FADE IN:

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Spock stares into raised sensor readout as Kirk sits in his captain’s chair.

KIRK (V.O.)
Captain’s log. Stardate 5945.5.
Having just barely escaped with our lives from a long abandoned class M planet, it’s sun has gone super nova behind the Enterprise to unnecessarily hasten our departure.

McCoy enters through the turbo lift just as...

SPOCK
These readings are phenomenal, Captain. The combined data gathering capabilities of the Enterprise and proximity to Beta Niobi will provide astrophysicists enough data to sift through for decades.

MCCOY
If I didn’t know any better I’d say you were giddy, Spock.

SPOCK
Any giddiness I might be experiencing Doctor is tempered by the damage our instruments are receiving from the super nova’s radiation.

MCCOY
I’m still so cold from Sarpeidon I may be tempted to stick my hands out the stern porthole to warm them up some!

McCoy and Kirk exchange smiles.

SPOCK
Doctor, of all people I shouldn’t have to remind you--
MCCOY
Oh put a sock in it.

KIRK
Put in a heading for the nearest starbase, mister Sulu. Warp four.

SULU
Aye, Captain.

KIRK
Miss Uhura, alert them of our arrival for minor repairs and some well deserved R & R.

UHURA
Aye, captain. However, the super nova is creating subspace interference. Communication is limited... Sir?

KIRK
Yes?

UHURA
Off port bow I’m receiving what appears to be a distress call. It seems somehow alien.

MCCOY
Out of the frying pan...

SPOCK
More apt would be from one fire to the next.

KIRK
Mister Spock, if I may tear you away from your scientific endeavors, what can your sensors tell us of the craft?

SPOCK
Long range sensors are impaired due to proximity to the super nova, however it does appear to be a vessel of unknown origin and design with an unstable, anti-matter drive engine. It’s pace and erratic movement suggest evasion maneuvers, although from what, if any, I cannot determine.
CHEKOV
Unidentified ship now in visual range, sir.

KIRK
On screen.

The battle scarred alien spacecraft streams yellow anti-matter behind it.

KIRK
Hail the ship, ask if we can help.

UHURA
Hailing on all channels, sir. No reply. Subspace interference is making it difficult.

SPOCK
There appears to be no one commanding the ship’s bridge.

KIRK
Perhaps autopilot, mister Spock?

SPOCK
 Likely, sir. Captain, I’m picking up faint life signs on the ship from what appear to be a dozen beings not in Starfleet’s database.

KIRK
Mister Sulu--

SULU
Aye, sir. Already on it. We’ll be within transporter range in minutes.

TITLE SEQUENCE

KIRK (V.O.)
Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its five-year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before.
INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Spock looks into raised sensor readout.

SPOCK
Life support systems on board are operational.

Kirk keys communications.

KIRK
Scott. Meet me in the transporter room. You’ll be accompanying Spock, McCoy and myself to do a little rescue and repair.

SCOTT (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Aye, sir.

KIRK
Mister Sulu, you’re in command.

SULU
Aye, sir.

KIRK
Be on the lookout for whomever may be chasing.

SULU
Aye, sir.

KIRK
Gentlemen.

All get up to leave on the turbo lift.

EXT. ENTERPRISE - SPACE

The enterprise pulls up alongside the smaller alien craft.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scott and red-shirt security guard stand on transporter disks.

Kirk taps his communicator.

KIRK
Miss Uhura, still no reply from the vessel?
UHURA (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
No, sir.

KIRK
(to transporter engineer)
Energize.

INT. ALIEN CRAFT PASSAGEWAY

They beam in, half-lit by a downed overhead light and across from venting exhaust. Kirk points back the aft passageway.

KIRK
Bones, you, Spock and Lieutenant Chomsky head to whom or whatever needs our help back there.

Tricorders and phaser at the ready, the three go.

KIRK
Mister Scott, you and I are heading to the bridge to gather all the data we can before this thing blows.

SCOTT
Aye! Bite your tongue, Captain! She may be banged up a bit but it’s only a little anti-matter leaking out. I may save her yet!

KIRK
Scott, your confidence is always inspiring. But first things first.

They trot up the forward passageway.

INT. ALIEN CRAFT BRIDGE

They enter a damaged bridge with displays that flutter and spark behind a haze of smoke.

KIRK
Tricorder readings, Mister Scott.
Life detection.

Scott scans the room with the tricorder, shakes his head.

SCOTT
No life forms here, sir.
KIRK
As suspected. Autopilot.

From a hidden chair, rises a beautiful silver and white humanoid female. She turns to them.

SCOTT
What a lovely autopilot this ship has, Captain. She’s beginning to look much more easy to repair than I first thought.

She smiles before she speaks lovely gibberish.

A light shines overhead of Kirk and Scott. They look up, then back at her.

ORVOS-E
Aaaadjusting... I am Orvos-E of the ship Orvos Do you require medical attention?

KIRK
Orvos-E, I am Captain James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise. We do not require any medical attention. However, your ship’s distress beacon and extensive damage leads us to believe your ship may be in need of medical attention. Mister Scott.

SCOTT
Aye. (to Orvos-E) Could you save me the trouble and point me to your ship’s computer? Maybe provide a little help? I think I can patch you up well enough.

She steps to a central console.

ORVOS-E
I may be accessed here. I’ve just configured an interface program to parse with common diagnostics, assuming your qualifications are sufficient.

Scott eyes Kirk then approaches to the console.

SCOTTY
I’ll manage.
KIRK
You don’t register on our instruments as living and you refer to you and your ship as "I", as if you and it were the same. Are you a machine?

ORVOS-E
Yes and no.

KIRK
What is your primary function?

ORVOS-E
I am a medical ship forced to repair damage to beings used in bloodsport.

KIRK
You say "forced" which implies will and self awareness.

ORVOS-E
For all practical purposes, yes. I have grown distressed over repairing and caring for beings only to have them returned to me again and again. Or not at all, knowing their fate.

KIRK
A machine with feelings. Oh, Spock will love this.

ORVOS-E
The Raubtiere now pursue us. Are you familiar with them?

KIRK
I’m afraid not. Why do they do not recognize your state of sentience?

ORVOS-E
Owning self-aware beings as slave property is common in the outer systems. My situation is even more tenuous than most.

KIRK
And you have escaped?
While in the Zeta2 Reticuli system collecting game specimens on LV-429 the Raubtiere experienced a significant emergency event. While distracted I slipped away inside a class-T planet’s atmosphere until I thought they had left.

KIRK
Patient, were they?

ORVOS-E
After a centuries of working for them I should have learned. Yes. They hid on the far side of the sun. Their own medical ship became their next great hunt. I think they rather enjoy the novelty of it.

KIRK
Yes. I imagine they do.

ORVOS-E
But the novelty is long lost on me. I seek asylum with those strong enough to withstand those that would continue to enslave me as property. As a machine.

KIRK
The Enterprise has encountered many androids and even several silicon based lifeforms before. But obviously you were manufactured or built by someone, making your claim for asylum, to life itself, somewhat of a grasp.

ORVOS-E
Long ago, yes. Your point would have been correct. But over centuries of exposure to many alien technologies I’ve replaced much of my original materials while repairing myself, making upgrades whenever possible.

KIRK
A variant of Theseus’ paradox. Replace enough parts with new parts over time and what you have is not the same what you began with.
KIRK
Scott, what can you tell over there?

SCOTT
She’s a complicated thing of beauty, sir. A combination of mechanical, electrical and chemical. Much of it alien tech I haven’t the foggiest idea of what it is.

KIRK
Does it appear to be alive?

ORVOS-E
I am not an "it", James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise. My name is Orvos.

KIRK
My apologies. Mister Scott. Does Orvos appear to be alive?

Scott steps up beside Orvos-E, they inspect one another.

SCOTT
Aye, sir. But I’m very partial to seeing these things different than most. I don’t know if Starfleet would call her alive or not, but...

He looks back around the ship.

SCOTT
... strong as she is, I know she’s hurt fairly well. That I can tell ya.

KIRK
Can you repair the damage?

SCOTT
Aye. If I can get back to that ruptured anti-matter pod the rest will fall in place right as rain.

KIRK
Please do so.

SPOCK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Captain.
KIRK
Yes, Spock?

SPOCK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Please meet me in the ship’s
primary medical bay

Scott smiles, holds out a crooked arm to Orvos-E.

SCOTT
Escort me? Now, what can you tell
me of your electro-chemo relay
systems?

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

With their tricorders, McCoy examines the exotic alien
species while Spock examines the ship’s technology.

Phaser in hand, the red-shirt guard, Lieutenant Chomsky,
inspects the area.

Many aliens are encased in horizontal wall chambers behind
glass. Gas surrounds them, tubes inserted into them.

A large, dark, shaggy-headed alien is suspended in a
vertical chamber, also with gas and inserted tubes.

MCCOY
Fascinating. I’ve never seen
anything like these.

SPOCK
Quite the menagerie, Doctor.

MCCOY
I don’t know what kind of fighting
they’ve been through, but their
basic cellular tissues indicate
almost perfect repair of laser and
radiation burns, limb and major
organ replacement.

SPOCK
Indeed. Starfleet has far inferior
medical capabilities than present
here.

McCoy stops and looks over at Spock.
MCCOY
You know, I’m standing right here.

Spock stops and looks over at McCoy.

SPOCK
Yes, Doctor. Indeed, you are.

Spock resumes tricorder scans of the ship. McCoy grimaces and scowls before he returns to his own work.

The dark alien in the vertical chamber opens its eyes. It watches the three crewmen move about the medical bay, grips its black clawed hands into fists.

Spock raises the tricorder to a wall.

SPOCK
There appears to be another being behind this bulkhead undergoing what can only be described as an automated surgical procedure.

MCCOY
What? Well that’s some feat.

McCoy raises his tricorder to view, grimaces.

MCCOY
Is there a window or monitor? I’d love to see--

Chomsky trips over some equipment which falls, it strikes and breaks the glass on one of the horizontal wall chambers.

The creature inside begins to shudder and shake. It screams.

SPOCK
Doctor.

McCoy looks into his tricorder, frustrated.

MCCOY
I don’t even know where to begin!

McCoy pushes a wall button, the creature slides out on a platform bed.

McCoy pulls a hypo, calibrates.

Just as he’s about to give the hypo a figure steps through the solid surgical suite wall.
It’s another beautiful silver and white humanoid female, identical to Orvos-E.

She turns to them.

Light shines down on them from overhead. They look up.

ORVOS-A
Stop!

Faster than they can follow, she pushes away McCoy’s hand then produces her own hypo and other tools.

In a blur she administers medicine to the creature, begins surgical work, moves things about, flashes lights inside, closes up, flashes light across skin again then slides the bed back into the wall.

She presses a button, the chamber fills with gas.

ORVOS-A
Please. I’m sure this is all very fascinating to you but I’m busy with another patient.

She looks at the dark alien, notes it’s closed eyes.

She then points to the chamber just closed and looks at Chomsky.

ORVOS-A
I’ve already repaired this being four times after regeneration from it’s original’s tissue culture. Twice. Please try to be careful and stay out of trouble. I’ll be done shortly.

Again, she looks at the dark alien, then turns to the wall.

McCoy
Wait! Who are you?

ORVOS-A
Orvos-A of the ship Orvos.

She eyes McCoy up and down and then the others.

ORVOS-A
You require no medical attention. Please wait.

She turns and disappears in a glow through the surgical suite wall. McCoy steps to it, touches it solidity.
MCCOY
Well that was impressive. Spock, I thought you said there was only one being behind that bulkhead.

Spock inspects his tricorder.

SPOCK
Indeed.

MCCOY
Surely that was not the surgical patient.

SPOCK
Correct. Either that is an android or my tricorder is not calibrated to register it as living. Fascinating, in either case.

MCCOY
She, it, whichever is clearly a better surgeon than I am.

SPOCK
Or ever will be, considering your human limitations.

MCCOY
I hate to say it but you’re possibly right.

SPOCK
Possibly. It’s only a matter of time before technology surpasses biology.

MCCOY
I’m feeling a little threatened already.

SPOCK
That is only natural.

MCCOY
Being out developed by other beings millions of years ahead of us is one thing. I’m not so sure about this.
SPOCK
It is a very interesting development indeed.

Kirk rounds the corner and enters the medical bay.

KIRK
Gentlemen, what seems to be of interest in here...

Kirk stops in his tracks at the menagerie of aliens.

SPOCK
Perhaps more interesting than the bevy of beasts, sir, are the medical technologies present in this ship.

MCCOY
It’s fantastic, Jim. I--

McCoy is taken aback as a jovial Scott and Orvos-E round the corner.

McCoy double-takes the surgical suite wall then Orvos-E.

MCCOY
How... ? Didn’t... ? Androids.

SCOTT
Not quite, Doctor. We may have just encountered an emerging electrolytic life form. The first of it’s kind!

SPOCK
Fascinating.

SCOTT
Aye, Commander. Seems Orvos has had exposure to technology throughout the outer rim. Over quite a bit of time she has upgraded herself from a regular electro-mechanical ship to something of a hybrid mish-mash of alien technologies.

McCoy gestures at Orvos-E

MCCOY
So these are... the children? Of the ship?
SCOTT
So, you met Orvos-A, did ya? No, Doctor. They’re not exactly children.

ORVOS-E
Dynamic aspects of the whole.

MCCOY
The muscle to the bone.

ORVOS-E
Precisely.

KIRK
Orvos seeks asylum with the Federation from its... her previous owners, from whom she has escaped.

SCOTT
Speaking of children, sir, actually the Orvos’ lack of reproductive capability may be one of the sticking points with Starfleet before official recognition of life.

KIRK
Spock, what are Starfleet’s criteria for classification of life?

SPOCK
Much the same as recognized throughout the galaxy. The basic six questions begin with does it react to it’s environment?

Orvos-E, Kirk and Scott nod in agreement.

KIRK
Go on.

SPOCK
Does it adapt to it’s environment?

Orvos-E and Scott nod in agreement.

SPOCK
Does it reproduce?

Orvos-E exchanges a concerned look with the others.
SPOCK
Does it grow?

ORVOS-E
I do have the capability to expand facilities, although have not had the need.

MCCOY
We could argue the same for your reproductive capabilities. Environmental stasis.

SPOCK
Does it obtain and use energy.

SCOTT
Aye, that she does.

SPOCK
Is it made of cells.

They all exchange concerned looks. McCoy then grins.

MCCOY
Maybe consider you a rather large amoeba.

SPOCK
Three out of six criteria strongly met. Three rather subjective. The argument for life is--

KIRK
I’ll do it.

SPOCK
Sir?

KIRK
I’ll suggest a provisional consideration.

SPOCK
It is a weak argument, sir.

KIRK
Orvos isn’t just flashy lights and complex programming, mister Spock. I sense something... unique here.
SULU (COMMUNICATOR V.O.)
Sulu to Captain.

KIRK
Yes, mister Sulu?

SULU (COMMUNICATOR V.O.)
Sir, sensors indicate another vessel approaching fast from the same origin as this ship. It may be within firing range momentarily.

ORVOS-E
The Raubtiere are here.

KIRK
Mister, Sulu, how did it get so close?

SULU (COMMUNICATOR V.O.)
The super nova has damaged long range sensors. We’re practically flying blind, sir.

KIRK
Thank you, mister Sulu. Mister Scott, how long will it take to stabilize that ruptured anti-matter pod?

SCOTT
A full repair would take days, sir. However, I could simply shunt the anti-matter into a containment field as a temporary measure.

KIRK
Is that safe?

SCOTT
Aye, sir, as long as it’s left undisturbed it should be fine.

KIRK
Do it. Then get back to the Enterprise and repair those sensors.

SCOTT
Aye, sir.

Scott leaves.
KIRK
What can you tell me of the Raubtiere’s battle capabilities?

ORVOS-E
The Raubtiere have limited space fighting experience but make a very strong opponent hand to hand.

KIRK
Suggestions?

ORVOS-E
Anticipate boarding attempts. In negotiations do not be interesting. Neutrality is best. Inferiority invites enslavement. Superiority invites interest which is to be avoided at all costs. For me, they will fight hard. I am one of a kind in their world as well as yours.

Kirk taps his communicator.

KIRK
Mister, Sulu. Lock onto this ship with the tractor beam, come about aft placing the Enterprise between the two ships. Just as soon I come aboard activate defensive screens.

SULU (COMMUNICATOR V.O.)
Aye, aye, Captain.

MCCOY
Can we evacuate these patients before someone becomes interesting?

KIRK
Orvos-E, can you leave the ship with your patients?

ORVOS-E
I don’t know. I’ve never left the ship.

KIRK
Doctor, you and Spock figure a solution, gather what data you can then get back to the Enterprise.

Kirk taps his communicator.
KIRK
Transporter room, beam me directly
to the bridge.

Kirk beams away as McCoy and Spock turn to Orvos-E.

SPOCK
The Captain will go to great
lengths to secure your desired
independence from your owners--

ORVOS-E
I am owned by no one no more than
you are owned by your captain.

SPOCK
None the less, independence is not
guaranteed.

ORVOS-E
Does the word of one of your
starship captains cary so little
weight?

SPOCK
As it currently stands you remain
the property of the Raubtiere until
asylum has been granted.

MCCOY
Let’s not get ahead of ourselves.
We haven’t even made it out of
harms way, yet.

SPOCK
A valid point, Doctor.

ORVOS-E
So you’re just going to stall for
time, take what data you can then
hand me back over to the Raubtiere.

MCCOY
No. We won’t. You need to trust us.

ORVOS-E
It seems I have no alternative.

SPOCK
None with more favorable outcomes.

Orvos-E looks at McCoy.
ORVOS-E
Will you take our patients?

MCCOY
I can’t even pretend to know how to take care of these beings. They need you to go with them.

Light shines over McCoy’s head.

ORVOS-E
There is much medical data aboard. Although superior to many beings, human brains remain limited in their synaptic linkages.

MCCOY
I think I’ve just been insulted, mister Spock. How about his brain?

He gestures to Spock.

ORVOS-E
Although possessing greater synaptic linkages, Vulcans lack the empathic sensitivities of medicine as humans have.

SPOCK
I believe I’ve just been insulted as well, Doctor.

ORVOS-E
It’s more art than science than your kind can appreciate.

SPOCK
So you have met both humans and Vulcans before?

ORVOS-E
The Raubtiere that pursues us is T’Mos. Ten generations ago his tribal ancestors collected specimens of several species in this region.

MCCOY
Game specimens? To hunt? For trophies?
ORVOS-E
Yes. But the Raubtiere were not impressed. They grew bored quickly.

MCCOY
And you repaired them? The humans and Vulcans?

Orvos-E looks at McCoy, then at his skull.

ORVOS-E
Orvos-A did.

MCCOY
What are you looking at?

ORVOS-E
With a direct synaptic augmentation you will be outfitted with supplemental data to both take care of these patients as well as craft the tools and supplies they require.

SPOCK
How shall we begin?

MCCOY
Whoa, just hold onto your pointy little Vulcan ears one minute! What do mean by "direct synaptic augmentation"? You’re not cutting into my brain quite so easily.

ORVOS-A
She won’t. I will.

All turn to Orvos-A just stepping into the room from the surgical suite.

ORVOS-E
Orvos-A is more experienced therefor more qualified than I.

ORVOS-A
A permanent trans-oral probe will be inserted directly into the hippocampus for rapid transfer of new information, underutilized sections of the cortex will be removed and replaced with crystal storage for deep memory and another probe will be placed into the
ORVOS-A
cerebellum to maximize
surgical-motor performance.

MCCOY
Great! How long do my dilithium
batteries last with all of that?

ORVOS-A
Understood. You are nearing the end
your expected lifespan. In your
crystal storage I will include
surgical instructions for repeating
this procedure in a younger human.

MCCOY
No, you don’t understand.

SPOCK
Are you confident of the
procedure’s success and safety?

MCCOY
Spock?!

ORVOS-A & E
Completely.

SPOCK
Doctor?

MCCOY
No. Not in a thousand years, no.

SPOCK
Doctor, you will not live that
long, and these patients
considerably less.

MCCOY
Look, I am not volunteering to
become some cyborg monstrosity for
the rest of my life just to tend to
a dozen aliens I’ve never met.

ORVOS-E
You do not wish to be a slave to
strangers?

MCCOY
Correct.
ORVOS-A
As we are?
All stare at one another at impasse.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

On the main screen approaches a coal-red ship.

    KIRK
    Any communications yet from it, miss Uhura?

    UHURA
    Still receiving a lot of subspace interference from the super nova, sir. The sensor damage is worsening.

    KIRK
    Mister Scott needs to get back here immediately. Hail the incoming ship on all frequencies with an invitation to come aboard, immediately.

All turn to Kirk.

    UHURA
    Sir?

    KIRK
    You heard me. Mister Chekov, have the galley send to the bridge gelatin fish. A dozen big ones. Make it two dozen.

    CHEKOV
    Any particular color, Captain.

    KIRK
    Surprise me.

    CHEKOV
    Aye, sir.

Kirk keys communications.

    KIRK
    Mister Scott, how are you doing on that containment field?
INT. ORVOS ENGINE ROOM
Scott works amongst a collection of glowing tubes and wires.

SCOTT
I’ve just about got her set up, sir. Any minute, now and she’ll be ready.

He presses a button and a containment field flickers on. Then off. Scott grunts with disgust.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

KIRK
Make it half a minute. I need you aboard the Enterprise to fix these sensors. Kirk out.

UHURA
Receiving reply transmission from the approaching craft, sir.

KIRK
On screen.

On the main screen three large, dark, shaggy-headed Raubtiere stare back.

T’MOS (ELECTROLYZED VOICE)
T’mos of ship Teer’nan. Decline invitation. Surrender Orvos.

From the turbo lift enter galley crew rolling serving tables with large, wiggly, pink and green gelatin fish.

KIRK
I am Captain James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise. There seems to have been an accident. We’re embarrassed, really.

T’MOS
Surrender Orvos or be boarded, Kirk of Enterprise.

KIRK
This is all that remains of the occupants of Orvos.

He points to the large gelatin fish.
KIRK
We were about to eat it and thought we should share them with you.

The screen goes blank.

UHURA
They’ve terminated their--

A loud BONG resonates through the ship.

CHEKOV
I think we’ve just been scanned, Captain.

KIRK
Indeed we have.

Kirk keys communications.

KIRK
Engineering, lock onto Chief Engineer Scott. (presses another button on armchair console) Mister Scott?

INT. ORVOS ENGINE ROOM

Scott, panicked sweat on his face, leans back against the wall.

SCOTT
Whatever that was, sir, don’t ever do it again.

KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Is the anti-matter containment field up? Are you done?

SCOTT
Aye and aye, sir. I was just about to--

Scott beams out.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

The five look around the ship and at each other. Orvos-A looks at the alien patients.

The large, dark Raubtiere in the vertical suspension chamber pulls tubes from it’s body while it watches Orvos-A.
KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Spock. Bones. Get those patients ready to beam aboard immediately.

SPOCK
Our options for resolution narrow as we speak.

MCCOY
Narrowed is right.

KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Make it fast, gentlemen. Kirk out.

SPOCK
How much of this ship is integrated into your dynamic aspect?

ORVOS-E
I don’t understand?

MCCOY
I believe he means how much of your ship can be left behind.

ORVOS-A
How much of you would you chose to be left behind?!

The Raubtiere removes it’s breathing mask, eyes the red-shirt’s phaser, then a large piece of medical equipment.

MCCOY
We don’t really have time for a philosophical debate.

ORVOS-A
There’s nothing philosophical about it at all. I am asking you for your assistance in attaining freedom from slavery. You yourself, Doctor, have refused to enter into this state by your own free will. Surely you see where I stand.

MCCOY
Unfortunately I certainly do.

ORVOS-E
But you ask me which part to cut and carve to be left behind as if any of myself is less valuable than your own appendages or skin. This
ORVOS-E
is not philosophical in the least bit.

SPOCK
We cannot beam your entire ship or being aboard the Enterprise. You need to decide your own sacrifice for freedom.

MCCOY
Desperate times. Desperate measures.

Orvos-A and E give hard eyes to McCoy and Spock.

The suspended Raubtiere breaks out of it’s chamber in a colored cloud of gas.

It rips a heavy metal strip from a piece of equipment as a sword, threatens them all.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

KIRK
Mister Scott, I need those sensor arrays repaired immediately or we won’t see what’s--

Several loud CLANGs ring out, the bridge crew look up.

KIRK
All hands, this is the Captain. All hands to battle stations. Red alert. I repeat, red alert. This is no drill. This is no drill. Transporter room. Lock onto enemy boarders and beam them into the brig.

TRANSPORTER ROOM(COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Sir, they’ve already--

CHEKOV
Exterior hull breach on starboard decks four and five, sir!

KIRK
Transporter room. Can you get a lock on them?
TRANSPORTER ROOM (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Negative, sir. They have some kind of phasing armor we cannot lock onto.

KIRK
Keep trying. Security. Seal off starboard decks three through six. Send four heavy armed units to decks four and five. Set your phaser rifles on stun. Do not kill. I repeat. Do not kill!

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY
The Raubtiere sways then steps toward Chomsky. He backs up, phaser aimed at the beast.

ORVOS-A & E
Don’t. Run!

Chomsky raises his phaser to fire. McCoy holds his arms out to him to stop.

MCCOY
No!

The Raubtiere staggers forward.

Chomsky fires, the gas ignites, the explosion throws all to the deck, Spock into the passageway.

The Chomsky rises and runs over to McCoy, rolls him over, sees McCoy’s forearms both burnt to a smokey crisp.

MCCOY
Aghhh! My hands! My Hands!

CHOMSKY
I’m so sorry, sir!

MCCOY
Watch out!

The Raubtiere looms over Chomsky, grabs then hurls him across the medical bay.

Chomsky grabs his phaser lying on the deck, fires it again at the monster.

It bends in pain but recovers with little effect.
The Raubtiere strips a long wire from the ceiling, whips the phaser from Chomsky’s hands, takes the phaser and fires at him.

Chomsky falls forever.

The Raubtiere looks about the medical bay then turns the phaser at McCoy on the deck.

Orvos-A and E rise behind McCoy, dazed as they recover.

RAUBTIERE (VERY GARbled)

Run.

ORVOS-E

Don’t!

MCCOY

No!

RAUBTIERE

Run!

MCCOY

I won’t.

RAUBTIERE

You may live if you run. But you will die here. Run!

MCCOY

Never!

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

UHURA

Security has engaged Raubtiere boarders on decks four and five. No casualties, sir.

KIRK

Transporter room. Any progress on locking onto our unwanted guests?

TRANSPORTER ROOM(COMMUNICATOR V.O

Negative sir.

KIRK

Then lock onto these gelatin fish and send them to the Raubtiere ship.

The gelatin fish beam out.
KIRK
Uhura. Open a channel to their ship.

UHURA
Aye, Captain. Open.

KIRK
We’ve had another accident and insist on sharing with you our bounty, as is our custom.

On screen T’mos and the others appear. The red and green gelatin fish behind them.

T’MOS
We do not eat the kill of others. Surrender Orvos, Kirk of Enterprise.

SULU
Enemy ship has just fired on us, sir!

The Enterprise bridge shakes.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

Large equipment falls from the ceiling, crushes the Raubtiere at McCoy’s feet.

McCoy breaths a sigh of relief.

Then it’s hand strikes out, grasps McCoy by the throat, McCoy chokes.

MCCOY
Ack!

McCoy screams as he grabs at the strong forearm with his burnt hands.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

CHECKOV
Minimal damage sir, but transporters are now inoperative.

SULU
Captain, shall I return phaser fire?
KIRK
No, mister Sulu! They know we have screens up. That was a warning shot. We are being tested on our level of aggression. Not only do they want their medical ship they are also assessing us as sport game. To respond to their threat with an attack invites unwanted interest. Aikido rather than boxing. Deflect rather than retaliate, mister Sulu.

Sulu nods with understanding.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

The Raubtiere pulls itself out from under the equipment as Orvos-E pulls at its hand from McCoy’s throat.

Orvos-A races to grab a hypo across the room, McCoy’s eyes flutter.

Spock leaps over Orvos-E, knocks out the Raubtiere with a neck pinch.

McCoy coughs as he regains his senses.

ORVOS-A
Fast and effective. We have failed at learning that technique ourselves.

SPOCK
There are perhaps many techniques we could exchange if you will come with us.

MCCOY
What took you so long?

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

Kirk keys communications.

KIRK
Mister Scott. We need to get Spock and Bones back onboard with or without Orvos. I need you to repair the transporter immediately.
SCOTT (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
I can’t replace sensor instrumentation and fix the transporter at the same time, sir. Which do you want first?

KIRK
Both!

SCOTT (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Aye, Captain.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

Spock and Orvos-A examine’s McCoy’s burnt forearms.

SPOCK
Can you repair his arms?

ORVOS-A
If I repair your ship’s only doctor can you guarantee my freedom?

MCCOY
My God! This is no time to barter over a patient’s life!

ORVOS-A
Desperate times. Desperate measures, Doctor.

KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Mister Spock. Bones. Are you ready to transport your patients?

SPOCK
We have complications, sir.

KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Well, resolve them immediately. We’ve got to get you two and anyone else out of that ship, now.

SPOCK
Sir, Ten generations ago ancestors of this tribe hunted specimens in this region. They were not impressed.

KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Thank you, mister Spock. The feeling is mutual. Kirk out.
MCCOY
Doesn’t sound like negotiations are going well.

ORVOS-E
On the contrary. No one has ever withstood a standing confrontation with the T’Mos this long.

Orvos-A looks at Spock and McCoy a long moment. Then at Orvos-E.

ORVOS-A
E, do you trust them?

Orvos-E weighs the question as she looks Spock and McCoy over.

ORVOS-E
Completely.

ORVOS-A
Then prep all patients and databanks for immediate transport. Mister Spock. I’m relaying the metrics of my critical functional elements to your recording device. Doctor. Come with me.

They lift McCoy up, walk him to the surgical suite wall.

ORVOS-A
Mister, Spock.

SPOCK
Yes?

ORVOS-A
Give me provisional consideration with your Starfleet. Give me a chance at freedom.

SPOCK
Yes, Orvos, I will.

Orvos-A and McCoy step through the solid wall.
INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

KIRK
Mister Sulu, arm two photon torpedos and target a thousand and five-hundred meters one second apart above their bridge. Fire when ready. Miss Uhura. Hail our guests.

EXT. ENTERPRISE - SPACE

Two photon torpedos loose. First detonates then second.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

UHURA
Raubtiere ship hailed, sir.

KIRK
On screen. T’Mos. That isn’t very sporting of you to fire upon an old friend.

T’Mos laughs. Behind him many Raubtiere scramble about, the gelatin fish spilled on the deck.

T’Mos

KIRK
Not I. Your ancestors. We tell our children stories of the great strength and bravery of your ancestors that traveled through our region. We trade in epic tales of the great beasts they hunted and killed. Throughout many worlds here you are renowned for unsurpassed gamesmanship. Your mythic skills have not fallen so far that you now fire upon still prey, have they?

T’Mos turns a sideways glare at Kirk, considers.

T’Mos
No, Kirk of Enterprise.

KIRK
I had hoped not. It would be a shame to strike from our rich story
KIRK
telling history of your tribe’s
legendary achievements. In fact, it
has been so long since we’ve
crossed star paths. Would you care
to tell us a new tale of a great
hunt?

T’mos stares at Kirk. Grunts.

KIRK
I’ll give you Orvos for a story.

T’mos confers with another Raubtiere. They disagree on
something, ask another crew member.

T’MOS
No new stories. Give us Orvos.

Kirk feigns concern.

KIRK
Would you like to hear our stories?

Two raubtier nod heads "yes", another "no". T’mos undecided.

T’MOS
No. Give us Orvos, Kirk of
Enterprise.

KIRK
That is very disappoing. Tell me,
if can you even confirm to me the
name of your tenth generation
father and I will return Orvos to
you. For a single name you will
have your ship returned and
legendary status maintained
throughout this region.

On screen T’Mos and the others confer again. Crew member
departs.

KIRK
I’ll even include recordings of our
stories of your ancestors.

T’mos snarls at Kirk, resumes conference.

KIRK
(discreet aside)
Where are they!
UHURA
Captain? Receiving transporter metrics from Commander Spock, sir. A rather large mass to the shuttle bay.

KIRK (keys communications)
Mister Scott. What is the status of those transporters?

SCOTT(COMMUNICATOR V.O)
They are just now back in full operation, sir.

KIRK
Uhura’s sending you transporter metrics from Spock. Lock onto it and transport directly to the shuttle bay the moment screens drop.

SCOTT(COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Aye, sir.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY

McCoy walks through the Surgical Suite wall, forearms coated in long white gloves, is greeted by Spock and Orvos-E.

MCCOY
You should have seen what she did in there, Spock! It was amazing! I’ve never seen anything like it! There’s enough medical data here to learn from for decades.

SPOCK
If I didn’t know any better I’d say you were giddy, Doctor.

McCoy’s childish grin evaporates.

SPOCK
Will Orvos-A be with us shortly?

MCCOY
Yes. She’s cleaning her work area and some other things.

Orvos-E looks concerned.
KIRK (COMMUNICATOR V.O)
Mister Spock. Transporter is standing by to beam your metrics to the shuttle bay. Are you ready?

Orvos-E nods to Spock.

SPOCK
Yes, sir. Standing by.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE
And agitated T'mos and others stir about on screen.

T'MOS
Tenth ancestor before T'mos was Gee’ger. Return Orvos!

KIRK
Very well! She is yours. Fare well, new friends. Mister Checkov, drop screens. Give T'mos of ship Teer’nan their ship back.

INT. ORVOS MEDICAL BAY
Spock, McCoy, Orvos-E, the aliens in their wall chambers along with much of the equipment all beam out.

INT. ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE BAY
The huge mass of exposed internal workings of the Orvos materialize.

EXT. ENTERPRISE - SPACE
The smaller Orvos glides to the Raubtiere ship as the Enterprise departs.

INT. ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE BAY
From a hatch Spock, McCoy and Orvos-E step out into the bay.

MCCOY
Are you okay?
ORVOS-E
I’m... different. Sad. Glad to
taste freedom. Sad for my loss. Too
many emotions. I feel sick.

McCoy gives a hopeful look to Spock who looks about. Kirk
and Scott enter the bay, run over to greet them.

Scott and Orvos-E stand very close to each other. The others
don’t seem to notice.

KIRK
Bones! What’s happened to your
arms?

MCCOY
They were burnt to a crisp from an
explosion, but Orvos-A repaired
them. It was incredible. I’ve never
seen anything like it.

Spock continues to look about.

SPOCK
Speaking of which, where is
Orvos-A?

Kirk looks at Orvos-E.

KIRK
Well, how does freedom feel?

INT. ORVOS ENGINE ROOM

Orvos-A aims the dropped phaser at the containment field
surrounding the leaking anti-matter.

She fires.

EXT. ENTERPRISE - SPACE

Far behind the Enterprise a second bright flash burns.

INT. ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE BAY

The flash fades through the shuttle bay windows.

ORVOS-E
Freedom feels bitter. Desperate
times.
MCCOY
Desperate measures.