

Season 1 - Episode 4: "Solstice's Last Hour"

Novelization by Crist

Cast

Captain David Jellico – Captain U.S.S. McKenzie, Played by David Jellico

Ensign Phoenix Gallant – Helmsmen, Played by simiteen

Ensign Sydona V'Krull – Engineering Officer, Played by Talon

Lt. Valarian Shar – Science Officer, Played by Valarian Shar

Doctor Darum Bains – Medical Officer, Played by Darum Bains

Lt. Daniel Crist – Tactical/Security Officer, Played by Crist

Captain's Log:

Once the McKenzie's crew had been totally completed we have resumed our patrol mission. A week ago we left Starbase 10 and we are currently patrolling Sector 364 with no surprises to report.

I welcome this peace as it allows me to get to know my crew and to settle to the new ship. Most of us still find this ship strange and we need some time to get used to this. In addition, an easy assignment after our last mission will help us relax a little bit.

Our newest addition, Chief Science Officer Shar has started to work on the sensor array as he is convinced he can improve its performance. These days he is using his spare time on the long range sensors trying to better its resolution.

For my part, I spend my time studying the last reports from Starfleet Command, trying to get some clue about what the Tal Shiar's intentions are. I just hope this is not the prologue of a coming war.

=Bridge=

Must...stay...awake. Phoenix, who had not had a proper night of sleep in a couple of days, was counting down the minutes, until he was relieved from duty. Not long after their return to Starbase 10, the McKenzie was ordered to head back out. To ensure that his flying skills were up to par, he had been spending his off-duty hours working on his flying. Which meant he had cut down considerably on his sleeping.

He was finally up to standard, and was looking forward to sleeping in his quarters the minute he was off-duty. After silently cursing whoever was responsible for his transfer, he glanced at the readings. Satisfied they were still on course, he checked the time. Only a couple more minutes had passed since the last time he checked. He swayed slightly in his seat before straightening himself out. Come on. Only seven more minutes to go.

Idly, he glanced at his biomechanical hand. It had been almost a month since his first mission. And it was only now did he have complete control over it. Although it was supposed to resemble an organic hand, it was still partially mechanical. This meant there were a couple of extra bonuses that came with it. Phoenix was looking forward to testing it out in the coming days.

Another check revealed four minutes had passed since his last check. Okay, three more minutes. You can do it. Just stay awake for three minutes, walk out of the bridge, then run like heck back to my quarters.

YES! Phoenix roared in his thoughts. With barely concealed glee, he let his replacement, whats-his-name, take over the helm as he nearly ran to the exit. In the lift, he murmured his destination.

"Please restate your destination."

Phoenix glared at the speaker, which dared to stand between him and his much-needed sleep. He announced it with much gusto. This time, the lift moved. The second the door opened (and he was certain no one was nearby) he bolted down the hallway.

Almost there. Almost there! He abruptly stopped in front of where he thought were his quarters were and punched in the authorization code. He stopped midway, realizing that he probably messed up. Oh well. He punched in the rest of the code, and was extremely thankful to fate, when the door opened. He rushed in. The low illumination didn't deter him from jumping into the top bunk, forgoing a change of uniform.

"What the! WAAAH!" When he jumped into the bed, he was surprised to find someone already in it. He lost his balance fell back onto the floor. As he tried to regain his bearings, someone ordered the lights back on.

When his eyes adjusted, his heart stopped. From the bunk bed, two females were glaring at him, one of them was part-Klingon. Aw HECK! "Er, I, I," he never made it farther. Without explaining, he dashed out of the room only crash into the door before it could open. Clutching his bloody nose, he made his escape. Now that he was awake and aware, he sprinted down the hall. Unfortunately for him, his quarters were only three doors down from where he accidentally intruded. As quickly as he could, he inputted the code and practically jumped into the room.

His roommate, who was just getting ready to go, was surprised by his unorthodox entrance. "What happened?"

Phoenix stared at him for a few moments, deciding on what to say. "I think I'm screwed." His roommate stared at him, uncomprehending the phrase. "It means, I'm in big trouble."

=Corridor=

Sydona walked the corridors of the McKenzie, looking for her room assignment with her personal belongings in hand. The Klingon hybrid spent most of her time with the engineer techs and the repair teams when the McKenzie got back to Starbase 10...so she had very little rest and was looking forward to getting some solid sleep. Entering in the access code she received, the door swooshed open and she entered the room.

"Hello? New roommate here." Sydona said as she put her pack down.

“Now that’s a voice I recognize.” The human female rolled to her side to face Sydona. Her curly blonde hair draped down one side of her face, but wasn’t able to contain the friendly smile.

Sydona chuckled lightly upon seeing her new roommate. “Considering how things have gone over the past few days, I would hope to have made an impression by now Jen.” Sydona said as she let her hair down. “I’m curious... why the top bunk? Most people would be fighting over the lower bunk.”

Ensign Jenny Summers swung her legs over the side of the upper bunk and gracefully slid out, place her feet on the floor. Wearing an oversized t-shirt with a faded “Ranchos BBQ” logo on it, she started helping Sydona place a few of her belongings in the room. “Well...I figured I avoid the confrontation about it all together. Well...that and I kind of grilled the officer handling room assignments and he pretty much told me that I’d end up bunking with you.”

“Is that right?” The Klingon Hybrid said, raising a brow.

“Yup. That and I’m probably the only female on this ship crazy enough to room with you.” Jenny said, chuckling to herself.

“Cork it Sunshine.” Sydona said, smiling. “I think another reason is that I have you scheduled working the same shifts as me. Makes life a bit easier. That and I think the Captain liked the work we did on the previous mission.”

Jenny nodded in agreement. “I’m just glad we were all able to get out of there in one piece. Not to mention the information we gathered will help Starfleet immensely.”

“True enough. I think due to the design nature of this ship...we’re going to get some of the tougher assignments.” Sydona said as she stripped out of her uniform.

“Now that we are fully staffed...we’ll be ready for it.” Jenny said as she picked up a few articles of clothing that belonged to her. Picking up a Padd on the nearby desk, she glanced over the upcoming schedule. “Seems like we got a long day ahead of us.”

“I know. Time to crash and rest up now. Computer: Set the wake up alarm to our current schedule.” Sydona said as she flopped down on the lower bunk.

Jenny quickly climbed up to her bunk and settled in. “Computer: Set illumination to 20 percent.”

Sydona sighed happily as she finally was able to rest. “Hopefully nothing crazy happens in the next day or two.”

Jenny chuckled softly, “I’m sure it will.”

Meanwhile...

=Bridge=

Valarian's turn on the bridge had finished a couple of hours ago but his work on the sensor array had kept him occupied. He had been trying to improve its performance on long range scans which although could be done in theory, had prove to be more difficult than expected.

There, in the middle of his work, a startled voice made him "unglue" his face from the screen.

"Captain, I am receiving a distress signal" said the Operations officer.

"It's very faint and there is a lot of interference but it's surely there"

At the Captain's order, the young officer put it on the speakers:

"This is the.....Solstice. We ... help.... been caught in a...storm. Casualties...shields down....."

The people of the bridge stared at each other confused by the message. It was surely a distress signal coming from an starship in danger but the interference made it difficult to know more about their situation.

Quickly Valarian reacted by putting the sensor array back online and trying to know more about the origin of the signal...

=Sickbay=

After the last mission, Bains spent a while on Starbase 10 while some minor repairs were done. After returning to duty, the doctor spent a couple of hours in Sick Bay making sure the place was spick and span. The McKenzie would be shipping out in a couple of hours so he returned to his room for a couple of hours rest.

=Bridge=

David listened carefully to the Operations Officer and the distress signal. Once it had finished he switched to alert mode and started to issue orders:

"Ensign, try to get a better quality on that signal. We need to get the maximum amount of information possible."

"Lieutenant Shar, look for any signals on the sensor that could correspond to a vessel in the vicinity and coordinate with Helm to approach the location of that vessel once you have the coordinates."

David remembered that most of his Senior officers had recently finished their duty but he needed the best people on the bridge if the distress signal was confirmed. So he decided to call them:

"Attention to all Senior Officers, man your positions on the double. We have an emergency."

Waiting for more information to come by, David paced the bridge thinking about what they could find.

=Crew Quarters=

"AWWW! YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING ME!" Gallant roared when the order woke him from his peaceful slumber. Still, an order was an order. He swung his legs off the bed and proceeded to don his uniform. After checking in the mirror three times to make sure nothing was out of place, he marched toward the Bridge.

When he arrived on the Bridge, he glanced at the view screen. The screen was filled with an empty space. As he walked to his station, he tried to pick up anything from the mutterings from the crew mates, but he couldn't understand a word of it.

Once he arrived at his station, he asked the officer what was their current heading. Satisfied with the answer, he took over and waited for new orders. All the while, he wished he had something to help him stay awake.

Valarian finished checking the sensor display and proceeded to inform the Captain: "Captain, I have found them. It's the USS Sostice, a Nova class vessel assigned to study the Copparan nebula. I have their location, they seem to be trapped inside an ion storm in that nebula. The interference is quite intense but I have them on sensors. We would have to get closer to have better scans."

"Understood, Mr. Shar. Mr. Gallant, plot a course to the Copparan Nebula as close to the Solstice as possible but do not enter the storm. We will try to help them without putting this ship in risk."

"Mr. Shar, continue with the scans. Try to get the most detailed information about the Solstice condition and about the storm."

Then David turned to the Operations officer:

"Ensign Polaj, try to clear off the distress signal and hail them. Tell them we are on our way."

'So that was it, a routine patrol mission had become a search & rescue one' thought Valarian. This job is never boring. Now the Captain had to choose what to do.

'What did I do to deserve THIS?!' Phoenix mentally cried. An ion storm. An INTENSE ion storm at that. Somebody has it out for me. Still, Phoenix glanced at the location on the sensor display, and prepared to input the coordinates if the Captain decided to aid the beleaguered ship.

In an instant, Phoenix temporarily forgot his troubles and focused on the mission at hand. "Aye, sir." With the press of the button, the small ship pulled a sharp turn and was now well on its way to the distress signal.

=Crew Quarters=

Sydona groaned as she heard the order from her captain, pulling the covers over her head. The Klingon-Human hybrid was finally starting to drift off, due to an unexpected visitor and an impromptu wrestling match between herself and her new roommate...to which stopped the Lieutenant from hunting down said uninvited guest. Swearing in Klingon...the weary officer pulled herself from her bed.

"Why do I have the feeling something heavy duty is about to go down?" Sydona said as she grabbed her uniform.

Yawning, Jenny rolled to her side to face her roommate. "Because your gut is probably right. Still...I can't remember the last time a guy jumped into bed with me like that. Reminds me of my Academy days..."

"Oi...are we still talking about that? For starters...he busted into our room. Second...he got more than an eye full of both of us. I don't know why you stopped me from going after him." Sydona retorted as she finished slipping into her uniform.

Jenny laughed heartily. "Hey, I can't help it if you decided to go quasi-commando. Now that he's got a good look at you...maybe he'll jump into your bunk next time."

Sydona glared at Jenny for a brief moment before slowly reaching toward her bunk. Jenny continued to laugh at Sydona's expense until the Klingon quickly swung her pillow at the Ensign, nailing the blonde dead in the face. The two women continued to chuckle for a few moments as Sydona did a final check of her uniform.

“Jenny, get some rest. I don’t know what’s going on...but I might need you if things get serious.” Sydona said as she stood in the doorway of their quarters.

Jenny gave the thumbs up sign. “Just give the call Lieutenant and I’ll be ready.”

“Thanks.” Sydona smiled as she turned to head to the turbolift.

“KapLawn Syd!!” Jenny yelled from the room before the door closed. Other officers in the hall looked at the Lieutenant in a perplexed manner. Others snickered as they knew what the young Ensign was trying to say. With her hair looking quite untamed, Sydona executes the classic face-palm maneuver and quickly makes her way to the Turbolift.

The doors of the Turbolift open to find Sydona whipping her hair back behind her as she does the final touches to her ponytail. The Klingon-Human hybrid makes her way onto the bridge, acknowledges everyone, glares at Phoenix, and makes her way to the engineering station.

Phoenix held his finger over the button that would change their course to intercept the Solstice, when suddenly he felt a pair of eyes boring into his back. What is it NOW?! He glanced back, right before his jaw hit the floor. I'M DEAD! The pair of eyes happened to belong to a young woman. A human/klingon hybrid. Specifically, the one he had disturbed a mere couple of hours ago.

His eyes quickly zoomed on her rank: Lieutenant. She's a bridge officer AND a higher rank than me?! I'm dead! So, very, very dead! He noticed that he'd been gaping at her for an indecent amount of time and quickly turned around to face his station.

And she's half Klingon! Does that mean she'll kill me now or later? No, she wouldn't do that...would she? I mean, she's half-Klingon. Does that mean she'll place duty and honor before or after retribution? ACK! It's times like these that I hate that I grew up in the middle of nowhere! If there is a God, I need a miracle now or in the near future! Who am I kidding? The second the mission is over, the Captain will probably release us. So, I have to reach the turbolift, close it, and get back to my quarters before she can reach me.I'm not gonna make it. What if she orders me to "accompany" her to a remote part of the ship?! I can't refuse!....I'm so dead.

As the seconds dragged on, Phoenix's mind wandered, wondering how he was going to meet his inevitable doom. For better or for worse, he was no longer sleepy.

=Crew Quarters=

"Ah, wonderful." Said the Doctor tiredly

Bains awoke with a start and got out of bed. Taking a minute to don his uniform, Darum left for Sickbay.

"This is the doctor to all medical Delta and Alpha shift crewmen, please report to your emergency positions and await farther orders. Ensign Camp, report to the bridge and keep me informed. Bains out"

"Doctor to the Captain, copy that sir. Deploying extra personal and taking necessary precautions. I will have an Ensign arriving on your bridge in case of emergencies. Bains out."

Arriving in Sickbay Bains headed over to the console to replicate some extra supplies. It seemed the mission would be starting early.

=Torpedo Room 2=

Crist exited out of Torpedo Room 2, after a lengthy inspection of the Torpedoes.

Yes the computer could do it, though it could be done more in-depth in person. Crist thought, plus its always gets the Security staff the stay in line. Crist laughed to himself.

He then entered the Mess Hall, and ordered "Water, 5 Degrees Celsius."

As the glass materialized the Capt. could be heard over the comm.,

"Attention to all Senior Officers, man your positions on the double. We have an emergency."

Crist looked up and gave a groan. He stood at the replicator for a moment while he drank his drink. He had been working in the Torpedo Rooms for 12 hours straight and needed a break, so he took his time drinking. Once he was done, he placed his glass back and hit recycle. Crist then left and headed for the Bridge. Once there he noticed the Ion storm that was on the screen.

Phoenix glanced at the information displayed on his console. "Captain, we've reached our destination." With another press of the button, the ship dropped out of warp. In front of them, the ion storm raged. Oh boy, that looks pretty bad. And there's a ship in there. I don't like this one bit. Since his previous orders were complete, Phoenix brought the ship to a complete stop just outside of the storm. Now all he could do was wait.

After the Conn Officer's news about the McKenzie arriving to the Nebula, David decided to start by playing it safe.

"Lieutenant Shar, try to assess the condition of the Solstice and determine if it would be possible to use transporter to get the people out of the ship. If not we will have to use the tractor beam on it."

"Ensign Gallant, keep watch on the storm. We don't want to be caught in it by surprise."

"Lieutenant Crist, raise shields and watch the radiation levels."

David knew that some of those orders would need some time to be completed but having the best information about the storm and the Solstice would help them a lot and would avoid unnecessary risks.

"Captain, I am afraid we won't be able to transport the surviving crew to the ship as the interference caused by the storm makes it impossible. I have even difficulties to get good resolution scans of the ship. However I can confirm that the Solstice shows important damage. It's life support is failing and won't last long, several fires and explosions can be detected inside it and shields are below 5% and falling." Valarian spoke. "Using the tractor beam is neither an option as, with a failing structural integrity field, we risk tearing the damaged ship apart. I am afraid we don't have many options."

As he looked to the Captain, waiting for instructions, Valarian thought that maybe they could do nothing for those people on board the Solstice.

Crist then walked up to his station and sat down, and pressed a few buttons. "Aye, shields are up."

He then turned to look at the storm that was brewing outside.

David heard the news that the Science officer had relayed. The situation was tough and they did not have many options left. However they had to do something to rescue the crewmembers of the Solstice.

At this point it was evident that they could not activate warp power or impulse speed to exit the storm. Transporters and tractor beam were not an option so the only available solution was to enter the storm and rescue them the old way.

"Listen everyone. We have to get to that ship and rescue as many people as we can. As transporters won't work we will get there using the shuttlepods. We will adapt them to generate as maximum space as possible so that we can evacuate all the surviving crewmembers. In addition, once there we will asses the situation and try to find another solution."

"We have 4 shuttlepods onboard. On each one of them 3 of us will get to the Solstice and will start combing the ship for survivors."

With that David began to issue orders:

"Captain to Engineering! Ensign V'krull, I want you and any other engineer you can spare on Shuttlebay 1. Bring any tools, spare parts and portable generators you may need to repair some of the systems aboard the Solstice."

"Captain to Sickbay! Mr. Bains head to Shuttlebay 1 as well and have your medtechs be prepared to receive the wounded."

"Helm! Once the shuttlepods are ready be prepared to take us closer to the Solstice. Thus we will help the fragile shuttles in their trip to the Solstice."

"Aye sir." Although he sounded confident, on the inside Gallant was nervous about his new orders. True, the McKenzie was a tough, little ship, but she did have a limit to how much abuse she could take. Those teams better do their job quick, he thought to himself as he prepared to take the ship into the tempest.

"Lt. Crist you will lead the rescue. Get there, assess the situation and start looking for survivors."

Crist looked up and nodded, "Yes sir. O one thing Sir, we only have 3 shuttlepods."

With that, he left the bridge, on his way to the Shuttle bay 1. He tapped his comm badge, "Crist to Shran, get to the bridge and man our station."

He tapped it once again, "Crist to Hughes, report to the Shuttle bay 1, we need to help the Solstice."

=Turbo Lift=

Sydona headed stared at the ceiling of the turbolift as she reviewed the current situation in her mind. The crew of the Solstice is in danger and their only shot depends on the actions that are taken by the crew of the McKenzie... the crew that she is a part off. The Engineer closes her eyes and exhales slowly before tapping her combadge.

"V'Krull to Summers. Rise and shine sunshine. I'm going to need your assistance on this run."

Yawning can be heard before the Ensign responds. "How bad is the situation V'Krull?"

“Pretty bad. The USS Solstice is trapped in an Ion Storm. From what the Science officer has detected...here’s what we got: Multiple fires on the ship, life support failing and the shields are dangerously low.” Sydona said as she stepped off the turbolift.

Sounds of a person getting dressed in a rapidly fashion, along with the occasional tumble to the floor flow from Sydona’s Combadge. Stifling a laugh as she briskly moved through the corridors, the Klingon-Human hybrid made her way to engineering. “Try not to injure yourself before we make our way to the ship.”

“I can only imagine what shape the Structural Integrity Fields are. One thing that concerns me...how are we getting over there? Most Ion storms make transporting sheer hell.” Jenny asked with concern in her voice.

Sydona entered the doors in Engineering, quickly making her way to her station where she found her engineering tools. Thinking ahead slightly, she quickly grabbed Jenny’s engineering tool kit. “We’re going by shuttle.”

“Really? Lovely. Let’s just hope we don’t get caught in the Spider’s Web ourselves.” Jenny said flippantly.

“We’ll have to rely on the Science office to give us the right shield modulation to weather the Ion storm. Thing is...if that storm can immobilize a Nova class ship...” Sydona paused as she looked over the McKenzie’s system status before she left Engineering.

“A shuttle would be essentially screwed.” Jenny replied.

“Exactly. This is going to be a tricky on to pull off.” Sydona said as she made her way to the shuttle bay. “V’Krull to Guadarama. I need two power generators in the shuttle bay. Site to Site transport.”

A voice cuts through on the Combadge. “Done Chief.”

A small smile crosses Sydona’s face and she rounds the corner to see Ensign Jenny Summers in uniform, holding an extra phaser and Engineering Tricorder. Ensign Summers tosses the Tricorder to the Hybrid which she caught and quickly holstered, due to the phaser being tossed moments after. Shaking her head and chuckling, Sydona handed Jenny her engineering tools. The two officers made their way to the shuttle, loading up the power generators. Once situated in the shuttle, the two officers checked and rechecked the ships systems...making sure that the shuttle was ready for the mission at hand.

“V’Krull to the bridge. Captain, Engineering Team Alpha is in place and ready to go.”

Once Crist got to the Shuttle bay, he meet up with Hughes, they entered and Crist noticed the engineer. “Ensign, how are things here. Guess we need to wait on the Doc.”

=Bridge=

As the risky rescue operation was being put together David looked for alternatives that would put his crew in less danger. For the moment he did not found any but he keep looking at sensors trying to find something useful.

"Mr. Shar, head to Shuttlebay 1 and take part of the mission operation. Don't forget to carry a few transporter intensification so that we can establish a lock on the survivors."

Then, David tapped his comm-badge:

"Lt. Crist, Mr. Shar is heading Shuttlebay 1. Once he gets there and you have assembled the four rescue teams initiate the operation without waiting for my order. Time is of the essence."

=Science Lab=

Once provided with two sets of transporter enhancers, some diagnostic equipment and his Scientific Tricorder, Valarian headed to Shuttlebay 1 accompanied by Mr. Junyo, the assistant Science Officer. They would board the Solstice and try to establish a reliable transporter signal to help evacuate the survivors.

On his way he was calculating the magnitude of the Ion storm they had entered and it was affecting sensors and transporters. He would need to find a transporter frequency were the storm interference was not so intense. Normally that task would require several hours but the survivors did not have that luxury. He would have to perform it in a matter of minutes.

A few moments later he was on his destination and there he found the Chief Engineer and one of her assistants. The same could be said for the Chief Security officer and one of his men.

Only the medical officer remained to arrive to the room and then they would leave for the damaged ship.

The shuttle had been prepped and was ready for launch. The last to enter the shuttle bay was a four man medical team. As the four man medical team arrived, Crist nodded and gave out his orders,

"Ok, Shar, V'Krull and Summers, take this shuttle pod. Hughes, go to Shuttle Bay 2, take 2 medics with you and launch from there. As for me, I'll launch from Shuttle Bay 3 with the other two medics. We'll all meet over there, clear."

With everyone nodding with agreement, the mission was underway.

Crist, Hughes and the 4 medics left the Shuttle Bay, as the others were getting in the shuttle pod. As the group got to an intersection, Crist and Hughes nodded as they parted ways. Now there were only two medics with Crist as they made it to shuttle bay 3. The three boarded the shuttle pod and launched from the ship. As the pod left the Ship, he could feel the violate storm, although they hadn't entered yet. The three shuttle pods formed up and entered the storm together. It was a bumpy ride, but it was necessary. Once at the Solstice, Crist opened a channel,

"Crist to Solstice, This is Lt. Daniel Crist of the USS McKenzie, we're here to rescue you, we're in shuttle pods and need you to open your shuttle bay."

Crist could barely hear a response.

"This is...lstice,damage every..... shuttle....open."

After the distorted message, the doors of the shuttle bay opened. The containment shield seemed to be down and that will slow down the evacuation, if we need to open and close the door to get in and out. Once all three shuttle pods landed inside the shuttle bay door closed behind them and the bay was then pressurized.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Ensign Jenny Summers broke the silence. "Thank God. We made it in one piece. This shuttle took a beating going through the storm."

“I know. Hopefully it can make it back. The rest are being used for Evac. Grab your gear Jen. We got work to do.” Sydona said.

The team then stepped out to meet with one of the Solstice crew.

“Hello I’m Lt. Crist of the McKenzie, this is Lt. Shar, and Ensign V’Krull, were here too help.”

The Solstice crewman said,

“Thank god, I’m Lt. Cmdr. David Leduc, Chief Engineer.”

Crist, “I see that your containment shield is offline.”

Leduc, “Yeah, there not much that’s still online. So how are you going to get us out of here?”

Crist, “At first, we’ll use shuttle pods, but our Engineering officer, Ensign V’Krull, is going to try to get the transporters to work, if you want to help her.

Leduc, “Sure, anything I can do.”

Crist “But for now, we need to get the wounded on the shuttle pods and get them back to the McKenzie. Medical teams get to work, stabilize the injured and bring them here for evac. V’Krull, Summers, work with Leduc on getting the transporters online. We’re counting on you. Shar and Hughes, the three of us will pilot the shuttle pods.”

They heard a very familiar voice say something at the very moment she didn’t want to hear.

WARNING. HULL DECOMPRESSION EMINENT. 8 MINUTES UNTIL TOTAL STRUCTURAL FAILURE.

“Damn it. It’s worse than we thought! There’s no way the crew have enough time to do this evacuation!”

Jenny stumbled out of the shuttle due to the turbulence and explosions the storm was causing. “Hull decompression?! Come on! That would mean the...”

“Structural Integrity fields are down. We need to get them back online to buy the crew time. Nova class ship... Engineering is Deck 7. Let’s move.”

With that, the medical teams went off to find survivors, and the engineers went off to work, while the 3 remaining officers stood there, in the Solstice's shuttle bay, and waited to begin the evacuation.

The two engineering officers and the Science officer headed to Engineering. The corridors they traveled were bathed in red flashing lights amidst the smoke and occasional flames. Panels exploded as officers quickly made their way through, leaving a danger that the officers of the McKenzie are charging headfirst into.

Finally at Engineering, Sydona took a deep breath and entered the command override sequence to get the doors to open. Sparks flew at them as they entered the room. Some of the display panels have caught aflame. Quickly darting from console to another, Sydona finally found one that works.

“Fantastic. Just lovely. Majority of the SIF generators are damaged. There is only a handful left. Not enough to erect a field that will hold together a ship.” Sydona said in a frustrated tone. Her fingers jettied back and forth across

the console as she watched the display screen in front of her.

“The main computer core is still online for the moment. We need to get the SIF up.” Jenny replied.

WARNING. HULL DECOMPRESSION EMINENT. 7 MINUTES UNTIL TOTAL STRUCTURAL FAILURE.

Sydonia sighed briefly to calm her nerves, then set about working on the task before her. “I’m going to try to get power to the few generators that are working. With the damage that the ship is taking, there are only a few power conduit pathways that we can use.”

Jenny abruptly turned from Sydonia and Valarian Shar and headed out of engineering.

“Jenny?!?” Sydonia asked.

“I’m heading to deck 4. Transporters would speed up the evacuation...but with all that is going on...we need the Core Computer online for that. I’ll work on the Computer Core.” Jenny replied.

“Roger that.” Sydonia nods to Jenny before the Blonde Ensign darts off into the corridor. The Klingon-Human hybrid turns to Valarian Shar to address him.

“So...how much do you know about transporters?”

=Solstice Shuttle Bay=

A few minutes pasted and then the three officers could hear noise. The medical team had brought survivors, though most of them had minimal injuries. Crist thought, there must be more people that are worst off, but there’s no time to argue, we need to scramble to get as many off this ship as possible, that is, if V’Krull can’t get the transporter online in time.

“Ok, guys, lets get these folks on board so we can take them back.”

The three officers helped the injured crew into the shuttle pods and took off, back to the McKenzie. Once back the at the McKenzie, Crist opened a channel,

“McKenzie, we have injured, lock on to everyone but me, Hughes, and Shar and transport them straight to sick bay.

As the injured disappeared, the shuttle pods made a 180 and headed back to the Solstice, to repeat the trip, again and again.

=McKenzie Bridge=

'I hate ion storms!' Phoenix declared to himself. After the away teams had finally reported in that they were ready, he had taken them into the tempest. Straight from the get-go, the storm had crashed against them again and again. But, thankfully the McKenzie was a tough little ship, and with only a minimal effort on Gallant's part, they made it to the Solstice.

Then came the real challenge: "anchoring" next to the distress ship as close as he could make it without crashing into it. After a few close-calls, Phoenix pulled it off. The second the shuttles were on the Solstice, he put a little breathing room between the two ships. Now, he waited for the first wave of shuttles to begin the return trip. As soon

as the sensors picked them up, Phoenix would have to move McKenzie back next to the Solstice. I can't wait for all of this to be over with.

David was monitoring the situation from his chair. Several people had been rescued from the Solstice but they were only a 15% of the assigned crew. The rest were still waiting to be rescued or already found to be dead.

The use of the transporter enhancers had allowed for an increased number of people rescued but they were working erratically and each transporter cycle took for more than 8 minutes. In addition the damage that the ship had suffered made impossible for many crew members to reach the designated transport areas so rescuing them was almost impossible. Currently the problem was not the sum of people to be rescued but to find them and take them to the hangar bays where the shuttle pods were docking and the transporter areas were located.

Without more options David decided that it was best not to put his crew on an unnecessary risks.

"Mr. Gallant, be prepared to get away of the Solstice 2 minutes before its integrity field totally collapses. We don't want to be caught in the resulting explosion."

He had been afraid that order would come sooner or later. Thanks to their late arrival, there was precious little time to complete their rescue. He kept an eye on the one of the displays of his console. Come on guys, he silently pleaded with the away teams, hurry it up!

=Solstice Corridor=

"I know my way around transporters but I seriously doubt we can do something useful with them with the damage they have suffered...however I could do something to avoid more damage on the ship....If I can create a temporary subspace pulse from the ship we should be free of the ion storm for a few minutes. That will help the shuttlespods to do their work."

"For that I need to modify a torpedo and manually detonate it. I am sorry but I have to leave you here and get to Torpedo storage. You should try to recover some SIF in order to have more time."

With that Valarian left the Engineer and head to the nearby Torpedo storage area...

=Solstice Corridor=

Ensign Jenny Summers sprinted through the corridors of the Nova class ship, dodging falling bulkheads and various debris to get to the nearest turbo lift. Thankfully the Turbolift was still operational.

"We're gonna pull this off. Please dear lord let us pull this off." Jenny mumbled to herself before reaching deck 2. As the Turbolift doors opened, the Ensign was greeted by smoke from the deck. Three officers stumbled onto the lift.

"Hurry and get to the shuttlebay! You need to get off the ship!" Jenny exclaimed as she pushed past the officers.

One of the Male security officers grabbed Jenny's arm, halting her momentarily. "The deck has been evacuated! Are you crazy? You won't last long in there!!"

Pulling her arm free, Jenny stepped onto the deck...coughing periodically. "Crazy? Maybe. Someone has to buy you time to get off this ship. Get going."

The Turbolift doors close and Jenny made her way to the Computer Core. Wasting no time with blonde locks flowing behind her, she made it to a console and accessed the main systems.

“Summers to V’Krull, Syd...we got problems. I got cascading failures all over the place! I’m attempting to route all remaining system control to the back up systems.”

Meanwhile in Engineering, Sydona V’Krull continues to work on the Structural Integrity Fields. Running into roadblock after roadblock, the frustrated Klingon-Human hybrid finally started playing to her strengths: Thinking outside the box.

“V’Krull here. Jen, Shar is attempting to make a Subspace Pulse by manually detonating a Torpedo after it’s fired from the ship.” Sydona replied.

There was a momentary pause before Jenny responded. “Umm...I’m no Science officer...but due to the fact that the hull and pretty much the entire structure of the ship is compromised...”

“Yes. The shockwave created by the blast would kill us all unless the SIF is back in place.” Sydona said.

Chuckling nervously...Jenny asked, “So...any ideas Chief?”

“I already reconfigured the inertial dampening field generators to act as makeshift structural integrity field generators. The makeshift generators will make up for the damaged ones. I figured since this ship isn’t going anywhere...might as well make use of them.”

“Nice.” Jenny replied. “Okay. All Core Computer systems are rerouted through the backup systems. I also took the liberty to make sure the manual torpedo firing sequence and controls are running on the backup systems as well.”

“Good job Sunshine! Now, bringing the generators online. Computer, initiate generator sequence Beta 1.” Sydona said.

The Nova class ship rocked and swayed briefly before settling. The occasional rumble did effect the ship periodically...but the computerized warning did cease. A series of computerized sounds poured from Sydona’s console.

“Okay. The field is holding...but it’s only going to buy us an additional 5 minutes of time. Not to mention I have to manually calibrate it so it holds.”

“Roger that Syd. Summers to Shar, what’s your status?” Jenny asked.

=Solstice Torpedo Room=

Valarian was working on the modifications of the torpedo when his comm-badge relayed the Engineer's question:

"I am finishing it as we speak. I will manually fire the torpedo and set it to detonate 5km from us. The modifications I made will make it unharmed to us as I have removed most of its antimatter charge. If I am certain the subspace pulse it will create will render most of the ionization in the area inert for a few minutes. That will help out pilots and the transporter operations."

A few moments later a last calibration was performed on the torpedo which now was ready to be launched.

"Shar to V'krull! The torpedo is ready. I am firing it in 5...4...3...

2...1...0 The modified torpedo was fired from the Solstice and detonated a few kilometers away from the ship. The energy released caused almost no concussive wave. However it was far more luminous than the standard torpedo. David had to cover his eyes as the screen was not quick enough to diminish the brightness caused by the torpedo. Once it faded a curious environmental effect was starting to form in the area surrounding the ships. The colorful masses of gas of the storm were gaining transparency and becoming almost non-existent so that one could start to see black space as normal.

Quickly the assistant Science Officer informed everybody that the interference had considerably diminished and establishing a transporter lock was much easier now. In addition the ship had ceased to be rocked by the storm masses of moving gas and shuttles had it easier to dock on the McKenzie.

=McKenzie Bridge=

With the ion storm temporarily neutralized, Gallant's job had suddenly become much easier. He no longer had to fight the storm just to keep the ship anchored next to the Solstice. He sighed in relief. And continued waiting for the rescue effort to finish up.

"Ok everybody. We have only a few minutes of this tranquility. Let's make the most of it!"

Quickly everyone rushed to accelerate the rescue operations before the effect caused by Shar's torpedo dissipated.

=Solstice Engineering Room=

"Thank you Mr. Shar. Sorry for the doubt in the skills. I owe you a lunch. Jen, I'm rerouting Main power to the transporters that do work." Sydona said as she worked frantically at her console.

Jenny watched her displays as she saw system after system break down. "Hon...I'm losing the backup systems. Life support is gone on decks one, three and five. It's beginning to fail on deck two and seven."

"Great. The decks we are on. Lovely. Shar, if you can hear this...you might want to get to a shuttle and directly any that are left on your deck to either a shuttle or one of the transporters." Sydona continued to work on maintaining the power distribution to the structural integrity fields as well as the transporters. "Summers, move your blonde butt and get to a Jeffries Tube. The Turbolift in your area is out."

Tapping her badge and running to the nearest tube hatch with engineering tools in tow, the young ensign pulled on the manual release handle. Consoles and display panels began to spark and explode, causing the room to be engulfed in flame. She quickly closed the door behind her, quickly making her way down the tube itself. "Roger that. The Core computer just went boom. We have to get out of here."

"Okay, that kills the transporting from this end. Air is getting thin here. Summers, Shar...make it to a shuttle. V'Krull to McKenzie: What's the status of the evacuation on your end? The Solstice's internal scanners are offline."

=McKenzie Sickbay=

After returning from the shuttlebay, Bian's got to work.

"Ok everybody, listen up. We're going to use triage, but treat pain first unless they're in red condition. I need to approve any surgeries or risky drugs. No patient may be released until a detailed medical profile has been made and they are clear for some RnR somewhere on the ship. Anyone who isn't needed, clear out now and report to the shuttle bays to help receive patients. Everybody ready? Good. Let's go."

The first few minutes were hectic. He'd never imagined active duty like this, but it was going pretty smoothly. Within the first few minutes, the medical personnel were underway and the only two critical condition patients were in surgery. The others were beginning to be administered medicine and some extra beds were being rolled out. The doctor finally began to lead his personnel with more confidence. Bains had just started to patch up some ion burns when he started to grin.

=Solstice Shuttlebay=

As the shuttles landed on the Solstice, to start the second evacuation trip, Shar was called to help the engineers, V'Krull and Summers. Crist thought to himself, Great, were one pilot short. A moment later a man walked up carrying a crewman with a broken leg.

"I see your one man short son, I Commander Richard Morgan, I can pilot the third shuttlepod."

Crist, "That's great, we could use you, once we're loaded up, we can start the second trip."

As the shuttles filled up with injured, the three shuttles took off once again. The ride was still as rough as ever. The shuttles docked with the McKenzie and helped the injured off so they could return for another trip. On the trip back to the Solstice, there was suddenly a bright flash, a flash that almost blinded him.

Crist, "Agh, they could have warned us, Crist to shuttlepods, is everyone ok."

Hughes, "Hughes here, I'm ok, thankfully I was looking at the console."

Morgan, "Morgan here, yea I'm fine too"

Crist noticed that the ride began to get smoother and thought that it might have been worth the big flash that could have blinded him. After that thought, he smiled and knew that they might have a chance to get the rest of the crew off the Solstice. The 3 shuttles landed and once again loaded up the injured for another trip.

=McKenzie Bridge=

With the news of the arrival of the shuttlepods on the Solstice for their second run the mood on the bridge improved considerably. Rescue operations were proceeding better now that the interference had been weakened.

However the Nova-class ship would not resist much more and David knew it.

Suddenly the operations officer relayed a message that David was expecting:

"Sir, engineering crews on the Solstice inform that life support and the structural integrity field are about to collapse. They have less than 10 minutes to abandon the ship."

David understood that nothing more could be done:

"Jellico to away teams, you have to leave the ship now! Come back with the people you have now and don't be delayed. The Solstice will be destroyed in 10 minutes. Repeat: Abandon ship."

=Solstice Shuttle Bay=

The shuttles landed on the Solstice for their fifth trip, then came, the Captains voice,

"Jellico to away teams, you have to leave the ship now! Come back with the people you have now and don't be delayed. The Solstice will be destroyed in 10 minutes. Repeat: Abandon ship."

Crist, "Great, OK PEOPLE LETS GET MOVING." He muttered to himself "We'll strap people on the top if needed."

Crist began helping more people into the shuttle pods and waited for the rest of the away team. Finally Shar, V'Krull, and Summers arrived.

Crist, "Good, guys get on fast, were taking off."

The shuttles loaded everyone that was in the shuttle bay and took off, with Shar, V'Krull, and Summers on board. The shuttle was extremely cramped, as they stuffed as many people as they could inside, even if it was over the safety limit. The trip back to the McKenzie, became a little bumpy, it seemed that the effect that was caused by Shar was starting to dissipate. The shuttles were finally back at the ship, and landed safely. Crist then began helping the survivors off. Suddenly Morgan came over the comm.,

"I'm going back for more."

Crist, "No it's too late."

Morgan, "Maybe, but there my crew, I have to try."

Morgan took off in a shuttle pod, the trip became far more violate, as the effect that Shar created was no longer in effect. Morgan's shuttle was suddenly hit by a bolt, and began to lose control of his shuttle. The shuttle was now completely out of control, and it collided with the Solstice. The Solstice was destroyed by the collision. With the rescue, they saved a total of 53 out of 80, which included Captain Hsuuri, Rachel Pasqual, Tevek, and David LeDuc.

Crist shook off the death of Morgan, and began helping the injured to sickbay and the mess hall.

=McKenzie Bridge=

With the order made, it was only a matter of time before the shuttlepods made their return trip. All except for one. What's he doing? Phoenix wondered to himself as he watched a solitary shuttlepod make its way back to the Solstice. He watched in horror as the ion storm hit it, sending careening out of control. Desperately, Phoenix tried to lock onto the pod with the tractor beam. Alas, his efforts were too late. The pod crashed into the ship. But that wasn't the worst part. The heavily-weakened Solstice could no longer take the stress. The last impact sent off a chain reaction.

"Oh no." He whispered to himself. The McKenzie was still very close to the ship.

"Get us away from her!" Somebody shouted behind him.

"Too late!" He replied before the explosion crashed into their starboard side. Phoenix clutched his console as the ship listed to one side. Then, his a part of his console (ironically the tractor control part) exploded into his face. "AAAHHHH!" Phoenix roared as he reacted too late and fell to the floor. Someone tried to pull him toward the exit, but he shoved them off. Holding a hand to his bleeding face, he jumped back into his chair. "Captain! That explosion knocked out half of my starboard impulse engines! I can only get us moving at half impulse. I don't know how long the ship can last, so I suggest you get somebody to fix it!" Finished with his recommendation, Phoenix began piloting the ship to the nearest edge of the ion storm.

=McKenzie Sickbay=

A few emergency beds had been set up in Sickbay. Some of the medical information from the Solstice was transferred to the ship and matched up with medical information from Starbase 10. The injuries now seemed to consist of mild cut, burns, bumps, bruises, and broken bones, along with a few concussions and a punctured stomach. The doctor signed a PADD to remove the glass from the stomach and got to work giving some of the patients some basic scans and sending them on their way to the mess hall. Darum remembered to send some personnel to the mess hall to help with relief efforts.

=McKenzie Corridor=

Staggering through the corridor toward Sickbay, Sydona carried her friend and engineering partner in crime...Jenny Summers. The two women were grateful that they were back on the McKenzie.

"Syd, you can put me down. I know I have to be hurting your arm as well as your shoulder. I can have someone else...ow...help me to sickbay." Jenny said, trying her best to not think about her leg.

"I'm fine Jenny. Don't worry. I got you. We're almost there." Sydona was totally focused on helping her friend. Images started to flood her mind of her time served on the USS Thane and how many fine officers were lost due to the attack of the Romulans. Fighting to keep her thoughts focused on the present, she shifted Jenny on her shoulders...forcing most of the Ensign's weight down on her own injury. Pain spiked through her shoulder and arm...forcing the sense of urgency to proceed forward.

The sickbay beds as well as sickbay was full of the injured, some from the McKenzie...most however from the Solstice. One of the medical officers from the Solstice that was up and about was treating some of the newly arriving patients. The medical officer raises an inquisitive brow at the Klingon-Human hybrid in a tattered and torn uniform, carrying another officer over her shoulder.

"Let me guess, transporting wasn't an option to get there huh?" The medical officer quipped as he donned his tricorder and began scanning Jenny.

Sydona smirked, trying her best to mask her own pain. "Walking is good exercise. Totally overlooked by most standards."

The medical officer chuckled as he finished up his scans of the Ensign. "Seems like she several fractures on her lower leg. We'll get that taken care of shortly. Looks like you've already received something for the pain."

Jenny nods, letting her blonde locks partially cover her face. "Yeah. I'd be crying like a newborn if they hadn't."

Jenny looked over to Sydona who leaning on an adjacent wall with her eyes closed...hugging herself.

Taking even and slow breaths, the Klingon-Human hybrid tried her best not to focus on all the pain hitting her now due to the decreased adrenaline levels. The medical officer began scanning the Engineer for injuries while Sydona tapped her combadge, contacting the bridge. Before she could speak, all the lights in the room flickered briefly.

“V’Krull to the bridge. What the hell is going on?”

“We lost the impulse engines! We need to get away from this Ion storm or we’ll end up like the Solstice!” the bridge officer responded.

Sydona took in a deep breath and pushed off the wall making her way to the door slowly. The medical officer quickly moved in front of her...blocking her path.

“There is no way I’m letting you out of here. You have some internal injuries as well as a dislocated shoulder.”

“As my brother would say: My injuries are irrelevant. The needs of the Collective are priority.” Sydona replied, pushing past the officer in front of her. As she walked out of the sickbay, she grabbed the edge of the doorway with her right hand. Gripping it as tight as she could...she took a quick step forward and jerked her body, popping her shoulder back in place. Wincing slightly, she tried to pick up the pace in movement...but could only manage a light jog.

It seems like an hour had past by the time Sydona reached engineering, when actually it was only a few minutes. She stumbled into Engineering, barely able to keep her feet when a few of the on duty officers helped her to the nearest console. Trying not to blackout, Sydona started barking out orders. Despite her condition, she worked on her console.

“V’Krull to bridge. I’ve realigned the transfer relays and conduit power. Essentially, we’re going to feed as much power into the impulse engines as we can. It’ll get us out of here...but it’ll only leave us with thrusters and warp after we’re done due to the fact that this will literally fry the impulse engines.”

Sydona looked at a few displays before continuing. “For some reason the residual bubble and the explosion of the Solstice has effected the Ion Storm, making it close to impossible to create a stable warp field. So we’ll need to do something now before all of our systems get fried in the process.”

=McKenzie Bridge=

God bless her soul, Gallant thought as his readings showed the impulse engines powering up. He immediately accelerated the ship to full impulse. He read his displays. "20 seconds until we've cleared the storm." Gallant watched as the distance between the ship and escape shrank.

"10 seconds."

C'mon. Just a little more, he pleaded with his ship. "Five seconds." A rumble traveled through the ship. His engine displays turned red. Gallant swore.

Then he remembered one of his favorite facts of space: no gravity. Without the law of inertia in effect, the ship continued onwards at full speed. "Clearing the storm in 3...2...1." The viewscreen filled with black, empty space and bright, twinkling stars. "We're free."

Gallant relaxed in his chair and sighed. I'm so tired. He realized that blood was still pouring out of his head. The wound must have been deeper than I thought. Despite this, he wasn't worried. In fact, he was feeling very detached.

A nagging voice in the back of his head demanded he went to sickbay. Phoenix saw no reason not to. So, he stood up. He was dimly aware of someone next to him that seemed to be concerned. Oh well. Gallant managed three steps before collapsing to the floor.

=McKenzie Corridor=

Valarian left Sickbay and headed to the bridge. There he found his Captain and some of the Senior officers. All were recovering one way or the other from the recent events but now they had to clear the storm and get home to deliver the Solstice's survivors.

He seated on his chair in front of the Science console and checked their trip home. Hopefully there will be no more surprises along the road.

=McKenzie Sickbay=

Dr. Darum Bains struggled to get around his already full sickbay taking care of the wounded and making diagnoses on less injured personnel. Aside from the shocked, moaning or crying littered crew, Dr. Bains heard more of a commotion towards the front of his sickbay.

"Ma'am, if you could please sit or lie down on the floor, we can get you a doctor..." said one of the nurses.

"I don't need a doctor, dammit! I AM one! Let me help attend to my crew as well as yours!" she yelled back at the nurse, unaware that she herself had a serious gash wound going down her left arm.

"They just brought our captain in from the shuttle bay, she was knocked unconscious when her whole body hit the shuttle's bulkhead." the presumed doctor said as a Catian wearing captain pips was carted in. Running her medical tricorder over her captain, she continued.

"She's definitely suffering from a concussion, a few broken ribs and some internal bleeding. We need to take care of this now! Where is your medical physician? Tell them Dr. Rachel Pascual from the Solstice needs their assistance!"

Crist continued to help the injured, but after he helped a few to sickbay, he moved on to the mess hall, to help the medics there. He applied what little medical knowledge he had, to help the wounded. He then taped his comm. badge,

"All off duty security officers, report to the sick bay or the mess hall, to help with the injured."

Crist thought to himself, 'I'm sure the doc will be thankful to get more helping hands.' A minute later the shaking of the ship stopped, 'We must be out of the storm' he thought. Crist stayed in the mess hall, and continued to help the injured until they reached Starbase 10.

Darun ran frantically around Sick Bay. One of the patients was making a ruckus and was demanding he could leave. Bains ran over and ordered some of the personnel to give him some antihistamine. A patient was carted by and

the doctor turned to see another nurse.

“Sir, Dr. Pascual from the Solstice has arrived. He wants to see you about his captain's surgery right away.” She said.

“Thank you Mrs. Manning.” He replied. The doctor walked over to an unknown lieutenant.

“Excuse me,” Asked Bains, “Are you the Dr. Pascual?”

The comm. chirped: All off duty security officers, report to the sick bay or the mess hall, to help with the injured.”

Darum groaned.

Dr. Pascual looked over at the tall Andorian. "Dr. Bains, I presume." she said as she handed her medical tricorder to him. "My captain needs surgery right away. Are you free to help me out?"

Dr. Bains nodded as they both headed toward the surgical bay and begun to work on Capt. Hsuuri.

=McKenzie Bridge=

The McKenzie finally made it out of the storm and they were en route to Starbase 10 at maximum possible speed. The ship had suffered some damage but now the crew was concentrating in attending the survivors of the Solstice.

The engineering crew, lead by Ensign V'Krull were proceeding with reparations of the impulse engine and the medical staff was tending to the wounds of the crew.

Once tasks were issued, David headed to Sickbay to ask about the Solstice's Captain condition.

=McKenzie Sickbay=

Darkness. Quiet...light, noise. Slowly, Gallant opened his eyes. He was in Sickbay, and there was chaos everywhere. He started to get up, but a nearby medical officer pushed him back down. "You shouldn't be moving, sir. You gave us a bit of a scare when they brought here with half of your blood gone. We managed to fix that, but you'll need to rest for a couple of days."

Phoenix would have protested, but for the brief amount of time that he was sitting up, he'd been struck hard by a dizziness. For now, he would have to follow the medic's orders. He nodded, and the medic rushed off to help someone else. And all Phoenix could do now was watch the scene unfold in front of him.

Captain Jellico entered Sickbay, just as McKenzie dropped out of warp, it was traveling at low warp due to some damage, and approached Starbase 10. His comm. badge beeped. Bridge, “Captain, We’ve dropped out of warp and approaching Starbase 10. We’ve contacted them and are aware of our situation.”

Captain Jellico tapped his comm. badge and responded, “Good, go ahead and dock. Then help the survivors to the Starbase.”

Captain Jellico then walked up to a nurse and asked, “How are things here?”

The nurse responded, “Sir, I think we have things in hand now, the Doctor is in surgery. O sir, I believe the Captain

of the Solstice, wished to speak with you." The nurse pointed to a recovering patient. The Captain nodded and walked over to the woman and spoke,

"Hello, Captain, I'm Captain Jellico. I'm sorry we weren't able to save your ship, and my condolences about your XO. But on the side note, we were able to save most of your crew, 2/3's. We've just arrived at Starbase 10, and will be docking momentarily. I hope you're doing ok, despite what has happened."

Captain Hsuuri heard everything he said, but it was still too much to take in. She tried to sit up but one of the nurses gently pushed her back down on the bio bed, insisting she rest.

"Thank you, Captain." she said in a soft, raspy voice. "I appreciate everything you have done for us..."

Captain Jellico stayed with Hsuuri for a moment out of respect before he turned and left sickbay.

Capt. Hsuuri just laid on the bed, staring at the ceiling with commotion of the area around her. So many things went through her head. The board report, the eulogies, the mountains of paperwork, not to mention a reprimand for losing a ship.

She then felt the rumble throughout the ship as it connected with the docking moors. She sighed as she felt relieved that she and what remained of her crew were now safe.