

"STAR TREK: 2465"

by

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FIRST DRAFT

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Star Trek: 2465

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FADE IN:

CREDITS. The names of the cast listed in a glistening heliotrope vortex. As the names vanish, we drop out of the vortex and now we realize we've been inside a phaser beam on microscopic level. Turning to the right, the phaser beam smashes into a Romulan warbird.

PULL BACK TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

(Note: we see the whole scene from the POV of Captain Mechwart)

A viewscreen showing space. A couple of Federation and Romulan ships are discernible. The bridge swimming in blurred light. We look at a Romulan woman, S'ANRA at the tactical. She looks back to us.

S'ANRA
Channel open, sir.

A Romulan man, HHIRL IR'RAMNAU appears on screen. His face is bloody and tired. The bridge around him shaking, obviously his ship being under fire.

HHIRL
Surrender! You're not getting away from the Romulan Empire. Never again.

MECHWART
You'd better collect your reason. More Federation ships are coming. You're worsted. Drop your shields while you still can.

The Romulan man disappears from the screen, which shows the battle again. Everywhere starships and warbirds aglow or in debris. A disruptor charge hitting the Enterprise. Earth-shattering judder on the bridge. On starboard, a console explodes throwing the officer sitting in front of it back to the floor.

CRUSHER
Disruptor salvo fire. They targeted the saucer-section.

MECHWART
All power to weapon systems!
Fire at will!

The Romulan tactical officer works her console. The screen shows the quantum torpedoes hitting HHirl's ship right on the engineering section.

CRUSHER
Direct hit. Not much time left
for them.

MECHWART
Bring us about!

The helmsman thrumming on her console. The viewscreen shows as the Enterprise turns away from the warbird which all of a sudden blows apart. The shockwave reaches the Enterprise, causing even bigger explosions, discharges, shaking. Some officers falling from their chairs. Mechwart trying to hold on his chair from the floor, while the bridge slews.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Report!

CRUSHER
The shock-wave smashed into the
saucer. Hull breach on exterior
starboard habitation ring.

Crusher looks at his console, then nodding 'no' to him. Mechwart falls back onto the floor a bit. Wheezing, deadbeat. Then he sees the rest of the warbirds explode. He collects himself to give the order.

The officers' voices gradually fading.

MECHWART
Let's get out of here!

CRUSHER
Deflector power fluctuating.

S'ANRA
Structural integrity at twenty-
three percent.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STARBASE QUARTERS

A ceiling. A female voice keeps saying the same words getting clearer and clearer. Slowly panning the room until we get to a bed. Crumpled blanket and cushion on it.

FEMALE'S VOICE (COMM)
Commander Thahm to Captain
Mechwart.

Under the blanket an arm appears, not moving. Its owner gives a growly sound.

THAHM
Commander Thahm to Captain
Mechwart. Please reply.

The arm moves and the body parts belonging to it push through the blanket. Those body parts are owned by a 30-40 old, little bit blowzy, little bit sweaty, but apparently sports-loving man, MECHWART. The Captain searching through the floor full of clothes and stuff. Finally he finds his comm badge.

MECHWART
Call me half an hour later.

THAHM
Half an hour is one hour later
you should've come to our
appointment. Other guests want
to have resort to the lake, too.
I've been paddling here alone in
the Federation Park.

Mechwart looks at the bedside table. A transparent plate showing the usual time and stardate.

THAHM (CONT'D)
Sir, you want me to wait for
you?

The man hesitating a bit longer, then reconciling himself to it.

MECHWART
I'm on my way.

With his morning face he stares out to the stars for a moment. Rubs his face, yawns, then heads for the bathroom.

INT. STARBASE CORRIDOR

Humans and aliens getting around everywhere. A door opens. Mechwart leaving his room with a piece of clothes on his foot. He kicks it back into the room and sets out for the corridor. Then he stops in front of a turbolift door. Behind him the bustling base populated with all kinds of species, smaller fountains, restaurants. The lift arrives, he gets in.

INT. STARBASE TURBOLIFT

A dozen of aliens standing in it already. All of them say their destination at the same time. They look at each other rather perplexedly, but the lift starts.

INT. STARBASE, FEDERATION PARK - LAKE

Giant plants tower towards the artificial sky. Smaller creeks running between the rich vegetation. The half-simulated environment produces a nice summer day effect.

At the bottom of the lake a slim being swimming at an astonishing speed. Without purpose, just to swim hither and tither for the hell of it. Then she emerges slowly, getting ashore. Two barefeet walks up to her. The fish-like woman, Commander THAHM looks up. Her scaly blue face glitters in the syntethic sunlight.

THAHM

In the nick of time. The next booking is enrolled by quarter past four. The Kvatelians are doing a family picnic here on the lake-side.

MECHWART

Great. I'll call the quarantine department.

THAHM

The worms in their fur are less noxious than their reputation.

MECHWART

From your point of view. I personally don't feel like vegetating under glass for three weeks, with tubes in my guts.

He looks to the right. A Kvatelian has already arrived.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

Let's get over it before they swarm out.

The Captain drops the towel from him, wearing canoe dress with his comm badge on it. The woman crawls in a canoe, the man sits in the other one. They row up to the start. Mechwart's lousy mood is continually present.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

What's the deal?

THAHM

You force a smile to your dour face.

MECHWART

Before or after licking your
Captain's paddle?

THAHM

Don't underestimate your first
officer. My apparent fragility
have made many come mucker.

MECHWART

Move your gills, not your mouth.

Said that, the man starts with a little advantage. She
follows him agily.

INT. ENTERPRISE HOLODECK

Exotic plants, sun-shine, waterfalls, flower as far as
the eye can reach. While panning the landscape, two men
talk.

BAJ IZ (O.S.)

You want it?

CRUSHER (O.S.)

I'm afraid a little bit.

BAJ IZ (O.S.)

Pull it carefully, then I'll
feel almost nothing. Trust me.

In the middle of the jungle a smaller 'jacuzzi'. Two men
sitting in it, CRUSHER and BAJ IZ. Baj Iz is a bird-like
creature with colorful feathers, green, orange, violet
and who knows what else. Between his arms and body he has
wing-like formations, suggesting he could float in the
air if a breeze holding him up there.

CRUSHER

I will until I wound you.

Crusher starts pull out the molting feathers from his
back. He holds a handful of feathers.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)

Baffling. How often do the Impa
lose their feathers?

BAJ IZ

Every three years. According to
earth time.

CRUSHER

We fray out a short leisure once
and even then I'm attending to
your plumage.

BAJ IZ

This kind of attending belongs
to our sexual activities.

Crusher reacts to this great news with a much more
interested face. He takes the bird round his chest.

CRUSHER
Scientific explanation?

BAJ IZ
In breeding season we begin to
lose our feathers which lure the
females to us. By way of
foreplay they ease us from a
handful of them.

Crusher looking tomfool.

CRUSHER
Your knowledge about the human
race must be quite incomplete.
I'm something we call a male.

BAJ IZ
That's the usual procedure. I
didn't say males can't tear at
other males.

CRUSHER
My honor is amended.
(keeps tearing at him)
We could rest for a short
feathering more often. Remember
when we spent that much time
together?

BAJ IZ
We've been hardly spending time
with each other for two hours
now.

CRUSHER
That's what I'm talking about.
You're stooping in the engine-
room and I on the bridge,
correcting vectors simulated for
the greenhorn Ensigns who thrash
the helm console. Higher-level
requirements for those berserk
Romulan scum.

BAJ IZ
Those Romulan scum tore apart
the saucer section. The repairs
took six month, not to mention
getting the ship into her new
armor suit. And don't blame the
Ensigns. They're working their

tails off to measure up to the harder requirements.

CRUSHER
The Kardun rebellion is not their fault.

As he talks, Baj Iz's nose and ears start bleeding. His head jerking around a bit.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)
Crusher to sickbay. Medical emergency.

BAJ IZ
(interrupting)
No doctor. It'll cease soon.

After a couple of seconds he looks better. The jerking stops.

CRUSHER
What was that?

BAJ IZ
The universe didn't design our race for unremitting toil. My body misinterprets overtime quite wrong. If I have to calibrate one more armor unit, I'll shred my oath to Starfleet.

CRUSHER
We still have two days until departure. Lock your quarters on you and get a good rest. The rest of the work can be done by your team.

FEMALE VOICE (COMM)
(interrupting)
Engine-room to Lieutenant Baj Iz.

BAJ IZ
My team would need a kick in their hindquarters.

FEMALE VOICE (COMM)
Engine-room to Lieutenant Baj Iz. Do you hear me?

BAJ IZ
(to himself)
You wish.

CRUSHER
Lieutenant Crusher, go ahead!

FEMALE VOICE (COMM)
Sir, I was going to tell
Lieutenant Baj Iz we've finished
calibrating the armor units. The
report on the entire drive-
system is on his desk as well.
I've already notified Commander
S'anra.

CRUSHER
The Lieutenant will stay in bed
until departure at the doctor's
orders. I'll come down and help
you with the other doing-ups
soon.

FEMALE VOICE (COMM)
For further doing-ups we've got
to shut down all non-vital
systems on the ship.

CRUSHER
Do it. Crusher out.

Suddenly the landscape simulated around them disappears.
They lie on the naked holodeck floor. Crusher at a loss.

BAJ IZ
(annoyed)
The power supply of the holodeck
is non-vital, lunkhead.

Crusher looks at him with the most disdainful face ever.

INT. STARBASE, FEDERATION PARK - LAKE

The contest goes on. They're rowing shoulder to shoulder
when the Captain's comm badge gives a chirp.

S'ANRA (COMM)
S'anra to Mechwart.

His face reflects slight abomination. He's just about to
win. He taps on his badge.

MECHWART
What's so urgent?

INTERCUT:

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/PARK

The Romulan woman talks. Behind her officers working on
the almost finished bridge. Some panels and the screen
still disassembled. Another officer standing on an
antigrav, repairing something on the ceiling.

S'ANRA
We've finished the calibration
of the new shield armor.

MECHWART
Ready worker. Anything else?

S'ANRA
(surprised)
That's all, sir.

MECHWART
No good overloading the ship's
comm channels for this.

The crew looking at each other. They don't say a word to that.

INT. STARBASE, FEDERATION PARK, LAKE

Thahm arrives first. The Captain throws his paddle into the lake.

THAHM
Don't blow your stack. You
handled that paddle like a man.

Mechwart is in everything but not in good mood. He did blow his stack.

MECHWART
Having a good time, Commander?

Flushed with rage, he grabs the canoe, unable to look up at her. All the other guests are watching them.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Go back to the ship. They've
patched up the armor.

Thahm turns, rows to the shore. Then stops and looks back.

THAHM
It's been six month since the
tragedy. You're not the only one
who lost friends. Don't want
company? Write a memo.

MECHWART
Perhaps the Midean can give up
their friends effortlessly.
Humans are more complex than
that.

Apparently she takes this remark to her heart. She turns and spikes spring up on her blue head turning into read.

She doesn't say a word. Turns back, rowing to the shore. Mechwart stays on the lake. His comm badge chirps.

KAWASHI (COMM)
Admiral Kawashi to Captain
Mechwart.

Reluctantly, he answers.

MECHWART
This is Mechwart. Go ahead.

KAWASHI (COMM)
I'm waiting you in shuttlebay
fifteen in thirty minutes.

MECHWART
Understood. Mechwart out.

INT. STARBASE, SHUTTLEBAY

The Captain, well set, in uniform, with his luggage in his hand walks up to the bay like nothing happened before. Looking around, he spots Admiral KAWASHI, about 50, grey hair and beard, standing near a shuttle. He gives a padd to an extra. The extra leaves then.

MECHWART
Admiral, my crew thinks I'll be
aboard the Enterprise in an
hour.

KAWASHI
I've informed your crew of your
delay. Anyway, I ordered them to
the Pluto so you won't have to
waste your time crossing the
solar system.

MECHWART
I don't quite follow you.

KAWASHI
The Enterprise gets a new
assignment.

While talking, they enter the shuttle. Only after throwing his bag into a corner, Mechwart realizes the blonde, Betazoid woman, AIEN RAVOIS in Starfleet uniform, decorated Ensign. The man is a bit surprised.

KAWASHI (CONT'D)
Let me introduce Ensign Aien
Ravois. Your new helmsman.

RAVOIS
Captain.

MECHWART

I wasn't aware of...

RAVOIS

You couldn't be. I was commissioned three hours ago. In Starfleet's judgement a Betazoid helmsman could react faster in case of emergency.

KAWASHI

I've known her father for a long while. Besides, Professor Nurak commended her for this post with good grace. And a little supervision never hurts.

MECHWART

If that whimsical old man sympathized with you, I have no doubt we'll get along. Nice to meet you.

AIEN

No. For you it really isn't.

MECHWART

(recoils)

I see you don't reckon the restrictive rules for mind-reading as obligation.

KAWASHI

Allow me to defend the Ensign. Fate blessed her with Alpha-level telepathic abilities.

RAVOIS

Fate has little to do with it. My father is a politician, my mother a warp-field theorist on Betazed. The doctor forewarned them their daughter would have an overwhelming temperament with or without abilities.

MECHWART

(not really caring)

Apparently he was right.

KAWASHI

(offering to sit down)

Let's come to the point.

EXT. STARBASE, EARTH

We see only now that so far we've been non Earth's orbit in the main starbase. Looks more modern than the one back in the 24th century.

Panning the area from the base to the docks, while shuttles and bees flying to their business. Also Kawashi's shuttle flies out.

INT. SHUTTLE

Mechwart sits one side, the Admiral and Ravois on the other. Kawashi gives the Captain a padd. He studies it for short, then, surprised, looks at the Admiral.

KAWASHI

The USS Baranya was transporting supply to our relay station in the middle of the Keagon Sector when sensors detected a greater amount of gamma radiation. The traces of the radiation led them directly to their doorstep where they ran into whole herds. At last we buttressed up the theory that they're social life-forms and roam in space only for nutrition purposes.

MECHWART

I'm jumping out of my skin. Why was it so important to tell me about this?

KAWASHI

Because our scientists unraveled the way they communicate. Back at that time the Enterprise-D made first contact with a specimen.

MECHWART

If I right picked it up while sleeping back at the academy, not with a starry result.

KAWASHI

That's right. But in a hundred years there was plenty of time for us to analyze that conversation pattern. Don't think of any complex communication form. In technological respect it's no more than a basic exchange of information. That's why we count on Ensign Ravois's plus services.

MECHWART
What would be that information?

KAWASHI
Look at the entry 23C.

Mechwart stares at the Admiral as incomprehensibly as if he heard the warp theory for the first time.

MECHWART
In case you don't clue me up in a second about the purpose of our mission, I'll order my chief medic to overrule the privileges to your rank due to paranoid behaviour.

KAWASHI
Hardly. He's waiting for you in the Gamma Quadrant. The flagship can't do without a chief medical officer.

MECHWART
I'm aware of my recent conduct towards my superiors suggesting things about my competence, but I'm no invalid. I know what my ship needs. Better than anyone. I'm getting used to the acting chief doc.

KAWASHI
(with more temper)
I'm not willing to start another battle of words about what happened.

After a second their face shows regret. They calm down.

KAWASHI (CONT'D)
Praetor Deletham will sign the peace treaty in a little while. Not even a smaller skirmish right after the peacemaking would be to Starfleet's taste. Your mission has to do with that, too.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE ROOM

The warp core is situated in an isolated cylindrical place. Technicians working at full stretch. Two of them tampering with the dilithium crystal. One, HANSEN holds a tricorder in his hand, the other fires a laserbeam at the crystal.

HANSEN

Good. Now set it to a higher dispersion. A minute and we're done.

An officer says somewhere: "Reactor two in the port impulse engine burnt out. Tell the technicians on deck six..."

Another officer says somewhere: "Bring this back and tell them to deliver us an energy-transition unit that's actually not malfunctioning."

Finally we get to Commander Thahm working the pool-table.

THAHM

(to an officer)

I'll check the deflector relays.

The console chirps under her hand. Everything seems normal.

THAHM (CONT'D)

Right. Everything works within normal parameters.

Baj Iz enters. Realizing Thahm, he takes her being officious as a joke.

BAJ IZ

Surprise! Surprise!

THAHM

Lieutenant. They told me you were ordered to bed.

BAJ IZ

Doctors and their wide knowledge. I've cured myself with my own method.

THAHM

Very well, then. Now you can crack jokes about my being fish-headed for keeping our Midean technology under control.

BAJ IZ

If so, we don't need a chief-engineer here.

THAHM

You don't take me seriously enough. That's the very first time we install the propulsion-system in a nine-hundred meter long Federation starship.

BAJ IZ

Maybe you want to undermine the terrible fact that we come from the same planet. I won't contend with you. I don't even know why I should.

THAHM

I do not contend. I'm worried about the crew's security.

BAJ IZ

The problem is that you don't take them seriously enough. Starfleet's transwarp drive doesn't allow us to do as fine calibrations as ours, but...

THAHM

The power system of the Enterprise is based on organic principles, and even so it's dangerous to combine it with our organic technology.

BAJ IZ

(more firmly)

But as for their experience, which you can go after if you throw a glance at some older reports, there were several cases when a Starfleet officer's hair fluttered at a speed of higher than warp ten. This is just a test to see how compatible the two systems are.

THAHM

Nice unprepared speech. With a broad accent.

BAJ IZ

I'll go on with the calibration. We'll depart in thirty-six hours.

(instructing)

There's a lot of things you should keep under control on the bridge.

THAHM

(in Midean: you're going beyond your rank, Lieut.)

Rinikrafisekka hama nob, sobea.

BAJ IZ

(in Midean: I'm not the only one, Commander.)

Ok! otiranit, tömsh.

Thahm leaves. The birdman would continue working when his head jerks again. Little blood coming from his nose. Embarrassed, he wipes it, then goes behind a bulkhead, giving himself a hypospray. Then gets back to work like nothing happened.

EXT. PLUTO, SPACE-STATION

The shuttle arrives at the station. Turns off for a dock embracing the Enterprise-G! That's the first time we see it from outside! A quick pan at the ship and...

INT. SHUTTLE

The Admiral headed for the door which just started to open. The Captain holds him back.

MECHWART

And I don't want to have families on board. If just half of your suspicions prove true, the mission could hide more danger than usually.

KAWASHI

I understand your worry and believe me everyone feels with you and your crew. But that won't change the rules of Starfleet. The family members of the officers serving aboard this ship are fully aware of the high risk factor. They accepted it.

MECHWART

About fifty children are bustling around here. Did they consent to wait for death on a battle-field full of Romulans bereft of reason?

KAWASHI

(reluctantly)

All right. I'll call the parents' attention to the fact that this mission could more hazardous, but the decision is in their hands.

Mechwart nods. The Admiral grabs his shoulder for a handshake, then steps out of the shuttle, right in the shuttlebay of the Enterprise. The Captain talks to the air.

MECHWART

Mechwart to the bridge officers.
The plan has been changed. We
depart in two hours. I expect
full readiness by that time.
Briefing in thirty minutes.

INT. ENTERPRISE SHUTTLEBAY

Topsy-turvydom. Officers working feverishly. Some
shuttles here, some shuttles there. Panels disassembled.
Mechwart takes big steps.

RAVOIS

Wait a second!

He looks at the woman running after him.

MECHWART

Ensign. What's the final
analysis about my muddled
thoughts?

With all her telepathic ability, Ravois recoils. She
doesn't seem to have expected that question, but gives a
firm answer.

RAVOIS

If you don't finally let the
devil out of you, you'll
jeopardize your rank. And with
that your crew.

MECHWART

So you rate me as emotionally
fragile.

RAVOIS

Losing your comrades was not
your fault, just like the deeds
of the rebels cannot be made
liable for the Romulan Empire.

The Captain continues for the turbolift. She follows him.
They enter.

INT. ENTERPRISE TURBOLIFT

MECHWART

Bridge.

The lift starts with the usual humming and lights.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

Will you follow me in the
bathroom?

RAVOIS
I appreciate your offer, but I
have yet to register my comm
badge.

MECHWART
You're on the Enterprise. You've
got to learn your priorities.

RAVOIS
I was commissioned just now.
I've already been to the
Enterprise, but only to get
acquainted with the helm
console.

The lift stops. The door opens.

MECHWART
Oh, well then. I'll see you
on...

RAVOIS
...the bridge.

MECHWART
Yes, right there.

Mechwart, perplexed, stares at her with a little boy's smile. She turns and runs into a Gazrot. They try to get on their ways, finally they make it. The woman leaves, the Gazrot enters. The Captain keeps smiling. The alien has no idea what's the matter with him.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The Captain steps out from the turbolift. Lieutenant S'anra, the Romulan tactical officer shouts.

S'ANRA
Captain on the bridge.

MECHWART
Everyone sees. I'll see you in
the obs lounge.

He goes directly to his ready room.

CRUSHER
I told you it wouldn't do any
good.

S'ANRA
Lately it's been all the same
what we do. At the end you got a
wig.

CRUSHER

Perhaps the occurrences in the Kardun Sector and the loss of crewmembers are not all the same for him. Six children lost.

S'ANRA

(irritably)

What the hell are you getting at?

All watching them.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)

I was there. Fighting for the Federation against my own race. Why do Starfleet regulations allow families to come aboard? On Romulan ships it's an absolute interdict.

CRUSHER

I was getting at the fact that it might be hard for him to have a crack with a Romulan officer now.

S'ANRA

It doesn't seem that hard for other officers.

EXT. EARTH, PARIS - AFTERNOON

Futuristic skyscrapers, people hurrying to shuttles for earth transportation. A little insight in their life in the 25th century. Then panning a huge Federation complex.

INT. FEDERATION COMPLEX, FLOOR - AFTERNOON

Politicians and other office-holders of all kind of species bustling in the room when the Romulan Praetor DELETHAM enters. All stop talking. Listening to him. He stands on a platform. Looks like a man in his fifties. His voice echoing the room.

DELETHAM

Bilire. Roj. Sochya. Peace.

He lets these words echo in the room for a second.

DELETHAM (CONT'D)

So this is how it sounds when a Romulan Praetor's iterating these words in the complex of the United Federation of Planets. I'm completely aware

that several Federation members in these benches take the admission of Romulus with a grain of salt. After so many years, your allies are still obsessed with fear whenever a new species gets on the list. I don't blame you for that. It's no different in Romulan circles. However, all scrums come to an end when we realize that fear has to be treated as a friend, not a foe. I venture upon declaring, even if we're still far away from exploring its motive and nature, we have excavated a small fragment of it. This epiphany permits a small fragment of perpetual enmity today to become unintelligible. It's presumable, tough, that this inchoative stage won't be a smooth transition. A lot of time, maybe just about as many centuries will pass until we get acquainted with each other's culture and mentality for the hindrance of which the Kardun Rebellion has been a deterrent. That criminal act is considered opprobrious by the Romulan...Star Union. This moment here and now means the final peace.

(a beat)

My friends.

The crowd gives him standing ovation. The UFP PRESIDENT puts the contract in front of him. The Praetor signs it and shakes hands with the president.

MEANWHILE...

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The crew watching the Praetor signing the contract. Hurray everywhere. Also S'anra is there. Some officers shake her hand, saying things like: „Congratulations. I'm glad you made it. Have you ever though that we would..."

EXT. ROMULUS

Panning landscapes, cities and stuff. Getting closer to a military building.

INT. ROMULAN CONTROL ROOM

Romulans working or watching their Praetor sign the contract. No hurray from any Romulan mouth. We focus on an officer with a troubled face when another enters the room.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
I hope it's urgent.

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
Commander, we're getting reports about communication disturbances. We lost contact with our stations on the orbital trajectory.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Our sun is sprinkling enormous jets of flame into space.

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
We took the solar activity in account, too, but the Eism doesn't cause that intense disturbances. The data collected about the phenomenon up to now are attributable to artificial nature.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
What about the satellites, ships?

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
We've been trying, sir. We couldn't contact any of them.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
What the hell are they doing up there? Anything else to report?

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
Before the disturbances got detectable, ships on deep-space missions had sent us reports according to which whole planets and star-systems were melting into thin air one after the other.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Don't even say. Reason unknown.

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
Correct, sir. The phenomenon's just starting to sneak into the Alpha and Beta Quadrant.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Send a little bit more expansive
report to Earth while we still
have a usable sub-space channel.
Let's see how cooperative
Starfleet is now that we're
members of the Federation.

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
(whispering)
Sir, having these measurement
data, there are rumours about a
possible Federation conspiracy.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
You saw the contract being
signed, didn't you?

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
Yes, sir.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Good. Make known to the
mistrustful that Praetor
Deletham had to go through a
great deal of troubles until he
could push his pen against that
piece of paper. From now on
we'll have to gear our
interstellar politics and
military actions to that
arrangement. Do you understand?

ROMULAN OFFICER 1
Perfectly, Commander.

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Very well. Alert the Command.
Keep me informed about
interplanetary communication,
ships' sensor data, everything.
Warn the Romulan colonies, as
well.

At this point there's some strong battering at the door.
Officer getting closer, not knowing what it is. They open
the door. A Romulan turned into half Borg falls over the
threshold from the corridor. He's dead.

ROMULAN OFFICER 2
What happened to him?

ROMULAN COMMANDER
Activate planetary defense
systems. Hurry up!

Two officers sweeps away to execute the order. Romulan
Officer 1 staring at the corridor with a pale face,
holding up his phaser.

ROMULAN COMMANDER (CONT'D)
And you, Lieutenant...
Lieutenant?

The Romulan Commander looking at the corridor now, too. More hybrids appear. Through the window, bombardment and explosions in the Romulan city can be seen.

INT. ENTERPRISE READY ROOM

The Captain putting his stuff in a built-in wardrobe. Takes some clothes and finds a padd under them. Throws the clothes into the wardrobe and starts pressing the buttons on that hair-thin display showing now the picture of a young woman and a little girl. He's staring at it with a gloomy look. The bell chirps him out of his contemplation which apparently makes him see red.

MECHWART
Come!

Commander Thahm enters. Looks around, realizing the "hell-hole".

THAHM
The subversion in your ready room is in an astounding parallel with your leading capabilities. We have large quarters.

Thahm still standing at the door. Waiting for his permission. He beckons her in grudgingly.

MECHWART
I'd rather be close to the bridge if you allow me. Come in before you generate decompression on the corridor.

The woman comes in. Looking at him like: „Now I'll give you what for".

MECHWART (CONT'D)
You came to reinstate my aberrant morals and values with your nippy psycho-methods?

THAHM
As your first officer, I'm supposed to inform you about the increasing lack of trust among the crew.

MECHWART
The best day ever having this command! Not enough a

newenrolled helmsman reading my thoughts without permission, now I also have you to tell me off. Do you share the crew's opinion?

THAHM

It's not quite a life-insurance waiting orders from a desperate Captain, let's say in an emergency situation. You've jarred their nerves a good deal by giving them two hours for something they had three days according to plan.

(a beat)

Andrew, it's been a long time we picked up with each other.

MECHWART

(interrupting)

But even so it takes lots of effort for you to say you're mistrustful to your Captain.

He throws the padd back into the bag. Then getting closer to her.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

The order came directly from Admiral Kawashi. That's all I can say for now. But I can't help being seized with curiosity.

(more formal)

Why are you really here, Commander?

She won't answer. Walks up to the window, staring out to space. He gets closer, standing behind her.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

None of my officers briefs me because, shall we say, they respect the distance between superior and lower-ranked officer. Although, I made friends with a good number of crewmembers back at the academy.

THAHM

The absence of the contact with my mates forces me to reduce certain feelings. Or you know what happens.

MECHWART

That shouldn't necessarily affect all Midean. The evolutionary force is born with

you. Unlike the will to change it.

THAHM

Why should I change a billion-years-old evolutionary process? It's born with us for a reason.

MECHWART

Just like our tailbone we haven't used for ages.

THAHM

What you're talking about is an evolutionary process, not a question of will.

MECHWART

My analogies have never been as solid as duranium. If you wanted that change, you shouldn't run to your Captain every time loneliness is about to swallow you.

THAHM

I'm not lonely.

MECHWART

Is it really a must playing this out every single time? Now you'll say: „Why would I be alone? More than two thousand people are aboard this ship. I work with dozens of officers every day." I'll say to that: „who respect you, think well of you, execute your orders with full trust, but they're still not your kind."

THAHM

I'm just trying to meet the rules of human prudery. The 'Ighon' is quite an intimate procedure. Humans tend to mistake it for romantic approach. There have been a few misunderstandings in the past.

MECHWART

You said at the very beginning there's nothing to be mistaken for something else. Our species are not compatible.

THAHM

(impishly)
And you believed it?

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE ARBORETUM

Mechwart and Thahm walking through the arboretum. All kinds of earthly and alien vegetation. Huge windows showing space on one side. They stop by a beautiful plant.

MECHWART

New weeds? What happened to the last one?

THAHM

That's the last one.

MECHWART

I'm talking about the ugliness we brought from Lirath three.

THAHM

It's the same tea-plant we brought from that jungle planet.

MECHWART

The jungle planet is orbiting around Lirath three and I don't recall signing any petition.

THAHM

(huddling up)
Nor do I.

MECHWART

Is there anything on this ship taking place with my permission?

THAHM

It was subjected to thorough examinations in the hydroponics. It's harmless and beautiful.

MECHWART

Just wait and see! Perhaps it'll turn into a bloodthirsty carnivorous plant scarfing off our faces. So the purpose of our walking up and down in the arboretum is?

THAHM

I had my quarters transferred in the arboretum. I've been through with concocting the glop I need to preserve my skin humidity in that small tub.

MECHWART
Which you're absolutely not
bound to tell me, either.

Thahm continues up to a pool surrounded by plants. Mechwart throws one last disgusted glance at the teaplant and follows her. The Commander takes off her uniform and sits in the pool.

THAHM
Come.

MECHWART
We have large quarters.

He looks around if anybody watching them.

THAHM
You worry too much. No human
soul can see us here.

The Captain sits in without uniform, too. She embraces his neck, pulling him closer.

THAHM (CONT'D)
Hug me and put your hands where
human shoulder-blades are.

He hugs her. At this point energy starts streaming from the woman's hands into his body, then going back to her hands and her whole body. Energy permeates them for a couple of long seconds.

CRUSHER (COMM)
(interrupting)
Crusher to Mechwart. We're ready
for departure.

He realizes Crusher's voice in a pretty numbed condition.

MECHWART
On my way.

THAHM
Well, you feel better?

MECHWART
This method is like some drug. I
think I'm addicted to you.

EXT. DOCK, ENTERPRISE

The work-bees flying away from the ship. So are some technicians in space-suit. The lights of the dock go dead. Every system on the Enterprise gets activated. The so far dark windows light up. The deflector turning on,

the engines rumbling up. The joints of the dock get torn from the ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

All bridge officers and some extras, just the needed crew present, sitting at their stations. Mechwart enters and sits in his chair.

MECHWART
(to S'anra)
Call the dock control.
(with a kiss and
friends voice)
By the way, you're my guest for
a big jug of Romulan ale.

S'ANRA
(appreciating)
I accept.

She works the consoles. The hailing sound goes up.

MECHWART
Dock control. Permission to pull
out?

MALE VOICE (COMM)
Enterprise, this is dock
control. Permission granted. And
Captain, no rampancy in the
dock!

MECHWART
You know me like that?

MALE VOICE (COMM)
Wasn't supposed to be a joke.
I'm warning you...

The Captain pushes some buttons. The transmission gets stretched, then fades out.

MECHWART
What? I can hardly hear you. Our
comm channels are yet to be
adjusted. Enterprise out.

The crew wearing a grin. It's their good old Captain.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Ensign Ravois, takes us out.

RAVOIS
Aye, sir. Activating RCS
thrusters.

MECHWART

I appreciate you're not tearing
the orders out of my head. Half
impulse.

(to Thahm)

Crew number?

THAHM

Standard complement.

Mechwart's face goes red. The families stayed on board.

MECHWART

Helmsman, we're still in one
place.

Ravois works her console. Some chirps following it. No
more orders. Time to pull out!

EXT. DOCK AND SURROUNDINGS

The Enterprise sweeps out of the dock like a rocket, with
an unbelievable boom. The dock structure swings due to
the wave generated by the ship's engines.

INT. DOCK

The control room shaking a bit.

DOCK OFFICER 1

Stabilizers to maximum.

DOCK OFFICER 2

No damage to the structural
integrity.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE ROOM

INTERCUT:

RAVOIS

We cleared the dockyard.

MECHWART

Engine-room, I need maximum
warp. I want to get to the given
coordinates as fast as possible.
Crusher, program our destination
to the helm.

RAVOIS

I've already set a course, sir.

Mechwart takes notice of her 'outbursts' with boredom.

MECHWART

I see. Carry on with your work.

He nods to Crusher. He gets the hint. Checking his console readouts.

CRUSHER

The course has been set dead on, sir.

MECHWART

Engine-room, maximum warp, now.

BAJ IZ

Just a second, Captain. I'll readjust the intermix ratio.

THAHM

Not enough time in the dock, Lieutenant?

BAJ IZ

(displeased, trying to be funny)

All is ready. The warp drive operates at your own risk.

MECHWART

Engage.

The nacelles of the Enterprise flash up. A white point appears in front of the ship. The point grows into a huge tunnel and swallows the ship. (No stretch effect!)

EXT. GAMMA QUADRANT, PSERON NEBULA

The USS Sommerfeld, a small Federation ship swims in the nebula which embraces whole forming star-systems. The ship looks like a science ship.

INT. SOMMERFELD RESEARCH LAB

A dozen of officers teeming in the lab. In the middle of the room there's a holo-projector showing schematics of the nebula and planets forming in it. A Denobulan is among them, Captain TLAX.

TLAX

Show me sector 547/3. Magnitude one hundred.

The holo-image changes showing a more detailed scan of an area.

SCIENCE OFFICER

The protoplanets designated b25 and b26 have reached the optimal size. Their gravitational pull have made them go to collision course.

TLAX

Maintaining the actual direction and velocity, they're going to cause a considerable thunderstorm within thirty minutes. Tlax to the bridge. Get a distance of one million kilometers from the two protoplanets, then hold our position.

BRIDGE OFFICER 1 (COMM)

Aye, sir.

TLAX

(back to science officer)

What's this turbulence? Here in this sector?

SCIENCE OFFICER

Unknown, sir. We didn't detect it before.

They study the readout information. They look like they have no clue.

TLAX

A great number of forces are at work in such an environment, but I've never seen anything alike. As if there were something hacking its way through.

SCIENCE OFFICER

Cloaked ship?

TLAX

We didn't pick up a warp frequency and in a range of light-years there's no trace of any civilization. Just the Pseron nebula. Looking at that process, it'll take a few billion years till this medley turns into life.

SCIENCE OFFICER

Our sensors were focused on the surrounding sectors. The interference is considerable.

TLAX

We still have a couple of hours.
Then we'll set a course for the
Enterprise. Keep an eye on that
anomaly.

SCIENCE OFFICER
I heard we had one hour.

TLAX
You heard it wrong.

Science officer and Tlax smiles. Then the Denobulan man
leaves.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

RAVOIS
Captain, we'll reach the
coordinates in five minutes.

MECHWART
Don't forget to slow to impulse.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise drops out of warp. Proceeds on impulse.
Empty space around it.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER
Long-range sensors picked up M,
L and O-class planets two
parsecs from here. No life-sign.

S'ANRA
Confirmed. Beside the obvious
existence of those planets I'm
not registering anything.

CRUSHER
On the surface of the M-class
planet there are particle
residuals which could refer to a
great amount of energy. A
destruction of incredible size
must have swept through it.
Picking up antiproton remains
and gamma radiation.

THAHM
(to Mechwart)
Bizarre as it is, at least we
know we've come to the right
place.

MECHWART

Mr. Crusher, let's scatter those graviton pulses. See if they snap at them. Aien, I'd be glad if we could transmit a more complex message.

RAVOIS

I'll do my best.

EXT. PSERON NEBULA

The Sommerfeld forces her way through the gas and dust cloud to come to a standstill.

INT. SOMMERFELD BRIDGE

The crew working, pushing buttons, giving reports to each other. Tlax sitting in his chair, looking at the screen, finishing a conversation (we don't know with whom).

TLAX

Tlax out.

SCIENCE OFFICER 2

Message transmitted, sir.

TACTICAL OFFICER

We're one million kilometer from the two protoplanets. Holding our position.

Suddenly a female voice shakes up the bridge. It's Tlax's wife. At least one of his wives.

WIFE 1 (COMM)

Quarters 52 to Captain Tlax.

Tlax wearing an annoyed face mixed with fear. Pushing some buttons on his chair console, three Denobulan women appear on the small display.

TLAX

My one ewe lambs?

WIFE 1

Forgive us. You know we're loath to disturb you while on duty.

TLAX

Yes, indeed. You'd given proof of that lots of times.

Tlax looks at his Science Officer 2. Although being a Denobulan, he's quite embarrassed.

WIFE 2

Didn't you see somewhere Zelox's feeding-bottle?

TLAX

I don't recall. You have a replicator. Ask the computer to make one.

WIFE 2

The replicator fabricates galoot. I need the one we took with us. That's the only bottle your son's willing to drink from.

WIFE 1

(to the other wives)

How true. Humans make little account of quality products.

TLAX

You can be here with me because we got permission from Starfleet to bring more family members aboard ships due to the overpopulation on Denobula. Don't abuse that kindness and stop bothering me with balderdash. I'm on the bridge, on duty. You'd rather pore on the windows. Soon you'll see a wonder of the universe.

Meanwhile a Bolian doctor, NOL VERACIS enters. Stands behind Tlax's chair.

WIFE 1

Balderdash? Your son's adequate nutrition is balderdash?

TLAX

That's not what I meant.

WIFE 3

(to the other wives)

You know humans. They think they're an enlightened species, while they're as a rude folk as a group of Denobulan snowy owls.

WIFE 1

Exactly. I don't think they share sexual activities with more than four participants.

WIFE 2

You think so?

WIFE 3

I heard so.

Tlax can't take it anymore. He deactivates the display.

VERACIS

It's good to have a big family.

TLAX

Doctor. Anything to report?

VERACIS

Three officers fainted in a mess-hall. Their organism endure the radiation around us much worse.

TLAX

What about the other crewmembers?

VERACIS

No further reports for now. I should know how long we're staying on this part of the nebula so I can get ready for a mass ailment. Wouldn't hurt setting radiation shielding at a higher level, either.

TLAX

There'll be no need for that. A few other substantial measurements and we'll rendezvous with the Enterprise on the edge of the nebula.

VERACIS

(careworn)

I understand.

The Captain grabs his shoulders. It really looks like they've been friends for a long time.

TLAX

I couldn't ask for a better doctor. Regrettably, the results of your medical work calls for the post on the flag-ship downright.

The crew turning to them.

VERACIS

I'll miss this ship. All of you.

TLAX

So will I. You know how I hate terminal examinations.

VERACIS
I'll be missed for my negligence. That would look great in my evaluation.

Tlax puts a typical Denobulan ear-to-ear smile on his face.

INT. SOMMERFELD, CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The three Denobulan women and two kids are in the room. A crowing coming from the living room. The women enter and see the little boy jumping the little girl.

WIFE 1
Belix, stop that sister-jump.

The boy stops. Both sitting on the sofa.

WIFE 2
Well children, what do we play today?

DENOBULAN BOY
Karenbu.

DENOBULAN GIRL
We played that all day long yesterday.

DENOBULAN BOY
Get used to the male regime.

WIFE 3
Like the father, like the son.

The girl shows her long tongue to the boy, then walks up to the window. The two planets are about to collide. (-- everyone aboard the ship is watching this event.)

EXT. PSERON NEBULA

The planets finally collide. Huge explosion. Pieces of rocks getting torn out. At the end smaller rocks remain in the place of the two ex-protoplanet.

INT. SOMMERFELD BRIDGE

Flow of spirits. The crew is fascinated. Science Officer 2 reports.

SCIENCE OFFICER 2
Captain, the astrometrics
reports they've finished the
measurements earlier than
expected.

TLAX
Well, then...

Some chirps interrupts the Captain.

SCIENCE OFFICER 2
Energy readings are changing in
the surrounding area.

Tlax walks up to him. Watching the readouts.

SCIENCE OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)
On the port and it's closing. In
the farther regions our sensors
are barely feeling their way
through the interference.

TLAX
Corresponds with the frequency
of the phenomenon we registered
in the astrometrics.
(thinking)
Whatever. We have no more time.
Starfleet will have to order us
here again to do a more profound
investigation on this friendly
territory. We're leaving the
Pseron Nebula. Full impulse.

VERACIS
I'll be on sickbay. It's the
last time I can bawl at my
inferiors for their makeshift
skills.

Veracis leaves the bridge. The officers keep working.

INT. SOMMERFELD CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS/BRIDGE/CORRIDORS

INTERCUT:

The Denobulan girl stares out of the window. Beside the
red bay nebula nothing can be seen, when all of a sudden
a green light (disruptor charge) approaching the ship.

DENOBULAN GIRL
Moms, look.

WIFE 1
What is it, honey?

Wife 1 goes up to the window. At the same time the charge hits the ship. The hull breaches apart. The whole family flies out into the nebula.

Veracis marching with officers in a corridor when another shaking big as an earthquake finishes the inertial dampers off on that deck. The crew flying around, smashing into walls. Some hit the walls so hard that all left of them are blood smudge.

The bridge shaking violently like the rest of the ship.

TLAX

Report!

SCIENCE OFFICER 2

Hull breach from deck seven to eight.

TLAX

Isolate them!

SCIENCE OFFICER 2

(trying)
Force-field generators failing.

TLAX

Deploy armor.
(to helm)
Take us out and send a distress call to the Enterprise.

The helmsman thrumming on his console feverishly, while the bridge throwing people around amid the violent shakings.

TACTICAL OFFICER

The ship's hull is encumbered.
It'll take...

Another hit cuts the Tactical Officer's report.

EXT. PSERON NEBULA/SOMMERFELD BRIDGE

INTERCUT:

The ship's hull getting covered with the armor units gradually. It only reaches half the saucer when another disruptor charge heads for the ship. The armor units unable to build up on the wrecked hull parts. They crackle back and forth, activated then deactivated.

INCLUDING VIEWSCREEN: Tlax sees a bigger asteroid on it.

TLAX

Bring us under that piece of rock.

The Sommerfeld slowly hiding under an asteroid, at the bottom of a crater in it.

TLAX (CONT'D)
Damage report.

SCIENCE OFFICER 2
(reading incoming reports)
Force-fields activated in the critical sections. Decompression has been neutralized on deck nine. Damage control teams on their way. Artificial gravity offline on deck six. Casualty reports coming in.
(a beat)
Fifty-nine.

TLAX
Do we have energy to deploy the full armor?

TACTICAL OFFICER
Barely enough for partial activation. We must decide which part of the ship we let them pound.
(console signaling)
They've found us. Brace for impact.

TLAX
Deploy ventral armor.

The armor units flip up on the ventral part of the ship, but the disruptor charge hits the edge of the crater, not the ship. The explosion tears down a considerable amount of matter from the crater, covering the dorsal part of the Sommerfeld.

On the bridge, violent shaking as never before. The crew trying to hold on something.

TLAX (CONT'D)
We've got to get out of the nebula.

The Sommerfeld sinks from under the crater, heading for the 'exit'. A direct hit pierces the stardrive section where not covered. Another hit blows that section off the ship.

On the bridge, total chaos. Discharges coming from the consoles. An explosion throws back Science Officer 2 right onto Captain Tlax.

The saucer section of the Sommerfeld drifting out of the nebula until reaching space to some extent.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

All watching the viewscreen except Crusher working his console. The bridge covered with a soft violet light which suddenly disappears. Normal lightning on the bridge again.

EXT. SPACE, ENTERPRISE

At the bow of the Enterprise the same violet light illuminating her hull, but unidentifiable what it is. All at once it sweeps away from the ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER

The exchange of information has been successful.
(to himself)
I hope.

MECHWART

The Admiral didn't promise more than a yes-or-no based conversation.

RAVOIS

We've achieved far more than that. The being understood the essence of our message.

Console signaling a transmission to the Romulan woman. She reacts.

S'ANRA

Captain, we're receiving a subspace transmission from the Sommerfeld. From Captain Tlax personally with a delay of a few hours.

MECHWART

On screen.

Tlax appears on the holo-screen. (it's the message whose end we heard from Tlax himself on the Sommerfeld.)

TLAX

This is a one-way transmission for Captain Andrew Mechart. We're swimming in a post-accretion broth of proto-planets

right now. Until my next call
you'll get a little spare-time.
Tlax out.

The viewscreen switches to space again.

S'ANRA
End of transmission. What was
this good for?

MECHWART
It's his way to tell us he finds
the planet formations they're
examining more interesting than
expected. Originally he took up
planetology.

THAHM
What made him get to the
Captain's chair?

MECHWART
In contrast with the Midean
society, humans don't always
reach the final goal.

THAHM
From us it's expected to follow
our ambition. Throughout the
centuries we noticed that if
everyone chooses a profession to
their liking, our society works
more efficiently. This being his
devout, he should improve
himself in that range of
interest to assist the
Federation in a more wholesome
way.

MECHWART
There's no need to overdramatize
it. He's one of the best
Captains I've ever seen.

THAHM
As I pointed out. On our planet
it's an expectation. Captain
Tlax missed his vocation, which
should be corrected at once.

Mechwart gives up arguing with her. Ravois takes the
liberty to ask.

RAVOIS
Captain. Would you enlighten me
upon an eventual course
correction or the deferment of
it?

MECHWART
(pulling Ravois's leg)
Verbal inquiry. Now I'm
compelled to answer.

THAHM
The crew had been slaving over
the last six month. Recreation
for a few hours won't hurt.

MECHWART
However enticing the idea is,
we're on a mission.

THAHM
You mean the part you can't talk
about.

The Captain looking at her reprovngly.

MECHWART
(to Ravois)
Ensign, it's to be regretted but
we must cross Captain Tlax's
plans.

RAVOIS
(smiling; sitting back)
Aye, sir.

MECHWART
Set a course. Our destination is
the Pseron nebula in the Gamma
Quadrant. Engine-room.
(interjecting to Thahm)
I don't even dare say it.
(to engine-room)
Maximum transwarp.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Technicians running to their posts. Officers working as
usual. Baj IZ at the pool-table.

BAJ IZ
Understood. We're bracing up the
sails.
(to crew)
All right, people, your
attention please. We're starting
the transwarp drive. Watch the
fluctuations and give an eye to
the cronoton-injected bio-neural
packages. I don't think I have
to remind you our blunder last
time and I don't want to drop

back to normal space before
order comes in.
 (pushing buttons;
 looking at an officer)
Looks good. Baj Iz to bridge.
The engine-room gives the green
light.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

 CRUSHER
Confirmed, sir. Transwarp energy
readings are nominal.

 MECHWART
 (to Ravois)
Be so kind, Ensign.

She works her console. Some more chirps.

EXT. SPACE

The ship's hull gets covered with blue energy stream. A
tunnel opens pulling in the ship.

EXT. TRANSWARP CONDUIT

The Enterprise flying in a bluish tunnel. Looks
magnificent.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

The bridge crew shaking a little bit. The viewscreen
shows the transwarp conduit which drives the ship with an
unbelievable speed. The officers monitoring the flight
with increased attention when the ship lurches.

 MECHWART
Report.

 CRUSHER
Structural integrity at 94.3
percent and constantly
decreasing.

 S'ANRA
The armor is ready. It can be
raised any time.

 MECHWART
Mechwart to engine-room. Our
operations officer says the

ship's falling apart and we haven't even entered the anteroom.

Crusher giving a strange look to the Captain. Obviously he didn't say in that way.

BAJ IZ
The operations officers is camping it up. I'm trying to pump more power into the deflector to stabilize the quantum fluctuation, and then we can rush into the living room.

THAHM
(interrupting)
Lieutenant, get your hand off the warp energy. Draw some from the armor units.

S'ANRA
Then we won't be able to raise...

MECHWART
If the ship stays in one piece, we don't need it. After slowing to normal space, you'll get your armor back.

S'ANRA
(with defiance)
Understood.

THAHM
(to S'anra)
I'm sorry Commander, but I do have a greater knowledge of our own technology.

S'ANRA
(irritated)
I told you it's all right, sir.

The Romulan woman keeps thrumming on her console.

BAJ IZ
You heard the Commander, Ladies and Gents. Hansen, draw some energy from the dorsal units.

Hansen goes up to a wall console. Working it.

HANSEN
Energy transfer complete, sir.

BAJ IZ

Very well. Transferring energy
into the deflector...now.

Smaller shaking aboard the ship. The reactor drives
plasma in a much smoother way than before.

CRUSHER
Structural integrity at 97
percent.

MECHWART
Helmsman. Prepare for the second
domain.

RAVOIS
Aye, sir. Bridge to engine-
room...

BAJ IZ
I heard it. All is ready, but
watch the course-compensation.
Back in the dock we
reconfigured the dilithium
matrix. She could shoot ahead by
chance and there could be some
excursion, too. It's basically a
shakedown.

MECHWART
Then basically you could be the
pivot of the crew, Ensign.

Ravois gets down to work the console. The ship lurches
quite a bit, but not in a dangerous way.

RAVOIS
Transwarp speed at seven-teen
and increasing. Eight-teen,
nine-teen...

CRUSHER
Attention. We're getting into
the second domain in four,
three, two, one...

The bridge shudders. Crew holding on.

EXT. TRANSWARP CONDUIT

The Enterprise shoots ahead a great deal like a rocket.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER
Transwarp velocity at twenty-one
and constant.

MECHWART
You've just got a two-week shore
leave, Baj Iz.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Smaller hurrahs in the background. Baj Iz checking the
readouts.

BAJ IZ
Structural integrity field at
ninety-six percent and stable.
I'll pin you down to your
promise, Captain.

EXT. PSERON NEBULA

The Sommerfeld drifting without her stardrive section
between clear space at the edge of nebula. Her saucer is
heavily damaged, but more or less in one piece, covered
by a green light which sweeps back and forth on her hull.
(We don't see what ship it is, just the beam.)

INT. HYBRID SHIP, BRIDGE

Schematics of a transwarp tunnel flashing on a
holographic display. The Enterprise within it. A grey
head makes a hastily move.

EXT. PSERON NEBULA

The green light stops analyzing the Sommerfeld. The yet
unseen ship gives a murmuring noise and flies back into
the nebula.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise drops out of transwarp. Panning space as
the ship proceeds. In front of her the nebula. Meanwhile
we hear the Captain's voice.

MECHWART (V.O.)
Captain's log. Stardate
142152.3. After this somewhat
jolting transwarp jump we slowed
down to impulse in the Gamma
Quadrant. Our Starfleet
scientists are free to set their
hearts at rest. The Midean
transwarp technology proved
compatible with our drive-
system, which could get the
concept of deep-space

exploration to take on a new lease of life. If the Midean Government yields consent to a long-term cooperation, indeed just the sky will be the limit to our destinations.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The crew working. Being happy with the result.

MECHWART
Find the Sommerfeld. I already see Tlax's face when...

S'ANRA
Sir, I'm getting a distress call from the Sommerfeld.

MECHWART
(getting serious)
Hailing.

S'ANRA
(trying)
No response.

MECHWART
Localize them.

CRUSHER
They're about eighty-thousand kilometers from here. I'm giving you the exact coordinates.

The Romulan woman's console chirps. Mechwart sees S'anra be upset. He walks up to her, looking at the tactical console.

S'ANRA
Look at that.

MECHWART
Oh my God. Put it on the screen.

The screen shows the little ship drifting. Barely resembling her former self. Looks more like a huge piece of debris. On the open parts, burning corridors, some crewmember in space.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Red alert! Scan for enemy ships. Stand by shields.

S'ANRA
Type of enemy ship, sir?

MECHWART

Borg.

The crew petrified. Then getting back to work.

S'ANRA

Aye, sir.

THAHM

In areas protected by their armor I'm reading faint life-signs.

MECHWART

Bridge to transporter room four. Beam out the survivors. Use all transporters if you have to. Sickbay, casualties coming in.

MEDICAL OFFICER (COMM)

The sickbay is ready, sir.

TRANSPORTER OFFICER (COMM)

Captain, their armor's activating and deactivating desultorily on the ship's hull. Energy fluctuations are disturbing an exact lock-on.

MECHWART

Crusher, scratch their prefix code out of the computer.

CRUSHER

I'm on it.

Crusher working hard, but that's not enough to the Captain.

MECHWART

Common! They don't have much time.

CRUSHER

Got it! Sending the code.
(console signal)
System break-up successful.
Getting the armor down.

MECHWART

Transporter room. Can you lock on them?

TRANSPORTER OFFICER (COMM)

Rescue in progress.

CRUSHER

Energy increasing in the impulse
reactors of the Sommerfeld.

MECHWART
(to Ravois)
When we got them...

RAVOIS
(interrupting)
I'll take the ship to a safe
distance. Aye, sir.

INT. SOMMERFELD CORRIDOR

Veracis trying to struggle on his feet, but can hardly move his arms and legs. Around him officers soaking with blood. The walls are about to collapse while some officers disappear in the transporter beam of the Enterprise. A beam locking on Veracis when a bigger discharge causes explosions on the corridor, swallowing his colleagues lying there helplessly. Before vanishing, Veracis shouts with pain and the obvious loss. He's safe now. The corridors coming down revealing space.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise gains distance from the ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER
Reactor implosion in five
seconds. We're too close.

MECHWART
Full impulse.

S'ANRA
I'm raising armor.

EXT. SPACE

The stardrive section the rear part of the saucer gets covered by the armor plates. The Sommerfeld explodes. Her debris hit against the hull of the Enterprise.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Compared to the destruction, small shaking on the bridge.

CRUSHER

The Sommerfeld has been
destroyed.

S'ANRA
The debris didn't cause damage
to the Enterprise.

MECHWART
Armor down. All engines stop.
(to Crusher)
How many?

CRUSHER
Thirty-two out of four-hundred
fifty.

The crew in dead silence. A moment of mourning.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)
Most parts of the ship were on
fire. It was just the saucer
drifting there.

MECHWART
(thinking for a sec)
Keep up red alert. Build up
standard shields. Crusher,
S'anra, Thahm, find out what
happened. I'm on sickbay.

Headed for the turbolift, then stops short.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
(to Ravois)
Ensign, are you perceiving any
thoughts out there?

RAVOIS
(suspiciously; Note:
she might be under
HHirl's influence
already)
Negative, sir. If someone caused
this, they left before our
arrival.

THAHM
We can send a report to
Starfleet on HRS 03.

MECHWART
Without asking, Commander.

The Captain leaves the bridge. The others keep working.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

Biobeds in a circular room whose walls have doorways for officers to do their job. On the floor a huge medical starfleet emblem. Wounded, shouts everywhere. The medics taking care of them. The officer brings Veracis in. MEDICAL OFFICER instructs them.

MEDICAL OFFICER
Bring him to the other room.

They put him down on a bed. Medical Officer scanning him.

MEDICAL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Arms and legs broken. I'll give you some analgetic but you'll have to wait until we take care for the heavily wounded.

VERACIS
Forget about it. Fix me so I can help.

MEDICAL OFFICER
Look around. You're life is not in danger and the analgetic will...

VERACIS
Which word don't you understand?

MEDICAL OFFICER
(ceding)
What kind of medical experiences do you have?

VERACIS
Doctor Nol Veracis. Your superior and the chief medical officer of the Enterprise. Be so good as to tug back my limbs where they belong.

Medical Officer waves to another doc to take care of him.

MEDICAL OFFICER
I'm sorry. I didn't know.

VERACIS
Don't waste your time on me. You have plenty to do.

MEDICAL OFFICER
Welcome aboard.

Medical Officer gets back to work. Trying to get up a bit, Veracis takes the tricorder out of the other doc's hand and starts scanning himself.

VERACIS

(totally exhausted)
The honour is mine.

EXT. SPACE, HRS 03

The Hyper-space Relay Station floating in space. We hear Thahm's voice as giving report.

THAHM (V.O.)
This is Commander Thahm from the
USS Enterprise. Stardate
142152.7. The USS Sommerfeld has
been destroyed on the edge of
the Pseron nebula. What caused
it is unknown.
(fading)
I annexed a more detailed report
to this transmission. We
continue investigating the
tragedy.

Getting farther from the station, we see now it's on a display. A bald grey guy decorated with prosthesis showing his back to us.

CLOSE ON his wintry black eyes. Turns his head. The display showing the sound-waves of another message.

KAWASHI (V.O.)
This is Admiral Kawashi speaking
from Starfleet Command.
Transmission sent on stardate
142152 for Captain Mechwart
only. The USS Dionysus was
cruising the Ramak system in the
Gamma Quadrant when long-range
sensors picked this up.

A hybrid ship near a planet is on the display. (Note: it's the first time we see a hybrid ship as a whole.)

KAWASHI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The configuration differs
somewhat, but unambiguously
Borg. They seem to go on doing
what they'd begun with might and
main. Needless to say we got no
further message from the
Dionysus. I'm hereby ordering
you back to Sector 001 effective
immediately. Our planetary
defense systems are ready.
Hurry!

The grey guy nods again. From the corner of the holo-display a disruptor charge (seen in the battle with the Sommerfeld) is launched, heading for the station. It smashes into it and the station explodes.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

Less wounded officer on those bio-beds. The Captain enters. He walks up to Medical Officer.

MECHWART
Lieutenant, status?

MEDICAL OFFICER
Fourteen out of the thirty-two officer have died. We took care of nine. Internal haemorrhaging and broken ribs are the mildest injuries. The rest have suffered a massive radiation damage. They're being treated at the moment.

MECHWART
Captain Tlax?

VERACIS (O.S.)
The Captain didn't make it, sir.

Mechwart turns, surprised at the Bolian's interruption.

VERACIS (CONT'D)
Doctor Nol Veracis.

MECHWART
I'm glad you're safe and sound.

Veracis nods.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

VERACIS
We all are.

MECHWART
Can you tell me details on what happened?

VERACIS
The ops officer could only determine an energy increasing at the port of the Sommerfeld. Then I got in the turbolift. Hardly had I put my foot on the corridor when the whole ship began to shudder. I can't tell you details you need. I had a black-out. I came to my senses when you beamed me out.

Mechwart realizes someone on the main bio-bed. A boy, not more than ten or twelve, lying on it. The man looks questioningly at Medical Officer.

MEDICAL OFFICER
A science officer's son. Third-grade burns, internal haemorrhaging. I don't even know what kept him alive.

MECHWART
(walking up to the boy)
Report, Ensign.

BOY
I'm not an Ensign.

MECHWART
Well, then I'm hereby granting you a field promotion to full Ensign. With all privileges and obligations.

BOY
Dad said one must deserve to wear that uniform.

MECHWART
You surely do.

The boy puts a faint smile on his face. Then closes his eyes. He's gone. An officer covers him with a blanket. Mechwart, reluctantly, steps aside.

CRUSHER (COMM)
Crusher to Mechwart.

MECHWART
Go ahead!

CRUSHER
I've called a meeting together. Will you come in the obs lounge? You've got to see this.

INT. ENTERPRISE OBS LOUNGE

MECHWART
How accurate is your analysis?

As Crusher answering PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

A holographic projection in the middle of the table. It displays warp frequency patterns, metallurgical scan analysis and so on. The walls hold the gold models of older ships. The officers sitting around the table. Huge windows overlook space with stars coming towards us at

impulse, which suggests the obs lounge being situated in front of the bridge.

CRUSHER

As antiproton particle remains and a faint warp-field frequency make an analysis possible. All left of the ship were some pieces of debris I could put under the microscope. I think Lieutenant S'anra is the right person to enlighten the situation.

S'ANRA

There's no reason for you to be so leery of me.

CRUSHER

You're right. Just because particle remains treacable to Romulan disruptors are waltzing with Borg resonances among the wrecks of a Federation science vessel, there's really no call to make up that far-fetched conspiracy theories.

S'ANRA

If that's your way to let me know you like me, tousle my hair. That at least I would enjoy.

BAJ IZ

The pure fact that we found these two traces side by side will just result in neglectful theorizing. We don't know much about this area.

S'ANRA

I admit there aren't many possibilities to review. Either the Borg worked itself up to this stage of development and assimilated Romulan technology or...

CRUSHER

Or the Romulan themselves procured Borg technology.

THAHM

During the recent rebellion they only fought with their own ships. We didn't witness any event that could suggest Borg activity and forgive my

skepticism, how could we? They
ceased to function long ago.

CRUSHER

It was merely presumed that,
with the Borg Queens dead, the
other drones were destroyed or
became dysfunctional. Who knows
what's really left of them.

S'ANRA

(trying to explain
herself)

We didn't get a name for having
an upstanding behaviour. We
defeated the rebels. Perhaps
their intention was to give us
to believe the battle was over
while they kept weaving the
plot.

The Romulan officer looks at the Captain who hasn't say a
word so far.

CRUSHER

We can't just throw this
evidence out of the window.

BAJ IZ

Nobody intends to. My naive
question is how the hell did
Romulans get those Borg gadgets?

MECHWART

Starfleet Command has some ideas
about it.

S'ANRA

Captain?

MECHWART

A few month ago, remains of Borg
technology were founded here in
the Gamma Quadrant on Ventar
Four. Implants, deactivated,
wrecked drones seemingly
incapable of living. The samples
transported to one of our
science ships confirmed that
they'd never stopped
regenerating on cellural level.
That's all we know for now.
We're in this quadrant to prove
or demolish their
reorganization.

The crew not saying a word. Then S'anra decides to break
the silence.

S'ANRA

As most of the warp-capable species, also the Romulans experiment with transwarp technology.

BAJ IZ

And what are the results?

S'ANRA

On one or two occasions they succeeded in keeping up the transwarp conduit, and the ships endured the pressure on them pretty well. Of course, there were several backfires as usual with this sort of tests.

THAHM

So they could travel here or even to the Delta Quadrant...

MECHWART

(questioningly)
...to gather samples.

S'ANRA

Undoubted.

VERACIS

Your presumptions have a more gruesome side.

MECHWART

Doctor?

VERACIS

The history of several races tells about occurrences when they laid hold of more advanced technology and tried so to refine military performance beyond the pale of common sense.

S'ANRA

I understand you're warily dragging in genetic manipulation.

VERACIS

If I were a rebel and wanted to stop alien races at all hazards from chipping on the decisions of my people, then it'd be an expedient to attempt getting the least damage possible during my attacks.

THAHM
Romulan soldiers with Borg
modifications.

BAJ IZ
The aggressivity of the
nanoprobes surpasses the
conquesting ambitions of an
empire. The Borg order would
smelt down the Romulan
consciousness in no time.

VERACIS
You forget this time we're not
talking about reversing the
assimilation, but keeping a
check on it at a certain level.
Imagine a Romulan whose synapses
are continually infected without
any central guidance above them.
As Lieutenant Baj Iz pointed
out, it would be a matter of
seconds until they turn into
drones.

BAJ IZ
I don't think they're troubling
with that if they can easily
produce soulless zombies they
rap over the knuckles in case of
disobedience.

The Captain stares at S'anra trying to make fair weather.
However, her face can't hide the shame she feels.

MECHWART
(interrupting)
Very well. So far the only thing
we can be sure about is that
some rebels are intent on
annuling the newly sealed peace
treaty and they give their
disruptors emphasis with Borg
technology.

THAHM
Permission to send a priority
one message to Starfleet
Command.

MECHWART
Granted.

Thahm gets up, heading for the bridge immediately.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
I don't see the point in wasting
our time any longer. Lieutenant

Baj Iz, inform your team we're going home.

BAJ IZ
Aye, sir.

MECHWART
Thank you. We're done.

Everyone gets up, then leaving the room except the doctor. He keeps his seat.

BAJ IZ
(leaving)
Engine-room, make it hot for the reactor. We're going home.

MECHWART
S'anra, wait for me by my office.

S'anra nods with a bit of petulance. Everyone is out. Veracis staring at the holo-display on the table. The Captain puts his hand on his shoulder.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
I'll need my chief doc.

VERACIS
A ship of the Federation is destroyed. Her crew dead in sickbay down there. Wouldn't it be wiser to...

MECHWART
Sitting on the edge of a nebula won't help us find out the reason for their death.

Veracis gets up. Turns off the display.

VERACIS
I'm on sickbay.

Starts then stops short.

VERACIS (CONT'D)
Thank you for attending to my opinion. I was concerned about our short acquaintance...

MECHWART
As I said. I need my chief doc.

Veracis nods. Leaves the lounge.

INT. ENTERPRISE THE AFT OF THE BRIDGE

Baj Iz hurrying to a lift. Crusher pulling up with him.

CRUSHER
What was that?

BAJ IZ
What was what?

CRUSHER
Compared to an Impa you have a short memory. Thanks for sticking up for me.

BAJ IZ
I disagreed with you.

CRUSHER
I have my prejudice with good reason.

BAJ IZ
Till you don't have any proof in your hand, don't accuse a Starfleet officer of treason. She was fighting to protect the Federation.

CRUSHER
It's not just that, is it?

BAJ IZ
We're at it again.

CRUSHER
If you don't feel like going on, just tell me. Even that would be more endurable than this daily agony we call relationship. And I don't only mean the hard work pulling us apart. It's a good while you've been giving me a miss. We only talk on duty and at conferences.

BAJ IZ
I thought I'd be able to get used to it.

CRUSHER
To what?

BAJ IZ
The human generosity when getting into a relationship. You crack down on anyone you think they deserve it. It bears witness to doltishness at highest levels.

CRUSHER

The point of generous human relationships is to crack down on each other. It's called mutual reliance.

BAJ IZ

Reliance doesn't include incrimination blatantly served at a briefing which you're saying I should agree with. Regrettably humans have that flaw.

While saying this, suddenly his nose and ears start bleeding again.

CRUSHER

Watch out, Lieutenant. Your nose is dripping with prejudice. Recently you've been bleeding more often than usual.

BAJ IZ

I told you my body reacts to overtimes badly. We work less, several times a day, with intermissions.

Crusher understands at last. Goes on with more fret.

CRUSHER

Let me guess. You don't keep you fit with Vulcan meditation.

BAJ IZ

(reluctantly)
Zeproxin injections.

CRUSHER

(tap his comm badge)
Crusher to Doctor Veracis.

VERACIS (COMM)

Veracis here, go ahead.

CRUSHER

After going to transwarp, Lieutenant Baj Iz will drop by on sickbay. If not, call me immediately.

VERACIS (COMM)

Something serious?

CRUSHER

To my knowledge it's treatable with simple medication. Crusher

out. As for the personal part of
it, I have my doubts.

Crusher, half worried, half angry, leaves him there. Baj
Iz gets in the lift, while holding his hand to his
bleeding nose. He seems to have great pains.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

Veracis treating a male patient's leg who keeps groaning
with pain. The sickbay is almost empty. The crewmembers
of the Sommerfeld are gone. Medical Officer is there too
doing his job.

VERACIS

Astounding. During my practice
I've treated thousands of humans
and I didn't hear them do
anything but groaning. Where is
your station?

PATIENT

In the engine-room.

VERACIS

More details?

PATIENT

I monitor the data coming in
from the engine-room in the
impulse control room.

VERACIS

Mean sitting on a chair, staring
at a display.

PATIENT

(disturbed)
Yes.

VERACIS

Then all you have to do is to
creep up to the control room.
Dismissed.

PATIENT

But, sir.

VERACIS

(shouting)
Don't snivel about a broken leg!
You want to commit suicide? Hold
a phaser to your head. If you
just need adrenaline, call me.
I'll pump an overdose into you
with pleasure.

PATIENT

I apologize, sir.

The patient stands up. Heading for the door. His leg seems to be right.

VERACIS

Ensign, I've booked you a therapy. According to your medical record it wasn't the first time that you deactivated the security protocol on a holodeck. The counselor will inform me about any development concerning you. Get out of here!

The patient leaves. Medical Officer looks at his boss reprovingly. Veracis realizes.

VERACIS

You're free to ask my removal. The last tricorder scans point to the fact that I'm suffering from mental weakness.

MEDICAL OFFICER

I remember Bolian temperament described with the opposite characteristics. That makes me presume your general behavior is quite different.

VERACIS

If you knew.

MEDICAL OFFICER

Captain Mechwart will track down those who did this to your crew.

VERACIS

I'm sure about that.

MEDICAL OFFICER

The mood aboard this ship hasn't been recently moving within the confines of daily routine. But believe me. You won't find a more experienced and devoted crew which you belong to already.

VERACIS

The Captain has given his blessing to his new chief medical officer, however, I'm not less touched by my first officer's words.

They try to force a smile on their face. Might be a beginning of a friendship.

INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR

The Captain and S'anra are about to enter the ready room when Thahm hurries up to them.

THAHM
Captain, we're not getting any signal from the HRS.

MECHWART
There's some sort of nebula in that region. May be just some interference.

THAHM
Negative, sir. We're not getting anything from it. As if it wasn't even there.

MECHWART
Temporarily go to yellow alert. Maximum transwarp till we get home.

Thahm would start, but the Captain has a remark for her.

THAHM
Don't forget to supervise Baj Iz's calculations.

The fish-like woman nods huffily. Mechwart and S'anra enter the ready-room.

INT. ENTERPRISE READY ROOM

The tactical officer not letting her Captain to speak out.

S'ANRA
Don't even bother. I know what you're going to say.

MECHWART
Good. I'm still hesitating.

S'ANRA
If you don't trust me, you can confine me to a brig.

MECHWART
Don't make yourself ridiculous. Crusher just tried to feel out how much you endure.

S'ANRA
Then what's the purpose of this
conversation?

The Captain pours some blue drink in two glasses. He
gives one to her.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)
Romulan ale?

MECHWART
Reconciliation. And don't even
think about saying it's illegal.
It's an old Starfleet tradition
to get drunk before, during and
after peace negotiations.

S'ANRA
I'm not a kill-joy to
traditions.

They take a sip. Enjoying its flavour.

MECHWART
Anyway, if our reasoning is
watertight, we won't worry about
the morning after this night.

He invites her to the couch. They sit down. Meanwhile the
transwarp conduit appearing through the windows.

S'ANRA
I'm aware of your loathing our
race. At some extent I can't
even blame you.

MECHWART
It's not loathing.
Incomprehension.
(a beat)
How can one not realize and
embrace an effort that could end
a three-hundred-year old rancor
between our species?

S'ANRA
It's a familiar routine in
history. Think of the Khitomer
agreement.
(taking another sip)
Rebellious groups can't be a bar
to the final peace. The great
mass is driven by other
interests.

MECHWART
If you take history as an
underlying example, remember the

rebellious groups that had pushed sober and peaceable countries or even worlds to the verge of paranoia or total destruction.

S'ANRA

Then we'll have to do everything to make a difference in this era. And if the only way to it is sending some renegades to the Areinnye, so be it.

MECHWART

Real Romulan mentality.

(a beat)

I'm sorry I've been short with you. I blamed you for the death of my officers, but it was our fault.

S'ANRA

Starlfleet had set up several usable regulations. Letting family stay on board is not one of them. Romulan officers prefer to see their kins at home. Family stands above all.

MECHWART

We're afraid if something happens to us they won't be there to say goodbye. Driven by this egoism we empower ourselves to take cover behind approval contracts. Good my wife had more common sense and didn't let me bring my daughter to the ship.

S'ANRA

I didn't know you're a parent.

MECHWART

Technically speaking I'm not. We return to Earth once in a while. That's only when I see her.

They keep drinking.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

When you joined Starfleet, true enough despite the displeasure of the Senate, you took the plunge to see other ways of thinking. The rebels chose the easier way.

S'ANRA

The way of ignorance.

MECHWART

And destruction. Exterminate those who you disagree with and you're not bound to deal with the ignorance caused by them anymore. What doesn't exist, doesn't need to be learnt.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The Betazoid helmsman doing her job as she should. All at once pain creeps on her face. She hears voices (like coming from the Borg collective).

THAHM

Aren't you feeling well?

RAVOIS

I'm not sure. Suddenly I got this terrible headache.

THAHM

(waving to someone)

Yeoman, bring Ensign Ravois to sickbay.

The yeoman executes the order. He helps her up. An extra replacing her at the helm.

EXT. ROMULUS

Battle. Hybrid ships firing at Romulan warbirds, stations on orbit. A warbird trying to go to warp, when a tractor beam pulls it back, causing heavy damage to its engines. It explodes. The shock-wave drifts some other ships along.

INT. ROMULAN SENATE

Darkness. Romulan politicians tied up on table-like devices. Before them hybrids aiming with their 'arm-phasers' at them. Another hybrid appears from the shadow while a politician being tortured with a kind of electro-shock method.

HHIRL

I apologize for this little inconvenience. We haven't adjusted this new device yet. I assure you at full capacity it causes greater pains.

ROMULAN POLITICIAN

You don't have a chance. Peace has been signed.

HHIRL

Our prisoners, are of a
different opinion.

ROMULAN POLITICIAN

Every Romulan understood the
necessity of joining the
Federation. They won't turn
their back on it for an insane
hybrid's amusement.

HHIRL

You wouldn't believe what a tiny
piece of Borg technology is
capable of. A gene transcription
here, a synopsis manipulation
there. They proved pious
followers after the procedure.

ROMULAN POLITICIAN

If a word is true of what you're
saying, they're not Romulans
anymore, just soulless robots.

HHIRL

Do I look like soulless to you?
I don't feel like that. Look at
me. This is the future of the
Romulan race which materializes
with my peace offer. Announce to
the Federation monkeys you
desist from the contract. In
return, you'll witness the birth
of the New Romulan Empire as a
leader.

ROMULAN POLITICIAN

Your synapses must have gone
through some serious jumbling.
Hundreds of planets belong to
the Federation. Romulus alone
has no chance whatever. And I
won't assist to your little
destruction. You'll have to
assimilate me.

HHIRL

I don't intend to taint the
Empire with the blood of
traitors. I won't even keep on
torturing you. I'll do to you
what we do to any sleazy truce-
breaker.

ROMULAN POLITICIAN

All Romulans will fight against
you as a member of the
Federation.

Said that, HHirl grabs the politician's throat and as he speaks he keeps pressing it more and more.

HHIRL

Coward! Surak made us leave Vulcan. He chose logic for the impulsive force born with us. Since the first contact with humans the Empire had been declining. Why do you admire those crippled dregs so much? Federation, help us, our government is unstable. Federation, take pity on us, because the incompetence of our leaders makes our society fall apart. Finally we can achieve the only goal of the Romulan race. Conquest is our element, not subserviency.

Then he kills the politician with his bare hands. The other hybrids shoot the rest of them.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

Officers working. Everything is normal condition. Crusher sitting at his console, Thahm in the Captain's chair. The comm signal rings out.

VERACIS (COMM)

You wanted me to tell you if Lieutenant Baj Iz doesn't show up on sickbay. Well, he didn't.

CRUSHER

Understood. Thank you.
(walking up to Thahm)
Commander, I'd ask permission to leave the bridge.

THAHM

Is there any problem?

CRUSHER

It's a private matter and I wouldn't wimp out of my duty.

He can hardly finish the sentence. She interrupts him.

THAHM

Granted.

Said that, she turns galumph to her chair console, not even waiting for an answer from him. Crusher smiling at it, then leaves.

THAHM (CONT'D)
Commander Thahm to Doctor
Veracis.

VERACIS
I'm listening.

THAHM
I'm interested in Ensign Ravois'
condition.

VERACIS
The scans indicated increased
activity in her paracortex. The
Ensign complained about getting
much stronger telepathic
impulses than usually.

THAHM
How?

VERACIS
Might be fatigue or excitement
which cause the crew's thoughts
bombard her consciousness to a
greater extent. Though in her
case the standard level means a
much higher limit. I gave her
six milligram hydrocortilene. By
all odds she's sleeping in her
quarters.

THAHM
If I right remember that can
lead to coma.

VERACIS
If we spot it in time, it won't.
An officer of mine is watching
over her every thirty minutes.

THAHM
Thank you, doctor. Thahm out.

INT. ENTERPRISE MESS-HALL

This smaller mess-hall is situated at the back of the saucer. The windows overlook the huge nacelles. Panning the officers having a drink, talking, then...

TURNING TO:

Baj Iz standing in front of the windows. He watches a nacelle with piety. He seems to get more relaxed by staring at it. The ship still travels in the transwarp conduit.

INT. ENTERPRISE TURBOLIFT

Crusher standing in the lift with a couple of officers. Among them a mother and her little son, as well as a slimy, ugly-faced alien we've seen before, a Gazrot whose holes in his neck blow dirty green bubbles at a certain interval. Seems to be breathing. The little boy staring at him.

LITTLE SON
Mom, what alien is this?

MOTHER
He's a Gazrot, son.

The Gazrot feels cramped by this conversation.

LITTLE SON
He's so disgusting.

The lift stops. The Gazrot is about to leave when all of a sudden he turns to the boy, splashing some green stuff onto the boy's head and face.

GAZROT
(staccato)
Dis-gu-sting.

And the alien leaves. The door closes. Crusher looks at the kid.

CRUSHER
That's what I call infinite
diversity in infinite
combination.

The boy looking darkly at him. He's dribbling with the green goo. Crusher decides not to say a word anymore.

INT. ENTERPRISE MESS-HALL

Crusher steps out of the lift. Looks around. Notices Baj Iz. Approaching him on the opposite side of the mess-hall. Stops at the windows. Baj Iz turns his head to the left, while Crusher staring at him.

BAJ IZ
How long have you been standing
here?

CRUSHER

Long enough not to have an idea why you fall in trance at the sight of the nacelles. Except that you're the chief-engineer.

Baj Iz reluctant to give an answer to him. Crusher gets it and goes on.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about my previous outburst, but I have no stomach for bringing your body back to the Kau, telling your family their son died of an overdose.

BAJ IZ

(yielding)

I don't live out of your care as much as I wanted you to believe. The overdose as you call is just temporary.

CRUSHER

Good. Then you understand if you're not coming with me on sickbay at once, I'll have to report your temporary disability.

BAJ IZ

You think I'm so inane that I'd drug me to death only to stay awake over the engineering console?

He fails to understand. Keeps reproving him at a stronger voice.

CRUSHER

You smuggled an illicit substance to the ship which made your brain gush blood and you don't even have some sense of guilt about that?

BAJ IZ

Zeproxin reduces the adenosine level in my brain, makes more susceptible at the warp frequency.

CRUSHER

You perceive the frequency coming from the warp coils?

Baj Iz nods and continues.

BAJ IZ

The frequency increases the Turengran stream, which is responsible, among others, for wakefulness in our species.

The windows show the ship slowing to impulse. The two notice that, then go on talking.

CRUSHER
You could've told me.

BAJ IZ
That's what I planned. But instead of asking, you bellowed at my face. I know I still have much to learn about the human race, but I doubt care covers taking the other for a dupe.

He wants to go away when Crusher grabs his arm gently. They're close to each other.

CRUSHER
(hugging him)
I don't know what to say.

BAJ IZ
Something I never heard from you.

CRUSHER
You only have to be close to me and I don't know what to say.

Anger thaws on their faces. They hug each other very close. Now the windows shows as the ship going to simple warp.

BAJ IZ
We're at warp.

CRUSHER
Yep.

BAJ IZ
I should go down to engineering.

CRUSHER
Yep.

BAJ IZ
We're on duty.

CRUSHER
Yep.

Baj Iz jumps out of his cuddle, heading for the door. Crusher shouts after him.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)
Bye, honey!

BAJ IZ
(embarrassed; to
himself)
Yep.

Then he leaves. The crew looking at Crusher in a bit strange way.

INT. ENTERPRISE 'TEN-FORWARD'

CLOSE TO:

The door opens. Ravois leaves the turbolift with a curious happy face. She looks around. As she pans the huge hall she realizes there's not a soul in there beside her. The dim lights let the windows give a sight of stars at warp. A clash noise cuts the silence. She continues in the direction of the noise until she arrives at the counter. A bartender, turning his back on us, puts some bottles up on a shelf.

RAVOIS
Excuse me! I'd like a Xebloin
peach juice.

The bartender turns. It's HHirl! But now he looks plain Romulan as he was before. No cybernetic bodyparts, no grey skin. The whole scene reminds us the beginning of a nightmare which will unfold afterwards. The atmosphere is quite bizarre.

HHIRL
(wiping a glass)
I'm sorry, Ensign. We've run out
of it.

Ravois makes a disappointed face.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
What about a Romulan Red Battle?

RAVOIS
I've never heard of such a
drink. How long will it take for
you to make one?

HHIRL
I can mix it for you right away.

He throws a glance at the windows now. Ravois turns and sees as seemingly the ship goes to impulse and the Betazed heaves in sight. They're on orbit.

HHirl seems to focus on something with great effort.
Ravois jerks a bit.

CLOSING TO:

her eyes and

DISSOLVE TO:

several scenes in succession.

EXT. BETAZED

Now she's on Betazed in a park or similar. In the background a huge city. Above it hybrid ships firing at the city. Back in the park Betazoids in hand-to-hand or telepathic fight.

A hybrid doing a psycho-fight with a Betazoid man whose ears are bleeding. The hybrid concentrating. Now the Betazoid's nose bleeding too. The hybrid concentrating. The man drops dead to the ground.

Another hybrid dragging a boy. Suddenly another Betazoid man jumps on him, trying to free him. The hybrid firing at him with his weapon mounted on his arm. Kills the man, then lets fall the boy on the ground. He gives him a kick, then fires. He is dead.

Other hybrids dragging Betazoid women with them. Transporter beams locking on them. The women are gone.

BACK TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE 'TEN-FORWARD'

The planet from space again. It explodes in pieces. Then we turn to Ravois' shuddering face.

PULL BACK TO
REVEAL:

HHirl holding her in his arms, apparently against her will. She can't do anything but standing there petrified.

INT. ENTERPRISE RAVOIS' QUARTERS

She sits up on her bed. Her ears and nose bleeding. She feels something then her face turns resolute. She gets out of the bed.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Technicians working. Thrumming on consoles. Walking up and down. Ravois enters the room from the turbolift. Her continually resolute face full of dried blood. She walks along the room until she gets to the pool-table. For a moment she just stands staring at it. Hansen notices her. He realizes there's something wrong, so he tries to talk to her carefully.

HANSEN

Can I help you, Ensign?

Ravois not answering. At this point Baj Iz enters the engine-room with quite a happy look.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

Sir, for a moment please.

BAJ IZ

Go ahead!

Hansen points to the Betazoid woman. Baj Iz gets the hint. Smile disappears from his face. He grabs Hansen and pulls him in a corner.

BAJ IZ (CONT'D)

How long has she been here?

HANSEN

She's just arrived. I asked her if she needs some help, but she's just standing there staring at the table.

BAJ IZ

(walking up to Ravois)
Ensign? Aien. Have you been ordered to the engine-room?

Her face reflects suffer. She's fighting against something. Hansen gets closer to them. The two men are at a loss.

RAVOIS

Order.

BAJ IZ

It's alright. Everything will be fine. Baj Iz to sickbay. Medical emergency in the engine-room.

Hardly had he said that when Ravois pushes away Hansen to smash against the wall. Baj Iz trying to keep her down, grappling with her until she manages to push him down from the upper level. The man falling quickly. Then she returns to the pool-table and starts working it.

Meanwhile Baj Iz spreading his wings attached between his body and arms to 'sail' in a level below. He touches ground with a smaller thud. An officer running to help him out, while he talking to the air.

BAJ IZ (CONT'D)
Security to engine-room. Hurry.

Then he goes up to a ladder and climbs back to the actual engine-room. He sees her working the console, so goes to another. Watching the readouts.

BAJ IZ (CONT'D)
She's trying to override the
helm control.
(pushing some buttons)
Damn it!

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Everyone on their job when the comm channel rings out.

BAJ IZ (COMM)
Baj Iz to bridge. We've got a
problem.

MECHWART
What problem?

INCLUDING SCREEN: The bridge lurches. Mechwart watching as they slow to impulse.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Report.

BAJ IZ (COMM)
Ensign Ravois re-routed the helm
control to the engine-room.

THAHM
How bad is it down there?

BAJ IZ
He locked every function
connected with navigation with
multiple codes. I can't break
through them.

S'ANRA
Security teams already on their
way.

MECHWART
Thahm, you have the bridge. Get
back the control on navigation.

He gets up, waving to S'anra. They leave the bridge.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

A security team standing there, while Baj Iz trying to persuade Ravois.

BAJ IZ
Listen to me. I know you're acting under constraint but if you don't say anything I can't help you.

Trying to get closer, a force-field around the table throws him back. Now comes the Captain with the tactical officer.

MECHWART
What the hell's going on here?

BAJ IZ
She's stirring up the navigation control. I don't think she knows what she's doing.

MECHWART
What dou you mean?

BAZ IZ
She's fighting against something. Like she's not herself.

Veracis comes in. The Captain points at Ravois.

MECHWART
Tricorder.

VERACIS
(getting closer;
scanning her)
Her parakortex activity jumped to a multiple of the standard limit. Almost out of scale.

S'ANRA
What's the meaning of that?

VERACIS
There must an incredible amount of telepathic impulses streaming into her brain. The Ensign's cerebral activity corrisponds to a computer filled with information to the brim.

BAJ IZ
After a point there's no place for it to provide even the basic functions.

VERACIS
That's the case, I'm afraid.

MECHWART
What are our options?

VERACIS
I could keep on blocking her telepathic ability but maybe I'd just cause more damage to her.

BAJ IZ
She raised a force-field around her. I can't override her commands whatever I try.

VERACIS
Then we'll have to find the ones generating these impulses as fast as we can.

THAHM (COMM)
Bridge to Mechwart.

MECHWART
Save no details.

THAHM (COMM)
We've tried every known variations, but.

The engine-room gives another shaking like the one before on the bridge.

MECHWART
What now?

BAJ IZ
(checking readouts)
We just jumped to warp.

MECHWART
Find the destination.

BAJ IZ
(trying)
I can't get any navigational data.
(a beat)
She's trying to access classified information about the shield armor. Mechwart goes pale. Becoming more and more irritated.

S'ANRA
Captain. We've got to stop her. At any cost. The Captain staring

at the Ensign. Then makes a decision.

MECHWART
(acquiescent)
Do it.

S'anra produces her phaser, setting it on a level and fires. The beam trying to get through the force-field. With no effect.

S'ANRA
(to the guards)
Set your phasers on level three, narrow beam, or we blow the engine-room apart.

They fire together at one point. The force-field yields and drops with a small energy discharge. Ravois faints. Veracis hurries up to her, giving her some medicine with a hypospray.

VERACIS
Help me take her to sickbay.

At this very moment green beam covers Ravois's body, even if with apparent difficulty.

S'ANRA
(dumbfounded)
Romulan transporter.

MECHWART
Thahm, red alert! Deploy armor and scan for Romulan ships. The red alert klaxon tunes up. More officers arriving.

BAJ IZ
They beamed her out through subspace.
(to Hansen)
Identify the carrier wave frequency. The subspace signal will disperse in a couple of seconds. Hansen gets down to it. Pushing buttons, console chirps.

HANSEN
We've got it.

BAJ IZ
Good job. Let's track down the signal.

Ready. Baj Iz looking at a display. Mechwart turn and sees a planet.

MECHWART

Romulus.

Some officers instinctively giving S'anra a not so clear look.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

Can we guard against another beam-out?

BAJ IZ

(thinking)

The shield armor is based on transporter technology. If we remodulate the molecular matrix of the replicated plate units so that when our sensors perceive the registered carrier wave, they emit an inverse subspace frequency, then we might have a chance to play them false.

S'ANRA

The carrier wave will bounce off like laser-beams.

BAJ IZ

That's the idea.

MECHWART

Get down to it.

(to Hansen)

What else don't we have under control?

HANSEN

We control everything, except navigation.

S'ANRA

Seems like the rebels will force their hospitality upon us at whatever cost.

MECHWART

Why so sure it's the rebels?

S'ANRA

Who else?

Mechwart not responding. His face tells everything.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)

We do use underhand methods sometimes, but sabotaging a laboriously achieved consensus like that would top any kind of

Romulan atrocity. The Senate is more upright than that.

MECHWART

All I know is that my ship has been hijacked and is heading to Romulus. Till we don't have more information, we must take any possibility in account.

(a beat)

Engine-room to bridge. Commander Thahm, send a priority one message to Starfleet Command about a possible transgression of the peace treaty and the abduction of a crewmember. Encode all communication channels. Crusher, come down here to assist Baj Iz. I'd be glad if at least our manoeuvring thrusters worked.

The Captain, S'anra and Veracis leave. The others keep on working.

INT. HYBRID SHIP, BREEDING ROOM

A Romulan/hybrid, probably doctor, holds a baby in his hand. The little boy having hybrid-like mutations on his body already. He puts him back into an incubator. HHirl enters. Sends the doctor out, who now leaves.

Ravois is tied to a metal table. She regains consciousness. Tubes coming out of her already greyish body. She's naked except where the gadgets cover her. HHirl talks up.

HHIRL

I greet you. It's a pleasure to see you return to reality.

The Ensign tries to mentally hurt him. In vain.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

It's no use. You could've realized. The more you resist, the bigger will be the mess among your synapsis.

(walking up to her)

Though you couldn't get me what I wanted, you're fully entitled to my acknowledgement for your work aboard the Enterprise.

He touches her. Starts fondling her face.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

You're the most beautiful of
all.

(a beat)

But I hope our offsprings will
carry more Romulan
characteristics on them.

HHirl activates a terminal near the table. Nanoprobes
penetrating her body through the tubes. Ravois anguishing
with great pain.

INT. EARTH, FEDERATION OFFICE

Deletham turns in our sight.

DELETHAM

What do you mean we have no
contact with Romulus?

PULL BACK TO:

Admiral Kawashi and a Klingon ambassador, GHURAH.

KAWASHI

We received a fragmented message
which says there are grievous
communication disturbances in
the whole Eisin system.

DELETHAM

The Borg.

KAWASHI

We're not sure. Our ships
cruising in the Gamma Quadrant
overwhelmed us with
disconcerting reports. They
confirm what the Romulan Command
stated. The solar systems as we
know are vanishing one after the
other. But we lost trace of the
Borg ships in the Alpha Quadrant
in the last few hours.

The Klingon ambassador cuts in the conversation.

GHURAH

Do you have any idea why they
haven't sent one ship to ask for
assistance? They have a chance
to get to Earth if they stay
cloaked.

DELETHAM

If I knew I wouldn't be on the
verge of seizure, Hoj.

The Romulan takes a breath. Calms down.

DELETHAM (CONT'D)

Take my apology.

GHURAH

I understand your anger. Apology accepted.

KAWASHI

With your permission, we would send Federation ships to the Romulan side of the dismantled Neutral Zone. If any trouble had aroused, we see there much more.

DELETHAM

Thank you, Admiral. Understandably I accept your offer. Ambassador Ghurah, may I count on the assistance of Qonos?

GHURAH

We've signed peace. Naturally we'll help you cover up what happened.

DELETHAM

(trying to be funny)

Is that an opinion that sticks to the treaty or you just fear for your honour?

GHURAH

With all due respect. The peace treaty's just a piece of paper. We don't follow its passages and rules because they're written. We wrote them because we think of them in that way. And our honour strenghtens its adherence.

DELETHAM

I'd have contented myself with an answer in one sentence. Sometimes I have the feeling you'd joined the Federation before us only to peck at the Romulan Senate.

(to Kawashi)

Admiral, I'll beam back to my ship. We're coming with the Federation on this reconnaissance.

KAWASHI

As you wish, Praetor.

Deletham leaves. The Admiral staring at Ghurah.

GHURAH
There's something to it.

Ghurah leaves too. Kawashi puts a smile on his face, then calls an officer.

KAWASHI
Come. There's much to do. We have yet to inform the President about the latest news. Give me a list of the ships at our disposal and find the Enterprise for heaven's sake.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise going at warp, covered with full armor.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

A signal tunes up at the tactical console. S'anra checking it.

S'ANRA
Calculating our velocity and the time elapsed we're supposed to have arrived at Romulus.

MECHWART
Engine-room. I'd like to slow to impulse.

CRUSHER (COMM)
Just a moment, sir. We haven't been able to...look at that.

MECHWART
I didn't understand, Lieutenant.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

BAJ IZ
Sir, the codes blocking the navigational control have just been deactivated. The rudder is in our hands again.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
Helmsman, take us out of the warp.

EXT. ROMULUS

The Enterprise slows to impulse. Manoeuvring on the orbit of Romulus. Around the planet ship wrecks, debris of stations. The terrible destruction on the planet's surface showing even from space. Apparently some continents on fire, some have been transformed to meet the needs of the hybrids.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Crusher arriving. The crew, petrified, watching the viewscreen which shows the aforementioned destruction. The indignation on S'anra's face gradually turns into anger. Aware of that, the Captain gives a quiet order to Crusher.

MECHWART

Get us a full sensor sweep on the planet's surface. Scan anything you still can.

The Romulan officer interrupts him. With difficulty, she manages to pull some words out of her mouth.

S'ANRA

There's hardly a convulsion you can protect me from now. I'll do the scans.

Mechwart nods. She starts her job.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)

The D'vrex and Sath'tar peninsula as good as destroyed. On the surface of other archipelagoes and smaller continents there's a high radiation present due to disruptor charges. These territories are under the Apnex-Sea already. Throughout the Ar'hael desert structures are discernible. Whole cities have been constructed on it. Further analysis indicate that the majority of the population have been exterminated. Sensors reading only about one million clear Romulan life-signs. On account of disruptor fire gamma radiation flooded the solar system. We must presume that the colonies built on our two other planets have suffered severe damages, too.

The crew just listening to her while reporting the planet's status. Nobody really knows what to say.

MECHWART

I'm sorry.

The red alert sound cuts in his words. All coming to their senses. Checking console readouts. Standing by to whatever will come.

CRUSHER

A ship of unknown configuration decloaking directly ahead.

MECHWART

Load forward phasers and torpedo banks.

S'ANRA

(pushing buttons)

Weapon systems activated.

MECHWART

(to Crusher)

Robert, analysis. Quickly!

The comm channel sound tunes up. Thahm gets up to go to Crusher, so they can be ready sooner.

S'ANRA

We're being hailed.

The Captain staring at S'anra for a moment like he's waiting instructions from her. She looks back to him.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)

We can win a little time.

Judging by the ship's size they can destroy us hand over hand.

MECHWART

Just hoping we won't hear the usual 'I'm gonna kill you' monologue. On screen.

The screen shows the hybrid ship's interior. Here and there fully or partly assimilated hybrids walking, but not much can be seen from the scarcely illuminated place. Suddenly a familiar voice peals up in the dark.

HHIRL (O.S.)

We are the New Romulan Empire. For your war crimes throughout the centuries and delinquency against us we'll take retaliation on you. Whether you comply or not is considered

irrelevant. Or shall I say
'Resistance is futile'...

At this point HHirl steps out of the shadow, so the crew
of the Enterprise can see him completely.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
...Captain Mechwart.

The Captain struggles up from his chair. Getting closer
to the screen. S'anra looking at the hybrid with disdain.

MECHWART
You were the leader of the
Kardun battle.

HHIRL
I still am. Thanks to the
sophisticated Romulan
transporter technology and some
committed doctors. However, to
secure our triumph we couldn't
help not extending the battle to
territories regarded by us as
key positions, which the species
of the Gamma Quadrant had to
experience with pains to the
marrow. The Alpha and Beta
Quadrant won't be out of our
good will, either.

S'ANRA
(jumping up)
Look at you! You're
exterminating our race in the
name of our people. You don't
even have pure Romulan blood in
your veins anymore.

HHIRL
Lieutenant Commander S'anra if
I'm not mistaken. You've gained
quite a name. When the moment
comes, I promise you'll have a
forgettable death rightful to a
traitor. As for destroying
Romulus, I couldn't bring myself
to create my empire on a
homeland darkened with
unpatriotic blood.

S'ANRA
If you're really so piqued at
me, beam me over. And let the
Enterprise go.

HHIRL
Unabashed derision of the
Romulan race. You'd lay down

your life for these scabby mongrels while bearing the Federation instruct your own people.

(to Mechwart)

Take a look at my ship, Captain. Analyze it until your sensors burn. I can shoot you in pieces whenever I want.

MECHWART

I do not recall ostentation ever enthralled me. Your technological superiority can be counteracted with the right tactics. As far as your self-righteous battle's concerned, I can only say about you what people thought of the Klingons two hundred years ago: the scum of the universe. I presume your faithful, but candyass friends are hiding around us behind their cloak. Why don't you attack?

Said that, the Captain walks back to his chair. Slowly.

HHIRL

Kind of you trying to find out our strength, but if I have back-up with me or not, will be a surprise. I counted on a sharp contrast between our arguments...

Meanwhile the Captain standing near his chair. He pushes a button to stop HHirl from finishing his sentence. He disappears from screen.

S'ANRA

The good old 'Let's set them afire' method.

MECHWART

I want to know what his ship's capable of during a combat. Encoded message to the Command. Hurry.

The woman working her terminal.

S'ANRA

It'll take time till it gets to the recipient.

MECHWART

Better late.

S'ANRA

The ship's weapon systems remain inactive.

MECHWART

The good old method turned out crabs.

The tactical officer keeps working while Thahm and Crusher looking at each other with worry. The Commander reports.

THAHM

Captain, the analysis is finished.

Mechwart going up to them to the Science console. Schematics of the hybrid ship and different data readouts changing continually.

CRUSHER

A warship one kilometer in diameter. There are well-perceptible sections within the ship. On the basis of the energy patterns they might have a crew of about eighty thousand. Double-layered ablative duranium/monotanium hull. The destruction on the planet purports standard disruptor charges.

MECHWART

Most species can cope with it. They must have some sort of offensive weapon that even the Romulans fled before them.

THAHM

That's what's troubling us. There's no sign pointing to a new weapon. More likely to entrust their lives to the defense systems.

CRUSHER

The emitters embedded in the hull are uninterruptedly emanating modulated cronoton particles which surround the whole ship and sporadically I'm registering a new kind of alloy on certain areas.

MECHWART

I should spend more time on burrowing.

CRUSHER

The material is christened solidium. Starfleet had been trying to produce a stable alloy for years.

MECHWART

One up for the Hybrids. In case of need, where can we peck a hole in it?

THAHM

Not a chance with quantum torpedoes. The cronoton flow extinguishes the oscillation frequency of our torpedoes in a matter of milliseconds.

MECHWART

We've got a newly developed armor we haven't put them in touch with yet.

S'anra finished with sending the message. The computer confirms: 'Message transmitted on secure channels to Starfleet Command Headquarters'. She turns to the Captain.

S'ANRA

The Sommerfeld partially activated her armor. They could've analyzed it by now.

CRUSHER

Till they don't fire at us, all we have is our best guess. The only solution I can think of right now is remodulating the torpedo warheads so they emit anticronoton particles on impact.

MECHWART

Enough to weaken their shield. How many do you need to shred it?

CRUSHER

A dozen of torpedoes, at least. But even then just some of their emitters will be out.

MECHWART

(rather to himself)
Waste of ammunition.

S'ANRA

Captain, they made telepathic contact with Ensign Ravois.

Assumable that they obtained knowledge of everything she knew about the Enterprise. An attempt to defeat us with projective telepathy can't be excluded, either.

THAHM

What's your suggestion?

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

On the underside of the Enterprise opens a small circular hangar door, then closes. Seemingly nothing left the ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

S'ANRA

The Lurker's on its way.

MECHWART

Let's hope they can get out of here. Bridge to engine-room.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

BAJ IZ

Baj Iz here.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART

Assemble the experimental torpedoes. According to tactical analysis we won't get anywhere with conventional weapons. When out of the standard complement, we'll launch them.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

BAJ IZ

Acknowledged.

(to two officers)

You come with me to the torpedo control.

(to Hansen)

Hansen, assume command here.

They leave. Hansen standing at the pool-table.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

VERACIS

...yes Captain, I do. In case our new Hybrid friends descend to doing some brain rummage to us, we'll offer them quite a fray.

PULL BACK TO:

Five Vulcan officer sitting on beds. Around them doctor bustling. Attaching gadgets on their heads.

EXT. SPACE

Nothing but space. Then going forward, suddenly we go through a wall and we get into the cockpit of the Lurker.

INT. LURKER

The spherical cockpit contains two seats and consoles belonging to them. On starboard a set of cases for equipment, on port a transporter platform for two. The back wall of the small shuttle is semi-transparent, giving a nice sight to the warp-core. Thahm and a male Trill Officer working consoles.

TRILL OFFICER

There's no sign of them spotting us.

THAHM

I keep an eye on the cloaking system.

TRILL OFFICER

You put little faith in me.

THAHM

Have no fear! When it comes to fleeing, I'll put full faith in your skills.

Trill Officer sitting restlessly on his chair. Thahm notices.

THAHM (CONT'D)

What's on your mind?

TRILL OFFICER

Our flying at snail's pace. It'll take hours to get to the border.

THAHM

Cloaking or not. If we go to warp they'll lock on us easily. For now we should be glad they didn't make out the ion residuals of our engines in this amount of gamma radiation.

TRILL OFFICER
We're small enough not to be detected. We could mask our warp frequency. Being at warp for a few minutes would allow us to get out of this gamma dirt and send a message.

THAHM
You never give up, do you?

TRILL OFFICER
Everything programmed. You need to push a button.

Thahm checks his statement. Her face says it's alright.

THAHM
Engage.

EXT. SPACE

The Lurker goes to warp. Its shape looks just for a moment when entering the warp tunnel.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULAN BORDER

Some Federation ships, two Klingon and a Romulan bird of prey forming a line.

INT. FEDERATION SHIP

SCIENCE OFFICER
Admiral, we're receiving a message.

KAWASHI
Origin?

SCIENCE OFFICER
A moment, sir. Seems like it's coming on an encoded channel.
(working console)
Priority one, code 25. From the Enterprise. I'll switch it to your ready room.

KAWASHI

Put it on the screen. If they tell us news we expect, the whole quadrant will know it in a couple of hours.

Data running up and down the viewscreen. All is dumbfounded.

KAWASHI (CONT'D)
Praetor Deletham, there's something you should see.

INT. LURKER

TRILL OFFICER
The warp drive's indicating nominal function.

Thahm's terminal chirps.

THAHM
Picking up signals from half a million kilometer from here. A dozen of Federation ships, two Klingon and one Romulan bird of prey.

INT. ROMULAN BIRD OF PREY

DELETHAM
They exterminated Romulus. Exterminated.

The Romulans don't know what to do or say to that. Some can't help but crying. Kawashi and Ghurah split on screen.

GHURAH
We must return to Earth.

KAWASHI
I can't expect the other races not yet attacked to swarm to our help. The priority now is their own planet.

GHURAH
You have a point. However, Sector 001 is the main artery of the Federation. Qonos will send every available ship to you.

DELETHAM
Just for our own home planet there's nothing we can do.

GHURAH

We are going to defeat them!
We'll show them the strength of
the peace treaty.

DELETHAM

I regret it, but under these
circumstances we can't help any
longer. In every war there are
survivors. We must make sure
some of them made it to a remote
colony.

KAWASHI

I understand. Good luck.

DELETHAM

I thank you for everything,
Admiral.

INT. FEDERATION SHIP

Deletham gets off the screen. The Admiral turns to an
officer.

KAWASHI

Signal to all ships we're flying
back to Earth.

SCIENCE OFFICER

Aye aye, sir.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULAN BORDER

The ships turn and go to warp. The Romulan bird-of-prey
flies to another direction and gets cloaked.

EXT. SPACE

The Lurker slowing to impulse and gradually decloaking.
Now we see it's a sphere. The hull covered with phaser
strips, cloak emitters and two huge blue engines at the
back.

INT. LURKER

TRILL OFFICER

Where are they?

THAHM

Sensors picking up warp
frequencies. They've just left.
The subspace message S'anra

sent, had already arrived. Feels
good being on a scrounge.

EXT. SPACE

The sphere turns, cloaks itself and goes to warp.

INT. LURKER

TRILL OFFICER
Any trick in mind for getting
back to the Enterprise?

Suddenly shaking. Red alert tunes up.

THAHM
Gravimetric distortion in
subspace. The warp field is
destabilizing.

TRILL OFFICER
Raising shields. Quantum phaser
arrays loaded and ready to fire.

EXT. SPACE

The Lurker drops violently out of warp. Directly ahead of
it, a hybrid ship casting a beam on it.

INT. LURKER

TRILL OFFICER
They're draining power from our
systems.

Thahm pushing some buttons quickly.

EXT. SPACE

The engines of the Lurker fade out after a few shimmers.

INT. LURKER

TRILL OFFICER
We're done.

THAHM
Hardly. Call help.

TRILL OFFICER
Commander?

THAHM
There won't be a better occasion
to get closer to them. You can
do some light-years in the
transwarp conduit.

Thahm dematerializing. Trill Officer checking console. He gets it.

EXT. SPACE

The Lurker changes course. Goes to transwarp. The hybrid ship firing at it. Seemingly in vain.

INT. HYBRID SHIP

Thahm rematerializing and dropping to the floor. Gets surrounded by Hybrids immediately. They bring her in an exam room. They put her hands in two tubes, as her feet. Tear the uniform off her. Start examining her.

HYBRID OFFICER
(to another officer)
Send a message to the Commander.
He'll be interested in our
guest.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

The red alert klaxon screaming everywhere. Busy officers teeming around. Medical officers hypospraying technicians.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

The same picture. Officers getting inoculation or waiting for it in single file. The Captain enters.

MECHWART
Well, doctor, how are you
getting on?

VERACIS
(reading a padd)
Ninehundred fifty-four
crewmembers have been
inoculated. The Captain failed
to report for his dose.

MECHWART
Sir, I've come for my dose.

The doctor injects the medicine in him. Mechwart looking at the five Vulcans.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

Are they ready?

VERACIS

They'll do their best unless the Hybrids launch a longer telepathic attack against us. In some way or other, it won't be a cake-walk to ward them off.

MECHWART

What about this stuff you're injecting so eagerly in my officers. I must know how effective it is.

VERACIS

It's not a recently made drug. We put some 25th century admixture in it, but to give you an exact foreshow about its protective efficiency, I'd need at least a partial medical scan of those Romulan-Borg Hybrids. Otherwise there's no telling whether or not the agent repulses the nanoprobes.

MECHWART

In other words if it works, good, if not, sad.

VERACIS

So this is the famous simplicity you see the universe with.

MECHWART

There's nothing complicated in the universe. Romulan rebels want revenge and interstellar laws transcribed to their liking.

VERACIS

Not complicated a bit.

S'ANRA (COMM)

(interrupting)

Bridge to Captain Mechwart. The hybrid bastard's calling us.

MECHWART

Put him down here.

The Captain and the doctor go to the doctor's office. The display shows HHirl.

HHIRL

I took notice of your reluctance to subject yourself to my will with annoyance.

MECHWART

Was your face assimilated like that for a special purpose? That dark look makes me hide under my bed at once.

HHIRL

Ah, our Captain is friendly disposed today. Then let me deepen that good mood of yours.

We see a record about Thahm being caught by the Hybrids.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

If that's no punch-line, I don't know what it is.

The display goes empty. End of transmission.

MECHWART

(bewildered)

Why won't he attack? What the hell is he waiting for?

VERACIS

You to lose your head.

At this moment a shaking stirs up the ship. The battle has begun.

S'ANRA (COMM)

Captain, they've locked on us with tractor beam.

MECHWART

(rushing out)

Stand by on torpedoes. Load phasers.

INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

Mechwart running on a corridor amid shakings. Officers falling to each other.

MECHWART

Lieutenant Baj Iz. Status report.

In the engine-room the same subversion.

BAJ IZ

We're at odds. We have three torpedoes. The calibration is not perfect. I'll pray they have any effect. Not even starbases assembled one. Time was tight too.

MECHWART

I never disputed your professional skills. Direct all power to the defense systems.

While saying that, the Captain finally makes to a turbolift.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

No one sitting in the Captain's chair. Crusher, S'anra and other officers holding ground.

CRUSHER

(to helmsman)

Ensign, evasive manoeuvre beta two.

The helmsman reacts. Working the helm console.

S'ANRA

See how hard that solidium is.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The Enterprise fires with her violet quantum phasers. Direct hit to the hybrid ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

S'anra checking her display. No damage whatever to the enemy ship.

S'ANRA

Fvadt!

MECHWART

(entering)

Report.

S'ANRA

Four hundred gigawatt phaser energy wasted. That's all I've got to say.

MECHWART

There must be a weak-point on it, typical to standard Romulan ships.

S'ANRA
I've taken everything in account. Don't know how to turn upon them.

The shaking ceases. The bridge calms down.

CRUSHER
They deactivated the tractor beam. Energy increasing in their.

Bigger shaking. Direct hit.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)
Jacketed antiproton charge.

MECHWART
How many species did they rob?

The next charge cuts in the Captain's words...

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

...and extend on the armor of the Enterprise.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Smaller continuous shaking.

CRUSHER
The armor holding ground.

Mechwart thinks for a moment. Then shouts to Crusher.

MECHWART
Make them believe the contrary.

Crusher gets the order. Already hitting the console.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Helmsman, overload the impulse drive for a second, then deactivate helm control. We play dead fish on the surface.

The helmsman reacts. The bridge lurches quite a lot.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The Enterprise jerking. The ship's tail starts sinking, which makes her prow turn up. She's showing her ventral parts.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

HALF-ROMULAN OFFICER
Sensors indicate power-cut in their propulsion system. Their manoeuvrability is unstable.

HHIRL
Either that or the astuteness of a Starfleet Captain. I'm only interested in the stability of their armor.

HALF-ROMULAN OFFICER
I'm reading no weakening on it.

HHIRL
Let our prisoner find an answer.

HHirl looking to the left. Ravois, half-assimilated, standing next to him. Concentrating.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Mechwart watching in silence. Then grabs his head. Something's wrong.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

The Vulcans feel the attack and get down to work. They focus to fight back Ravois' attempt.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

Ravois recoils, then drops to the ground. A hybrid doctor steps up to her.

HYBRID DOCTOR
I told you the incubation procedure would weaken their organism. At this stage none of them is able to execute strong telepathic attacks.

HHIRL
Take her back to the incubation room. If that's the only way we can make use of them, fine to me.

The hybrid doc waves to two officers. They take her away.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The comm sound tunes up.

HHIRL (COMM)
This is still the flag-ship of
the Romulan Empire speaking.
Prepared to be boarded.

MECHWART
Activate all systems. Lay in the
the given coordinates and go to
maximum warp.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The systems of the Enterprise revive. Finds her way and evades the hybrid ship with a taut manoeuvre. She's about to go to warp when five other ships decloak dead ahead. She approaches them balefully with no room for another evasive action.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
(shouting as he can)
Reverse all engines!

Earth-shattering lurch on the bridge and aboard the whole ship. Explosions, discharges, some flying people here and there.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The hybrid ships straddling the Enterprise. There's no escape.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

HHIRL (COMM)
Nice try. I'm hereby informing
you my ship's full of Betazoids.

Mechwart waves to S'anra to get HHirl out of the channel.

MECHWART
Number of hybrid ships?

S'ANRA
Five. Which are already cloaked.

MECHWART
Engine-room, damage report.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Dirty consoles from an explosion on a wall full of monitors. Some officers being dragged out of the room.

BAJ IZ
The transwarp drive bid farewell to us. Warp energy fluctuating. Captain, fifteen wounded and twenty-one dead. If you want to launch those torpedoes...

MECHWART (COMM)
No. I don't want to lose our only trump.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
The hell knows how fast they can analyze our armor technology.

S'ANRA
Not fast enough. They cannot still penetrate the armor. Further analysis confirm they rely on Borg technology partly.

CRUSHER
And don't forget the superiority complex of an ordinary Romulan. In that deuced big arrogance of theirs they'll make a mistake.

S'ANRA
I take Lieutenant Crusher's side. That could be our only weapon against them.

S'anra and Crusher nod to each other as a kind of reconciliation.

MECHWART
We've tried to prod him. Till he has the upper hand on us, he'll be dead to our words.

VERACIS (COMM)
Veracis to bridge. Number of casualties twenty-five so far. Some suffered minor injuries. They can return to work soon. We needed the telepathic protection

just for a few seconds. They don't seem to be able to maintain a harder cerebral assault. They're unlikely to be going to try again.

MECHWART

Thank you, doctor.

(a beat)

We must push our way to Earth. Baj Iz, all power to the propulsion system. We're attempting to slide by close to the atmosphere.

BAJ IZ (COMM)

I'll see about it.

MECHWART

I expect full attention from everyone. They won't let us go just like that.

CRUSHER

(console signal)

All stations are ready, sir.

MECHWART

Engage.

EXT./INT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT/ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

INTERCUT:

The Enterprise going about while sinking from between the hybrid ships. She's headed for the planet. The hybrids taking her under fire.

S'ANRA

We're under cross-fire.

CRUSHER

They're treading us into the atmosphere.

MECHWART

None of our business. Initiate ascension.

The Enterprise emerging slowly, getting away from the planet. At this point a hybrid ship locks a tractor beam on it, pushing her somewhat back down.

Aboard the Enterprise continuous shaking.

BAJ IZ

They worship tractor beam.

MECHWART

Set the armor to a more solid state.

BAJ IZ

To do that we should lower it and raise it again. No more energy for that in the other systems.

CRUSHER

(to Mechwart)

If we want to get out of here, we must keep everything we've got in the engines.

MECHWART

Evacuate the available sections. Drain what you need from there!

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

Hhirl watching the desperate attempt of the Federation starship.

HHIRL

Remarkable this human obstinacy.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER

Crewmembers beamed out. Energy has been re-routed.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The fluctuating nacelles of the Enterprise finally resuscitate with a beautiful rumbling 'coming online' noise.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART

Let's go! Throw some phaser fire to their shield emitters.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The prod of the Enterprise tilting upwards. She fights against gravity while firing her phasers at the hybrid ships uninterruptedly.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Non-stop shuddering. The Captain losing patience.

MECHWART
Get a move on!

CRUSHER
We're almost out.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The Enterprise drops out of the gravitational pull. The hybrid tractor beam peeling off.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
Go to warp!

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The starship sweeps away at warp. A hybrid ship coming in sight.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

HHIRL
Let's take a roundabout way.
We'll give them a kick in the teeth.

EXT. SPACE, ROMULUS ORBIT

The hybrid ships go to warp. All left after them is destruction around Romulus.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
Send damage control teams where they're needed. Continue evacuating the non-vital sections. We need every milliwatt of energy.

S'ANRA
They didn't have to do much of an effort to bring us down.

MECHWART

We brought us down ourselves.
They decloaked dead ahead. It
was so obvious. If we run into
them, we're done. If we burn out
our systems, same good to them.
I acted like a cadet at the
academy.

INT. HYBRID SHIP DINING-ROOM

A door opens. A hybrid guard looking more Romulan pushes Thahm in. She has some standard clothes on. HHirl tampering with some food on the table. He turns.

HHIRL
I greet you.

He notices a wound on her face. Turns to the guard.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
(telepathically)
What's that scar on her face? I
told you. No violence. We need
her to gouge the working
principle of their shield armor.
Get out of here!

The guard leaves.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
Take my apology for the rudeness
of my guards. I assure you it
was no intention of mine.

THAHM
Don't know if you see how I'm
moved by that. The screams
echoing the corridors suggest
something different than a tame
nature. What happened to the
Enterprise?

HHIRL
They escaped. For now.
(offering a seat)
Please, take a seat.

Thahm reluctantly sits down. So does HHirl. She's surprised to see a certain food.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
I took the liberty to peep in
the data files submitted for the
Romulan Senate. The Midean race
is fascinating.

Thahm not answering.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
I hope sincerely I didn't
blunder that culinary
speciality.

THAHM
(looking at her plate)
Chilb sömol. Midean delicacy.

HHIRL
Help yourself.

Thahm tastes it. Puts on an indifferent face.

THAHM
Eatable.

HHIRL
I take it as a compliment.

Silence for a few seconds. HHirl continues.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
Not too chatty, are you? The
description of your species
contrasts your behavior.

THAHM
Where did the Senate get these
information from?

HHIRL
From the Federation, of course.
As a token of trust for the
peacemaking. This is how I know
that in absence of company you
can even die of loneliness.

THAHM
I have nothing to discuss with a
self-deifying, megalomaniac
psychopath.

HHIRL
Is that all preying on your
soul?

At that, Thahm's eyes sparkle with anger. That's to the
hybrid's taste very much.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
That's it. Ready to fight.
Craving for killing me here and
now. This is the fire that had
died out of the Romulans so long
ago. And speaking of God. I'd
rather think of me as a
conqueror. The problem with gods

is that their almighty
consciousness doesn't take
notice of the weak. Even a
Penkar mule can do considerable
harm to a Vlarui elephant when
rushing at each other.

THAHM

I guarantee you a bitter death.

HHIRL

Not too fair against me. The
civilizations we exterminated
didn't feel a thing. The
Jem'Hadar, the Founders. And
those assimilated don't feel
anything already.

THAHM

The guard is not assimilated.

HHIRL

All officers went through a
genetic manipulation needed for
their function.

THAHM

And you're the leader.

HHIRL

On this ship. We have several
leaders in case one of us loses
control.

THAHM

Not even you had a full
manipulation. A psi-wave device
is connected to your brain. That
only cannot perceive the
thoughts of millions. Only those
wearing one are an open book for
you. Which means you don't
possess the telepathic
collective created by the Borg.
There's got to be a leader to
maintain order in chaos. And
that leader is you.

HHirl gets up from the table. Walking behind the woman's
back. At an easy pace.

HHIRL

You're a thrilling personality.
You're dining with your enemy.
Perhaps I'll order your death in
couple of seconds and you
placidly give voice to your
observations. I just don't think
any longer it's right to hide my

real intention from you. I want the armor. Tell me how I could breach through it.

THAHM

You have the Borg technology. Adapt!

HHIRL

Unfortunately time was short for us when we destroyed your science ship. Now you know a small part of our weaknesses.

THAHM

You can't be in earnest about me betraying the Federation.

HHIRL

Depends on my mood. We can continue this profitable discussion by dinner or you can join the collection of our games we've got up to now.

On a side, the green wall becomes see-through. The dead bodies of different species hung up on the ceiling or lying in containers.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

They for example died a terrible death.

Thahm recoils. Her head turning red, and spikes shooting from it directly into HHirl's eye. He falls against the wall. Thahm runs off. The hybrid communicating through his psionic gadget.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CORRIDOR

Thahm runs as she can. At a junction hybrids surround her. They force her to the ground. HHirl arrives.

HHIRL

Take her under mind control.

HYBRID OFFICER

After her capture, we examined her brain. It's not fitted for a Psi-wave device.

HHIRL

Then bring her to chamber 032. Let the fish flounce until she can.

EXT. TRANSWARP CONDUIT

The Lurker sliding at transwarp. Visible damage on its hull due to the hybrid fire.

INT. LURKER

The instruments not working properly. Flashing on and off.

TRILL OFFICER
Computer, distance from the Kau?

COMPUTER
One point three light-years.

TRILL OFFICER
Lead all power to the transwarp drive.

COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

TRILL OFFICER
(working console)
Common! Draw power from the life support system.

COMPUTER
Please enter security code in order to disengage protocol.

The Trill man thrumming on his terminal. His face reflects 'he would blow up the damn computer if it was up to him'. Final chirp.

COMPUTER (CONT'D)
Energy from the life support system has been redirected.

A sudden lurch makes the man's head hit the console. He became unconscious.

COMPUTER (CONT'D)
Warning. Transwarp drive has been overloaded. Structural integrity decreasing due to gravimetric shear. Inertial dampening fields shut down in sixty seconds.

EXT. TRANSWARP CONDUIT/SPACE

REAR ANGLE: on the Lurker slowing to impulse. The Kau, homeplanet of the Midean appears in front of it. It only has one continent on it, the rest is water. The Lurker

approaching it fast. A huge Midean ship on orbit trying to get it with tractor beam, but the little spy-ball flies too fast towards the atmosphere. Finally enters it.

EXT./INT. KAU/LURKER

INTERCUT:

The sphere heading for a forest with rich vegetation. The Trill guy shuddering on his console, while leaving the atmosphere. The Lurker smashes into the horn-shaped tree crown full of water.

At this point the man's body lifts up, then thuds back on the console. Finally falls from his chair.

The Lurker hits the ground, rolls some meters, then gets stopped by a tree.

ANGLE ON: the legs of two Midean officer beaming down. In front of them, the sphere. They walk up to it. Open the door and enter. They find the unconscious officer. The computer tunes up.

COMPUTER

Warning. Obstruction has been detected directly ahead. Evasive manoeuvre is recommended.

INT. HYBRID SHIP ANNIHILATOR ROOM

HHirl stands near a rail. Looks down. Prisoners, men, women, even some children sitting on the level below. They're mostly aliens.

HHIRL

I have good news for you.

The prisoners looking up to him with a beat-up face.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

Thanks to the walloping cogency of the Federation leaders, we'll let some prisoners free.

They start moving about. Hope in their eyes.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

Everyone in this room will be beamed over the flagship of the Federation immediately.

Smile on their faces. Relief in the crowd.

HHIRL (CONT'D)

Queue up for the beam-over.

They struggle on their feet. A woman holding a baby close to her.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
(to an officer)
Energize.

The prisoners stand in a container-like place. A cover sinking over their head until it closes on the high-tech walls surrounding those aliens. They don't know what's happening. In the closed place the walls start glowing greenish. The glow becomes brighter and brighter. Finally they get torn apart in their atoms. The procedure is over.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
Bring the prisoners here from cells 301. The same method.

At this point a rich voice speaks up from a shadowy part of the room. Then an elder and more Romulan looking man leaves the dark.

ROMULAN LEADER
And who authorized you to execute the prisoners?

HHIRL
I did.

ROMULAN LEADER
I see. Have you given just one thought to your actions, that maybe they could be useful to us?

HHIRL
For what? What we need, we take. We form the rules of the Galaxy.

Suddenly HHirl falls to the ground. He grabs his head with quite a painful face.

ROMULAN LEADER
Out of respect, for your bravery in the Kardun Sector we chose you for our leader. We can take this privilege back anytime.

HHIRL
Out of respect? My body is made up of shreds of flesh. Wires keep my unhurt organs together.

ROMULAN LEADER
You'd better bow to it. And you must not give a state dinner to a Federation prisoner. I expect

you on briefing in thirty
minutes.

Romulan Leader leaves. HHirl stays anguished on the
floor.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CHAMBER 032

A dark room. A holder almost full of water in the middle
of it. Thahm suffering in it. The water which is rather
some mordant keeps desiccating her skin. Wheezing, she
tries to dive under water. She hits the glass with her
hands a few times. In vain.

MEANWHILE...

EXT. EARTH, FARM

A farmer working his land with a futuristic plow. Looks
up to the sky. A green light sweeping towards him. It
smashes into the land. Explosion.

EXT. EARTH, A CITY

In a café on an extended wing of a skyscraper humans and
aliens talking, drinking. Next to them the same weapon
blowing up buildings. The debris flying towards them.

EXT. EARTH, APPARTMENT

A family living their life when the wall blows apart.
Explosions again.

EXT. EARTH, SAN FRANCISCO

The Golden Gate Bridge gets shot into some pieces. At
this point we see a couple of hybrid ships appearing in
the sky.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO, STARFLEET COMMAND

Officers running up and down. Working consoles. Shouting
new incoming data to each other. Admiral Kawashi and the
President of the Federation standing near a really big
pool-table.

STARFLEET OFFICER 1
Mr. President, we're getting
distress calls from all over the
planet.

STARFLEET OFFICER 2
So far they've taken the
American and European sector
under siege. Sensors reading
fifty ships.

PRESIDENT
How are the defensive corps
responding?

KAWASHI
They launched a counterattack
immediately. Without avail.
Recommend rearranging our troops
to the territories that haven't
been attacked yet. Asia, South-
Africa and the Polar Circles.

PRESIDENT
Rearranging our troops is no
option, Admiral. I won't let
them destroy the continent to
its ashes.

KAWASHI
Mr. President, it's not much of
a help to our officers sending
them to death. At the moment
we're outnumbered. One hundred
twenty-seven ships are locking
Earth's orbit hermetically. The
rest will settle down throughout
the solar system, trying to
preclude that more hybrids worm
themselves further into our
proximity.

PRESIDENT
How could they get through the
atmosphere?

KAWASHI
They improved their cloaking
technology. We can't even follow
them in traces.

PRESIDENT
Then how do you want to preclude
that they send more ships?

Kawashi falls his eyes. The President gets it.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
Do it. And fling some older
ships. Fire against fire.

KAWASHI
Understood. And you will be
taken to a secure hide-out.

PRESIDENT
You know what's my opinion about
the privileges of the President
at war. I won't stir a foot.

Said that, the President walks up to another console. At
the annoyance of the Admiral.

KAWASHI
(to officers)
Deploy armor on all Starfleet
establishments.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO, STARFLEET COMMAND

The armor flipping up on the building. It's almost
covered.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO, STARFLEET COMMAND

The windows showing the last plates activating. The armor
is up.

KAWASHI
Message to the ships on orbit.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise travelling at warp.

INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR/RAVOIS'S QUARTERS

Captain Mechwart turning the corridor and entering
Ravois's quarters. Two officers taking measurements with
tricorders, Veracis standing at the display.

MECHWART
Found anything?

VERACIS
Strong psionic energy remains. I
attained the records of Ensign
Ravois' quarters from the
security, but I'm not wiser than
before. On stardate 142154.5 she
left this room.

MECHWART
She must have had great pains.

VERACIS
To put it mildly. Seems like the
projective telepathy of the
Romulans have reached an

extremely advanced level. Light-years from us they managed to lock on Ravois's brain.

MECHWART

How advanced you guess those telepathic abilities in case of a mass suggestion?

VERACIS

In principle an extraordinarily intense concentration is needed only to control one individuum.

MECHWART

The Borg collective had no difficulty in communicating that way from lightyears.

VERACIS

As I'd pointed out, I need a scan of them to predict anything, but it would be too risky to adapt full Borg technology.

MECHWART

You didn't answer my question. Is it conceivable to manipulate crowds? Yes or no?

VERACIS

According to our actual information no, it is not.

CRUSHER (COMM)

Bridge to Captain Mechwart. We've reached Sector 001.

MECHWART

Slow to half impulse. I'm on my way.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise slows down, passing by the Pluto. Ahead of her, ships in line.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Mechwart arrives. Going to his chair.

MECHWART

Status report.

S'ANRA

Hundreds of Federation starships
are forming line in the entire
solar system.

Hailing sound tunes up.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)
The USS Fornax is hailing us.

MECHWART
Answer them.

The Captain of the Fornax shows up on screen. A little
older man than Mechwart, Captain VARETTO.

VARETTO
This is Captain Varetto from the
Uss Fornax. Captain, you're
late.

MECHWART
I'm glad to see you too,
Captain. Status?

VARETTO
They took Earth under attack.
Penetrated the atmosphere
without our knowledge. They
don't emit the smallest amount
of ionic gas, nor we can detect
tetrion particles.

MECHWART
I know. We've had the pleasure
to experience their
technological advantages. Order?

VARETTO
We've been sent to stop other
hybrid ships. No matter how.

MECHWART
Where can we be of major
assistance to you?

VARETTO
I have no idea. If we didn't see
their presence on Earth, we
won't be able to get them here.

MECHWART
Anyway, we're sending you all
data we got during the combat
with them.

Crusher nods. Varetto looks at the Romulan tactical
officer.

VARETTO

Supposed you have any
information about their ships,
you're free to share with us.

S'ANRA

Those are hybrid ships. The
Romulans are as good as
exterminated.

MECHWART

I repose full confidence in
Commander S'anra.

CRUSHER

Data transfer finished.

VARETTO

I'll take your word. Your
decision?

MECHWART

We're going to Earth. The flag-
ship is likely to be fighting
there.

VARETTO

I understand. If possible, avoid
the Mars. It's not a pretty
sight. Our stations and colonies
have been demolished. We're the
last fastness.

Mechwart nods. Varetto is out.

MECHWART

Set a course for Earth. Deploy
armor. Load quantum phaser
arrays, but we'll use torpedoes
as primary offensive weapons.

S'ANRA

Understood.

MECHWART

Full impulse. Engage.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise passing by the other starships. Perhaps
heading for her destruction.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIEFING ROOM

Romulans at different stages of assimilation sitting around a table. Romulan Leader and HHirl being present as well.

HHIRL

What do you mean by we don't have the Gamma Quadrant fully under control?

ROMULAN LEADER

The races are more resistant than we thought. Executions take more time than expected. We're talking about billions of individuals.

HHIRL

It took five years until we finished the plan. Other six years to secure our new technology. And you justify this fallback with too long execution time.

ROMULAN LEADER

And energy, speaking of that.

HHIRL

Shoot apart their planets if they don't let themselves led captive.

ROMULAN LEADER

That's exactly how we handle several planets. However, there are territories of prime necessity we can't just blow apart. We need the knowledge of the more advanced species. Did you understand me?

HHIRL

Too well. Our cloaking devices work flawlessly. No one can detect us. We can beam out more advanced technologies and destroy who resist. Even so you want to make compromises with subdued species.

ROMULAN LEADER

If you took the trouble to think it over for a minute, you'd realize the cooperation with them would be to our profit.

HHIRL

We can bring them to heels.
(a beat)

Shall we exterminate one or two planets? Is it right that we blew up six Federation ships or would it have been enough to cripple three? Your frailty will be our death!

ROMULAN LEADER

Watch your words.

Romulan Leader seems to be focusing. So are the other leaders. HHirl won't react. The leaders put on a surprised face.

HHIRL

I've done some modification on my body which is now connected to a high-performance psionic interface. What you see is just a well-constructed photonic matrix.

Suddenly more HHirls appear around the leaders.

ROMULAN LEADER

You don't have the nerve to do that. If I don't stop you, a leader of another ship will.

HHIRL

You haven't been informed yet, but the other leaders had a little accident. Their brains couldn't process the large amount of information streaming into them. In the Alpha and Beta Quadrant my duplicates command our ships. I've already taken aim at the units stationing in the Gamma Quadrant. And we took Earth under siege.

HHirl's duplicates annihilate the leaders with phasers. A guard standing at the door.

HHILR

(to the guard)

Tell our ships to exterminate Sector 001. I don't want to see a survivor. From now on we don't take prisoners.

The guard reacts. Leaves the room.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The viewscreen showing space. Mechwart stepping in view.

CRUSHER
We're reaching Earth in two
minutes.
(console signaling)
Captain. Sensors picking up low-
energy patterns in the
surrounding area.

MECHWART
On screen.

The screen shows space infested with small objects. Not
yet discernible.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Magnify.

The small objects turn out to be dead bodies floating in
space. Bodies of all kind of species.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
(petrified)
What the have they done to them?

S'ANRA
I'm reading residuals of
transporter signals. There are
hundreds of thousands of dead
bodies out there.

CRUSHER
Captain, we've arrived to the
moon.

EXT. SPACE

As soon as the Enterprise passes by the moon, gets a
direct hit. An enormous battle field on Earth's orbit and
more faraway from it heaves in sight. Starfleet, Klingon
and unknown alien ships fighting Hybrid warships.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The bridge shakes a bit. The hull couldn't get severe
damage.

S'ANRA
Disruptor charges.

MECHWART
(to Crusher)
Send them the data we gave
Varetto.

CRUSHER
Already done.

MECHWART

Stand by on modified torpedoes.
Get me a sensor sweeping on the
surface.

CRUSHER

(working terminal)
San Francisco and Paris are
under heavy attack. They're
cutting out the planetary
defense systematically. Our
defense units keep the hybrid
ships under continuous fire.

Another smaller shaking.

S'ANRA

Armor at ninety-two percent and
stable. A hybrid ship next to us
locking with tractor beam on a
Bersolian warship.

MECHWART

Standard torpedoes. Full spread.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise fires a dozens of quantum torpedoes at the tractor beam emitter of the hybrid ship, which causes it to fluctuate. The Bersolian ship wriggles out of the beam arch and fires with everything it has. In vain. Then it passes by the hybrid cube.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER

Torpedoes with modified warheads
are loaded and ready.

MECHWART

Target them to the coordinates
547.3. Launch two of them. If
they have any effect, we'll see.

S'ANRA

Target locked.

MECHWART

Fire.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise launches two modified quantum torpedoes which hit the hybrid ship. Seemingly with no effect.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

MECHWART

Any result?

CRUSHER

(checking)

Their cronoton emission is sinking to some extent on the impacts. We'll need that dozens of torpedoes to drill through them.

MECHWART

I knew it's a waste of ammunition. Mechwart to engine-room.

BAJ IZ

Go ahead.

MECHWART

I want another three dozens of modified torpedoes. We'll also use the experimental ones soon.

BAJ IZ

Impossible to be ready with those wishes of yours.

MECHWART

Rope in waiters from the mess-hall for all I care.

The bridge shaking again.

CRUSHER

They're trying with jacketed antiproton charges again.

MECHWART

Why aren't they throw some Borg weapon at us?

S'ANRA

Probably because they can crunch our smaller ships equipped with standard shields in no time.

The bridge shaking continually to a small extent.

MECHWART

Fire three torpedoes. Focus them on one point.

S'ANRA

Locked on. Firing.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise firing and hitting the hybrid ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

S'ANRA
Direct hit.

CRUSHER
Their shields are weakening.

MECHWART
Aim at the weakened shield area
with the rest.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise launches torpedoes again. Direct hit on the hybrid ship's hull. Smaller explosions on it. Then the enemy cube stops attacking other starships and aims at the Enterprise only. It takes her under heavy fire, causing explosions on her armor. Something definitely went wrong for our heros! The armor units flipping up activated and down deactivated, appearing and disappearing.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

Infernal shudder on the bridge. Discharges from consoles. Smaller explosions. Officers holding on in what they can.

MECHWART
Damage report!

S'ANRA
Shield armor at fifty-nine
percent. The structural
integrity field's weakening.
Inertial dampers inoperable on
deck fifteen and sixteen.

BAJ IZ
They dissected the energy
transition conduits connecting
the armor plates. If we keep
them up, the hull's gonna burst.

MECHWART

Lower the armor. Raise standard
shields now!
(to S'anra)
Auxiliary power to the damaged
sections. Fire at will!

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise continually vomiting torpedoes from her tubes directly to the hybrid ship ahead with bigger or smaller success, while her armor disappears for good and all. While a direct hit from another hybrid ship swings the Enterprise out of its course, causing some of her modified torpedoes to hit starfleet ships which blow up immediately.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

The holo-displays show the Enterprise bridge.

HHIRL
What do you say now? How
ingenious we are. It's an honour
that from all those ships you
spotted mine. Goliath against
Goliath.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
Get'em off the screen.

The screen overlooking the battle now.

CRUSHER
Captain, the Starbase opens fire
at the hybrid cubes.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The huge starbase launches its torpedoes and phasers against the hybrids. Some of them, perhaps by chance, are irreparably damaged at once. Then four hybrids approaching the base, shooting it as they can, causing it severe damage. Its reactors are torn apart. The underside and upper side of the starbase blows up, projecting it out of its orbital trajectory.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER

They can't stay up on orbit. The base is falling in the atmosphere.

MECHWART
Shields down. Rescue as many as you can.

CRUSHER
Sir!

MECHWART
Execute my orders, damn it!

He runs up to the helm, pushing aside the helmsman and takes it in his hand.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Override transporter protocols and match it with the shield frequency.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise flying dangerously close to the atmosphere. Almost shaving it.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE/ENGINE-ROOM

INTERCUT:

CRUSHER
Beaming in progress.

The screen shows the base hot up and explode in pieces. Dead silence on the bridge.

S'ANRA
We've got less than hundred. Setting shields to rotating modulation.

MECHWART
Baj Iz, status report.

BAJ IZ
We've lost the armor. Standard shields at eighty-three percent. Integrity fields holding. The navigational deflector functioning normally to my great surprise.

MECHWART
Re-route power from the phasers to the torpedo banks.

BAJ IZ

Aye, sir.

The Captain waves to the helmsman to sit back at his post. He returns to his chair.

S'ANRA

Captain, I've noticed changes in reference to their tactics.

MECHWART

I don't feel like guessing.

S'ANRA

Looks like they're running amok. Shooting insignificant areas on Earth from defensive point of view. The battle formation has broken up in the atmosphere and on the orbit.

CRUSHER

Analysis confirmed. These manoeuvres can't be called tactics. They're massacring the population at haphazard.

S'ANRA

Their ships must be under the control of several Commanders. They don't seem like caring about each other's will.

MECHWART

Perhaps one of them assumed command.

S'ANRA

Sir?

MECHWART

Target HHirl's ship. We're lodging the entire complement of torpedoes into him. We must beam over.

S'ANRA

What if you're mistaken?

MECHWART

The same like sitting here and staring at the useless computer readouts. Target a single point again. Continuous fire.

S'anra getting down to work. Mechwart pushing buttons.

MECHWART (CONT'D)

Baj Iz, we're going to deplete our resources. Deal with the experimental torps.

BAJ IZ (COMM)
Is the situation that bad?

MECHWART
On the contrary. Maybe we got closer to the solution.

BAJ IZ (COMM)
I'll try to get that as a good news.

MECHWART
(to S'anra)
Begin the firework.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise begins to fire, bereft of reason. Torpedoes hitting one point. The hybrid ship suffers at least a bigger explosion on that part of the hull.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

ROMULAN OFFICER
They cut a hole in our shield.

HHIRL
Shoot them apart!

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise recoils as being fired.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

MECHWART
Evasive action.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise barely avoids the disruptor charges. One still managed to hit the stardrive section.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Huge discharges. Explosion coming out of consoles. The warp core fluctuating.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise gaining more and more distance from Earth.
Going deeper in clear space.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM/BRIDGE

INTERCUT:

BAJ IZ
Baj Iz to bridge. We got a hit.
The warp power's fluctuating.

MECHWART
Acknowledged. S'anra, we beam
over with a troop. Crusher, you
have the bridge.

CRUSHER
If I saw their systems, I
could...

MECHWART
Negative. Keep the Enterprise
together.

CRUSHER
Your life-signs won't be easy to
detect. And how do you plan to
beam over?

MECHWART
Feedback energy.

CRUSHER
(not pleased, but
yielding)
Might work.

MECHWART
As for the battle, you have a
free hand.

The Captain leaves. S'anra goes up to Crusher, grabbing
his shoulder.

S'ANRA
Good luck.

CRUSHER
The same to you.

The woman leaves. Crusher sits in the big chair, extras
coming to his station. He looks at the turbolift as the
two officers get in and the door closes on them.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)

Until further notice, we'll hold position. Computer, keep track of Captain Mechwart and Lieutenant Commander S'anra's patterns. In case of severe life-sign degradation beam them back to the Enterprise. Crusher to Transporter Room four.

INT. ENTERPRISE TRANSPORTER ROOM

The Captain, the tactical officer and four other enter the room in field uniform. Tricorder embedded in their arm module, having phaser rifles in their hands.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF
Sir, I've done the modification Lieutenant Crusher asked for. It'll be a bumpy road.

MECHWART
Mechwart to Crusher. Let's play the victim.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CRUSHER
Bring us about. Let them lock on us with their tractor beam.

INT. ENTERPRISE TRANSPORTER ROOM

The officers go up to the platform. The room starts shaking.

MECHWART
(to transporter chief)
Get us through somehow.

Transporter Chief working. The officers dematerializing.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The tractor beam locked on the Enterprise flashing up, then ceasing to function.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

ROMULAN OFFICER
The feedback wave has deteriorated the emitter relays.

HHIRL
I wonder what else they have yet
in store.

ROMULAN OFFICER
(checking console)
Commander, twenty-three ships
reported malfunction in engines,
and other secondary systems.

HHIRL
They'd better find a solution!

ROMULAN OFFICER
Commander. One consciousness is
unable to maintain the optimal
functioning of our troops.

HHIRL
Up to this point you've done an
excellent job. Don't want me to
make you end up in space like
the prisoners.

Romulan Officer, petrified, recoils and returns to his
post.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
The Enterprise is not stronger
than any other ship. You may
shoot what you want.

ROMULAN OFFICER
I understand.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

A Klingon bird-of-prey under attack and returning fire.

INT. KLINGON SHIP, BRIDGE

KLINGON CAPTAIN
Damage report.

KLINGON OFFICER
Disruptor energy sinking. Barely
enough to fire some more shots.

KLINGON CAPTAIN
Submergence down to thirty
thousand kilometers.

KLINGON OFFICER
That brings us in the airspace
of North-America. We can't
manoeuvre us back.

KLINGON CAPTAIN
I never planned. All energy to
the disruptors.

Klingon Officer working his console. Other Klingons doing
their job as expected from them.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Klingon bird-of-prey starts sinking. It glows up
reaching the atmosphere. Hardly getting to its
destination, it fires at hybrid cubes in the sky
immediately.

INT. KLINGON SHIP, BRIDGE

KLINGON OFFICER
Captain, don't ask why but their
shield power has been
debilitated. Their manoeuvring
capability faltering.

KLINGON CAPTAIN
All disruptors fire!

EXT. EARTH ATMOSPHERE

The Klingon ship vomiting disruptor charges at the hybrid
ship, which explodes in tiny pieces.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BRIDGE

ROMULAN OFFICER
Commander, one of our cubes has
been destroyed in the
atmosphere.

HHIRL
What?

ROMULAN OFFICER
A Klingon ship, class bird-of-
prey defeated it.

HHIRL
A horde of lousy beasts
destroyed our ship? Explain!

Romulan Officer leaves his post. Gets closer to HHirl.
Seems like he gained self-confidence.

ROMULAN OFFICER
I'd told you several times. You
alone are incapable of keep the

cubes on the orbit and in the atmosphere under control.

HHIRL
Shut your mouth, traitor!

Said that, HHirl grabs his phaser and fires. The beam shots through Romulan Officer and hits a console some meters behind him. The console sparkling a couple of times. Romulan Officer drops dead.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
(to the other officers)
Sink this moment into your memory. I am the Romulan Empire!

Chirp from the holo-displays. HHirl turning to see Mechwart and S'anra sneaking around.

HHIRL (CONT'D)
And the nominees for the roughest suicide are.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Still in the middle of the battle.

SCIENCE OFFICER
Long-range sensors picking up Midean ships.

CRUSHER
It was about time.

SCIENCE OFFICER
Sir, old Sovereign and Galaxy-class starships decloaking before several hybrid cubes.

CRUSHER
On screen.

The screen showing that type of ships floating in front of hybrid ships.

SCIENCE OFFICER
The power-level in their warp drive is increasing.

CRUSHER
(picking up on it)
Full impulse! Let's get out of here. Give all power to shields. Signal the same to other ships.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

A Sovereign-class commits kamikaze attack at maximum warp. So do other Galaxy and Sovereign ships. They smash into several hybrid cubes which blow apart immediately.

Meanwhile the Enterprise and other allies trying to escape the shock-wave and huge explosions. Some make it, some don't. The warp power of the Enterprise ceases as the shockwave hits her. The blue glowing of the nacelles turns off. The shield flashes up for a second then ceases to function.

INT. ENTERPRISE

SEVERAL SCENES SHOWING:

Explosions, discharges, infernal shudders on the bridge, corridors, engine-room, arboretum, throughout the ship. In the engine-room the warp core is completely dark. No plasma, matter or antimatter flow anywhere. Officers trying to hold on. Some killed by console blasts, some injured and can't move. Baj Iz still working the pool-table when the ceiling comes off.

INT. HYBRID SHIP BREEDING ROOM

Mechwart and S'anra enter the room. Full of Betazoid women, connected with machines. The Romulan officer scanning.

S'ANRA

Just Betazoid women. They're
being used as living incubators.

MECHWART

(disgusted)
Children of a better Romulan
Empire are born here.

They continue scanning until they find Ravois. They hook her off the tubes and conduits right away. Mechwart holding her in his arms. Ravois is strong enough to look at him. At this moment the Captain twitches. Ravois sending thoughts and pictures in his brain. He sees a Romulan (HHirl) pieced together and connected with a life support machine and who knows what more gadgets are attached to his body. Then he sees Thahm lying on a bench. Another picture about crystalline entities swarming to a direction in space. Telepathic transfer over.

RAVOIS

(faint; quavering)
We called them. They will help.

MECHWART

Good job. Don't give up. We beam
you back.

RAVOIS

No. Too late.

Mechwart holding her tight. Ravois dies in his arms. He
puts her down on the floor carefully. They're just
watching her. Silence. Then the Captain, reluctantly,
continues.

MECHWART

I know how stop this madness.
But first we've got to rescue
someone.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CHAMBER 032

Mechwart and S'anra beam in the room. Darkness. Only
Thahm is illuminated. They run up to her. Scanning.

S'ANRA

Her life-signs are as good as
gone. Her skin has been
completely desiccated with some
corrosive.

Mechwart places a little device on her. Works his
tricorder. Thahm disappears in a transporter beam.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

The sickbay is in ruins just like the rest of the ship.
Casualties, wounded everywhere. Thahm getting beamed in.

In another room Veracis treating officers when hearing a
howl.

MEDICAL OFFICER

Doctor, quickly!

Veracis doubles up there. Sees Thahm.

VERACIS

Take her to lab six. Hurry!

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The same pictures. Everything in ruins.

CRUSHER

Crusher to engine-room.

No answer. He jumps up from the chair. Runs up to the turbolift.

OFFICER
Sir, where are you going?

CRUSHER
Engine-room. We can't do anything here.

He gets in the turbolift. Officer watching flashing console.

INT. ENTERPRISE SICKBAY

CLOSE ON:

Baj Iz shouting with pain.

PULL BACK TO:

Debris, parts of walls, consoles lying everywhere. Among them some dead officers. Scraps, debris ripped through a part of his left wing which is continually bleeding. He can barely move.

The floor below is so damaged it can't hold the upper level, which starts gradually fall down, pieces breaking off. The debris fall down, Baj Iz can hardly hold him up.

CLOSE ON:

Baj Iz's hand being caught by another. It's Crusher.

CRUSHER
Climb!

BAJ IZ
I can't.

CRUSHER
Of course, you can. We've hacked it so far. Don't give up now!

BAJ IZ
(exerting himself)
No use.

CRUSHER
Let out your claws.

BAJ IZ
There's nothing I can hold on.

CRUSHER
So I'm nothing. Thanks.

Baj Iz fires up at this idea. Trying to free his hand from Crusher's.

BAJ IZ
Let me fall.

CRUSHER
No!

BAJ IZ
Let me fall, goddamit!

CRUSHER
Do it, you idiot!

Finally Baj Iz lets out his claws. He struggles up, sinking his claws into Crusher's back. Crusher pulls him up to an area where it's safe. They stay lying on the floor. Suffering from pain.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)
We should do this by way of foreplay.

EXT. SOLAR SYSTEM

Federation ships and Midean cruisers shooting hybrid cubes. Some of them lying in ruins in space.

Suddenly a hybrid cube starts jarring, flickering. It continues vibrating until falling apart and swallowed by a bright beam.

ANGLE ON: turning up to a CRYSTALLINE ENTITY eating the hybrid cube.

We see now a herd of entities approaching us. Doing the same to other hybrid ships. Federation and Midean ships escaping from their feast.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CHAMBER 032

Captain Mechwart and his tactical officer still scanning which direction to go. From nowhere, HHirl appears in a dark corner. He surprises them.

HHIRL
Captain Mechwart and the Judas of the Romulan Empire. Would be more proper to knock. Don't you think?

MECHWART
Come out of the dark, timorous little worm!

HHirl steps out. S'anra takes her rifle and fires. At nothing. The hybrid vanishes and reappears some meters away. S'anra scans him. She understands why it happened.

HHIRL

As you can see, it's not a body of flesh and blood standing in front of you. Allow me to demonstrate the contrary of this special characteristic of mine.

His body gets firm. Runs up to S'anra, punches her. She flies several meters away. Lands on the ground, bleeding. Mechwart reacts. Wants to get HHirl, but another holo-duplicate appears and another. They beat him until he's on the floor. At this point, Mechwart grabs his rifle, fires, tearing apart the room in its atoms. The beam covers the holograms too. Severe damage inside the ship. The walls before Mechwart vanished. Several decks can be seen ahead.

Mechwart and S'anra struggle on their feet.

S'ANRA

There must be a control center where he sends his holograms from.

MECHWART

It's about much more than that. What about the troops?

S'ANRA

I'm getting no report from them.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Officers leaning against walls or suffering on the floor. Some under debris. Crusher and Baj Iz next to each other. Crusher comes to his senses.

CRUSHER

The Captain.

Carefully he pushes away Baj Iz so he can get up. Walks up to the pool-table. Watching readouts.

CRUSHER (CONT'D)

There's barely energy in any system.

BAJ IZ

(trying to shout to him)

Torpedo tube one.

CRUSHER

(checking)
Seems like that's all we can do.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CONTROL CENTRAL

The two Starfleet officers enter. The green lights embedded in the floor lead to a circle lowered more than the rest of the floor. Someone sitting in it, connected to several machines which are attached with wires penetrating the ground. Mechwart steps up to him. He removes the headpiece from his head. It's HHirl's wrecked face and body what he sees.

S'ANRA
He'd been more wounded in the Kardun battle than he made us believe.

MECHWART
And probably he didn't sit in this chair of his own accord. Back on the Enterprise you said their tactical priority changed. He's the key to it.

S'ANRA
He will fail to control so many ships.

MECHWART
He attached a pile of psi-wave device on him. Liquidated the other Commanders. He wanted to revenge on the Federation, but also get his own fellows on their knee for what they've done to him.

HHIRL (V.O.)
Believe me I suffered agonies beyond your comprehension, but there's still a faint beam of hope. My physical existence are limited by that bunch of cables and wires. As soon as I've managed to download my memory in one more stable hologram, I'll destroy this piece of meat. But first I'll deal with your crew.

He appears in his holographic form. Holo-displays emerging from the floor, showing the helpless Enterprise.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

In the middle of the battle, the Enterprise drifting. Even smaller ships are able to cause severe damage to some hybrid ships. A hybrid disruptor charge approaching the Enterprise. It smashes into the sensor/torpedo module protecting the bridge, causing it blow apart.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

The bridge officers flying up and down in this shuddering. The force-field around the bridge gets activated automatically. The shuddering ends. The officers lying on the floor, looking up and they don't see the ceiling anymore, just open space. The battle is visible too above them.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CONTROL CENTER

MECHWART
(pointing rifle to
HHirl)
Too bad you screwed me up.

The Captain wants to fire, but his rifle thinks different.

HHIRL
(as if reporting)
Inhibitor fields activated,
Captain.

HHirl attacks the Romulan woman. Meanwhile Mechwart attempting to deactivate his real body. A hologram shows up, fighting Mechwart.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

Midean ships firing with all power. They destroy some enemy cubes. The Enterprise still drifting.

INT. ENTERPRISE ENGINE-ROOM

Crusher makes it. He pushes some other buttons.

CRUSHER
I hope it works.

COMPUTER
Transphasic torpedoes loaded.

Then he works the console for a couple of seconds and the computer reports again.

COMPUTER (CONT'D)

The activation transporter lock-
on of the communication channels
designated confirmed.

Crusher pushes a button.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Enterprise fires three torpedoes. Headed for three different hybrid cubes. They penetrate them and blow them apart from inside at once. The shock wave destroys other enemy ships too.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CONTROL CENTER

The duplicate fighting Mechwart fluctuates and disappears. Mechwart surprised, shouts to S'anra.

MECHWART

Keep him busy.

The force-field around HHirl's real body shuts down. Mechwart grabs his rifle. Steps back and fires at the duplicate fighting S'anra. Then pulls her away and fires at his real body. It gets torn apart in its atoms.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The hybrid cubes shut down one after the other. Federation and Midean ships shooting them senselessly. The enemy ships explode.

EXT. EARTH ATMOSPHERE

Hybrid cubes start falling. One of them hitting the ground, causing huge explosion spreading kilometers.

INT. KLINGON SHIP

KLINGON CAPTAIN

Shoot them apart before they
fall down.

EXT. EARTH ATMOSPHERE

Ships shooting enemy cubes to make them explode. They make it. No other ship smashes into the ground.

INT. HYBRID SHIP CONTROL CENTER

The Captain and S'anra struggle on their feet. She burts out crying. Mechwart hugs her while activating his comm badge. A transporter beam covers them immediately...

INT. ENTERPRISE TRANSPORTER ROOM

...and they materialize in the transporter room. Sitting on the platform, They look around. Destruction everywhere.

MECHWART

Crusher did find a way.

They go down from the platform with heavy steps.

EXT. STARFLEET BUILDING

In a huge room the President addresses the crowd. Officers, politicians, everyday people, aliens.

PRESIDENT

We made a mistake. As so many times in the last centuries and millennia. History proved that however much we want to live without prejudice, there's always an aggressor coming on the scene who at a dash unsettles the peace laboriously maintained and achieved. The conclusion is still the same: the price for peace and freedom is constant vigilance. That's all what lies in our power. We weren't watchful enough to realize the intentions of the traitor Romulans. Our arrogance led us to underestimate them. I won't be so arrogant to say next time it'll be different.

SCENES DISSOLVING TO EACH OTHER AS THE PRESIDENT SPEAKING:

SCENE 1

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

We all feel the destruction caused by the Hybrids on our own skin. There's no species in the three quadrant which hadn't suffered severe damage in demographic or infrastructural ways.

SCENE 2

PRESIDENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Mankind breaks camp on a good part of its colonies. Millions of humans chose to come back to Earth to bear a hand in reconstructing it and to fill the space left by our misfortunated friends, mates, families.

SCENE 3

PRESIDENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The Romulan Star Union has officially seceded from the Eison star-system which they were forced to destroy due to the excessive ravage in it. They have rescued their mates from the subdued colonies. The Romulan race found a new home in the Algeron System.

SCENE 4

PRESIDENT (V.O.)
The primary mission of Starfleet will consist in assisting the species twisted on the verge of almost total extinction and reinstating the losses suffered from war. The exploration of the universe is a secondary function.

SCENE 5

PRESIDENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
However, we can't let the taste of peace inebriate us. All Federation member has the obligation to search for Borg technology and destroy them. As for the populated worlds beyond the Federation's range, we count on cooperation and assistance. We'll ask them to quest for remains, debris eventually scattered on the surface or buried under the ground of their planets in order that no living being can benefit from that gruesome technology ever again.

EXT. SPACE, MOON

The Enterprise parking near the moon. In full fig. Meanwhile a man talking.

OFFICER (V.O.)
Enterprise, this is the Beta
Starbase. We've beamed over the
last piece of the relief
consignments. Safe journey!

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

S'ANRA
Beta starbase, this is the
Enterprise. The arrival of the
relief consignments confirmed.

The Captain enters. Looking questioningly at the Romulan woman.

S'ANRA (CONT'D)
Transshipment is finished. The
technicians of the station have
left the Enterprise.

MECHWART
Seemed an eternity to me till
they put those packages under
our nose.

THAHM
The aid packages for the
different species will take more
time to deliver.

BAJ IZ
All systems are fully
operational. The Enterprise is
ready to launch.

MECHWART
Music to my ears.
(to Thahm)
Did you checked his
calculations?

Thahm gives him a look that suggests he'd better shut up.

CRUSHER
Captain, we've just got a
message about a new helmsman.

At this moment the turbolift door opens. A Gazrot steps out. He walks up to the helm console without saying a word to anyone. The crew amusing about it. What should they expect from a Gazrot?

MECHWART
(to the Gazrot)
Welcome aboard, Ensign.

The new helmsman turns, putting on an annoyed face. Turns back, then...

CLOSE ON: the Captain.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Set course.

The Gazrot working the console. Ready. Mechwart casts a glance at his crew.

MECHWART (CONT'D)
Engage.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise gets covered with that beautiful blue light. She proudly jumps to transwarp to help the already known lifes and civilizations.

FADE OUT.