleet facilities in the Trill sector have been requisitioned by the Trill Navy. Half the Trill officers in Starfleet have transferred to the Trill Navy. All the sectors adjacent to the Trill system are under joint Starfleet-Trill defense. They pursue a separate economic policy than the Federation. They're even debating introducing a Trill currency.

(beat)

During the Sheliak War, this was both reasonably controllable and acceptable. The Trill formed an independent, haphazard navy to defend their homeworld simply because Starfleet couldn't spare any. Governor Kigan, who took that step, never dreamed of this degree of autonomy. And even since then, the Trill government has always been very cooperative and has helped to solidify Federation interests.

CROSS

And?

THEL

There are... others... in the Trill hierarchy who do not see these developments as helping to secure the Federation, but steps towards fully breaking from it. Narlan Rex is one such other.

CROSS

Not a man of many scruples, is he?

THEL

Hardly. The previous Chief of the Symbiosis Commission was less so. Zia Larzon, yes, was the one who decided to assassinate Ozran, but she believed that his very life was fundamentally dangerous to the Federation, and intended to take him out with the Federation in mind.

CROSS

Charming.
(beat)
Wait, previous?

THEL

Yes, previous. In the Symbiosis Commission there has lately been a rather fierce power struggle. Rex won. He's the new Chief of Staff of the Symbiosis Commission, and thus, the most powerful unelected Trill within the Trill autonomy. And as I said, Rex is a staunch nationalist, who wants nothing less than complete Trill independence. That view was acceptable, when he was merely a high ranking commander in the Symbiosis's segment of the Trill Navy. His superior Larzon could keep him in check, and she was not grooming Rex to succeed her.

(beat)

The Trill government is still staunchly pro-Federation. But it has always been strongly influenced by the Symbiosis Commission's stance. The Symbiosis Commission is always a very important factor in the autonomous government elections, and those are just over a year away. This is a very disturbing trend.

CROSS

I thought you were staunchly pro-Trill.

THEL

One's opinions are rarely as simple as they seem, Captain. I place the Federation above everything. I believed then and still believe today that a certain degree of autonomy for the Trill is immensely beneficial to the Federation's interests. It takes some of the burden off Starfleet's shoulders in defending the interior, it worked as a deterrent to stop the Sheliak from seizing the planet. But there is a point where such autonomy begins to undermine Federation interests, be distinctly dangerous.

(beat)

We are fast approaching that point.

A longish BEAT.

CROSS

You brought me here to tell you that?

THEL

Yes, that. But not just that. You and many members of your crew are eye-witnesses to an incident that, if made public, would ruin Narlan Rex's political career. I told you two years ago I wiped, edited and replaced your ship's memory bank record of the incident, to discredit any claim of this attack. I have kept a backup copy, including proofs of its validity.

CROSS

Then what? You're going to put Rex on trial after a two year delay, whip out the necessary evidence, thus disclosing to all the Federation your deceitful little trick? If you weren't careful, Admiral, you'd be following Rex right to jail.

THEL

Of course not. The data will have been edited by Narlan Rex, who had his science officer hack into your databanks before leaving the system. The necessary evidence to this event will be, of course, produced.

CROSS

You mean fabricated.

Thel shrugs.

THEL

Essentially.

CROSS

And you'll want me to go along with that?

THEL

Preferably, yes. You can go against it with your own testimony, of course, but there will be no evidence to back you up.

CROSS

That's more than economical with the truth, Admiral.

THEL

I place the Federation above the truth.

CROSS

You place your career above the truth.

THEL

How am I to help the Federation without a career?

CROSS

Is this really the kind of help the Federation wants?

THEL

It is the kind of help the Federation needs, irrespective of the individual wants. If Rex remains as Chief of Staff of the Symbiosis Commission right through the autonomous government elections, it is more than likely that his influence will bring a nationalist, separatist group to power. That group would then do everything within its power to make Trill independent, and would, at least, concentrate even more local power in the autonomous government's hands. If, in the unlikely event, Rex's influence is not strong enough to get such a group to power... the position of Chief of Staff can be held indefinitely. He could influence the elections after that, or after that, and serious concessions to autonomous power would be made in the process.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

(beat)

All of the possibilities, in even their most innocent form, are serious threats to Federation interests.

Beat.

CROSS

When are you going to "discover" the evidence?

THEL

Not yet. For now, I will watch. But when the time comes... you will be told.

CROSS

And you'll expect me to comply.

THEL

I will expect you to think about it.

CROSS

And if I don't reach your conclusion?

THEL

You would be the one most likely to convince the rest of your crew to give testimony. I will see if I can convince any of them myself, of course, but lacking a complete testimony would damage the case.

CROSS

I don't speak for my crew.

THEL

Yes, but you can speak to your crew.

A long beat.

CROSS

I will not support any of your falsified information.

THEL

We shall see.

(before Cross responds)

Oh, I know what you would say to that. But wait until you reach that road before saying it.

CUT TO:

INT. STARBASE 478 -- OPERATIONS

A massive room. Stairs going up, stairs going down, railings surrounding each level, different segments and places slipping off for specialist work -- it's three decks built in a similar manner to the Enterprise's Mission Operation's two decks. This is quite possibly one of the biggest interior sets seen on a Federation station or craft. Somewhere on the second deck we can see a kind of command alcove where whoever is in charge stays, and there are a variety of different and extensive terminals both on that deck, the one above it, and below it. Its color-coding matches the rest of the station: Subdued, mostly grey. We begin with a long shot, taking in a substantial part of the set -- not it all, because from the way it's built it would be impossible to get a near-complete shot from the interior.

The place is a hive of activity, STARFLEET OFFICERS buzzing to and fro with PADDs, tricorders, and the like -- working at terminals, tapping away at a PADD, talking to another officer, moving to another terminal... we notice that some of the larger terminals -- ones that are partially closed off to almost provide a room to themselves -- feature an extensive holographic interface, and we see large holograms appear next to them out of the ground. We can recognize one as a slow motion shot of the Manila EXPLODING, which it does in silence.

Slowly, we pan down past the steps, past the officers busily working away. We leave the first deck behind, hang in vertigo above the second deck for a moment, and then fall towards the third, and final, deck.

Or more accurately, part of it that can only be accessed from the second deck via a stairs. It contains one of those largish panels that can project holograms.

Grey is standing at the top of the stairs to this panel, and with him is ANDREW CHAMBERS and an unknown female ENGINEER.

Grey pats Chambers on the back.

GREY
(to Chambers)
Carry it on from here, Andrew.

Chambers nods, and WALKS OFF.

GREY (CONT'D)
(to engineer)
You were saying?

ENGINEER
Do you want to see the evidence,
sir?

She motions towards the stairs.

GREY

Of course.

They both walk down the stairs towards the computer panel.

GREY (CONT'D)

(as they walk)

How exactly did you get the information indicating it was a Benzite attack?

ENGINEER

(reaching end of stairs)

Quite simple, sir.

She walks up to the panel and begins to type at it. As well as the large hologram projector, there are about a dozen other readouts next to the control terminal, all of which display important-looking technical information.

ENGINEER (CONT'D)

For such vital cargo as the Manila was carrying, security cameras were installed in all sensitive areas. Our salvage teams, thankfully, found the records for the point where the explosion took place completely intact. Their casing is made of the hardest material available the Federation, the planted fusion bomb could hardly make a dent in them.

A 2-D image of a cargo hold onboard the S.S. Manila APPEARS floating from the hologram projector. It's a huge room with piles and piles of futuristic boxes, each labelled "FEDERATION SUPPLIES. DO NOT OPEN."

Near the camera we can see a hunched down, blue figure, who is clothed in black overalls. His face is visible -- Benzite, definitely. He's placing a small black object near one of the supply boxes.

He glances up at the camera for a moment, but only a moment, and then walks OUT OF VIEW.

Grey frowns, and enters a few commands into the panel.

The hologram obligingly changes to a 3-D, life-size view of the Benzite in question. It is still wearing the black overalls. It is a still, upright position, and rotates slowly. Floating alongside him, biological and biographical data -- date of birth in stardates, condition of liver, etc.

ENGINEER (CONT'D)

(nodding to image)

This camera data was sufficient to identify him as Morodaks, a known terrorist and former member of the Benzite Liberation Movement who was known to be one of the members of the Benzar Stands Alone And Together.

(beat)

We assume that he perished in the explosion, but no trace of his body has yet been found. It is quite likely it was simply incinerated.

Grey's gaze flickered to one of the information feeds, one that is simply listing numbers. Almost immediately, something catches his eye.

GREY

(authoritatively)

Hold.

The Engineer is caught a bit off guard by this, but does so. Everything, including the rotating Benzite, freezes.

GREY (CONT'D)

(pointing)

Look at this data stream.

ENGINEER

Yes, that's part of the information obtained from the Benzite's scan...

GREY

It's fake.

ENGINEER

Fake?

GREY

During the Sheliak War, myself and a friend of mine had to pass enemy lines. We needed to make convincing Sheliak, so we programmed a holographic emitter that could be placed on us and sell it fairly convincingly. You'd have to know how we programmed it to pick up its few faults.

The Engineer looks hard at the now static stream of numbers.

ENGINEER

I don't see it.

GREY

Exactly.

Grey moves away from the stream, and indicates the panel.

GREY (CONT'D)

May I?

The Engineer nods.

He begins to type rapidly at the panel. The hologram image freezes, flickers, and begins to change.

GREY (CONT'D)

You'll see it in a moment...

We focus on Grey tapping away at the controls, not looking at the changing hologram. He works frantically for only a few seconds. The Engineer continues to look at the hologram.

GREY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

It's very similar to what we used.

(beginning to look up)

Odd, really, that they'd duplicate it so...

Grey trails off when he sees the new hologram (which we still cannot see). He stares, completely speechless, completely astonished, above and beyond words. He is frozen to the spot, hit by something so hard he cannot yet begin to react -- all he can do is stare.

Slightly worried, the Engineer looks over at him.

ENGINEER

Sir?

GREY

(lowly)

I know that man...

We pan around. The black overalls that the Benzite was seen wearing are still on this new hologram - but this hologram is no Benzite. The replacement is human, male, somewhere in his mid thirties. He has cropped, jet-black hair. And even as a hologram, he looks slightly, ever so slightly, mischievous. But it is a very grim, dark mischief that occupies him now. He looks more ruthless than we have ever seen him before. And he is indeed a familiar face - in fact, very little has changed since we have last seen him.

GREY (CONT'D)

Karl...

He is KARL SCHANN.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

SEQ: Scenes from "The Call of Duty."

INT. STARBASE MESS HALL

This is part of the first the reunion scene onboard Starbase 290. MIKE HAUDER, the host, is near the front. The room is totally silent, and all eyes are on one person we cannot see, including GREY'S, who is near the corner.

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 that it indeed SCHANN. He 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, but many eyes are on him.

Schann spots Grey, 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.

CUT TO:

INT. STARBASE MESS HALL

Much later. This is the third reunion scene. GREY is standing near SCHANN.

SCHANN

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

GREY

Where are you headed?

As we begin a slow FADE:

SCHANN

Where my will takes me.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STARBASE 478 -- OPERATIONS -- THIRD LEVEL

Same as before. We fade from that final shot of Schann to the holographic, stiff, mockery of the man. Grey is glancing back at the technical data on hand, again and again -- looking for a fault, almost hoping to find a fault.

Gingerly, the Engineer looks at the appeared individual.

ENGINEER

Who was he?

GREY

(as he works)

Karl Schann. That friend I told you about earlier, which helped me get through Sheliak lines? That's him. He completely disappeared from all public knowledge over seven years ago - I think I now know where he's been.

Something else catches his eye as he works.

INT. STARBASE 478 OPERATIONS - SECOND LEVEL

We now focus on the alcove mentioned earlier. The CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, a female ARCTURIAN, COMMANDER in rank, sits in the alcove's main, and reasonably comfortable, chair. She is working with no particular rush at a panel when --

ENGINEER (O.S.)

Tnotil!

The ARCTURIAN (Tak'narph-Osin'toka-Iarl, or TNOTIL) looks up as the ENGINEER and Grey rush into view.

TNOTIL

Yes?

GREY

The Manila attacker is still alive.

This catches Tnotil's attention. She bolts upright.

TNOTIL

Where?

Grey walks over to her panel and taps rapidly. Tnotil watches over his shoulder.

GREY

I've just determined that the attacker shrouded both his real identity and the fact he beamed out moments before the explosion using a holographic matrix. Tell me, was there any ship in these exact coordinates at the time of the attack?

Grey backs away. Tnotil sits down, and corroborates Grey's input with her preexisting data.

TNOTIL

(still looking at the screen)

Yes. A Cardassian merchant vessel, the Danor.

GREY

Where is it now?

Tnotil continues to work, then:

TNOTIL

It requested permission to leave the Starbase --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STARBASE 478 -- CONFERENCE LOUNGE

Same as before. Thel with Cross -- evidently the scenes in Operations happened while they talked.

TNOTIL'S COMM VOICE

-- about an hour ago, and proceeded to leave the system at high warp. Our long range sensors indicate this Cardassian frigate has already passed into Breen space. Additionally, the Enterprise's chief engineer informs me that the attacker was not, repeat, not, a member of the Benzite terrorist group, but a Human operative. Instructions?

THEL

(into the air)

Inform the necessary Breen authorities that the Federation believes that the Danor harbors a known terrorist. Supply data on appearance, name, et cetera, and request the Breen authorities that, if apprehended, he should be returned to Federation custody to stand trial.

(beat)

Additionally, revoke the Danor's trading license for the year period allotted to vessels that do not guard themselves adequately against illegal stowaways.

TNOTIL'S COMM VOICE

Yes, sir. Anything else?

THEL

No, thank you. Admiral Thel out.

Thel hits his commbadge and the link is severed.

CROSS

Ask the Breen to hand their operative over? I doubt that will be of much help.

THEL

Of course not. Unfortunately, that's our only legal outlet the moment that vessel passes into Breen space. We're expected to do that much if we've got this kind of evidence.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Chances are, the Danor's captain is on the Breen's payroll too. And as there's no conclusive evidence that the operative boarded the Danor with any of the crew's explicit permission, revoking their trading license is the best I can do for now. Of course, I'll make sure that a much closer eye is kept on that vessel if it ever comes anywhere near the Buffer Zone once it is back in commerce.

A beat.

Cross nods towards the door.

CROSS

May I?

Thel nods. Cross gets up, walks towards the door, and EXITS, leaving Thel alone with his thoughts...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

Similar to before. The massive starbase still dominates the view. The Enterprise, the Sovereign-class starship (ENDEAVOUR), and the Scimitar class (ACINACES) are still present. The Trill-modified Liberty-class vessel (CURZON) is, however, nowhere in sight. Work is still progressing on the somber remains of the Manila -- though to a much smaller degree than before. The composition of surrounding civilian craft has changed quite a bit. We close on the Enterprise...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

The same as ever. The doors PART, and Grey enters. He looks around as the doors close behind him. He seems to look at everything with a new, bleak, light...

"Why?" is a question that looks almost ready to leave his lips, but never does so. He is considerably distraught.

Grey goes towards the bed and throws himself onto it. He pounds the pillow for a moment, then stops himself. He closes his eyes and clenches his teeth, almost as if in physical pain. Finally, he opens his eyes, and slowly turns over to face the ceiling. He is exhausted, and for a moment he doesn't know what to think. Fitfully, he lies there, gazing upwards... we CLOSE IN on his eyes --

DISSOLVE TO:

SEQ: FLASHBACK

EXT. BARRACKS (FLASHBACK)

A massive, bleak stretch of grey defense grids and compounds stretch out into the distance. It is not huge, but fairly decently sized. The sky is a mild greyish-blue, and filled with low lying clouds. There is a sense of bleakness, a sense of utter desolation...

Text appears:

DOSON BARRACKS, ANTIGONID ARCHIPELAGO, IPSUS
STARDATE 65094.2

We focus on a clearing within the barrack's multi-building structure. It is a bleak, dusty area, about the size of two decently sized parking lots. Standing by the edge of one of the buildings and looking into the sky are two men, whom we have both seen before. One, Colonel JENNER ("Men of War and Science") is only a little younger than when we last saw him. The other, Lieutenant Colonel DAVID BATTENBERG ("The Call of Duty") is substantially more so. Both look like particularly uncompromising, stern people.

We now see what they are gazing at: A single runabout, Nile-class, the U.S.S. Amu Darya, which is making its descent. Battenberg looks further -- as if he's looking for more of them -- and then, turning his gaze back to the descending Amu Darya, looks disgusted.

BATTENBERG

I would hardly call those reinforcements.

JENNER

(as the runabout descends)

We can only spare a few hundred thousand for Ipsus, Battenberg. For an isolated barracks, even one holding such a strategically important position, a single runabout is about as much as we could expect.

(beat, more meaningfully)

They need every man at the front.

There is a clank. The runabout has landed. Jenner, with Battenberg following him, walks away from his side position to the head of the runabout as MARINES pile out. We can't get a good look at the marines at first, but there's about twenty of them.

JENNER (CONT'D)

(loudly)

Ten-SHUN!

The marines immediately snap into a formation, left of the runabout they have exited. Jenner looks over them, and as he does, we recognize one of them, near the front -- GREY, over a decade younger, and like the rest of them, decked in Marine gear. Jenner strides over, still looking over the rigidly still marines.

JENNER (CONT'D)

(after a beat)

At ease.

(when they do so)

The Antigonid Archipelago is one of the most vital strategic positions on Ipsus. If a serious attack is to be made, part of that attack will hit here. That means I want absolutely no degree of laxity. It will not be tolerated in any shape or form, and will be punished accordingly.

(beat)

Do I make myself clear?

MARINES

(as one)

Yes sir!

JENNER

Good. Now, the accommodations of this barracks are limited and you will be bunked.

(motioning behind him)

Behind that door are some of the staff here who will direct you to your bunks. They should also direct you to the gymnasium, and I expect all of you there within the hour for fitness checks.

(beat)

Understood?

MARINES

(as one)

Sir!

Jenner stands aside. Battenberg walks over to a panel by the door, presses it, and it opens. Within are another group of Marines. The first group march forth into that area --

INT. DOSON BARRACKS -- ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

Organized chaos. The second group of Marines are all calling at various individuals within the second group. We focus on Grey, who is trying to shift through the chaos. He runs into a female Marine next to him.

MARINE

(calling)

Grey, Erik. Grey --

GREY

I'm here.

She looks at him.

MARINE

Right.

(calling)

Schann, Karl. Schann, Karl.

Grey seems slightly surprised -- it's evident he's never heard that name before.

VOICE

I'm Schann, Karl.

Grey looks over at KARL SCHANN, who approaches the Marine. Like Grey, he is much younger than we have previously seen him, and is decked out in marine gear. Karl glances at him briefly, making nothing of him, and looks back at the Marine, as Grey does likewise.

MARINE

This way.

She walks off, and both GREY and SCHANN follow her, slightly behind. Schann watches her for a while and then looks at Grey again.

SCHANN

(to Grey)

You bunking with me, then?

GREY

I'd assume so. Schann, isn't it?

SCHANN

Yeah, Schann. Karl Schann. You?

GREY

Erik Grey.

SCHANN

Must've missed you during the flight.

GREY

Probably.

Beat.

SCHANN

Grey, eh? As in the --

GREY
(annoyed)
I've heard those jokes.

SCHANN
Oh. Pity, because they're really
quite good.

GREY
I wouldn't say so.

Schann shrugs.

SCHANN
Some people have no taste.

The Marine stops at a door.

MARINE
You sleep here.

She walks off.

Schann opens the door, and we move into --

INT. DOSON BARRACKS -- BUNK ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A basic, drab, unimpressive room with three bunk beds. The one at the end of the room is completely unoccupied, the one in the middle has a single, Vulcan occupant in the lower bed, eyes closed, hands folded, and the other at the other end of the room has a man sitting on one of the top beds. GREY and SCHANN enter.

MAN
You'd be the new ones, then?

Grey strides over to the bed, and purposefully takes something out of his pocket.

SCHANN
Yes, we are. I'm Karl Schann, and
that fellow over there is Elmer
Grey...

We can now see that what Grey has in his hands is a book, medium sized. Its title is "On Marine Regulations And Conduct, An Introduction." He opens it where there is a page-mark.

GREY
(as he does so)
Erik.

SCHANN
Erik, yeah, that's it.

MAN

Oh. Well, I'm Michael Warren, and
that guy over there --
(indicating Vulcan)
-- is Strove.
(to Vulcan)
Hey, Strove, you awake?

Slowly, pointedly, the Vulcan opens his eyes. If he wasn't a Vulcan, he'd look rather irritated. He stares at the bed above him, motionless, expressionless.

VULCAN

I was meditating. And my name is
Strovok.

MAN (WARREN)

Whatever. Want to say hello to our
roommates?

VULCAN (STROVOK)

(still looking above)
Greetings.

Strovok closes his eyes again. Warren rolls his.

WARREN

See what kind of company I have?

SCHANN

Yeah. That's a shame. You're not
doing your part right though.

WARREN

(dumbfounded)
What do you mean?

Schann smiles.

SCHANN

The trick is to spike their plomeek
soup...

Warren waves this away.

WARREN

Bah. They're probably just as boring
drunk as they are sober.

SCHANN

On the contrary.

The smile has widened.

WARREN

You didn't actually...

Schann stares at him.

WARREN (CONT'D)

All right, I'll bite. What happened?

SCHANN

Not only was he stone drunk -- that was hilarious in itself -- but would you believe Vulcans find alcohol highly allergic? Suvan didn't stop sneezing for a week.

Warren laughs.

WARREN

Hell, I wished I tried that.
(mockingly)

Hey, Strove, you want some plomeek soup?

STROVOK

(not opening eyes)

No.

Warren chuckles. Then:

WARREN

(to Grey)

Hey, Ed! What you think?

GREY

(not looking up)

Erik.

WARREN

(disinterested)

Yeah, whatever. What do you think?

GREY

(not looking up)

About what?

We can see that Warren now realizes Grey paid absolutely no attention to the conversation. He looks at Schann and shrugs.

SCHANN

(to Grey)

What's that you're reading?

Grey holds up the book higher so that Schann can read the title "On Marine Regulations And Conduct, An Introduction." He is still immersed.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Ah. Want to impress the boss?

Grey lays the book down and looks up at Schann.

GREY

(blunt)

I believe it is absolutely imperative that I am fully informed on each and every aspect of Marine protocol and that protocol's proper procedure, from the Field Marshal down. This information is both invaluable on the field of battle and in conduct of my overall career.

SCHANN

Oh. Good for you, then.

GREY

(annoyed)

Good for me? What do you mean, good for me? We're in a wartime situation and we are expected to perform to our very best. We need a strict maintenance of discipline.

SCHANN

Hey, don't get me wrong there. I'm all for discipline. The Colonel tells me to suck vacuum and I'll ask how much. I'll serve the Federation to my damned very best. I'm no slacker, let me tell you. I just don't read protocol in my off-time, okay?

Grey begins to calm down.

GREY

Maybe you should.

Grey's gaze flickers right back down to his book. He returns to reading. Schann still looks at him, nevertheless. He is visibly surprised by Grey's outburst.

SCHANN

You know what?

(beat)

Maybe I should.

Grey does not respond. Schann looks away.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

(to Warren)

Hey, Mike, you know where I can get some food in this place? I'm starved.

As they EXIT, we...

CUT TO:

INT. DOSON BARRACKS -- CORRIDOR

The same drab and dull corridor. All colors are subdued, and it has a Spartan feel to it, despite the futuristic touches. We look at one door, which opens. Grey, Schann, and OTHER MARINES, all from the runabout and all dressed in clothes appropriate for jogging, pile out of the room. They all are sweating profusely. The Marines begin to break up and go their separate ways. Grey and Schann head one particular direction, and the marines also heading that direction turn off in other directions during the following dialogue until only Grey and Schann are left.

SCHANN

Now that's something I'm not going to forget in a long time...

GREY

(partly to himself)
That was pointless.

SCHANN

(overhearing)
You think so?

GREY

Yeah. I'm sure Jenner read the reports he was sent on us, it's in the regulations. They would have shown us, of course, in absolutely fit health. Hell, even if he didn't read he'd know it as a fact that the Marines don't accept people who aren't in the very best of health.

SCHANN

But isn't it a regulation that regular fitness checks are required?

GREY

It is at the discretion of a commander to order fitness checks. The unit's doctors analyze the physical health of the entire unit monthly, including their fitness, and send a complete report to the Colonel.

SCHANN

Ah. In that case, maybe he wanted to keep us fit. Sitting on a Sickbay bed isn't hard work.

GREY

I can keep fit. I exercise.

SCHANN

And how is he supposed to know that?
And what if not all the Marines
exercise? Besides, if you do
exercise, what's wrong with a bit
more?

GREY

I exercise at my own convenience.

SCHANN

Oh. Don't want to follow discipline,
then?

Grey glares up at him.

GREY

That was a low blow.

Schann raises his hands defensively.

SCHANN

Just saying things as I see them.

They continue to walk in silence. Then:

GREY

Besides... we should be doing
something important.

SCHANN

Well, like what?

GREY

(exploding)

There's a war on! Right across this
sector the Sheliak are pounding and
occupying Federation worlds! Tellar
is being beaten to a bloody pulp!
And here we are, stuck here, doing
push-ups for all anybody cares.
Push-ups! How is that meant to help
the war effort?

Schann puts on a rather patient look.

SCHANN

What, you don't know why we're here?

GREY

Oh, I know all right. To defend
Ipsus. From lethargy, evidently.

SCHANN

Last I checked, Ipsus was one of the
most strategically relevant planets

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

in this entire sector. Believe me, those Sheliak would love to have their slimy tentacles on this thing. Look at the campaigns ongoing on Iotia Alpha. Why do you think they want that world? Got no real worth of it's own except for one point: It's an excellent base for staging an attack on Ipsus.

(beat)

If things keep on going in Iotia Alpha the way they're going, then we've got the best and brightest of the Sheliak war force headed right out way.

GREY

And if they don't?

SCHANN

So much the better, so much the better. But listen, the chances Sheliak are going to pour all over this place are very real.

They reach the door to the bunk room. It opens, and both Schann and Grey enter.

INT. DOSON BARRACKS -- BUNK ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Strovok is still present, meditating in the same spot and position as before, but Warren is nowhere to be seen. Schann and Grey enter. Grey, rather tired, makes his way for the bed he was sitting on earlier. Schann stands nearby.

GREY

(sighs)

I guess you're right, Karl. Can I call you Karl?

SCHANN

Why not?

GREY

(looking away)

It's just so frustrating to be here doing nothing...

SCHANN

It'll be a lot more then frustrating if we ever end of doing something.

Grey looks up at Schann.

GREY

But that's why you joined the Marines,
isn't it?

SCHANN

Actually, the pay was rather
attractive.

Grey looks at him blankly. Schann is irritated by this
particularly bad crowd of one.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Hey, lighten up, will ya?

GREY

I don't see any particular reason to
do so, so no.

SCHANN

I was joking.

(with conviction)

Of course I joined the Marines to
get in the thick of this war. I saw
those horrors on Tellar and I was
every bit as moved as you. What
those Sheliak are doing...

(beat)

Yeah, I want to do my bit to defend
the Federation. And the Federation
wants me to defend here, then here
I'll stand.

Beat. Grey considers this.

GREY

I...

(beat)

I guess I misjudged you. I'm sorry.

Schann waves it away.

SCHANN

Think nothing of it.

Schann looks at his watch.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

Hmmm. Dinnertime. You hungry, Erik?

GREY

Absolutely.

SCHANN

(waving towards the
door)

C'mon.

Together, Schann and Grey walk towards the exit. We pan in on Grey's face --

END FLASHBACK.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

-- and hold. The face is over a decade older now, and pain, confusion, and listlessness is much more prominent in its expression. An expression of personal horror and private torture.

Grey continues to stare upwards towards the ceiling as we pan back... he is so still one can barely notice he is breathing. Besides the low throb of the Enterprise's engines, there is not a sound in the room.

On Grey, we --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

An establishing shot, again of the Enterprise, Endeavour, Acinaces and Starbase 478. None of the Manila's remains are visible in the shot, nor the ships that had once been working on them.

Once more, the overall complement of civilian craft has changed.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING

An eye, riveted with pain. We can hear sounds of work, though we can't see from where.

We pan back: A face, betraying the same expression. It is Grey. Slowly, we move from his face, to reveal his upper body, working at a computer panel. We begin to pan around, to go over his back, and gain perspective on the situation around him.

He and NARV OZRAN are hard at work at some panels not far from the QIC.

Grey looks very preoccupied. He seems, at first glance, to be looking at the readouts in front of him, but in fact he's submersed in his mind's eye.

OZRAN

(in mid-speech)

The result of this, basically, is that our readouts are giving us inaccurate information about the Induction Core.

GREY

(not paying attention)

Right.

OZRAN

I've rerouted these panels --

(indicating the panels both he and Grey are at)

-- and they should give us accurate information.

GREY

(automatic response)

Yeah. Okay.

Ozran's brow furrows.

OZRAN

What's its current efficiency?

GREY

(distractedly)

Its current efficiency... its current efficiency is... currently efficient.

Ozran, now quite surprised, looks up.

OZRAN

(pressing)

Sir? The power status?

GREY

(vague, mumbled)

The status of the intermix ratio is...

Ozran, provoked, moves over to Grey. He stands close to his side. He seems worried, from what one could gather.

OZRAN

(quietly)

Sir... we don't have an intermix ratio.

GREY

(not looking at him)

Yes, of course not. Who said we did?

OZRAN

You did.

This finally makes an impact. Immediately, Grey is lurched back into the here and now. Slowly, he turns his head, looking up at Ozran. He looks slightly embarrassed, but his expression is mostly still very preoccupied, pained - if keeping up with the present.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

I don't mean to pry...

Grey sighs and sits down, as Ozran sits on the chair next to him.

GREY

No, that's alright.

OZRAN

Do you want to talk about it?

(indicating the panels)

This can wait.

GREY

(half-amused)

We weren't making much progress,
were we?

(beat, more serious)

I just can't stop thinking about it,
Narv. About Karl, that is.

OZRAN

(understanding)

Ah.

GREY

He'd meant so much to me, Narv. He
was there right from the start of
the Sheliak War. We fought alongside
each other throughout the entire
war. He'd saved my life more times
than I can count... and I his. He
wasn't just a friend. He was a
comrade-in-arms. Karl Schann meant
a great deal to me, and together, we
fought for what we believed in. I
thought I knew him.

(beat)

Then he... changed. That's the best
word I have for it, that's the best
word I've got. I'm not trying to
understand it... not anymore. But
one day, he up and renounced the
Federation, all its ideals, and all
the beliefs he -- we -- had strived
for.

(beat)

I saw him again, I saw him changed...
and I could accept that. Somehow, I
felt I still knew him. I don't know --
maybe I wasn't really listening, or
maybe I just never felt that, despite
all he'd said, he'd try to bring
actions behind his words... certainly
not like this. Maybe it was always
there, and I'd just never noticed
it... well, like I said, I don't
know anymore.

(beat)

But he did. I've seen the Manila
explode a thousand times by now,
over and over... my friend did it.
My dearest wartime companion is a
terrorist. He's committed high
treason and massacred Federation
citizens who he had once risked his
life to protect.

(beat)

It's a horrendous, unspeakable crime.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

I never would have thought Schann would ever have been capable of it. Is he really the man I fought with? Is this the same man that saved my life?

(beat)

I feel betrayed, Ozran. I couldn't believe that someone I had once trusted so much could do such a thing like this!

(beat)

Well... now you know why I can't concentrate.

OZRAN

It wasn't your fault.

GREY

That's not the point.

OZRAN

I know.

(beat)

It's something we all at one stage or another like to think at one point in life... that we truly know another person. That we know what they will and will not do... that we know their inmost souls.

(beat)

It's a lie. We lie to ourselves, and we'd like to believe it. But no matter how long you know someone, no matter how well you know someone... you never know them fully. The depths of someone else's soul can never be fully explored. To what depths another can sink or what heights another can rise, you can never truly say, never truly know. It is one of the greatest dangers of living: Likeable, amicable people who seem worthy of trust and friendship can be infinitely cruel. It is not a simple universe we live in.

(beat)

You'd shared the same deprivations with him. You'd fought alongside him. You'd saved each other's lives. And on that basis, you thought you really knew him. Now you've witnessed a facet of him you'd never have believed in.

(MORE)

OZRAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Whether he has become like this over time or if it was something always present, I cannot say. But do not burden yourself with blame for not knowing. You trusted him, Erik -- you didn't know him. They are two very different things.

A long beat, as Grey considers this. He is melancholy, and slightly pained.

GREY

You know what, Narv?

(beat)

You're right, I didn't know him, and maybe never will. But I trusted him. And I thought he was worthy of that trust. He betrayed that trust.

(beat)

It's one thing to look at this abstractly, it's another to have it happen to you. He was a close friend, and no matter whatever darker tendencies I did not see -- or chose not to see -- a friend he was. I might have not known his soul, but he was my comrade. And that counts for something.

(beat)

He has violated that trust. He has gone against everything he stood for when we were comrades. He has killed my fellow citizens. That counts for something, too.

(beat)

Maybe I was wrong to trust him, you can say in retrospect. But that's retrospect.

(looking directly at
Ozran)

He meant a lot to me.

Ozran returns the gaze, sympathetic. He knows when his speech will do little good. There is a long silence, then, finally:

GREY (CONT'D)

Well, I suppose I kept you waiting long enough.

(turning back to the
panel)

Where were we?

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM

Cross is sitting at the desk. Next to him is a mug of what we suspect is hot chocolate, with a touch of mint. Thel's face is on the screen in front of Cross.

CROSS

(mid-conversation)

We were preparing to leave, Admiral.

THEL

(dryly, as always)

Of course.

(beat)

Captain, I would like to extend my thanks for the successful identification of the Manila attacker.

CROSS

You should thank our engineer, not me.

Cross takes a sip of chocolate.

THEL

Then forward my thanks. We were unlikely to have discovered the identity without him... though the value of this discovery must not be overestimated.

CROSS

Oh?

THEL

Using the information your engineer supplied us, we've been reviewing all the previous attacks in this region. This is certainly not the first time Breen operatives have used these holograms, by the look of it -- the earliest confirmed attack to use it was seven and a half years ago, and the vast majority of them since have employed it.

CROSS

(thoughtfully)

Seven years ago... that was about the time this Schann disappeared from all public record, wasn't it?

THEL

Yes.

(MORE)

THEL (CONT'D)

In fact, the first attack to use this device happened just a month later -- and we have confirmed that Schann himself was also responsible for this attack.

CROSS

I see.

THEL

Our evidence so far has Karl Schann held responsible for almost a third of all terrorist attacks after that point. Most of those attacks were mostly low level... from what we have gathered, the Manila is the biggest attack he has yet done. Additionally, there has been a sharp increase in his importance in the attacks very recently.

CROSS

Do you have anything solid?

THEL

(taken aback for a moment)

Solid?

CROSS

Proving the Breen are behind this.

THEL

Hardly. What we thought were Orions turn out to be Bolians, what we thought were Anticans turn out to be Cardassians... all handily using market-produced weaponry and equipment. This information can definitely be used to prove that most of the recent attacks were a collaboration to some extent, but not for who -- or why.

(beat)

The Breen are careful to leave no tracks. Which is why I say we should not overestimate the significance of your engineer's discovery.

(beat)

But it is one step closer to the truth. Most of the terrorists we have discovered in that seven year bracket appear to still be alive, and almost all have committed more than one attack. For future security reference, would you like our dossier?

Cross nods. Thel taps at something off-screen.

COMPUTER VOICE
(almost immediately)
Downloading complete.

CROSS
Is there anything else?

For a moment, both Cross and Thel hold each other's gaze. If expressions could speak, Thel's would say "We have unfinished business."

THEL
(not too reluctantly)
No. Starbase 478 out.

The screen flickers, REPLACING Thel with the Federation logo. Thoughtfully, Cross brings the cup to his mouth and sips.

CROSS
(as he puts it back
down)
Computer, call up the downloaded
file.

The screen changes to a display of text and images -- the images primarily being shots of faces, among them KARL SCHANN. We CLOSE IN on this photo of SCHANN, then...

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

...and begin to pan out from an IDENTICAL image. But this one is on the computer in Grey's quarters, and it is GREY, not Cross, that is looking at it. His eyes bore intensely into the picture's false eyes, as if searching for its soul.

Grey is hunched over in front of the monitor, his hands clasping his chin. He looks hollow, stiff. He is sitting on a rather uncomfortable looking chair.

For a long, silent BEAT, Grey stares into the oblivious image of Schann's eyes.

Finally, he straightens.

GREY
Computer, one bowl of Htrag rice.

The replicator shimmers, and a bowl of reasonably ordinary-looking, Federation rations rice (as seen in "...Day Out") appears. Grey looks at it expressionlessly, breathing in the aromas of his past...

We PAN IN TOWARDS THE RICE...

DISSOLVE TO:

SEQ: FLASHBACK

INT. ROOM

And PAN OUT as a fork-like utensil hits the bowl, taking up a clunk of rice (rice clings to its front, as if it was some kind of rice-magnet) which finds its way immediately into a noticeably younger Grey's mouth. We begin to pan out to get a better sense of Grey's surroundings.

As we do so, a caption appears:

STARDATE 65418.1: FIVE MONTHS LATER

We can now see clearly that the room is a COMMUNAL DINING HALL. There are rows and rows of long tables where Marines can be seen eating Htrag rice. The walls are drably colored like the rest of Doston Barracks, it is the largest interior room we have seen in the barracks so far.

Schann is sitting directly next to Grey, and he is talking animatedly as Grey swallows. Just behind him, at another table, if we cared to look, Warren can be seen, also consuming rice.

SCHANN

(mock-confidentially)

And you can guess how Mark felt about that...

(when Grey fails to respond)

Hey, you paying attention?

GREY

(after he swallows)

Eating.

SCHANN

That's not an answer...

Grey lets the fork utensil descend again.

GREY

(as it does, looking at rice)

Yeah, I heard you.

SCHANN

Ah. Then what did you think?

GREY

I think you might want to pay more attention to that bowl of rice in front of you.

SCHANN

Oh, c'mon! You can't tell me you didn't want to see the look on his face.

GREY

Can I get another bowl of rice for it?

Schann sighs, as if trying to look frustrated but not doing it very well.

SCHANN

All right, all right. We'll talk about what you're interested in, eh? The war.

GREY

(as he prepares to eat the rice)
It is why I'm here.

SCHANN

Don't you talk about anything else?

Beat. Grey lets the rice-collecting device dangle in front of his face for a moment, looking thoughtful.

GREY

Marine regulations.

SCHANN

(overlapping)
I knew it! I knew it!

Beat, as Grey swallows rice. Schann plunges in his own device, and then dangles it, laden with rice, in front of his face. His expression seems to harden.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

(somberly)
I assume, then... you've heard the news.

Grey is slightly surprised by Schann's sudden change of attitude and tone.

GREY

What news?

Schann looks up at him.

SCHANN

The last stronghold on Iotia Alpha fell this morning.

GREY

I could see that coming. The position on that planet was just looking bleaker and bleaker the moment the north-central and south-central continents were seized. How long had they been besieging that last stronghold, a week?

SCHANN

Ten days.

GREY

Ah.

There is a BEAT, as both eat their rice.

SCHANN

(lowly)

The Second Fleet is trying to check the Sheliak advance in that theater, but now that Iotia Alpha is in Sheliak hands it doesn't have any nearby natural defenses it can rely on...

(beat)

Saving a miracle, it's only a matter of time before the Sheliak reach Ipsus. We have weeks, maybe days.

Grey PUTS DOWN the utensil. Schann has struck a particularly passionate chord within him.

GREY

And that's when we start to make a difference.

Suddenly everything BLACKS OUT, and all we hear is the sound of a very distant explosion. It sounds like something of enormous power.

The lights flicker on again, glowing at a dimmer level. Now that we can see them again, we can see that both Grey and Schann are standing, all interest in their food evaporated. Around them, the many N.D. Marines are also getting up and becoming ready,,,

GREY (CONT'D)

(looking around
urgently)

What the hell was that?

SCHANN

(grimly)

That's a planetary bombardment.

Grey locks eyes with Schann, almost too shocked for words. Schann looks at him with the sureness of someone who has been cast into a blazing inferno and lived to tell the tale.

JENNER'S VOICE

This is the Colonel. We are under attack. I repeat, we are under attack. This is no drill. Get to your battle-stations! Move, move, move!

This message continues to repeat, automatically, for the remainder of the flashback sequence.

At the sound of this, people immediately PILE OUT of the room, racing towards their intended destination. GREY, SCHANN, (and WARREN, who we glimpse briefly) are among those who are making their way for the right-hand door.

INT. DOSON BARRACKS -- CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

The same kind of corridor we've seen previously, if not the exact same corridor. Grey, Schann, Warren, and numerous other MARINES run down it as we follow them.

Suddenly, there is another sound of a DEVASTATING EXPLOSION -- and it sounds like it's a lot closer. Behind Grey and Schann, the room COLLAPSES completely on itself. This CRUSHES several Marines, whom we can hear their blood-curdling death cries, and as the rubble begins to clear we can see that Warren is caught in the rubble -- he's on the ground, and only his upper body is visible. There's blood on his forehead, though it does not seem to be his own. We can just about make out an hand or two of also emerging from the rubble, crushed by the weight of the walls -- like their former owners. Blood trickles out from them.

All the surviving N.D. Marines quickly disperse to their posts, but Grey and Schann are both interrupted by --

WARREN

(in pain)
Oh Jesus...

Schann stops, immediately looks back towards him. Grey does the same.

SCHANN

(overlapping)
Mike?

WARREN

(babbling, overlapping)
Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god, oh my god...

The following happens very quickly.

Grey glances up at the ceiling directly above him -- it's been badly shaken by the recent explosion, and looks like it's going to give way. Schann doesn't take a moment, but is about to LUNGE TOWARDS Warren --

When GREY GRABS HIM, and with all the force of his strength HURLS SCHANN DOWN THE CORRIDOR, immediately JUMPING after him -- just as the segment of corridor they were standing on completely COLLAPSES.

We can hear a ghastly cry, presumably Warren's -- and a horrid smashing sound, like bone ripping through flesh -- though we do not see this. Grey and Schann collapse at the edge of the corridor, having barely made it. They are both coated in the dust of the collapse. Grey has a cut in his lip due to shrapnel, and Schann a cut in his left-hand eyebrow. Neither seem to notice.

They are badly shaken, Schann more so. They sit there, huddled, shell-shocked, for a single BEAT, as the dust clears.

SCHANN

How did you... how did you...

GREY

I looked up. It was going to do that...

Schann extends his hand to Grey.

GREY (CONT'D)

(irritated)

What?

SCHANN

I owe you my life, damn it! Allow me to express a little gratitude.

GREY

(as he takes it)

Oh. Sorry.

He SHAKES it, once, firmly. Together, they stand up.

SCHANN

We need to get to our battle-stations, then. C'mon.

GREY

Yeah.

But before Grey moves, he glances back, at the collapsed rubble. He looks like he wants to reach out and touch it -- reach out and wish it all away. An image has been seared onto his mind of what it was, only moments ago, and it is not an image he seems likely to forget.

Schann looks back at him, noticing that he wasn't coming, and then with him, towards the rubble.

Simply looking at the rubble strains Schann profoundly. It's as if he desperately wants to look away, but could not bear doing so.

SCHANN

There's nothing we can do for him now.

Grey swallows, uncomfortably.

GREY

I know.

Slowly, Grey turns away, and Schann follows suit. Silently, both run down the corridor. We remain in this part of the corridor, motionless...

FADE OUT.

END FLASHBACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

Starbase 478 still hangs in view, the Endeavour and Acinaces circling her, the Enterprise off to a distance. As always, there are now a different array of civilian crafts.

As we watch, the Enterprise turns around and, with a blast, enters WARP.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

Grey is still sitting in front of the computer terminal, completely lost in thought. We take a good look at what he's looking at.

It's an image, of a Human woman, smiling, late forties, red hair. Altogether congenial. Next to it is a text, that is scrolling. We focus on the last few lines, which read...

"...perished when the S.S. Manila was sabotaged, Stardate 80153.8. Survived by husband, Aleksandr Tkachev."

GREY (O.S.)
Computer, next file.

The woman's face is replaced by that of a man, a young BAJORAN. We pan back as Grey begins to read...

The door chimes. Grey does not seem to notice, and continues reading.

It chimes again. Grey looks somewhat surprised, as if he had not heard the first chime.

GREY (CONT'D)
(neutral, not looking
up)
Enter.

The door opens, and QUINLAN enters.

QUINLAN
Hey.

GREY
(not looking up)
Hello.

Quinlan begins to walk over to him, looking over his shoulder.

QUINLAN
What's that you're doing?

GREY

(finally looking over)

Oh, this? It's the crew roster for the Manila...

Quinlan pulls up a seat.

QUINLAN

Oh. Did you know anyone...?

GREY

...on the Manila? No. All the same... I think I owe it to them.

QUINLAN

Ah. And you've been doing that for the past four days?

GREY

What?

QUINLAN

Besides being at work, not a soul has seen you outside your quarters since you returned from the Starbase.

GREY

(irritated)

Oh, that's what this is about...

QUINLAN

(undaunted)

I thought you might want to talk.

Grey pauses, thinks. Then he turns his chair completely around to face Quinlan, and sits.

GREY

All right. Talk.

(beat)

Do you remember the Marine reunion I had, oh, two years or so ago?

QUINLAN

I know it was Karl Schann that destroyed the Manila, Erik.

GREY

That wasn't my question.

QUINLAN

Well, yeah.

GREY

Did you meet Schann there?

QUINLAN

I don't think so, no...

(beat)

They all looked pretty much the same to me.

Grey is somewhat chagrined by this response.

GREY

(sighs)

Never mind, then.

(beat)

He was like I'd never seen him before. He'd always had something of a bitter streak, but this... this was very different. To my face, he talked about how the Federation must be destroyed. He'd disappeared without a trace years ago and then suddenly pops up spouting anti-Federation tripe. Shouldn't that have been a warning enough?

QUINLAN

Warning? Hell, Erik, I used to say that kind of stuff all the time. Do you think I'd do what he did?

GREY

No! Of course not.

QUINLAN

Then why do you think you should have caught on? I've fired on the Enterprise before. Isn't that a good enough hint?

Beat.

GREY

Yes, it was just words, okay? But I never even asked myself where he'd been... never stopped to think what the hell such an iconoclast would spend his time doing!

QUINLAN

That's it, isn't it?

GREY

(taken aback)

What?

QUINLAN

Guilt. You feel you could have stopped this, and can't stand that you didn't -- that's it, isn't it?

GREY

(firmly)

No!

(wavering)

It's... it's not all of it.

Quinlan leans back.

QUINLAN

All right. What is all of it?

GREY

(angrily)

That guy was my comrade, damn it! I never had a closer, dearer friend in all my life! I trusted him with my life more than once. I saved his life more than once.

(beat)

He betrayed me, Jen. He betrayed me completely and absolutely.

QUINLAN

You're still alive, aren't you?

GREY

That's not the point!

QUINLAN

To you, it isn't. What do you think Schann feels?

(beat)

Do you honestly think he feels he's betrayed anyone? He has his code of ethics, and you have yours. His might feel personal gratitude towards you for saving his life, but clearly that gratitude doesn't extend to the Federation at large. He might even feel betrayed because you blew his cover.

GREY

That's --

QUINLAN

Disgusting? Most certainly. But it makes sense to him...

Grey looks into her eyes, and he begins to realize something.

GREY

You're not talking about Karl, are you?

QUINLAN

In a general sense, I am. I wouldn't be surprised if someone all high minded like him has worked out his justifications to a T.

(beat)

But no, not really. Trust is a rather vague term in a line of business that requires every form of duplicity, but as far as that went... I trusted Devon, once. I could count on him, at least more than I could count on anyone else.

(beat)

But that trust only counted when I was on his side. When I decided to go it alone, well...

(beat)

You trusted Schann with your life. That seems to be a good enough bet -- you are still here. But you thought that just because he'd save your life he wouldn't attack something you believed in... that wasn't a good call. You saw something in him that may have never been there.

GREY

Oh, it was there all right, once. Schann was every bit as committed to the Federation as I was...

QUINLAN

The road not taken?

Grey seems genuinely distraught by this suggestion.

GREY

(forcefully)

I could never be like him.

QUINLAN

That's it, though, isn't it? You see yourself in Schann

(beat)

Erik, you were not responsible for the Manila attack. He was. It doesn't matter how eerily similar he is -- he's not you. Snap out of it.

There is a long BEAT.

GREY

But he was once my friend...

QUINLAN

That does not make you responsible.

Grey sighs, deeply.

GREY

I just couldn't believe it, I guess...

(beat)

Even now, it's a little hard to believe.

(looking up)

I needed that. Thanks.

QUINLAN

Anytime.

Quinlan gets up, is about to leave, and then turns around.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

You want dinner?

GREY

Sure.

Together, they EXIT...

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM

Grey is standing before Cross.

CROSS

(mid-speech)

...the Manila is, however, the biggest known attack he's performed so far.

(beat)

That about covers what we know about him since his disappearance.

GREY

(nods)

Thank you, sir.

There is a beat. Cross clearly intends to say something else, but he doesn't seem to know how he should say it.

CROSS

Do you know Schann's parents?

GREY

I've spoken to them.

CROSS

(slowly)

They have yet to hear the news.

The statement drops like a dead weight.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I've discussed this with the Admiral... he's agreed that, if you want, you can be the one to inform them.

(beat)

Do you?

Grey stands, quietly determined to bear this final, but most unbearable, of pains. There is no doubt as to his response.

GREY

(softly)

Yes, sir.

CROSS

Then I'll have it arranged. You are dismissed.

GREY

Sir.

Grey walks towards the door, pauses, and looks back.

GREY (CONT'D)

(sincerely)

Thank you, sir.

Cross nods, slowly. Grey EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

Once more, Grey is hunched up in front of the computer monitor. The image is of the Federation logo.

COMPUTER VOICE

Contacting house 24601 in Alpha City,
Luna, grid Kappa-Epsilon-Gamma-Gamma.

(beat)

Contact successful.

The image changes from the Federation logo to a shot of a man somewhere in his late eighties. He's sitting in front of his computer, and behind him is some comfortable-looking furniture.

OLD MAN

Hello?

GREY

Mr. Schann? It's Erik Grey.

OLD MAN (SCHANN'S FATHER)

Oh, Erik! Karl often talked about
you..

Grey tries to smile -- he can't. It's all he can do to not
cry.

GREY

(weakly)

Yes, you've said that before.

SCHANN'S FATHER

Oh, have I?

(slight chuckle)

I miss him though, you know. I just
wish he'd write home once in a
while...

We note that Grey's right hand, which Schann's father cannot
see, is clenched into a tight fist. Besides this he is
overall well composed, but he is clearly fighting his pain.

GREY

(calmly)

Where is your wife?

SCHANN'S FATHER

She's out at the botanical gardens.
They grow some lovely roses there...

GREY

When will she be back?

SCHANN'S FATHER

Oh, a good few hours from now.

GREY

I see.

(beat)

Do you remember the last time I
called?

SCHANN'S FATHER

Oh, yes, yes. You haven't heard
anything about our Karl since then,
have you?

There is a long beat. Grey doesn't even know where to begin.
We PUSH IN on his face. There's no avoiding it now.

GREY

(hollowly)

Yes. Yes, I have.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END