

LOTUS FLEET

U.S.S. ALSEA



***"WRONG PLACE,
WRONG TIME"***

STAR TREK LOTUS FLEET

U.S.S. ALSEA

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Season 1, Episode 1

Main Characters:

Commander Thopor – Captain, Vulcan
Lieutenant Anthony Griffin – Chief Medical Officer, Human
Lieutenant Jamie Donaldson – Chief Tactical Officer, Human
Lieutenant K'Rrauw – Chief Science Officer, Caitian
Lieutenant Talak Rahl – Chief Engineering Officer, Human/Vulcan
Lieutenant Christopher Stevens – Chief Helm Officer, Human

Guest Characters:

Fleet Admiral Nova – Lotus Fleet Commanding Officer, Human
Rear Admiral Niomo Lire – Commanding Officer Starfleet Operations, Human
Fleet Captain Spawnnner – Chief of Starship Operations, Human
Senator Kimara Cretak – Romulan Senator, Romulan
Lieutenant Calderwood Kyran – Science Officer, Bajoran
Lieutenant Suran – Medical Officer, Vulcan
Lieutenant J/G Mezan Vol – Science Officer, Trill
Lieutenant J/G Ivo Alrobaye – Science Officer, Human
Ensign Sun – Engineering Officer, Human
Ensign Goln – Engineering Officer, Boolian
Ensign Wehnem – Nurse, Human
Ensign Trell – Medical Officer, Human
Ensign T'Lun – Engineering Officer, Human
Ensign Samot Kawto Defal Soe – Engineering Officer, Pahkwa-Thanh

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Thopor gathered the last of his personal attire from his ready room. His quarters had already been moved to the Alsea from the Umpqua. The stuff he had in the small box he would not let anyone touch. As Thopor toured the ship one last time he thought. *This was a good ship.* Only being in Command of her for a few months Thopor came to appreciate how well the ship had handled. The crew had all become friends. Most, to his surprise, was transferred along with him to the Alsea. But he had to say good bye to a few of them.

Turning toward the door Thopor walked onto the now empty bridge and made his way off the ship. The Starbase was full of people, seeing the Academy had just opened most where cadets. As Thopor walked the corridor he took note of his new Security Officers Quarters location on the PADD he was carrying.

Finally, Starfleet has given us a competent officer to fill the post. Thopor thought.

Thopor had decided to meet Lieutenant Jamie Donaldson before making his way to the ship and introducing himself. Rounding the corner Thopor got on the turbo lift.

"Deck 82." The trip took only a few seconds and then the doors opened.

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Donaldson woke up early this morning. He needed to pack, after a few weeks on Starbase 10 he had settled in. However this was the day that he would move to the Alsea, with excitement, controlled however much, he defiantly had a spring in his step.

Gathering his uniform together ready to put it on, Donaldson caught himself in-front of his bathroom mirror.

"Chief security/tactical officer, reporting for duty." He said out aloud.

With a smile he decided he would go and get something to eat. Putting on his uniform, two pips for lieutenant, he was proud of those two pips.

Away from the busy area of the Starbase here at the crew quarters section it was much quieter. Arriving at Lt. Donaldson quarters, Thopor pressed the terminal announcing his arrival.

Just as he was about to leave, the door chimed, the computer reported it was captain of the Alsea outside his door!

Donaldson straightened his uniform, cleared his throat and prepared to meet his new CO.

He pressed the button to open the door.

When the doors opened, Lt. Jamie Donaldson, a young human male stood shocked, and snapped to attention. Thopor took a good look at his new Tactical officer.

"Captain! Uh... I wasn't expecting you this early." Donaldson said.

"At ease Lt." Thopor raised an eyebrow. "I wanted to meet you first hand before heading to the Alsea. We have been without a Tactical officer for quite sometime and I wanted to measure you up so to say. I am headed that way now would you care to join me?"

Thopor looked behind the Lieutenant and saw all his stuff was packed and ready.

"We can inform Starbase 10 to move your stuff aboard to your quarters."

"Thank you captain for taking consideration in me, I'm very proud to have the opportunity to serve with you, the Alsea is a magnificent vessel, 'long range, tactical deployment' reads the mission statement sir."

There was an uneasy silence before Donaldson had the courage to ask another question.

Thopor being at ease with the silence, as they walked the corridor toward the turbo lift, walked with a short stride.

"May I ask you about the crew? I have read reports and all of them ready sound like heroes. What are they like?"

Choosing his words wisely Thopor started with a smooth grace to his voice.

"The crew is some of the finest Starfleet has to offer. Their expertise in their given fields are surpassed by few."

Rounding the corner they both stepped onto the turbo lift

"Docking bay 15."

The turbo lift moved quickly through the Starbase.

"I would hate to give you the wrong impression on them, or a preconceived notion. Better you to find out on your own..."

Thopor exited the turbo lift and walked over to the viewing platform. Looking out the window the both took in a breath. There they could see the U.S.S. Alsea in dry-dock. The ship was huge compared to the Umpqua.

Docking bay 15 looked standard Starfleet style, metallic colors with a bland colored carpet, however as captain Thopor and Lieutenant Donaldson looked out of the wide panoramic window the U.S.S. Alsea's internal and external lights light up the entire section of the space dock, the Alsea was a majestic ship with smooth curves and aerodynamic edges, its many phaser strips and photon and quantum torpedo tubes added a sense of power.

"The U.S.S. Alsea." Thopor stated.

Do I really get to serve on this ship? Donaldson thought to himself.

Captain Thopor's comm badge beeped and he tapped it. "Captain Thopor here."

"Captain Thopor report to my office at once!" Admiral Nova said.

Thopor turned towards Donaldson.

"Looks like you will have to make your way onto the ship alone, when you get aboard find Lt. Rahl and tell him I expect nothing less than perfection, he will understand." Said captain Thopor.

"Thank you sir for your views on the crew, I look forward to serving with you. I hope you enjoy your meeting."

Donaldson stood to attention and nodded respectfully towards his new CO, as captain Thopor turned and walked away, towards the turbo lift.

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Thopor arrived at Admiral Nova's office shortly later. Upon walking in Thopor was amazed at how it looked. There was no back wall, it was a window made up of a force field that overlooked the docking bay. In the distance Thopor could see the U.S.S. McKenzie, U.S.S. Alsea and another ship. It looked like a civilian make but to what accord he could not decide. To be honest it looked like somebody had taken it bits and pieces from other ships and molded them together.

Around the room there were artifacts from all across the galaxy, Thopor even noticed a model of the first ship the Admiral had served on. Degree after degree hung on the wall. The desk was probably the most simple piece of furniture in the room. Just the right size to fit not one but five terminals. *The Admiral surely had his hands full.* Thopor thought. He stood at attention in front of his desk until the Admiral acknowledged him.

"At ease Captain." His voice was commanding, even by Vulcan standards. If Thopor had tried to resist the urge to relax he would have failed.

"Have you had time to look over your new crew compliment for the Alsea?"

"Yes sir. I have." He replied in a sheepish manner.

"I have added two Ensigns to the list. After much debate over where to put them in the fleet I felt your ship would be the best." As he said this he slide a PADD across his desk for Thopor to look at.

Continuing the admiral said. "They are the first to go through the Academy."

Thopor looked at the PADD and read to himself.

Name: Samot Kawto Defal Soe
Race: Pahkwa - Thanh
Gender: Male
Married to: Keyota Tipa Defal Soe
Specialty: Engineering

Name: Keyota Tipa Defal Soe
Race: Pahkwa - Thanh
Gender: Female
Married Samot Kawto Defal Soe
Specialty: Science Officer

Being with child (Egg)
3 weeks to Hatch.
Special Care required from physician.

After a few minutes Thopor looked up.

"Pahkwa-Thanh? That's if I am correct the race that looks like the ancient Earth dinosaur called a Raptor, correct?"

"That it is. They are a very gentle and intelligent race. Your crew is already very diverse and I believed they would feel most comfortable on your ship. Not only that but you have a skilled Doctor that can care for the needs of the Egg."

Sliding another PADD across the table, the Admiral never missed a beat.

"Your orders are to respond to a Romulan distress call. Their military has been very busy as of late and they do not have the support to get to the ship in a timely manner. Time... is of the essence. I have taken the liberty to clear your departure with Starfleet. The last known coordinates are listed on the PADD. The area has been hostile for some time. You are authorized to use any force necessary. Do you have any question's Captain?"

Looking over the PADD Thopor took in all the information.

"No sir. I understand." He replied.

"Good, then hurry. Time is crucial in this manner." Nova ordered.

Thopor nodded turned and hurried out. *Time is always crucial.* Thopor thought as he now hurried back to the Alsea pressing his comm badge as he went.

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Rahl had just gotten back from eating and took a stroll along the wide hallways of the Starbase. There were various ships docked at the Lotus Fleet hub, but none of them were as impressive as the Prometheus-class ship sitting there. The U.S.S. Alsea had just been assigned to Lotus Fleet by Starfleet Command, and she was certainly one of the most advanced starship in the fleet, though some would argue that the Nehalem was.

However, none of them had sensors quite as new or as impressine as the Umpqua's. At that thought, Rahl filled with pride.

Rahl hadn't been in his quarters for a couple of days now, since there was no need. He was

having fun spending time with some fellow officers and trying out some of the therapeutic massages that the Starbase offered. Life was good. He would be happy to return to the Umpqua once they got their mission, but for now he was content just to roam around the massive structure.

In the distance, Rahl saw a tall human gazing out at the Alsea.

Donaldson looked towards his new ship, its gleaming hull and dazzling light show almost hypnotized him. "Better get moving." He said to himself.

Donaldson took in the last far-reaching views of the Starbase docks, and, just as he was about to leave a voice next to him spoke aloud.

"Beautiful ship isn't she? A Prometheus-class just assigned here. I haven't seen you before Lieutenant. I'm Lieutenant Rahl, Chief Engineer of the Umpqua. Are you assigned to some of the other ships here?"

Donaldson, a little stunned by the appearance of another person, looking at him, the tall, part Vulcan stood proud with an almost, ALMOST smile, but not quite enough to register on any human scale, it was certainly one to register on a Vulcan one.

Rahl chuckled and shook his head in disbelief. "I haven't seen you before Lieutenant." He repeated. "I'm Lieutenant Rahl, Chief Engineer of the Umpqua. Are you assigned to some of the other ships here?"

Donaldson introducing himself said. "Jamie Donaldson, chief tactical officer U.S.S. Alsea, it's nice to meet you. The Chief engineer of the Umpqua was, Talak Rahl, but now haven't you been moved to the Alsea?"

Just as Donaldson had finished the comm badges of both lieutenants rang out, captain Thopor's voice boomed with urgency. "Captain Thopor to Senior Staff. If you haven't not noticed our orders has changed. Report to the U.S.S. Alsea briefing room for a mission briefing on the double. Captain out."

"Well seeing as you are the chief engineer, care to join me to the Alsea?" Asked Donaldson

Rahl was stunned to hear about being moved to the Alsea. It just wasn't possible.

Turning his head around slowly, Rahl felt his eyes narrow with antipathy. He knew he shouldn't have been irritated by the other officer, but at the moment he was the only one in sight.

"Very well." Rahl said stiffly. *Oh boy, Captain Thopor is going to hear from me...* He thought. Rahl walked in silence with Lieutenant Donaldson until they reached the ready room aboard the Alsea, where Thopor was waiting. It was all Rahl could do to not take off his pips and launch them at Thopor's face, but somehow Rahl resisted the idea and stood as still as he could until the other officers arrived for the debriefing.

Thopor looked up from a PADD, then took 2 other PADDs and slide them across one to Rahl and one to Donaldson.

"Rahl..." Thopor noticed the shear look in his eyes, was he about to cry or throw a rage?

"A Prometheus class, an engineers dream, I know how hard you worked on the Umpqua and its upgrades, and that is why you were chosen. To continue your outstanding service. At this time I want you to take note of your new Ensign."

Turning to Donaldson. "And you have met our new Chief Tactical Officer Jamie Donaldson, look over your PADDs and hold questions until the others arrive."

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K'Rrau had been re-familiarizing himself with the ship he helped develop the sensors for, about 30 years ago. Had it really been that long, he thought. Most of the time was spent in a cryo-chamber though, so how long would it be without that? He calculated it quickly to 12 years. He did a mental note to check what, if any, changes they have made to the ship before they left for their next mission.

When K'Rrau heard the Captain's voice over the ship's intercom, calling for a mission briefing, he rushed off to the nearest turbolift. When he got there he sat down at the table with the rest of the senior officers awaiting the start of the briefing.

Stevens rushed in quickly and unprepared trying to appear at least to be on time. He snuck in right behind the much bigger K'Rrau and quietly took a seat in the new briefing room. With the rush to the briefing Stevens didn't have time to enjoy cruising around the ship. He had to do that later. He awaited the start of the meeting.

Thopor handed out the remainder of the PADDs, as K'Rrau, Stevens and Doc all took their seats, Thopor stood and moved to the wall terminal and pulled up their mission.

Rahl was still seething with hate when he took his seat in the debriefing room. Not even wanting to look through the PADD, Rahl was content to stare at the table in a vain attempt to drill a hole through it.

The doctor approached Captain Thopor aboard the Alsea. He had moved his belongings over a few hours earlier and had received a summons to the new Briefing room.

"You requested my presence sir." Asked the doctor.

"Yes Doctor, I have something for you."

The Captain led the doctor towards a case on the table and opened it. Inside, was an egg, it appeared to belong to a reptilian species. The captain handed the case to Dr. Griffin.

"How would you like it sir, hard boiled..... or scrambled?" Said the doctor, in a vain attempt to amuse the captain.

The captain was far from amused, and the grin on the doctor's face soon disappeared.

"Ehm, sorry sir, I will arrange suitable incubation after the briefing... sir."

Doctor Griffin stood to attention, turned about and headed for his seat, highly embarrassed by his actions.

"Starfleet has picked up a faint Romulan Military distress call. We are to respond to it at the coordinates on this map. Apparently the Romulan Senate constant arguments over whom will take charge has put them in a position where they lack the ships to respond, and we are the closest to make it in a timely manner. I have taken the liberty to have all your personal items transferred over this morning from the Umpqua. When you get to your quarters on Deck 5 I would like to give you all more time to get familiar with the ship however, we need to depart. It will take us approximately 29 hours to reach the Romulan ship. Use this time to get your things in order. I expect reports on all systems in 2 hours. Also there is a report on the shakedown mission in the logs Starfleet completed before it she was transported to Lotus Fleet. I am sure you have all seen the box in front of the Doctor. It contains an Egg. Yes, an egg. The Alsea is far from the Umpqua. We have 150 crewman and officers aboard: 63 Families and 17 Children. Although I have never understood Humans' drive for bringing there families with them it is Starfleet's policy.

Thopor retook his seat. "Are there any questions? If not, then report to duty. We depart in an hour. After that you can take care of your departments' agendas."

Everything that the Captain said sounded absolutely ludicrous to Rahl from the egg to the number of crewman assigned to the U.S.S. Alsea. Although the ship could be automated, an excursion into Romulan space was no place to test how functional an automated starship could be. When his jaw unlocked, perhaps Rahl could find it in himself to kindly...and calmly request some additional crewman to engineering.

At the end of the meeting, Rahl was ready to leave when Lieutenant K'Rrauw made a rather sensible remark.

K'Rrauw had pondered for a moment. Then he had waited for someone else to say something first. When it had been silent for a while he couldn't stay quiet any longer.

"Captain, if I may say something. I find it highly unusual that a deep space tactical vessel would carry children and families aboard. I know it is not my place to question Starfleets orders, but while in combat I do hope we will have procedures to safeguard the children and to prevent them from interfering with ship operations? This is after all, not a Galaxy-class. Think of the children."

K'Rrauw leaned back in his seat. Waiting for the captain's response.

Stevens smirked at K'Rrauw's question. Having parents who were always away and busy on assignment he would have loved being with them. K'Rrauw probably had not had the situation Stevens had and couldn't understand the need for families. To separate such young and needy children from their parents going on such dangerous assignments was a cruel fate for a kid.

Stevens was too young to settle down and in fact he couldn't really decide if a family was right for him, even though he had often thought of meeting the certain lady that would sweep him off his feet. Still, for those older officers and crewman he could certainly understand why they would want their families.

Turning toward K'Rrauw, Thopor answered. "I too feel the same as you, however, Starfleet has always had a strong desire to keep families close." Taking a breath and leaning back in his seat the captain continued.

"And to be fair we are not looking for a fight. Hopefully in every situation that puts us in harms way we can achieve a diplomatic solution. I understand as well as all of you that it's illogical to assume we won't get into a fight from time to time. That's why I have to depend on my crew, each and every one of you."

Why were children assigned to the ship? Certainly Starfleet would be smart enough to assign officers and crewman without children...But no matter, as long as those little brats stayed out of engineering. Rahl could care less about who was aboard.

And if one of them did stray into engineering...well he could always lock them inside a Jefferies tube or something. It'd be a very educational experience for them. They would learn how to override standard locking commands as well as learn that they need to stay out of engineering. Suddenly remembering that a Prometheus-class vessel had three parts, Rahl let out a long sigh since he now had to worry about three engineering bays as well as three warp cores. I definitely need more engineering personnel. He thought.

Thopor took a second to look at each of the senior officers finally falling on Rahl whom was looking at the table... the room was silent for an extended time until he finally looked up.

Thopor observed Rahl let out a long sigh. "Rahl would you like to say something?"

With no response he continued. "To keep the ship and its crew both young and old safe and from harms way. Starfleet didn't just randomly pick us for this ship or mission. We have all been chosen based on the skills and technical expertise that we have acquired over the years."

Thopor stood up. "If there are no further questions, you have got 1 hour to get your personal belongings in order before we depart."

Thopor watched as K'Rrauw got up and stomped out. The huge Caitian sure could make a scene if he wanted to. Or if he didn't want to, he was huge so it would be a scene for him just to enter the room if you never seen one. Stevens filed out slowly behind K'Rrauw. Rahl got up and approached the captain.

The briefing had ended and the senior staff were leaving, Dr. Griffin among them. The doctor stopped before leaving the room and contacted his assistant, Ensign Trell, in sickbay.

"Ensign, I have a very fragile egg in my possession, it requires specialized incubation. 50 degrees C, 90% humidity and plenty of foliage to sustain the newborn. Generate these conditions in the holo-chamber."

After the instructions, the doctor made his way down to sickbay, but not before summoning the EMH in the Briefing room, in front of the captain.

"Computer Activate the EMH." Griffin ordered.

"Please state the nature of the medical emergency." The hologram stated.

"As you know sir, the EMH can traverse the entire ship, without the strange portable holo-generator that the famed 'Doctor' on the U.S.S. Voyager acquired. It will make triage in the event of attack, so much more effective."

In fact Thopor did know this. He had been studying this ship for months. He could probably walk the Jefferies tubes blind folded.

"I wish I knew..." Letting out a deep breath Thopor turned his attention back to the objectives at hand and then stopped.... turned back and looked at the EMH.

"A MARK II!" Doctor... Please upgrade his program to the most recent EMH program available."

"Update my Program? I am perfectly fine as I am. I possess all the knowledge and subroutines of the newer models through upgrades. I have decided to remain in this form. That is all." The EMH responded.

Captain Thopor acknowledged with a nod, and watched as the doctors left the room.

He continued to babble about different stuff he knew as he and Griffin walked out of the briefing room.

As all the senior officers had filed out of the debriefing room, Rahl stayed behind to speak with the Captain. After taking a couple of deep breaths, Rahl attempted to speak with a neutral tone.

In a low voice, Rahl said. "Captain?" To get his attention.

"Yes Rahl?"

"With all due respect."

RESPECT, ha, he wants to show respect now. I don't think he ever has showed anybody in his life respect. He probably doesn't know what the word means. R.E.S.P.E.C.T. Thopor's thoughts were interrupted.

"I need at least 20 more personnel, assigned just to engineering."

20 MORE? What is he thinking? He has twice as many as the Umpqua did. Thopor's thoughts continued.

"We have 3 engineering bays now that must be maintained and the current crew complement doesn't cut it, sir." Rahl stopped talking there and couldn't explain himself further.

Now all he could think about was the engineering bay he was leaving behind with his new sensor installation. He had worked his whole life to get some type of commission, and he thought that he had landed one with the first ship prototype. Heck, the only papers he had

published were defenses against cloaking technology. But now, he was stuck with more work with his life's passion in another engineer's hands. He was sure that the sensor was now in capable hands, but it just felt...like something was ripped away from him. Rahl couldn't look the Captain in the eyes anymore and now regretted his decision to speak directly to him instead of sending him a message later on.

"Rahl... Thopor sat down with the PADD in hand. You have the standard crew compliment on all of Prometheus class vessels. You know it would be an embarrassment for me to request more personnel for engineering on a ship that is completely automated. I expect you to use the skills you have acquired over the past few months to plan and schedule everybody in a matter that covers all the objectives you set forth."

Thopor Stood and walked over to the window which looked out across the Docking bay. The U.S.S. Umpqua was parked right across. Thopor took a deep breath, Rahl walked up beside him.

Thopor said in a lower, less commanding voice. "You know she was a fine ship and will be in good hands. Take the knowledge you learned from her and use it here to the best of your ability."

Rahl turned and scurried out of the room.

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As he left the Briefing room Stevens stopped and took a moment to admire the view of the new bridge. It certainly wasn't much bigger than the Umpqua's, but it was amazing. There was something new and fresh about it. Something exciting. This was a special assignment and they all knew it, at least Stevens did. A Prometheus class. This was not just some old refit science ship. This was a new, innovative ship with technology not even seen possible on a nova class ship. Multi vector assault mode alone was overwhelming for him but as he looked over the specs longer Stevens found more and more to love about the Alsea.

With one last quick look around the bridge Stevens glided to his console and slid into his new seat. Much more comfortable than the Umpqua's, and looked over his new conn.

Shortly there after the captain entered the bridge.

"Captain is everything all right?" Doctor Griffin said who still hadn't had time to leave the bridge.

"One hour Stevens." Thopor said and then left for his ready-room.

Stevens turned slightly hearing the Captains voice reminding him of the departure time. One hour to prepare and get used to the new console. Stevens turned his attention back to the conn and looked over it some more.

The captain walked into the Captains ready room and straight to the Replicator for some nice hot Vulcan tea.

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Stalking out of the room, Rahl had to think about how he could maintain three separate warp cores with practically skeleton engineering teams. *Automated systems my ass...* He thought.

Rahl decided that he would just fully automate the saucer section warp core and integrate the two down in engineering, so that he could be as efficient as possible with his crew.

Entering main engineering, Rahl was amazed at the size of the room, but quickly snapped out of it and started ordering the crewmen around. Right around the corner next to a bulkhead was a huge reptilian working at a console. "Ensign, I believe you're new. What is your name?"

"Sssamot Kawto Defal Sssoe, ssir." hissed the large Pahkwa-thanh, who then broke into a very disturbing smile where all of his sharp teeth were visible. "But you may call me Sssamot."

"Great to have you Ensign..." Rahl finally took a look at his PADD and saw the Ensign's personnel file.

It seemed that he had transferred over from an outpost near Earth with his wife. Not to mention that some of his accomplishments in the engineering field were absolutely stunning, and in such a short amount of time too.

"I guess you'll be head of Beta shift. I would like regular reports." Rahl gave a grim smile back to the reptilian and made his way to the turbolift so that he could make sure all systems check out in the saucer engineering bay.

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K'Rrauw left the briefing room as fast as he could after the briefing was finished. He was brooding with fury over Starfleet's decision to pack in over 10% of the crew compliment with children.

"There are not even any day-care or school facilities on this type of vessel.", he muttered to himself as he hurried to the main science lab on deck 7, secondary hull.

As he entered the room it was packed with a diverse crowd of species from all corners of the Federation. Even the Pahkwa - Thanh, who had left her egg with the doctor, stood in the back of the room. "Greetings crew. At ease." He picked up a PADD to begin handing out assignments.

K'Rrauw read each assignment to the science officers out loud from the PADD.

Life Support, Lt. junior grade Marianne Leefgrove, Human, Female.
Environmental Controls, Ensign Ewec Caryna, Bajoran, Female.
Primary Environmental Support, Crewman Lozd, Bazar, Female.
Secondary Environmental Support, Crewman Patrick Arnolds, Human, Male.
Tertiary Environmental Support, Crewman Anthony Carlos, Human, Male.
Shield grid control, Crewman Bilk Brin, Bolian, Female.
Primary Computer Core, Ensign Elisabeth Gerald, Human, Female.
Secondary Computer Core, Ensign Ursula Jensen, Human, Female.

Tertiary Computer Core, Ensign Yohan Muñoz, Human, Male.
 Secondary Battle Bridge, Lt. junior grade Romeo Pirslin, Human, Male.
 Tertiary Battle Bridge, Lt. junior grade Fredric Berg, Human, Male.
 Science lab, Lt. junior grade Mezan Vol, Trill, Female.
 Stellar Cartography, Ensign T'Ril, Vulcan, Female.
 Science lab, Lt. junior grade JohGeiz th'Shryx, Andorian, Male.
 Medical Labs, Ensign Thomas Michaels, Human, Male.
 Science lab, Lt. junior grade Ivo Alrobaye, Human, Male.
 Sensor arrays, Crewman Edward Milford, Human, Male.
 Deflector Control, Ensign Sabol, Vulcan, Male.
 Deflector signal processing, Ensign Keyota Tipa Defal Soe, Pakhwa - Thanh, Female.
 Main Deflector Dish, Crewman Vaal, Saurian, Male.
 Probe storage, Ensign Tristan Crosopolis, Human, Male.

"You have your assignments, report to your duty stations and familiarize yourself with them. On your PADDs you will see who will man your station on the Beta, Gamma and Delta shifts. Make sure to get to know them to make things run as smoothly as possible. We will leave for our first mission on this ship in less than an hour. After that you have less than 29 hours before we reach Romulan space so prepare to be ready for anything. Report your status to the main science lab when you are ready. If you have any questions contact me. Dismissed."

K'Rauw watched them scurry out of the room to their assigned workspaces except for Lt. junior grade Ivo Alrobaye who had been assigned to the main science lab.

"I will be on the bridge if there is anything. Try not to blow up my science lab while I am there with some strange experiment of yours." K'Rauw gave a stern look at the nervous Lt. j/g standing in front of him.

"I will try not to, sir." he stuttered in reply.

K'Rauw frowned at the word sir, "Please call me Chief while we are on duty and K'Rauw when we are not."

K'Rauw smiled and continued. "And do your family a favour and do not stay in here any longer than you have to each day, I want quality work and not just quantity."

Alrobaye smiled, "I have no family other than my parents back on Earth."

K'Rauw looked surprised at him, "Well, then you are one of the few exceptions on the ship that does not have anyone special on board. But that does not mean I will accept that you will pull double shifts unless ordered so. Your spare time should be used for recreation not work."

Alrobaye nodded in understanding, "That is understood, sir... I mean Chief."

"I should really get to the bridge now. Keep me updated on everyone's progress." With that K'Rauw left the science lab and headed for the science duty station on the primary bridge.

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Donaldson stepped out of the Turbolift and looked upon the bridge crew, the captain was in his chair, Lt. Stevens was at the Conn.

Donaldson walked towards his tactical station, the bridge was bigger than he had thought.

Thopor after what seemed an hour walks onto the bridge. Stevens was sitting at the helm. Donaldson was sitting at the Tactical station. The rest of the crew was off preparing to depart.

"Donaldson clear with Starbase 10 our departure. Code blue Stevens release the magnetic locks and secure the air locks. Disengage the mooring beams. Take us out thrusters only....

"Aye sir, set condition blue." Donaldson said to the captain.

Over the comm he said. "All hands, condition blue, the ship is about to depart."

K'Rrauw stepped out from the turbolift and entered the bridge moments before the ship was about to go in to warp and manned his station. He checked the reports from the main science lab. *Good Mr. Alrobaye had been in contact with the rest in the science department.* He thought as he read the reports that had been filed.

He then addressed the captain. "Science departtment is rready for departturre."

Donaldson's hands whizzed over his control panel with ease and confidence as the lights dimmed to a light blue.

He then opened a channel to the Starbase Chief Drydock Officer. "Starbase 10, Dockmaster please be advised we are preparing for departure."

Thopor watched the view screen standing in front of the captains chair.

"Once clear of Starbase 10, set coordinates to our destination, warp 8."

Stevens, now used to the undocking procedure flew through the commands with ease. The Alsea's conn was certainly larger and more advanced than the Umpqua's. For the basic functions however it was the same. The magnetic clamps unlocked and the maneuvering thrusters engaged. The U.S.S. Alsea slowly backed up away from the docking bay at Starbase 10. The Starbase's docking clamps began to retract and the Alsea continued moving back, now on its own power.

Everything was going smoothly. This ship was certainly ready to go. The Alsea glided back now fully away from Starbase 10.

"Captain, were free and ready to go." Stevens reported.

Thopor contacted engineering. "Rahl bring the warp engines online." Then he turned to the helm. "Stevens, warp 8, engage!"

Stevens pressed down on the button. Course and speed laid in and engaged the warp engines. The ship took off perfectly and the Alsea was away.

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The ship streamed across the neutral zone, confident on both the ship and his crew Thopor sat watching the viewscreen. When the comm station lit up.

Thopor turned and watched as Donaldson worked the controls of the Comm station.

On the viewscreen was a very distorted and static picture, over the comm a voice was heard. "Feder aghh ip this is cshh your battle cooshhh leave at..."

K'Rrauw heard the bad reception of the signal, "Captain, I think I can boost the signal by rerouting it through astrommetics."

He started inputting all the necessary changes as he awaited the response from the captain before he activated them.

"Excellent idea, get on it." Thopor waited for the message to clear.

"Captain." Donaldson said as K'Rrauw worked. "I am getting some strange readings."

"What type of readings?"

"Sir, they appear to be warp signatures but the sensors must be off."

Sitting at his stations Stevens monitored the overlay noticing faint readings that the tactical officer had also seen. They looked unfamiliar....possibly warp signatures but possibly not. Stevens made sure to keep an eye on the signatures and the rest of the surrounding space, and waited.

Thopor turned back to K'Rrauw.

"Any ideas?"

K'Rrauw silently growled at the insult that the sensors, his sensors, were wrong. Then he activated the command sequences to reroute the message through astrometrics.

He then took a look at the sensor readings. "The sensorrs arre opperrating at full capacity. It seems they arre fooling ourr sensorrs. I am rremmodulating themm to a new frrequency." K'Rrauw pushed quickly on the console.

As the sensors were able to get better readings he reported them to the captain.

"The two warrp signals, seemm to be emminating fromm ourr porrt bow bearing 347 mmark 042. The rreason they look strrange is that they arre emminating from two objects less then 2 mmeterrrs long and 1 mmeterrr accross, weighing less then 1 mmetrric ton. Too small to be space ships, mmight be some sortt of warrp capable warrheads. The sensorrs can

not get a clear reading, it might be some sort of probes as well. Wait..."

K'Rrauw redirected the scans to the warp trail, "This is strange indeed, I am picking up organic residue in the warp trail. It could be some sort of lifeform. Maybe if we get closer the sensors will be able to penetrate their scattering field."

The console beeped it was astrometrics patching through the boosted message, "The message is coming through from astrometrics, Captain, should I put it through? It is audio only."

"Yes put it through." Thopor replied.

Thopor listened attentively.

K'Rrauw started the message, "Federation ship, this is not your battle, leave at once!"

He input a few commands to locate the origin of the signal, "Captain, I have located the origin of this signal. It is from a binary system consisting of a class B star orbiting a class G star in a planetary system with six planets circa 3 lightyears at bearing 002 mark 031. The source is from the fourth planet, an O-class planet. The two warp signatures we detected are on a direct course for Remmus."

While he listened, Donaldson said. "Captain, it appears the Romulan vessel we are trying to save is in a tractor beam of a Klingon Warbird!"

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"Stevens set an intercept course. Donaldson, red alert."

"Aye sir." Said Donaldson, slightly nervous that he was about to issue a red alert.

As the lights dimmed to an eerie red color Donaldson thought of all his tactical training and experience, blasting through warp speed we would be there soon and he needed to be prepared for every eventuality.

Stevens made the course adjustment and the ship jumped in to warp. As the Alsea approached 2 more ships decloaked, and 5 more warp signatures showed up on Donaldson's sensors.

Stevens sat watching as ship after ship appeared on his console overlay. The Alsea was set to intercept the Klingon ship quickly. The Alsea traveled at warp 8, cruising towards the cluster of ships. Stevens thought through basic evasive commands and maneuvers to get on the warbirds weak side. He looked over at his console on the command inputs for maneuvering the ship should they use Multi Vector Assault Mode. He had never used it of course and it would be challenging to learn on the fly but if worse came to worse he would be prepared to keep the crew safe.

K'Rrauw frowned over the fact that he wasn't allowed to study the two warp capable space dwelling life forms the sensors had picked up. He went back to doing level 5 diagnostics so that Tactical would get clear locks on any hostile targets they wished to blow up.

Dropping out of warp the Alsea gets a clear view of what was going on. Indeed the Klingons had a Romulan warbird in tow. Just as the Alsea came out of warp they dropped their tractor beam and turned toward the Alsea. Then two Reman Cruisers decloaked.

"Sir, two Reman cruisers decloaking. They are charging weapons." Donaldson reported.

"Stevens, attack pattern Beta 4." Thopor ordered. "Target their cloaks."

"Captain! We are being hailed by the Romulan ship!" K'Rrauw said.

A static picture appeared on the viewscreen. It was a female Romulan dressed in what appeared a senator's uniform.

"Captain I am Senator Kimara Cretak. We have information about the Tal Shiar, you must help us!"

At that time the Tal Shiar scouting party come out of warp firing on the Romulan ship. On the viewscreen the Romulan ship rocked from the explosions. Taken by surprise the Klingons and Remans redirect their fire power at the new aggressors.

The Alsea was coming around for the attack. Stevens was hunched over the console ready to evade anything coming their way. But it seemed the other groups would rather fight each other though. As the ships fired at each other the Alsea moved into position.

K'Rrauw noticed that the shields of the Romulan warbird were down. He thought about getting a transporter lock on the crew but decided not to. *Now why would I try and save these filthy Romulans*, he thought. *They killed my friends on the first Prometheus-class vessel.*

He decided to wait a while before informing the captain about the status of the Romulan shields.

"Captain, There ship's structural integrity is down to 20 percent." Donaldson reported.

Thopor looks over at K'Rrauw. "Emergency transport the crew to Cargo bay 3, and the senator to the bridge."

K'Rrauw reluctantly activated the transports to rescue the filthy Romulans.

As the senator materialized in a blue haze aboard the ship, Lieutenant Donaldson continued to watch the Reman, Romulan and Klingon ships at his control panel.

They are too concerned with themselves to turn their attention onto our ship, however he would be better off keeping an eye on them just in case they realized why they were here. Donaldson thought to himself.

Turning back toward the viewscreen the crew watches as the Romulan ship explodes, at the same time Senator Kimara Cretak materialized on the bridge. She was bruised and banged up but alive to see another day. With out any warning she walked to the captain yelling. "GET US OUT OF HERE!"

Everybody on the bridge stared in trepidation.

Remembering that he was Chief Security Officer and that a group of Romulans had just transported onto his ship he ought to make sure the ship was secure, with a calm voice as not not worry the younger officers and lower ranks Donaldson tapped his com badge.

"Lieutenant Donaldson to security teams 1 through 4 report immediately to cargo bay 3."

Also remembering that they may be injured he thought to contact the CMO.

"Lieutenant Griffin please be aware that Romulan casualties have been transported to cargo bay 3, possible Romulan wounded."

"Understood." Replied the Doctor, in response.

K'Rrauw discreetly sent a message to Donaldson to let him accompany the security team he was going to send down there. He really felt the need to start a fight.

Just as Donaldson is about to tell the captain that he will be heading down to cargo bay 3, a message bleeps upon his screen, reading it and realizing that it is from K'Rrauw

Why would the chief science officer be asking to go and assist him with security operations? Donaldson pondered.

"Stevens, bring us all about, warp 8, engage." Thopor ordered.

As soon as the ship jumped to Warp Thopor notice something in the senator's hand.

"Senator, may I inquire what the thing in your hand is?"

"This is a sample of the bio-logical weapon we intercepted. My crew was trying to disarm it when we where ambushed by the Klingons. Unfortunately it was no easy task trying to explain to them what we where were doing, all they wanted to believe was there assumptions that we launched the weapons and was insuring it would reach it destination. Captain we have to catch it. Just before we where disabled we accessed the main computer and its going to hit Remus the Reman home planet."

"Stevens set an intercept coarse!" The Captain ordered.

Not wishing to make an enemy of the Caitian, Donaldson thought he would request the huge creature's presence for scientific purposes.

"Captain, may I go to cargo bay three and supervise the Romulans, sir? Also may Lt. K'Rrauw accompany me for scientific research?"

Captain Thopor nodded. "Yes, by all means."

"Activate the EMH." Thopor commanded.

The EMH shimmered in to existence.

As K'Rrauw and Donaldson entered the hallway on their way to the turbolift they heard him ordering the activation of the EMH. As K'Rrauw looked back the EMH appeared on the bridge next to the senator, shocked to see a Romulan there.

"Not a Romulan takeover of this ship too, computer deactivate EMH!" The EMH said and vanished.

Then the doors to the hallway closed.

Thopor ordered the activation of the EMH again. Trying not to show how irritated he was on it.

The EMH materialized and looked around.

"Romulans, computer de....

"Stop!"

The EMH looks at the captain and halts with a look of confusion.

"The ship is not captured. Take this vial to the Doctor,"

The EMH paused for a second. "I'm a Doctor, not a delivery boy." He said as he took the vial and departed.

Thopor turned back to the Senator. "Where did the missiles come from?"

"We believe they were designed by the Tal Shiar." The senator replied.

"Senator work with my science officer K'Rrauw find out what needs to be done to disable them"

Thopor could have sworn he heard a growl come from the large Caitian from the hallway when the EMH exited the bridge.

Stevens wondered if trying to intercept a huge biological weapon were the smartest thing to do.

The Alsea dropped out of warp, made a turn back the way it came, and reengaged at warp 8.

As the ship re entered warp a beeping sound started going off. Stevens looked around, the ship was slowing steadily.

Warp 8.0..... 7.7..... 7.6.....

"Captain, warp efficiency is dropping fast! Were at warp 7.6 and falling, I don't know how long we'll be able to stay at warp speed."

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"Ensign Trell, come with me to Cargo Bay 3, bring the portable anti grav beds" Griffin ordered.

The two officers left the sickbay for the cargo bay.

The doctor and his team worked hard in cargo bay 3, where many Romulan survivors had been teleported. Their ship had sustained heavy attack from the Klingons before it was finally destroyed and the majority was wounded.

"Computer, activate the emergency medical hologram" Demanded Dr Griffin.

"EMH program is currently operational" Replied the computer.

The doctor scratched his head, but didn't have time to locate the EMH. *"I guess we'll have to work without him for now."* He said to his team.

Dr Griffin knelt next to Ensign Wehnem, his assistant. She was treating a heavily injured Romulan.

"Can we save him nurse?" Griffin asked.

"He has a brain hemorrhage and severe plasma burns, he will not survive for long." She replied, with a slight, worried voice.

The doctor ordered a site to site transport, directly to sickbay, but before he could finish the sentence, his comm badge was removed by a nearby Romulan. The security at the doors shouldered their rifles at once.

"This soldier goes nowhere!" The Romulan said, in an authoritative manor.

"Excuse me, Mr. Romulan... but I am the Chief Medical Officer aboard this ship, this man is going to die if you don't let us treat him...." Replied the doctor.

The Romulan snarled at Dr Griffin, and turned his head, acknowledging the futility of dying for his now shattered empire.

"Thank you." He tapped his comm badge. "Transporter room one, site to site transport at once, cargo bay 3 to the sickbay, two to beam over."

The doctor and the Romulan dematerialized, leaving his hard pressed medical team in cargo bay 3, to triage the rest of the Romulan crew.

The EMH was waiting in sickbay when the doctor arrived. A nearby crewman attended to the Romulan as the doctor approached the hologram.

"I need you down in cargo bay 3, at once"

"Very well, but first, take this vial, complements of the senator. From my observations en route, I have determined it to contain...."

"Yes yes, I will look at it later, now go." Said the doctor, stopping the holograms incessant babble.

The doctor placed the vial on his office desk, and returned to the injured Romulan on the biobed.

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K'Rrauw was on his way to the cargo bay as he reached it his sensitive Caitian ears heard that the ship's engines were slowing down. As the cargo bay doors opened he could see about 200 Romulans standing, laying and sitting all over the cargo bay. His ears fluttered and his tail started to wag slightly. He swept the room riveting his eyes on each and every one he could spot their face on. He had memorized the faces of the bastards who killed his friends and were captured on the Prometheus so long ago. To him it had only been a few years, but in reality they had to be about 20 years older. He could not see any of them here. He realized that manually identifying them would take too long. Then he remembered something. He noticed the EMH treating an injured Romulan and walked up to him and whispered in his ear.

"Would you please scan the Rrommulans in herre and trry and mmatch theirr DNA with those who was captured on the Prrommetheus? Theirr DNA prrofiles arre in the ship's commputerr. Just nod if you agrree."

The EMH nodded. "Thank you doctorr. Please send it to the mmmain science lab.", K'Rrauw said before he left.

Entering the science lab he was met by the handsome, for a human, Lt. j/g Ivo Alrobaye. "Chief, I have analyzed the data you sent here from the scans of those two warp capable life signs we detected. They seem to contain huge amounts of a toxic biological compound."

K'Rrauw scratched his chin thinking, "Well Mmrr. Alrobaye, it seemms like they arre not what we thought they werre, at firrst glance. Look through the science database and you will find the specifications of how to rrelicate nanoprrobes."

Alrobaye looked suprisd, "Nanoprobes chief? Are you sure?"

K'Rrauw nodded, "Yes, we should programm themm to necrotize orrganic tissue. If we mmake a small enough deploymment systemm these orrganic weapons would prrobably not rregisterr it as a threat. Without its orrganic parrrts it will stop working and become an easy tarrget."

Alrobaye walked over to the science console and pulled up the specifications of the nanoprobes, "It will take about one hour to replicate enough for two doses. What about how we will deploy them, Chief?

"They arre shielded, so this has to penetrate theirr shields. I think therre arre specifications for transphasic torrpdoes in therre. If we adapt that technology on to two mmuch smmallerr casings larrge enough to hold one dose each, then theirr shields will not stand a chance."

Alrobaye smiled, "I like the way your mind works, Chief." and he continued with pulling up the specifications for the transphasic technology and adapting it for the nanoprobe casings."

K'Rrauw satisfied with the work headed for the door to return to the bridge, "If you make this work, I will give you a copy of my famous holodeck program that I have heard you shown interest in."

With that he left the main science lab and returned to the bridge.

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Stevens sat watching as the warp field continued to collapse, the speed dropped steadily. They were losing speed, and with it, valuable time. The weapons were advancing and the Alsea was looking more and more unlikely to stop them.

As K'Rrauw entered the bridge Donaldson had already returned. He took his station and he noticed that the two organic weapons had started to produce a subspace wake that was interfering with our warp field. He also had a message from the main science lab about the transphasic shielding had been finished and adapted to the casings. The nanoprobes had been modified and half of them had been replicated so far.

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Rahl saw that their energy supplies were being sucked away for some reason. The warp field was going to collapse. Running over to another console, Rahl saw that there was some kind of subspace wake that the biological weapon was leaving behind that was disrupting their warp field.

"Remodulate the deflector." Rahl ordered Ensign Samot.

"No effect Chief!" the large Pakwa-thanh hissed. "I will try to manually stabilize our warp field."

"That won't do any good. Our reaction antimatter/matter reaction rate is plummeting we're going to need to stop following this thing or we're going to have our warp core shut down on us. It's going to take an hour to reboot if it goes offline. Bring the saucer warp core online from hot standby to buy us a minute or two.

Tapping his comm badge, Rahl said urgently. "Captain, the bio-weapon is leaving some type of subspace distortion wave in its wake, we're going to need to stop pursuing it like this or we'll be dead in the water in minutes. I'm trying to figure out the problem, but nothing is working."

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"Captain." K'Rrauw stated, "I suggest we move out of the subspace wake the organic weapons are producing like Lt. Rahl suggested and try and stay on their port side, that way the wake would not disrupt our warp field. I would also like to report that we have come up with a means to destroy the organic parts of the weapons making them shut down. It is based on our Anti-Borg weaponry. Two nanoprobe mini-missiles with

transphasic shields that can penetrate any shielding will be ready for deployment in 30 minutes.”

K'Rrauw input in the fire sequences and coordinates and sent it to tactical.

Donaldson was at his duty station when the Alsea had detected the biological weapons. The bridge of the Alsea was spacious and very white. The crew members walked around on the bridge, performing their duties.

Realizing that there was nothing Donaldson could do he turned his attention to his passive scanners, and, although the two missiles were gaining distance on his ship, they were still in sensor range, deciding to have a closer look Donaldson ran a level 4 scan of the bio-ship-weapon.

As the computer displays a message he thought. *Ah, good that was quick.* He scanned through the document containing all sorts of facts like dimensions, power levels, composition and shield output. There was also a strange energy reading, but yet familiar.

Just as Donaldson was about to request more energy for a more intensive scan the firing sequence and codes were sent to his console.

He turned to K'Rrauw standing next to him. "Thank you for the firing sequence and coordinates, I have inputted them into the computer. However I have detected a strange energy reading and I need to investigate further."

Donaldson, looked towards the captain and said with a grave face and a hollow voice.

"Captain on their current courses the bio weapons will hit the Remus the Reman home world, sir. Total population of 2.7 billion, they will be highly susceptible to the bio-weapon."

"Captain" K'Rrauw stated, "I suggest we move out of the subspace wake the organic weapons are producing and try and stay on their port side, that way the wake would not disrupt our warp field. I would also like to report that we have come up with a means to destroy the organic parts of the weapons making them shut down. It is based on our Borg weaponry. Two nanoprobe mini-missiles with transphasic shields that can penetrate any shielding will be ready for deployment in 30 minutes."

Thopor turned to Stevens, "Make it so move the ship to the port side of the missiles."

The Alsea moved within 10 km of one of the missiles, as the crew watched on the viewscreen the closest to the ship disappears from sight.

"K'Rrauw do you still have it on sensors?"

The other weapon was still visible, traveling at warp 5, some 12 km off the port bow side of the ship.

"Sir, it appears when we got within 10 km of the closer one it activated a defense mechanism." K'Rrauw said.

K'Rrauw calculated the probable position of the now cloaked missile and scanned it, "I suggest we move away 2 kilometers from the last known position of the now cloaked missile. It is highly probable that the cloak will disengage when we move away."

He sent a message to Alrobaye in the science lab to hurry up with the nanoprobes.

"Stevens, don't get us any closer to the other one."

Stevens focused on keeping the Alsea away from the 2nd weapon and monitored the warp field. It looked very bad. With one weapon now invisible it was too dangerous to move away from the 2nd one, but he couldn't move closer either. The Alsea was stuck in limbo, and its warp field was just about gone.

Thopor presses his comm badge.

"Rahl has the engine stabilized yet?"

"We're still catching some of its disruption field... or whatever it is, but I can give you about 10 more minutes before it destabilizes our warp field completely. You better destroy those things as soon as possible." Rahl responded.

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The doctor observed and studied the vial he received earlier in the day. It was a vastly complex compound of particles. He pressed his comm badge and contacted the captain.

"Captain, I have looked into the vial you sent me, the news isn't good... my scans have picked up large quantities of trilitium resin, a toxic substance to most carbon based lifeforms... but that's not all... I have also detected neurolytic pathogens within the compound... our nanoprobe solution will not work."

The doctor complied his work into a PADD and made his way to the bridge. Upon arriving, he handed it over to the captain.

"Sir, trilitium is a very volatile substance, a rough shake can cause a chemical reaction... with its shields up and the pathogens, we have no way to destroy it with weaponry... but perhaps... we could disable the devices that keep the substance stable. Perhaps we could then... program the tractor beam, to say... shake the torpedo around... I'm sure that would destabilize the compound sufficiently enough, to cause an explosion."

Stevens turned around after Griffin spoke.

"Captain if we're going to do anything it needs to be now, our warp field is about to collapse and we'll lose the missiles."

K'Rrauw looked at the doctor in disbelief. "Captain, if I may, I think the doctor's analysis is flawed."

Lt. Donaldson stood at his duty station, looking out onto the starry sky and the two ominous grey-ish blobs on the view-screen. The doctor had just arrived on the bridge and were talking to the captain, Donaldson could only just hear him.

Donaldson watched as the doctor and the science officer began to talk and listened intently.

Thopor and Griffin turned around and looked at the big Caitian standing at his station. He then continued, "To be able to disable the trillithium stabilizers we need to get through the shields to disable them and to lock on a transporter to shake them. To get through the shields we have to modulate our transporters to their exact shield frequency. Something we have been unable to obtain due to their scattering field."

He flickered his ears, thought for a second and pulled up two last case scenarios he had drawn up, "Now I only have two possible solutions left to suggest. We move away from them to get our warp field stable. Warp past them. Set course for an intercept coordinate. Eject one of the warp-corres when we arrive there. And move to a safe distance within firing range. Then when the missiles are closing in on the warp-corre in their path we blow it up with a torpedo and the missiles with it."

He then took a deep breath before suggesting the second option that he knew could cause casualties, "Either that or we launch all our shuttles and do as they did in Earth's World War 2 in Pearl Harbour, fly the shuttles straight in to the missiles. Using the transporters to beam our crew out a second before impact."

The Caitian then began to talk about ways to destroy the missiles, being the new guy here he didn't want to be too forward, but as tactical officer he had to give his advice to the captain, abruptly interrupting the Caitian he spoke towards the captain.

"Sir, although our warp field is destabilizing rapidly, the alternatives put forward so far will prove ineffective, so far the weapons seem to be very well designed, given the proper shielding and a cloaking ability, these defensive measures are unlike anything I have seen or studied in a tactical missile of this sort." Sighing slightly Donaldson continued,

"As our chief science officer pointed out we could drop a warp core in their path, however if the weapons reacted when we got close they will surely react and alter course when they detect the warp core in their path. Secondly, flying shuttles into the missiles will only mean the shuttles destruction with the missiles' shields up it would be fruitless. Additionally as I discovered earlier I detected a strange reading coming from the ship, a sort of energy, quite rare when studying objects of an inanimate nature, however I have devised a theory..."

Thopor listened to all the ideas his crew gave him. When Donaldson interrupted K'Rauw the thought of a cat fight crossed his mind. Though Donaldson was a qualified tactical officer he figured the large Caitian could take him. Logically speaking size would play a large part in a fight like that. Bring his thoughts back to the weapon Thopor turned back to Donaldson.

"Continue I would like to hear your Theory." The captain said.

Thank you sir, however I would like to confirm a few things first, I know we have a need for urgency therefore."

He looked towards the science officer.

"Your idea about moving away could be used to buy us some much needed time, K'Rrauw." Said Donaldson, he smiled slightly and hoped the giant cat like creature wouldn't rip him limb for limb. *Donaldson had the image of him ripping Romulans in half, something the creature would love to do.* He thought.

Then turning to the CMO, Donaldson said in an encouraging voice. "Doctor, would you join me in the main science lab, I need help running a few scans..."

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After Donaldson and Griffin had been down in the main science lab for quite some time with science officer Lt. j/g Alrobaye, K'Rrauw presented the captain with two new ideas that would buy us some time. "Captain, I've done a search and found two ways to disrupt the missiles warp fields."

He looked at his console to get the details right, "We can use the main deflector to emit a verterron pulse that will disable their subspace systems. This will only catch the one that we can still detect."

His ears flickered in excitement, "However if we instead of destroying one of our warp cores by shooting at it, set it to overload in their path in close proximity to where they both should be, it will damage subspace forcing the missiles out of warp to sublight speed. But that will also force us to sublight speeds. The subspace damage in this sector will repair itself in time but it will take a long time before ships can travel through here at warp. But traveling at impulse we will be able to try and use our transporters safely to disarm the missiles. As we only know the location of one of them, alternative 2 is the one I recommend."

"Captain I highly recommend against destroying our warp capabilities. There was a large number of enemy ships close by and as far as we know we have no back up. Need I remind you we also have an important guest aboard our ship? I'd recommend doing anything we can to destroy these weapons but only use the warp core as a last resort. Were also down to warp 4, we need to act quickly".

Stevens turned back to his console and waited.

K'Rrauw growled, "I do not agree with Stevens. The other ships will not be able to enter this sector at warp and they too would have to travel at sublight speeds. This will give us just as much time before they reach us as if we were to continue at warp. Not that anyone seems to be able to keep us at warp for much longer anyway."

He ground his teeth, "It is either this or the missiles will reach their destination."

"NOOOOOO!!" Screamed the doctor as he returned to the bridge with Lt. Donaldson.

"We must not destroy the missiles!"

The bridge crew turned to face the doctor, all of them intrigued.

"The Lieutenant noticed some strange readings at tactical before leaving for the science lab. He was right to investigate... these missiles are in fact... life forms."

The doctor recovered his breath for a moment.

"We cannot attack them, it's a breach of prime directive... and goes against all we stand for."

The bridge now turned their gaze to Lt. Donaldson, eagerly awaiting his explanation.

Amazed at the doctor's outburst Donaldson looked shocked. All eyes rested on him now. He turned to the captain as a sign of respect and then Donaldson began to explain.

"Sir, as you know I ran a complete array of scans, I noticed a strange reading that I did not expect, doc griffin and I then ran a complete medical scan to confirm that we had detected brain wave patters and a consciousness! I'm afraid sir, that it has been confirmed.

He handed the captain a PADD. "I have compiled the results of the scans onto this PADD sir." He reserved his judgment.

As K'Rrauw noticed that the doc had returned from the science lab and that he was panting. He was all out of breath and more pink then usual in his face. He also noticed that Donaldson was handing over a PADD to the captain.

Lt. j/g Vol who was standing further away at the astrometrics station walked up to K'Rrauw and whispered in his ear. "What is going on?"

He whispered back, "Nothing, they have just discovered, again, that these are organic life forms adapted to serve as missiles with mechanical parts. As all organic life forms it is emanating brainwave patterns. And apparently killing them breaks the Prime Directive. Doing nothing means they will die and kill millions of Remans. But getting involved in internal Romulan affairs is also a violation of the Prime Directive. So there is nothing new. Except that we are barely at warp 3.89 and the missiles are gaining distance on us as they are at warp 4. The window of opportunity to do something is almost gone."

Vol looked puzzled at K'Rrauw as his ears flickered. *Was this the big emergency?* She thought. *He had already said that this might happen if we didn't do anything.*

Thopor took the PADD and observed the information as the doc and Donaldson explained what they knew of the 'life forms'.

"You say they have a consciousness, brain waves. Can we communicate with them? Regardless if they are alive or not? We are talking about millions of lives for the loss of 2. Let's not forget that, it would be illogical not to do something. If we do nothing, millions of people will die. Steven take us out of the subspace distortion wake. Set a course around to intercept them at another angle and gain or momentum back. Doctor find a way to communicate with them. If they are life forms, will try a diplomatic approach."

He then turned to Donaldson. "How long until the first one hits its intended target?"

"At present course and speed they will impact Remus in 27 minutes approx, sir" Donaldson said to the captain.

Thopor pressed his comm badge.

"Rahl find a way to stabilize our warp field when we get out of the subspace wake." Said Captain Thopor over the comm.

Thopor watched the viewscreen as the ship moved off in another direction.

Dr Griffin headed to the science station in response to the captain's orders. He was no science officer, but he had the scans he ran on the missiles a few minutes earlier.

These are quite regular brain wave emissions. He thought to himself. *Perhaps if I mimic them through the deflector, I can make contact?*

He was very confused and had no idea if the procedure would work, even so, he approached the captain with his new plan.

Thopor listened to the doctor and couldn't be convinced to follow up on the idea.

The minutes slowly passed us by. Ideas were being thrown about by everybody on the bridge. From Borg nanoprobes to placing shuttles in their path, to blowing up one of the warp cores. All attempts to communicate with them have failed.

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Main engineering was a mess. Everyone was furiously attempting to compensate for the creatures' bizarre disruption field, which was composed of some type of biological compound that Rahl had never seen before. He had two shifts working in main engineering and another team, headed by ensign Sun, working in the saucer section engineering bay to try and squeeze as much juice as possible from that warp core.

"What's our status crewman?" Rahl yelled over his console.

"Our M/AM Reaction Rate isn't decreasing as rapidly anymore, but the field is still sucking power through our warp nacelles somehow. Efficiency has dropped to 40 pct and it's down to 60 pct in the other engineering bay."

Tapping his comm badge, Rahl responded. "Captain, I can give you 5 minutes, 7 maximum. Just because we're not directly behind it doesn't mean we're out of it. Why is it taking so long to destroy the missile? I suggest that we do it quickly before we can't follow it anymore." *What are they doing up there?* He thought as he addressed the Captain.

"Rahl, we are doing everything we can. Just keep the engine running." Thopor responded.

"10 min captain." Rahl stated, unsure if it would last much longer than that.

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On the view screen Remus had appeared.

"Captain!" Donaldson said in an astonished voice.

Thopor looked up at the viewscreen, The missile that was still visible was altering course. The cloaked missile, though they couldn't see it, appear to still be on course according to the sensors at Donaldson's station.

"It's changed targets, sir. It appears its new target is Devorgis, population of Devorgis is 62 million Remans. It has also increased its speed to warp 5.5. At this current speed it will hit in 1.5 hours, There is no way we can stop both. I highly recommend we follow it."

Thopor took a deep breath knowing fully the impact of what he was about to do. Thopor stood and in a commanding voice spoke. "Stevens, follow it!"

The ship banked to the right as it altered course.

"Captain I will remind you our warp strength is almost gone. We have warp 3 max now, and like engineering said only 5 minutes of it. We need action or those people will die." Donaldson stated.

K'Rrauw was reading some of the science lab reports at his station. He had scanned the missiles, come up with suggestions to destroy, cripple and delay them, he had made the suggestions he could make to the captain and now all he could do was to continue to wait for him to make a decision. *Not that he felt all that sorry about the Remans but trying to talk to something that is making us drop out of warp without making sure they don't get away is not logical one bit.* He thought. He felt like someone had stroked his fur the wrong direction. His tail moved around in quick sweeps. He had to restrain himself from voicing his opinion out loud, about what he thought was the lack of action from the captain. Instead he began to start reading the reports again from the beginning. He tried to find something that he hadn't already recommended to the captain.

"Donaldson, notify the Reman authorities on Devorgis of the situation."

"Aye sir!" Donaldson said and tapped on his control panel. He tried to contact the government on Remus, after two unsuccessful attempts he tried a third time. He adjusted the bandwidth signal to incorporate wideband frequencies and this time Donaldson got an answer. He looked towards the captain and said. "Sir, communications established."

A sharp bleep followed and a voice rang from the speakers. "FeDEration ship, WHaat do YOUUU want"

K'Rrauw had been engulfed in reading the very interesting science rapports that he lost track of time. Suddenly he felt how the ship violently dropped out of warp. Startled from the jolt he looked up at the viewscreen where an ugly Reman was speaking to the captain.

Thopor straightened his uniform and stood up in front of the view screen and gave the singal to mute the sound.

"All departments I want a full damage rapport, K'Rrauw find out why we dropped out of

warp and Lt. Donaldson, I want a time of impact for the weapon.”

He then made a signal to resume the sound and turned to the viewscreen.

”I am Captain Thopor of the Federation starship Alsea. We were in pursuit of the warhead that is on course for your planet. Unfortunately we are experiencing problems with our engines and are unable to intercept and neutralize it. We urge you to evacuate as many as possible.”

”How do WE know that FeDEration dID not FIre this?” The Reman asked.

”Questioning our resolve is illogical. We would not put our self in danger trying to stop the warhead if we were the ones who launched it. Nor would we warn you of its approach to give you time to evacuate.” Thopor replied.

K’Rrauw had been analyzing the warp field and scanned the surrounding area to figure out what caused the ship to stop. In fact he had discovered that there were nothing wrong with their engines. Rahl had everything working in engineering apparently. They were stuck in some sort of subspace rift probably caused by the weapons subspace wake that we were caught in earlier. The rift collapsed the warp field. The life forms that had been turned in to warheads were somehow immune to this or used some other form of warp technology that the rift didn’t affect.

”Captain, if I mmay interrrupt, I think I have found something?”

Thopor turned around to the huge feline officer at the science station and signaled communications to mute the sound again.

”Yes Lt. what have you found?”

”We arre stuck in the event horizon of a subspace rift. That is why our warpp field collapsed.” He paused. ”That is strange...”

K’Rrauw scratched his chin and went silent for a moment, something that tested Thopors patience.

”What is it Lt?” He asked impatiently.

K’Rrauw looked up at the Captain. ”The rift is emmitting chrroniton parrticles and has startred to expand drammatically since we got caught in it with a rrate of 247% perr mminute. In 4 mminutes we would be commpletely inside the rift. I rrecommend we send a class 12 prrobe through the rrift to deterrmmine wherre it leads to.”

”The chance that it is a rift in the space time continuum is considerable. If we were able to determine if it lead back in time we might be able to stop these attacks before they happen.” Thopor replied and then continued.

”Launch the probe. Coordinate with engineering to boost the probe telemetrics. We do not want to loose contact with it just as it starts to tell us where the rift leads to.”

He turned to Griffin. "I want medical to examine what, if any, effect this rift might have on the crew and what precautions might be needed." He said and then signaled Donaldson to open the channel again to the Remans.

"We might have a solution to your problem, but the outcome of this solution is uncertain. Be sure to evacuate as many as possible as soon as possible in case we do not succeed."

"YUUOR loGic is sOUUnd. We will stARt evacUUating emEDiatly." Replied the Reman.

The Remans closed the channel and the viewscreen turned back to space. Thopor sat down and thought. We have to get out of this event horizon.

Then Donaldson reported. "Sir, the sensors have picked up a detonation of the first missile over Remus. They were only able to launch five ships with evacuees."

"What is the status of the probe Mr. K'Rrauw?" The captain asked impatiently.

"Ready for launch, sir."

"Then you should target the center of the rift and send it on its way. The sooner we know what we are dealing with the faster we will be able to stop the remaining missile."

K'Rrauw launched the probe in to the rift and began to analyze the scans on its way to the other side.

"Mr. Stevens put it on the view screen."

"Aye, sir." He replied and pushed a couple of buttons to redirect the viewscreen to the rift.

A big flash temporarily appeared when the probe entered the rift and then it was gone from sensors.

Thopor got up. "Mr. K'Rrauw, what happened?"

"Well sir, it seems the rift destroyed it."

The ship started to move towards the rift and Stevens started to panic as he couldn't do anything without the engines.

"Captain, we are moving. Towards the rift, at an increasing speed. At this rate we will reach it in less than 30 minutes."

The Captain looked on the viewscreen and could see the same thing the rest of the bridge could see. "I want to hear suggestions on how to get the engines back or how to close the rift. Now!" He demanded.

"Sir i have a suggestion." Donaldson blared. "If we realign our main deflector to emit the same resonance particle frequency we may sync our hull with the dampening field, and it may let us pass through it, however altering our frequency may affect us in a way we cannot predict, we would need forward momentum to push us out of the field."

"Good thinking Mr. Donaldson. Begin work on that immediately." The Captain replied.

K'Rrauw inserted some further ideas. "If Mmrr. Rrahl werre able to firre the impulse engines on an overrburnn that should gain us enough mmommentumm to get through."

"Bridge to Engineering." Thopor ordered. "Get to work on the impulse drive and be prepared to increase their out put beyond the safety limits without overloading them."

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The doctor felt a small shudder in sickbay, but it was not important, he and his team still has a large number of Romulan wounded to care for.

All the biobeds had been filled, with many of the casualties either lying on the floor, or standing in the corners of the sickbay. The doctor shrugged past the security team, stationed in the center of the room, in order to reach a Romulan near the entrance to his office... The Romulan was seriously injured, but was not complaining about his wounds, but rather about an agonizing headache.

Hmm, the doctor thought to himself as he turned to face his assistant.

"Nurse, how long has this Romulan complained of a headache?"

"About 10 minutes Doctor." Replied the Nurse. "He's not the only one either, these 4 Romulans near the biobed have also been complaining. I've administered Hydrocortilene to them all, but they seem unaffected."

The doctor acknowledged, and continued his rounds of the sickbay. Meanwhile, the noise in the room steadily increased, as more and more Romulans fell victim to their headaches.

The doctor continued to pace the sickbay, almost every injured Romulan was now complaining of headaches. Nurse Wehnem approached him, after scanning a patient.

"Doctor, this Romulan, his name is Centurion Nechra. He's one of the least injured amongst them, yet he keeps on complaining about his head, as do the rest of them."

Baffled by this, the doctor approached the console in his office and began an internal scan.

"Hmm, very strange", he exclaimed to himself. The doctor tapped his comm badge and called for the bridge.

"Captain, I'm scanning high concentrations of chronitons in sickbay and a 0.38% increase of Tellurium Hexafluoride particles according to internal sensors, this is causing severe headaches aboard the ship. What's going on out there?"

The doctor finished his sentence and tended to a nearby Romulan as he awaited a reply.

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Thopor was contemplating their situation when the doctor's question were heard over the comm.

"Doctor, we are moving in to a subspace rift. How will the Terellium Hexafluoride affect us?" Thopor replied.

"Captain, the levels are rising quickly and at this rate the crew will begin to become unconscious in less then 15 minutes, in 20 minutes they will start to die!"

The Captain turned to Donaldson and K'Rrau. "This put things in a different perspective. Do you have any suggestions on how we can close the rift?"

K'Rrau replied the Captain. "Therre arre two options as farr as I know. If we mmodify Donaldson's suggestion to use the mmain deflectorr to emmit a coherrent ggraviton pulse that mmight close it. The prrobability of success is 72%. The otherr option is to jettison the primmarry hull's warpp corre and detonate it inside the rrift. The prrobability of success forr that is 83%."

"If we try to use the warp engines the rift will expand. Our only chance to escape the explosion is by impulse. If we reroute power from all essential systems we could focus all shields to aft. It might prove enough to ride the shockwave from the warp core explosion." Donaldson added.

"Stevens, turn this ship around and put the coordinates of the rift straight in front of us, use thrusters only and get prepared." The Captain said.

"Mr. Donaldson and Mr. K'Rrau, put your theories in to practice. We will try the graviton pulse first. Disengage the pulse if it has no effect or makes the situation worse. Stand by with the warp core ejection until then. As soon as you and engineering are ready we will begin." The Captain ordered.

"Aye sir." Donaldson said, wondering what he had got himself into. He began to program a command to reroute the most of the shields to aft and fine tune the targeting sensors.

The Captain still hadn't heard anything from engineering about the status on the preparation for the Impulse Engine's over burn procedure and he was growing impatient after having to wait for a couple of minutes.

"Computer locate Lieutenant Rahl!"

The computer replied with its usual cheerful voice. "Lieutenant Rahl is in Main Engineering, Deck 10, Section 47 of the Tertiary Hull."

"Ensign Goln, go down to engineering and make sure they are proceeding with the preparations. Have Rahl report back to me when the engines are ready."

The Ensign scurried off in to the turbo lift as fast as he could and went directly down to engineering.

Thopor then pushed a button on his console to open a channel to Sickbay. "Bridge to sickbay.

Send a team down to main engineering immediately. Something might be wrong down there. We have not been able to contact them.”

”Acknowledged!” Replied the doctor.

He turned to face his nearest assistant and ordered him to engineering.

Dr. Griffin then approached his office and contacted the captain.

”Sickbay to Captain Thopor, particles of tellurium have increased to 500 parts per million, as well as the chroniton emissions of that rift... you should also know that Tellurium is dangerous to both Vulcans and Romulans.”

The doctor sighed for a moment

”Sir... if we enter that rift, the wounded Romulans will die...”

Thopor then terminated the channel and looked straight at Lt. Donaldson. ”You better send a security team to meet ensign Goln outside engineering when he arrives. With this many Romulans onboard we can not be too careful.”

Donaldson did as the Captain ordered and sent the closest team there.

Donaldson continued with fine tuning the targeting sensors and the preparations for the warp core ejection. He paused and looked at K’Rrauw and asked. ”Are we sure this is going to work?”

He nodded. ”Accorrding to mmy calculations one of themm should do the job. Having both rready I amm surre we will be able to close the rift. Arre you done with the prrpreparation forr the Prrimmarry Hull warrrp corre ejection and fine tuning the tarrgeting scannerrrs?”

Donaldson looked worried back at K’Rrauw. ”Yes I am. But I’m not convinced that this will really work.” With that he continued to create reroute commands so that most of the shields with a push of a button could be rerouted to the aft section but leaving one strong enough in fore to shield the ship from smaller space debris when we engaged the engines.

When he was done he checked if K’Rrauw was done as well with the modifications to the Deflector to emit a Graviton Pulse, which he was, then he turned to Thopor. ”Captain, the modifications are complete and we are ready to activate them on your command.”

The Captain looked up and raised an eyebrow. ”Efficient work Lieutenants. Be prepared to re-establish normal deflector functions if the beam doesn’t work. Restore shield coverage and enforce the shields and hull integrity with all the power we can spare as soon as we no longer are able to ride the shockwave.”

Stevens looked at his console and got worried. It was only 10 minutes left before all Vulcans and Romulans would become unconscious. He turned to the captain. ”Sir, 10 minutes left until people start to become unconscious.”

As one thing after another kept getting worse and worse Stevens sat now helpless at his console. The Alsea was a well made, hard ship but it had taken a pounding and things weren't getting better.

A small explosion came from overhead and the lights dimmed out and back on through the bridge. They needed to get rid of the warp core and close the rift fast. What was going on in engineering???

The helm officer sat through everything, waiting for the next command and hoping he could get the ship out safely. Hopefully the warp core or the graviton burst would work.

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A very agitated looking ensign entered main engineering. Rahl recognized him as Ensign Goln, assigned to manage power fluctuations on the bridge and help the Senior Operations Officer with power distribution.

"Ensign, are you not supposed to be on the bridge?" Rahl asked sharply. "I sent you instructions just a couple minutes ago to prepare for the impulse burst. I expect you to man your station especially--" a sharp pain lanced through Rahl's head "in a red alert situation."

Ensign Goln squirmed a little and spoke quickly, "Lieutenant K'Rrauw, sir, told me to make sure that you were preparing..."

"As you can see ensign..." Rahl gestured to a crowded and busy main engineering. "We are preparing, now get back to the bridge and start managing the EPS conduits, we don't want a blowout."

"Yes sir, right away sir." Ensign Goln said as he made his way out of engineering as fast as possible.

Now...back to the problem at hand. Rahl thought. "Ensign Sun, we can't use the warp cores' power since the efficiency is still dropping. Bring all the nuclear fusion reactors online and prepare them for an impulse burst."

Rahl hurried to another console and overrode impulse safety parameters. Calling over to nearby engineering personnel, Rahl ordered. "Crewmen, we have to modify power input into the impulse engines. We're only going to channel power through 70% of the conduits, lock out the other 30%. With any luck we'll have those 30% unburnt and still functional.

Ok, time to make sure our Driver Coil Assembly doesn't burn... He thought. A new debilitating pain struck Rahl, almost bringing him to his knees. "Sir, are you alright?" Said ensign Sun concerned.

"I'm fine Ensign, make the following adjustments to the DCA so we..." he collapsed to the floor, the pain in Rahl's forehead became unbearable and his consciousness winked out.

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The ship had begun to shake as the stress on the hull increased. Thopor's head felt like someone was trying to crack it open with a hyperspanner.

Suddenly a voice came through over the comm. "Engineering here, the engines are ready." Ensign Sun said.

The Captain had to focus to overcome the excruciating pain he felt. "Take us to Red Alert. Fire the Graviton Pulse!" He ordered using a higher voice than usual.

K'Rrauw engaged the deflector dish and a wide beam shot out from the ship towards the rift. The rift started to pulsate and for a moment it began to shrink. Then it suddenly started to expand even faster than before.

K'Rrauw disengaged the beam and informed the Captain of the results.

Thopor sat in agony and heard how the first theory failed. "Stevens, turn us about 180 degrees. K'Rrauw, eject the warp core and Donaldson, reroute the shields. Stand by on torpedoes and Stevens be ready to engage to full impulse as soon as it detonates."

With that he had given his last orders before he collapsed in his chair.

An ensign ran up to him and activated the EMH as the ship turned and the shields were rerouted to aft.

"Please state the medical emergency!" The hologram said and walked swiftly over to the captain and scanned him. "He needs to get to sickbay immediately. Emergency transport to Sickbay." The Captain and the EMH dematerialized.

The remaining bridge officers looked at each other but were too busy to assign who should take over the center seat. As the ship came to a halt in its new position K'Rrauw ejected the warp core and as it reached its coordinates Donaldson fired the torpedoes.

The two torpedoes glared as they swiftly flew towards the warp core and a blinding light covered the bridge as the warp core exploded.

A bright explosion blinded the bridge in a deep white light. The Alsea's rerouted shields helped protect the ship but the shockwave from the exploding warp core blew it off path hurling the ship at a weird angle.

Stevens flew from his seat as the ship twirled around. Emergency warnings were going off everywhere and the blinding white light would not go away. Stevens tried pulling himself up but the ship was still hurling too fast. He got a quick look at the viewscreen. The rift was expanding rapidly. Could it possibly be getting that much bigger that much faster?

Suddenly the white light immediately disappeared and everything was momentarily quiet as the viewscreen went dead. The ship stabilized and came to a halt. Everyone was down and in disarray. Stevens sat slowly up. *What happened?* He thought.

Stevens moved awkwardly to his seat. He was banged up pretty badly. He saw blood

dripping in front of his eyes. He also felt like he couldn't move his right arm very easily. He fell down into his seat and looked over his console.

K'Rrauw had learned from his accident on the Umpqua to protect himself when ships start spinning. He had buried his claws in to the bulkhead at his station and had managed to get through this last incident in one piece only with a few bruises.

As he got up the bridge was in disarray. Smoke was pouring out behind the Astrometrics Station and one of K'Rrauw's junior officers, Lt. j/g Vol was lying on the floor. K'Rrauw leaped forward and stopped the smoke with a power shutdown of that station. He checked on Trill science officer and she came to.

"What happened?" Vol said quietly.

K'Rrauw helped her to her feet. "I am not sure yet but I intend to find out.

He noticed Stevens getting back on to his seat and Donaldson getting up as well. "Is anyone injured?" He inquired.

Donaldson checked himself but except for a big tear on the chest of his uniform he was fine.

"I think I've dislocated my arm..." Stevens said.

K'Rrauw walked up to him and looked at his arm and it was definitely dislocated and a deep cut on his head was bleeding. "You should report for sickbay at once Mmrr. Stevens."

"You can't order me to, we hold the same rank. I have to stay here and get the helm operating again." Stevens replied.

"Well that is true." K'Rrauw confirmed. "We hold the same rank, as does Mmrr. Donaldson, but I have seniority due to my long service in Starfleet. So that is why I am assuming command until the Captain is fit to return."

"But I'm needed here!" He proclaimed.

"Yes you are, but first you need to get that arm and the cut on your head taken care of.

If the doctor says you can return to duty after that, please do so as quickly as you can."

"Vol, we need to get external sensors working. Donaldson try to get a damage report."

Donaldson tried to get Engineering over the comm but the comm system was also down. "Sir, the communications are down."

K'Rrauw walked over to the communications station and ripped off a panel below it. "I will begin repairs here, get down to Engineering and apprise them of our situation. Bring an Engineering team back with you."

Donaldson looked upon his new captain, he was an hugely built man, huge arms, he wondered how the creature used his console, even though he was massive he was also intelligent and recognizing that the ship needed command straight away, K'Rrauw took command of the vessel, usually in situations like this command would fall to the senior officer, as the

remaining bridge officers were all the same rank, the burden of command would fall upon the most experienced officer, that was K'Rrauw.

Donaldson looked at Stevens, he was badly beat up and he needed to get to the sickbay, he decided to help him to the turbo lift and to the sick bay. He helped Stevens through the hallway and in to the turbolift which luckily were functioning. He accompanied him to the sickbay before he went to engineering.

K'Rrauw could feel in every hair on his body that something wasn't as it should be.

Vol eventually managed to get the sensors and the viewscreen operational and the viewscreen flickered before it come online and the entire view was filled with a yellowish gas.

"Chief... I mean Captain, I can't get any long range or short range readings on the sensors. But we are inside a nebula. According to the internal sensors it is filled with Tellurium Hexafluoride."

K'Rrauw stopped what he was doing and stood up. "Ensign Kyle, fire up the impulse engines if we still have them and set a course out of here and let's hope that it is the shortest way out. Engage!"

Kyle fired up the engines and luckily the helm responded and the ship began to move. However it shook much more than he liked. He noticed that the shields were still rerouted to aft and quickly restored the normal shielding. The ride became much smoother.

K'Rrauw turned to Vol. "Would you mind working your magic on the communications station as well? We need to coordinate with the rest of the ship."

She replied. "Yes, sir." And walked over to the left side of the bridge and began the repairs.

K'Rrauw walked up to and checked the science console. "2 minutes until people starts passing out." He said to himself.

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The ship's power systems continued to fluctuate, the lights flickered on and off, it was difficult to navigate through the corridors of the ship. Luckily Donaldson had read thoroughly through the ship's schematics. Smoke filled the long sweeping corridors. Donaldson noticed an EPS fire in the distance, it burned a blue green color. As they got closer, he could feel the heat from the fire.

"Stevens, wait here until I get this fire put out, we can't get to sick bay until then" Donaldson tapped his comm badge, he needed the EPS flow cut in this section, just then the dull sound of his comm badge reminded him that the comm system was down and still down apparently, he would need to get to the cut off himself.

Tapping a wall display Donaldson brought up the schematic of the ship, it flashed on and off, Donaldson struggled to read the descriptions. The internal sensors were still down, but the ship's schematics were stored in the ship's computer library. He noted where the EPS valve was... on the other side of the fire, of course.

Donaldson's heart sank. He NEEDED to get through for Stevens and for the ship. there was only one thing to do, "Sickbay isn't too far away." He said to himself.

"Stevens, I'll be right back."

Donaldson took a running leap, curled into a ball and rolled under the EPS fire jet, it burned his leg, he gritted his teeth in agony, but he was alive, in pain but with determination he reached for the panel that he knew contained the shut off valve, he pulled it sharply downwards and the fire went out as did the lights.

As the emergency lights kicked in, Donaldson got up, walked over to Stevens and helped him up, they arrived at the sickbay, and it was packed with Romulans, on the floor against the walls and on the bio-beds, crewmen and women also stood amongst the Romulans. Donaldson looked for doctor Griffin.

"Doctor why aren't these Romulans in the triage area in the cargo bay?"

"Because they're dying Lieutenant, they're dying..."

The doctor dropped his head in shame.

"And there's nothing I can do for them or our Vulcan crewmates."

With his head held low, he approached the central biobed and conducted a scan.

"Nurse, this one is dead, please remove him and place Crewman T'lun here."

Dr. Griffin tapped his assistant on the shoulder and turned to face Lt. Stevens and Donaldson.

"As you can see, it's not only Romulans that are affected by this tellurium compound. It's also deadly to Vulcans... but we're lucky, none of them are injured, they may last it out a little longer... as for you two."

The doctor led the pair into his office and began to heal their wounds.

Stevens looked up slowly. He was groggy, tired and beat up badly. He was hurt and needed help.

The new tactical officer had moved him into sickbay. It was full of other crewmen.

"By the way, who is commanding the ship?" He asked.

"K'Rauw." Replied Donaldson.

"I see, if either of you are headed back to the bridge, please inform the 'Captain' that this substance is harmless to the rest of us, and that he should expect to be in charge for the remainder of the mission."

Donaldson nodded, with a grim look on his face.

"As for those Romulans that escaped their ship unscaved... the odds of their surviving more than a day, are slim..."

Stevens collapsed onto the floor and everything went black. Ensign Wehnem rushed to his aid, picked him up, put him on a biobed and began treatment.

The doctor bid farewell to Lt. Donaldson as he left the sickbay, and left Stevens in the care of ensign Wehnem.

Doctor Griffin approached the console in his office and took another scan of sickbay. The rocking of the ship has ceased a few minutes earlier but the ship was not out of danger.

"Computer, Chief Medical Officer's log supplemental... 1600 hours. I have just completed a third scan of sickbay, and the results aren't good... The environmental control must be damaged, the temperature in sickbay has risen by 5.2c. My patients are uncomfortable enough as it is, well, very uncomfortable."

Doctor Griffin moved from the console and sat at his chair, readying a hypospray.

"Many are in fact, in agony... they won't respond to hydrocortilene and unfortunately, it's too risky to administer anesthizine to those patients that are still conscious, mainly the Romulans. Fortunately for the Vulcans, their vital sign degradation is a lot slower than that of our guests, and all aboard are now in sickbay."

The doctor stood up and approached captain Thopor. He, like the rest of the Vulcans, was unconscious. He took a scan.

"Cardio, fine, synaptic functions in order, respiration... fine." He muttered to himself, before moving onto Rahl.

"Cardio, fine, synaptic functions, fine, respir..." The doctor turned around to face biobed 4, which was beeping to the sound of yet another dying Romulan.

"Nurse!!, get me 20cc's Lectrazine, fast!"

Nurse Trell rushed to the hypospray shelf, but it was too late. The wounds of the Romulan were severe, there was little chance of her surviving.

"Nurse, note the time of death and place her behind my office with the rest of them. Give this bed to Lieutenant Suran. Ohh, and move Crewman T'Lun to biobed 2."

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Griffin's words hung in Donaldson's head as he exited sick bay, he felt sick, sick to the bone, all those people he pushed past to get to the door were going to be dead in less than 24 hours, unless he could get to engineering.

His pace quickened, he needed to get to engineering and find out what was going on, the chief engineer was a Vulcan, susceptible to the tellurium radiation if he was badly injured or

even dead engineering might be in a mess, and the new captain needed a repair team.

The engineering door lay ahead, still running Donaldson paused to let the door open, taking a deep breath he walked in the blue light that shone from the warp core, still active, it meant that warp speed may be attainable, Donaldson looked around, there were several Vulcan crew members slumped at their stations. He walked over to check their pulse's, they were alive, for now.

Donaldson looked around and called to ensign Sun who were close by.

"What's your station ensign?" Donaldson enquired.

"I manage the internal sensor grid, sir." He replied.

"It's ok, get another ensign to help you and get these people to sickbay, then report back here. Where is the communications station?"

"Aye sir, it's over there by Lt. Rahl's station, sir."

"Where is the Lt, ensign?"

"Just around the corner, sir."

"Okay, carry out your orders ensign."

Donaldson shouted out to the remaining crew members. "Who is in command here?"

No one replied. *Okay.* Donaldson thought to himself. *What do I do now? I need to find Rahl and get our situation from him.*

Donaldson found Rahl. He was on the floor. An ensign was nursing a wound to his head. Donaldson bent down to look at Rahl, he had clearly been affected by the tellurium, he needed help. "Ensign take the lieutenant to sickbay!" Donaldson said to the ensign nursing Rahl.

"Aye sir." He replied.

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The doctor turned and headed to Rahl as he was delivered to sickbay by a couple of engineers. He had collapsed in engineering, along with the rest of the Vulcans in his team. Doctor Griffin tapped his comm badge and whispers slightly.

"Computer, resume log... It's too hard to look after everybody, we're too stretched, not enough staff, not enough beds, even the EMH is overwhelmed." He said while he was taking care of Rahl.

The doctor walked to his office afterwards and stopped for a moment to contemplate.

"I'm giving 100% priority to the Vulcans, the Romulans can... computer, end recording"

"Acknowledged."

With a grim look about him, the doctor slumped into his chair and closed his eyes, awaiting the next emergency.

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There was only a void, tinted red from pain. Voices, so distant, but loud, really loud. Each small whisper sent an earsplitting pain that kept ringing in his head, each footstep violently shook his existence and then everything fell away into nothingness.

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It was 2383, a memory buried deep, under layers of anger, grief, and sadness.

"Computer, chocolate candy!" Rahl said insistently to the replicator.

"Sugar-based rations have exceeded daily limit. Please indicate something with more nutritional value." responded the computer in a monotone voice. Rahl watched the computer panel display fruits and vegetables, all of which Rahl found distasteful.

Turning to his little sister, Rahl shrugged ruefully. "Sorry Iris, no candy for today I guess."

Iris's face crumpled in frustration. "Rahl, you can just make the computer do what you want like last time! I want chocolate! And you know you want it too."

Iris began taking off the panel hiding the internal mechanics of the computer, but Rahl stopped her. "Grandma caught us last time. I don't want *all* of our sweets taken away for a week again." Rahl led her away from the replicator and said to her, "Lets go and pick some grapes instead. You go get the baskets and I'll go and get mom."

Their mom had just returned from an assignment for shore leave, and Rahl was eager to spend as much time with her as possible. Hopefully when his father gets back from patrol next week, they will all be able to spend time together and he always had so many interesting stories to tell. He walked to her office and saw that she was speaking with another Starfleet officer, someone older. Quietly tiptoeing to the very entrance of the room, Rahl leaned in so that he could hear.

"...was destroyed, no one was found alive. I am so very sorry Lieutenant. He was a fine officer and he served with honor. You have my deepest condolences."

The screen went blank. And in the stillness, there was only muffled sobs coming from his mother who was still facing the computer screen. Not knowing what to think, Rahl turned and ran. Ran out to his backyard and beyond through the green fields, in the vain hope to escape. Escape a reality where he knew that his father would never return.

A few weeks later, at a small Earth funeral ceremony for his father, Rahl was among family members who were both Human and Vulcan

It was numbing, listening to everyone talk about his father. How great he was. How dedicated he was. How valuable he was. He had cried every night since the day his family found out, and now all he could was to stare blankly at the empty case. The ceremony was absolutely suffocating, always bringing up painful memories of his father, but somehow Rahl managed to get through it all. Maybe it was really possible for all of his tear ducts to be dry.

Walking back in a daze to a shuttle, Rahl couldn't help but remember his father teaching him the basic mechanics of shuttles, and renewed grief swept over him, with fresh tears springing from his eyes.

A strong hand clamped down on Rahl's shoulder and he looked up to find an old Vulcan man, his grandfather, whom he recognized from old holophotos. "It is illogical to cry. Your father wouldn't have wanted it."

Anger blossomed for the first time. Who was this man to tell him what to feel? Rahl decided to just glare at this man with all the hatred he could muster. The old Vulcan just looked at him indifferently and turned to his mother and said, "Your son must come back to Vulcan with me. His emotions--"

"I'm never going to Vulcan with you!" Rahl spat and ran to the shuttle in a blind rage.

When he got to the shuttle, Rahl was confronted by two other Vulcans, dressed in the similar bland robes that his grandfather was wearing. One of them step forward and said in a cold voice, "Follow us. We are to take you to Vulcan." At that moment all of Rahl's control snapped, all the pain he felt released in a flash of red.

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Pain, unbearable pain. Rahl tried to gasp for air, but found his lungs empty. It was at that moment, that Rahl knew he was going to die.

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In engineering Donaldson was trying to get a grip on the situation. "Repair team 2, assemble on me, we're going to the bridge. The rest of you, try and get communications back online, at least the one to the bridge."

He looked around the room. "Are there any lieutenants here?"

"No sir." Replied ensign Sun.

"Ok ensign. You now have command here." He said.

Taking him aside, Donaldson gave the young ensign some advice. "Try and keep the crews spirit's up, get communications and external sensors online, those are your primary concerns. Also anyone that comes by engineering, tell them to send a division member with a status report to the bridge, we need to know the state of the ship, good luck ensign."

Donaldson and the repair team walked down the corridor to the turbolift, Donaldson and the repair team jumped in.

"Bridge." Donaldson said.

Nothing happened.

"The voice commands must be down." An ensign said

"Ah great." Donaldson input the command manually and the turbo lift began to move. The repair team and Donaldson arrived at the bridge. The lights were still flickering and the bridge almost empty.

"Lt. K'Rrauw." Donaldson said.

"I made contact with engineering, Lt. Rahl is in sickbay and ensign Sun is in command sir, oh and the repair team is also here sir."

K'Rrauw felt that this was not the ideal situation for his first real starship command experience. *We need to get communications going.* He thought. He turned to the engineering team. "When do you expect us to have commmmunications back?"

Donaldson sighed and then flopped down to the deck plating, he was tired and bloody and dirty, not quite the career starting adventure he had in mind. All he could think about were the people about to die. Remembering what doctor Griffin asked Donaldson to relay, he said.

"Sir, doctor Griffin wanted me to tell you that the Romulan and Vulcans, have less than 24, no sorry, 23 hours to live, sir."

The engineering team had been replacing burned out parts and looked up with black streaks on their faces from the charred relays where they had scratch themselves. When they discovered that nothing was salvageable.

"Sir, I've done what I can do." The most senior engineer replied. "Both the primary and secondary backup systems are fried. There aren't enough working parts to repair the main system. We really need to have someone get more spare parts." He said.

"Understood. Send one of your men and get them." K'Rrauw ordered and turned to the helm. "Mmrr. Kyle, what is the status of the impulse engines?"

"Running at 100%, sir." He answered.

"What! They have been preppared forr overr burnn! Increase speed immmmmediately to 120 perrcent!" K'Rrauw replied raising his voice making it sound almost like he roared back at the Ensign. "We have hundrreds of Rrommulans and Vulcans dying herre."

Ensign Kyle quickly increased the speed per his orders. As they gained more momentum the ship was filled with the noise from the engines and it started to vibrate. The bulkheads and hull plating started to squeak as the vibrations increased.

"Sir, I don't think we can take this more then a few more minutes." He reported.

"Verry well, Mmrr. Kyle, decrease to 115%." K'Rrauw responded.

The squeaking stopped but the vibrations and the increased humming from the engines remained.

"Steady as she goes Mmrr. Kyle." He said and turned to Donaldson. "Good job Mmrr. Donaldson. Worrk with Mmrr. Vol and help herr get somme sorrt of sensorr rreading that could tell us if we arre mmoving out of the nebula orr furrtherr in to it."

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"Aye sir." Donaldson said.

He hauled himself off the deck and made his way to the access port for the ODN, Mr. Vol was right behind him, Donaldson didn't know Mr. Vol, He didn't even know her first name.

"Lt. Vol, what's your first name?" He asked as they began their work.

"My name is Mezan, sir." She responded.

"Ah I see." Donaldson said, pulling off an access panel, several of the wires looked burned.

"Is that a Human name or...?" He inquired.

"Its Trill sir, that's where I come from." She replied in a feminine tone and pointed to the spots running down her face and neck.

"Right. Vol, you'll need to get some ODN cables from somewhere, see if you can pull it from a secondary system." Donaldson requested.

The sensor system was almost totally fried but repairing the main ODN network to the bridge, Donaldson managed to get a partial link to the starboard sensor. Vol, go to the science station and tell me if you can get any readings, Donaldson ordered.

Lt. Vol hurried to the station and pulled up the sensor readings. "Getting positive readings sir, trying to patch in the auxiliary sensor arrays." Vol called out.

"Good work Lt. I'll manage the power flow from here, don't want what little cable we have left to short out."

"Sir, I have all sensor arcs active, short range. I'm getting the computer to analyze the nebulae."

"Good job Lt. Power systems seem to be stable, but it won't hold for long though."

Donaldson called out to the captain. "Sir, sensor systems active, internal and short range external online."

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Stevens blinked his eyes slowly... He noticed he was facing the ceiling. Everything was fuzzy and he was very groggy.

"Mmmmm.....what happened?" He asked, partially to himself but also hoping someone was around.

He noticed some noises as he started to gain more and more consciousness. It was the normal sounds of tricorders and other equipment.

Stevens slowly sat up and shook his head. It hurt. He was in sickbay, still full of crewmen and busy nurses. Most nurses were walking briskly checking injured crewmen quickly before moving on to another one.

The closest nurse turned and saw him and rushed over to him.

"And how are you feeling lieutenant?" Nurse Wehnem asked.

"I've had better days." He responded. "What happened?"

"We had a rough flight, if the bridge knows what happened. Yet they still haven't told us. But during the shake you took a pretty bad hit. Your arm is over stressed and your shoulder was dislocated. Of course it's better than being broken but you should still take it easy. The worst part is your head. You took a bad spill on the bridge and you have swelling around your brain, it's not a bad concussion but any stress could cause another blackout. I highly suggest you rest here in sickbay."

Stevens sat up straight and shook his head so it hurt again. "There's no way I can just sit down here doing nothing, especially not now. I'm going back to the bridge."

Stevens stood up very slowly, he was still shaky.

"Lt. you have to be careful. I'm serious, any stress could cause problems, don't hurt yourself up there."

He nodded and started shuffling towards the door. Stevens turned and looked over the overwhelmed sickbay one more time as he left. *Poor crewmen...* He thought.

Stevens forced himself to walk faster determined to make it to the bridge.

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K'Rrauw happy by the fact they had any kind of sensor readings ordered Vol to start scanning. "Grreat job, both of you. Scan forr radiation intensity and parrticle density to try and deterrmmine if we arre mmoving out of orr in to the nebula."

Just then the engineering team returned with the spare parts for the communications and continued the repairs to the comm. A minute later they reported it had been fixed.

10 minutes later Stevens reached the bridge. The turbolift doors opened and he shuffled onto the bridge.

"Captain, Lieutenant Stevens back and reporting for duty."

Then the turbolift doors opened and Stevens shuffled onto the bridge.

K'Rrauw was happy to have him back but was still worried about how the helmsman seemed to feel. "Good to have you back Mmrr. Stevens, but arre you surre you arre feeling alright?"

"Yes, sir." He replied with resolve.

"Verry well, ensign Kyle, you arre rrelieved. The helmm is yourrs Mmrr. Stevens."

K'Rrauw then opened a ship wide channel. "This is acting captain Lieutenant K'Rrauw. Ourr attempt to escape the subspace rift has failed. We arre now on the otherr side in what we have deterrmmed is a nebula. The nebula is dangerous to Rrommulan and Vulcan physiology. If you know you have Vulcan or Rrommulan ancestorr and feel any symmptomms, such as headaches. Rreport to sickbay. We will rremmain at Rred Alerrt until we have left the nebula. I want all deparrtmments to rreporrt yourr status to the brridge immmedately. K'Rrauw out."

Stevens limped over to his post, relieved to be back at his post. Even if nothing else was ok right now at least he was home. He slumped down and eased into the seat. Walking was not the best idea right now. His arm wasn't working very well and his head hurt but at least he was ok for now.

Two minutes had passed with no reports coming in. K'Rrauw turned to the engineering team working on the bridge restoring systems. "Ensign Sun, I thought you said that the commmunications had been rrestored?"

"Yes sir, they should be fully working. I'll run a level 4 diagnostic on it." The young Ensign walked over to the communications station and ran a diagnostic. Thirty seconds later he reported. "All systems check out fine sir."

"Verry well Ensign. Commputerr, rrepeat the last ship wide mmessage sent by mme." K'Rrauw stated. He then turned to Donaldson. "We can just as well startt the rreporrt fromm the Securritty and Tactical deparrtmments. Mmrr. Donaldson, what arre ourr status therre?"

"Aye sir, running diagnostics now sir" Lt Donaldson said. "Results coming in now sir."

"Weapons systems, phasers and torpedoes are active, the shield generator is active and external sensors are active, however, sir, internal sensors are still inoperable. All security teams have reported in and we are running continuous sweeps of the ship."

Then the doctor voice was heard over the comm channel.

"Sickbay to bridge, I've got nothing good to report. We've lost 11 Romulans since we entered this nebula. The tellurium count is far above safety levels. If you don't move us out soon, well, there won't be a Romulans left aboard, or any Vulcans, and that includes the captain and half our engineering team!"

After hearing the doctor's report through the comm system Stevens turned his attention to his post. He hoped the engineering teams could repair the systems quickly enough to restore sensors and he thought about anything he could do. It was not looking good but there was always a way out. His studies had taught him that.

"Captain" Stevens responded quickly, "With the shield generator active, perhaps we could re-modulate our shields and divert power from weapons to reinforce them and attempt to block the nebula's effects, it may buy us some much needed time."

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Donaldson turned to Stevens. "Good idea Stevens, but we have no way of knowing if the emitters are active, but I suggest we try it, we have no need for weapon ready status." He added.

K'Rrauw thought about the two officers' suggestions. *It would at least buy us some time.* He thought. *As long as there were enough power to divert without affecting the engines.*

"Get to work on it. Make sure you coordinate this with engineering. I do not want us to lose the engines." K'Rrauw ordered.

"Captain if we give all weapons and secondary systems power to the shields we can keep our auxiliary power with the engines. This should allow us to keep the impulse engines going at maximum, get our shields up and re-modulated quickly. I recommend keeping everything we have with the engines there and moving everything else except life support to the shields".

K'Rrauw pondered for a moment. "Make sure Doctor Griffin has the power he needs to keep his patients alive, as well."

Stevens turned back to his overlay and watched the helm, monitoring impulse power and speed to make sure everything remained safe and smooth. He waited for the bridge to contact engineering about rerouting the power.

Donaldson spoke to Stevens. "I'm going to reroute power to the shields from here, I shall contact engineering to inform them, and have them monitor the situation from the EPS relay monitoring station, I'm sure they will communicate with us while we transfer the power."

"Lt. Donaldson to ensign Sun" Donaldson said after opening a comm channel.

"We are about to reroute power from weapons to shields, can you monitor the power transfer in engineering, also, if the power is not adequate to boost the shields to maximum strength. Could you re-route as much power from secondary systems as possible until they are." Donaldson waited for a response from engineering.

"That is affirmative." Replied ensign Sun.

K'Rrauw opened a channel to sickbay. "Doctor Griffin, we are rerouting more power to the shields. Have someone keep an eye on your power requirements and monitor your patients for improvements. We hope to shield out the effects from the nebula. K'Rrauw out."

"Acknowledged" replied the Doctor as he approached his desk to collect a tricorder. He began to scan the area.

"Bridge, it's working. I'm detecting no increase of tellurium particles, give the environment systems a few minutes to clear the excess from the ship's atmosphere and there should be no further danger to the rest of us... As for those who were injured during the attack, it's too late... the damage is done, they will only get worse as time passes."

Dr. Griffin scanned his patient, Talak Rahl, before continuing.

"Permission to work only on a treatment for those still alive? If I can't reverse the effects on their nervous systems soon, they'll be dead within 12 hours..."

K'Rrauw thought for a second and then replied. "Doctorr, do what you can to save as mmany as possible. If they arre beyond salvation, that is your call. But try to mmake surre the timme they have left is as painless as possible. K'Rrauw out."

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The Alsea was flying through space at well over 100% impulse speed. All power was either in the engines or protecting the ships in the shields. This was their only shot.

The nebula had already taken a huge toll on the crew, and it was now or never. Stevens stared intently over his console as the ship zoomed through the nebula, hopefully getting near the exit.

The Alsea began to rock, slowly at first, then stronger and stronger. A light started beeping on the helm. The engines were taking too much power. There was nothing left. They had burned 115% impulse for too long. The shields were beginning to buckle from overusing the emergency power.

Stevens sat knowing there was no other option. They couldn't reduce power or many would die and they would still be stuck in the nebula. The only choice was to keep forcing the ship to go.

Stevens used the secondary EPS conduits to help the power flow better and the rocking slowed. The shield strength continued to fall.

The ship began to shudder and then it slowly dissipated. K'Rrauw looked over at the helmsman noticing him inputting commands to his console. "Mmrr. Stevens, reportt."

"Captain, I've momentarily helped the engines use power for efficiently but it won't last long, and our shields are losing strength, we have to get out of here soon".

"Mmrr. Vol, what can you tell us with the sensorrs? He asked the science officer.

"The particle levels are fluctuating, sir. But every time it does that, the amount of particles decreases. It is highly likely that we are moving out of the nebula." She responded.

The ship began to shudder more as the engines started to fail.

"Captain, I think I saw something on the view screen. It looked like a star." Vol stated with excitement in her voice.

Everyone on the bridge focused on the viewscreen trying to see what she had seen. But it looked like it had done since they ended up inside the nebula.

"Look!" Donaldson almost shouted. "That is a star, right there!" He pointed to the upper left corner of the viewscreen.

This time the entire bridge could see it.

K'Rrauw stood up holding on to the captain's chair with a firm grip. "Stevens, lay in a course toward that star. Warp 5. Engage!"

The shudders stopped as the impulse engines shut down and the warp engines engaged. The nebula became thinner and thinner around them and a few seconds after they jumped in to warp they had cleared the nebula.

"Stevens, full stop. Begin a full diagnostic on the impulse engines. Coordinate with engineering. I need to know how much damage they have taken and how long it will take to get them fully operational again." K'Rrauw ordered and turned to Vol.

"Vol, begin scanning for any deuterium deposits we can use to replenish the ship's deuterium storage with." He then looked to the tactical officer.

"Donaldson, restore all the power to the weapons and return shields to normal. Take us down to Yellow Alert."

He then opened up a channel to engineering. "Ensign Sun, I need a full damage report and start with the engines. Coordinate those repairs with Lt. Stevens. K'Rrauw out."

"Sir!" Vol said with anxiety in her voice. "You need to see this."

K'Rrauw walked over to the astrometrics station where Vol was currently standing. "What is it Mmrr. Vol?" He asked.

"I began to scan the systems around us and then I got a report from astrometrics that we aren't where we are supposed to be. So I looked in to it myself. They were correct."

He looked at the young Trills findings on the screen. "I see what you mean the stars are out of alignment. So not only have we moved a considerable distance from our previous coordinates, there is a time differential too. How far have we traveled in time?" He asked Vol.

"It seems we have gone back in time about 12 hours, sir. And our location is half a lightyear from our previous location. To where we initially detected the subspace wake from the missiles, sir." Vol replied.

"Well then, according to the temporal prime directive we need to find somewhere to hide our presence in this timeline. Scan for asteroids and planetoids with a paramagnetic core, we can use that to mask our presence." K'Rauw ordered.

The science station console began to beep.

"I've picked up an asteroid that contains deuterium, sir." Vol reported.

K'Rauw turned to Stevens. "This will need your great piloting skills. Drop us out of warp as close to the asteroid's coordinates as possible. If we can not beam it aboard then you need to take a few shuttles and use them to close the transporter gap. Then resupply the ship with deuterium transporting it from the asteroid to the shuttles then on to the ship."

K'Rauw opened a channel to sickbay. "Doctor, I want the Senator to meet me in the captain's office as soon as she is able to. K'Rauw out."

Stevens locked the helm on the largest asteroid with the most clearance around it and set the ship to a low orbit directly above the asteroid. The Alsea engaged warp shortly and dropped out directly above the asteroid.

"Captain we should be within transporter range of closest deuterium sources."

K'Rauw opened a channel to the transporter rooms. "Coordinate your transports and lock on to as much high grade Deuterium as we need to replenish our storage pods. Let me know when we are done. K'Rauw out."

He then turned to Stevens. "Good piloting there Mmr. Stevens. Now if you are up to it, go down to engineering and make sure they are on top of making use of the new Deuterium to get our impulse engines back online."

With that K'Rauw left for the Captain's Office to wait for the Romulan Senator.

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Stevens nodded and stood slowly. He felt significant pain and it definitely wasn't easy to walk. He limped off the bridge towards the turbolift and went down to engineering.

Stevens looked around seeing busy crewmen everywhere.

"Excuse me!" He yelled. "Who's in charge here?"

An ensign approached him. A taller human.

"Ensign, we need to make sure we can get our impulse engines back up as soon as possible. I'll help you get the new deuterium up and ready and help you get the engines going. Make sure you have your teams working at 100%. Let's go."

The engineering crews had worked very hard for quite awhile now and Stevens stepped back to monitor the progress. Everything was going smoothly, which was a change for this

mission, and they were close to having a pretty reliable impulse system. He tapped his combadge.

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K'Rrauw thought it felt strange to sit in the captain's chair on the bridge but now in his office it felt even stranger to sit in his chair there. But what he had to talk to the Senator about wasn't something he wanted to do out in the open. He got up and walked to the replicator. "One cup of dandelion tea with three units of sugarr and mmilk, hot."

The replicator slowly materialized the beverage and he brought the cup with him back to the table. He sighed slightly as he sat down. He slowly sipped his tea and he awaited the response from sickbay about when the senator would be ready to be released.

Then Steven's voice were heard over the comm. "Engineering to captain, we've got our impulse engines online, we shouldn't use them just yet to be safe, but they're ready. We should be able to go at full impulse within the hour."

K'Rrauw acknowledged the report. After that Stevens went back to monitoring engineering until everything had been completed. After that he returned to the bridge.

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All 22 Romulans in sickbay had now passed on. The doctor finished his scans on the Vulcans before departing for cargo bay 2 where the remainder of the Romulans were situated.

He had not yet finalized a treatment for their condition and visiting the Romulans was not productive, but the doctor needed to know how the Romulan senator was holding up.

The large doors opened to reveal a carpet of unconscious Romulan soldiers and a few security officers and nurses dotted between them. The doctor approached the nearest and asked.

"Ensign, the Romulan senator, where is she?"

"Over here sir." Replied the officer, who led the way to the frail senator.

The doctor knelt beside her and began to scan her vital signs. She was different than the other Romulans and more like the Vulcans. Each of her vital signs were stable yet everybody affected was suffering from nervous degradation. But hers was not as severe. The doctor tapped his combadge and contacted the captain.

"Sir, the senator is better than the other Romulans but worse off than the Vulcans. I still estimate 10 hours until her nervous systems fail. I have ordered that all patients receive 4 cc's of Alkysine, but I can't promise any positive results."

K'Rrauw responded to the doctor. "Bring the Senator to sickbay. I will be down in a moment." He put aside the cup of tea and left the office for the nearest turbolift.

As he entered he said. "Deck 7." When it finally reached its destination he promptly exited and left for sickbay.

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As K'Rrauw stepped in to Sickbay he got the report from Stevens and tapped his commbadge.

"Acknowledged Mmrr. Stevens. That is grreat news. Good job all of you. K'Rrauw out."

He looked around the sickbay and saw mostly Vulcan crewmembers on the biobeds. The captain and Rahl being one of them. All the dead Romulans had been moved on to the morgue except for one that just had been brought there. Senator Kimara Cretak. He walked up to Doctor Griffin and the Senator.

"Is the Senatorr conscious and can she talk, doctorr?" He asked.

The doctor nodded at the captain. "We're lucky, the Alkysine worked on the senator. I'll wake her at once... but please be quick."

K'Rrauw looked as the doctor administered the hypospray.

Dr. Griffin approached the senator and injected her with 2cc's of Animazine. "Senator, the captain would like to speak with you, please keep it brief, for your own safety".

As the senator began to awaken he turned to Griffin. "Thank you doctorr. Would you please leave us alone? I will alert you if herr condition changes."

With that the doctor left them and went to his office. Now all who were there were a few unconscious Vulcans and the two of them. The Senator looked up at him. "What are you doing to me? Where is Captain Thopor?" She said barely whispering.

"Senatorr, Captain Thoporr is in a comma and is on the biobed overr therre. I am in commmand now. We have been inside a poisonous nebula filled with Tellurrium Hexafluoride that we due to dammage could not stop frrom getting in to the environmental systems. All the Vulcans on the ship are in commas. Mmost of yourr crrw arre already dead orr dying and that includes you as well."

"The Federation brag about your technological prowess but can't handle the Rhizo Henbane Nebula..."

K'Rrauw interrupted, not interested in hearing her insults. "Senatorr, we mmight be able to save somme of you, but I need the exact shield frrequency of yourr ship as well as the exact location of the cloaking device."

"That is classified." She whispered with resolve in her voice.

"But please Senatorr, yourr ship is destroyed, what does it matterr now? We need this informmation to help you. But if you rrather die with the knowledge that you did not even ttry to save yourr crrw, then that is up to you." He replied in a calm voice, trying not to be angered by her stubbornness.

She was quiet for a moment. "Very well..." She whispered. "Do you have one of those PADDs that I can use?"

K'Rrauw looked around the Sickbay and eventually found one that he held in front of the Senator so she could enter the shield frequency and exact coordinates of the cloaking device. "Thank you Senatorr. We will do ourr verry best in saving you and yourr crew."

She looked up at the large feline. "I know you will. But tell me, Lieutenant how... will..." Then she passed out.

K'Rrauw turned around and called for Griffin. "Doctorr!"

As Griffin began working on the Senator, K'Rrauw excused himself and headed back to the bridge.

When he stepped on to the bridge Vol approached him. "Sir, I've found a planetoid with a paramagnetic core at a safe distance from this timeline's Alsea's scanners." She said.

"Well done Vol. But you need to find one within ttransporterr range frrom the position wherre we firrst encountered the Rrommulans." He ordered. "Stevens, brring up those coorrdinates frromm the ship's commputerr, lay in a courrse and be rready to jumpp to mmaximmum warrp."

"Donaldson." He hands him the PADD with the shield frequency and the location of the cloaking device and continues. "Mmake surre ourr transportters mmatch that shield frrequency and prrparre to lock on to those coorrdinates and beamm what everr is therre to mmmain engineerrng." He said and walks over to the Stellar Cartography station and Vol.

Taking the PADD from the captain Donaldson replied. "Aye, aye, sir."

He began making the shield frequency changes, they weren't difficult, just a slight modification, the transporters were a little more difficult.

"Any luck finding that prroverrbial needle in a haystack?" He asked to Vol.

"No sir, the closest one is slightly out of transporter range." She replied.

"That complicates things." He thought for a few seconds. "Stevens, go to the shuttlebay, mmodify a shuttle to appearr so that it will rregisterr on scannerrrs as space debrrris and mmake prrperations to jettison it towarrds the tarrget. Mmake surre all the powerr signaturres forr the ttransporterrrs arre dammpened and link themm with ourrs. Then we can use the shuttle to brridge the distance. We will need to be able to trriggerr a self destrruct by rremmote if it is not destroyed in the explosion frromm the Rrommulan ship."

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Stevens had just finished modifying the shuttle when a crewman walked in carrying a PADD. The crewman handed him the PADD with updated specifications for the shuttle.

"O come on...." He muttered.

Stevens went back to the shuttle and began the final updates for the shuttle.

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K'Rrauw had been pacing back and forth on and off for about 8 hours waiting for the shuttle to be finished when Stevens returned after a completed job. He then input the coordinates for the planetoid with the paramagnetic core.

The ship jumped in to warp and only minutes later it arrived at the set coordinates. The ship maneuvered slightly in to position to jettison the modified shuttle to the needed coordinates.

K'Rrauw opened a channel to the shuttlebay control. "Evacuate and lock down all entrances to the shuttle bay. Disengage the gravimetric plating and stand by for emergency depressurizing procedures."

The shuttle began to slightly hover over the shuttle bay floor. As the ship stopped at the correct angle he gave the order to jettison the shuttle just in time for it to reach its coordinates in time for the arrival of the other Alsea and the Romulan ship.

As the shuttle bay shut down the force field keeping it pressurized all the air blew out in to space and the shuttle slowly followed it towards its goal. Slowly twisting and turning around its own axis.

K'Rrauw turned to Vol. "Scan the shuttle for energy readings."

She began scanning the shuttle and got just some minor energy fluctuations at this close range. "Only minor ones sir. At the range it will be from the other ships they will not be able to detect anything with their sensors."

"Good. Well done Stevens. Donaldson, are you done with the transporter link?" He asked.

"Sir the transporter system power is fluctuating I'm trying to compensate, but there isn't MUCH power available".

"I have a stand-by-lock on the coordinates sir. I managed to scrape a few joules out of the warp core."

K'Rrauw turned to Donaldson. "Great. Also do an emergency redirect of 10 percent of the impulse engines energy as well. We have plenty to spare considering we have all that new deuterium now."

The ship engaged its impulse engines at 90 percent and moved in to position in a very low stationary orbit of the planetoid, well inside its magnetic field to hide from the approaching ships.

K'Rrauw looked over to Donaldson. "Take us to Grey mode, except for enough energy to keep us in this position and full energy to the transporters."

All they could do now was to wait. The bridge was silent for a while until Vol's console began to beep. "The ships are almost in position sir. We have a transporter lock."

"Put it on the main viewerr." K'Rrauw leaned forward in the captain's chair. "Wait, not yet, activate on my command..."

The Klingon ship was towing the Romulan warbird in a tractor beam just as the other Alsea dropped out of warp.

The Klingons disengaged the tractor beam and began firing on the other Alsea.

"Engage!" K'Rrauw ordered and Vol complied. "Did we get it?" He asked Vol.

"Yes sir. It's in engineering right now." Vol replied swiftly.

"Perfect." He said to himself and opened a channel to Engineering. "Bridge to Engineering, have you received the device in full working order?"

Ensign Sun replied. "That is affirmative sir, but according to Starfleet..."

K'Rrauw interrupted. "It is in working order ensign Sun?"

"Y-yes S-sir, b-but I w-would..." Sun stuttered.

He interrupted again. "Well then your orders are to make sure it is in operation and activated within 10 minutes. Bridge out."

The bridge was silent as the crew looked with mixed feelings of curiosity and suspicion on the Caitian sitting in the big chair, so silent that you could hear the proverbial pin in the haystack drop.

After almost 10 minutes of complete silence where K'Rrauw had impatiently been sitting in the captain's chair watching the battle between the now arrived Tal Shiar against the Klingons and the Remans, just as the Romulan ship was about to explode.

K'Rrauw turned to Donaldson. "Activate the shuttle's remote self destruct at the same moment as the Warbird is destroyed. Being so close they will not even register it as a separate explosion."

The viewscreen lit up as the Romulan ship blew up just milliseconds before the shuttle followed the same fate.

Then the intercom was activated. "Engineering to the Bridge. We are all done down here." Sun said with despair in his voice.

"Very good Ensign. Activate. Donaldson take us to blue alert. Stevens set course for the coordinates of the subspace rift, warp 9. Engage!"

The ship shimmered away, becoming totally invisible before it jumped in to warp.

They had been at warp for a while and passed an uncloaked Romulan scout ship without being detected. Having the cloaking device had proven to be a good decision to avoid contaminating the timeline. As they reached the coordinates of the subspace rift they dropped out of warp and began scanning the area for any signs of the rift.

Vol worked hard going between the science station and the astrometrics station on the bridge. "Sir, there is no sign of the rift on any scans we have done."

K'Rrauw turned around in his chair. "Arre you surre? Rrun a level three diagnostic on the scannerrrs and try again. We have to be surre." He stood up and walked towards the turbolift. "Stevens, you have the brridge until I rreturn. I will be in sickbay."

He entered the turbo lift and ordered it to sickbay. He needed to talk to the senator before she died.

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As he entered sickbay he couldn't see doctor Griffin so he walked up to the senator who was barely conscious. "I want to thank you forr yourr assistance. Although ourr plan to save you and yourr crrew is only half way through I ammm confident we will succeed. Howeverr we arre at the coorrdinates wherre we got stuck in the subspace rrift that thrrew us in to the nebula but therre is no sign of any rrift herre. Have the Tal Shiarr been developing subspace weaponrry?"

The senator was very weak and could only whisper. "Yes."

He then heard the doors open and close and Griffin were back. He approached doctor Griffin. "Doctorr, I want you to mmake surre you find sommething that you have not tried yet that will eitherr stop the prrogression of this or sommething that currees herr."

Just then Vol was heard over the comm. "Sir, the diagnostic shows the sensors to be working at peak efficiency. There is nothing there. Wait, long range sensors are picking something up. Sir something has gone terribly wrong. The missile that was supposed to have changed course haven't. They are both still heading towards Remus."

K'Rrauw tapped his badge. "Set a courrse towarrds the warrhead, mmmaximmmmm warrp. I ammm on mmy way." He then turned to Griffin once more. "And while you arre at it, I do not carre how you do it but we need ourr chief engineerr back, now. Therre has to be sommething you could do?"

With that he returned to the bridge to try and find a way to redirect that missile as it should have been done. *Could it be that they somehow have already contaminated the timeline in a way. But how?* He thought.

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The U.S.S. Alsea was speeding through subspace at maximum warp. On an intercept course for the missiles heading for Remus.

Griffin had been working hard at finding a way to treat the Romulans and Vulcans suffering

from the Terellium Hexafluoride and even though he had been reminded by K'Rrauw to do what ever it took to get Lieutenant Rahl back on his feet there wasn't anything he could do.

Just then the Romulan senator came to again. "Doctor, why aren't you treating us yet?" She whispered.

He looked perplexed at her, she must be delirious he thought. "Relax, Senator, we are doing everything we can."

"Humans..." She said with distaste in her tone. "Our scientists have had a lot of time to work on this. They have devised a cure centuries ago based on the poison itself."

The doctor changed his opinion and listened carefully to what she could tell him about this cure, after all she was not a doctor. But she could provide enough information for him to begin working on a cure.

With the Senators help Griffin had been working on a cure on the notes he had got from her and had come up with something that he thought were going to work perfectly. The Senator had demanded that he would give her the first treatment. As he scanned her after administrating the hypospray everything seemed to work perfectly. The neural degradation halted and began to slowly revert.

The Senator looked up at the doctor. "There is something wrong, I should feel much better by now. You must have made the dose to human standards... it is too weak." She spoke with more emphasis then she had done ever since she got sick. "Give me an other dose at once!"

The doctor rushed back into sickbay with his PADD and headed towards the nearest patient. He picked up an adjacent hypospray, went into his pocket and pulled out a capsule. The doctor held it to the light and starred intently before contacting the bridge.

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Back on the bridge Stevens had made sure that K'Rrauw's orders had been followed and the ship had changed course and jumped in to warp. "Vol, when will we intercept the missile?"

"Two minutes sir." She replied.

"Not much time to devise a plan. Do you have any suggestions?" He asked.

"None that we haven't thought about before sir."

"How about you Donaldson?" He said turning to his left.

"The only thing I have is to use those probes with nanoprobes and transphasic shields. Killing the life form in the process. We might also have to drop our cloak."

At that moment K'Rrauw stepped out of the turbolift.

"Stevens, rreporrt. What is ourr status?"

He began to get him up to speed as the ship quickly approached the missiles.

Stevens took over the helm again and K'Rrau sat down in the captain's seat. "Dammned if we do and dammned if we do not. To prrserve the timmeline as mmuch as possible I see no otherr option left then to firre the ttrransphasic prrobes at the still visible mmissile. No mmatter the cost that mmissile can not rreach Rremmus." He opened a channel to Engineering. "It is the brridge herre. How old would you say the cloaking device is?"

Ensign Sun responded. "We'll do a scan. Hold on." A few seconds passed and then he replied. "The oldest part our scanners could pick up is 2 years old."

"Will you be able to mmaintain the cloak while we launch two prrobes?"

"Affirmative sir." He replied.

Out from nothing two small flares of light appeared in space as the probes engaged their engines when the Alsea dropped out of warp, still cloaked, straight in the path of the missile. They probes flew straight towards the only visible missile left. They penetrated its shields but instead of the missile being deactivated, as intended, the missile changed its direction towards Devorgis.

Stevens sat quietly monitoring the helm. Everything was going smoothly and warp power was fine. Even though engineering had been in shambles earlier it looked like they had everything under control now. Stevens wondered if there was any chance of coming out of this mess intact.

K'Rrau reacted quickly. "Vol, will the mmissile pass through the arrea wherre the subspace rift appeared?"

She checked the astrometric station. "That is affirmative sir. It seems we managed to restore that part."

He then turned to the viewscreen. "Stevens, lay in an interrcept courrse that will interrsect 4000 km frromm the eventhorrizon of the rrift. Mmaximmum warrp. Engage."

Stevens laid in the course immediately and engaged pushing the Alsea foward at maximum warp.

He then turned to Donaldson and Vol. "I want you two to comme up with a new way to destrroy it. We mmust act and do it now Ourr hand mmust be a hand of steel. We cannot allow it to rreach Devorrgis."

Then the doctor's voice came over the comm. "Doctor to the captain, I have a treatment, please join me in sickbay." Griffin then began to assemble the hypospray and awaited the captain.

He then turned back to Stevens. "Mmrr. Stevens, you will have the brridge, again. While I amm down in sickbay." With that he got up and left for the turbolift.

As the captain left Stevens assumed command of the bridge and asked for a tactical report.

Donaldson responded to Stevens. "Myself and Lt. Vol are working on a way to destroy the remaining missile with a coronal mass ejection from the Devorgis system, sir. If we can get within 70 million kilometers of their sun and direct a high energy charged particle beam towards the sun we can create a controlled eruption of solar plasma and direct it towards the flight path of the missile, it will be disabled because the plasma will destroy and overwhelm its shields and the ensuing EM surge will disable it's systems. We will need to use the main deflector dish and we may burn out several capacitors. But it will get the job done."

He then continued. "The ships tactical systems are partially operational. Shields are at 80% and recharging. *He made a mental note to thank the designers for making the ship with regenerative shielding.* Fore and aft torpedo tubes are operational. All main phaser banks operational. I still have trouble transferring power, but I'm sure engineering has someone on that."

And with that said Donaldson turned to Vol to continue their very complex calculations, knowing too well that if they calculate incorrectly they could cause the sun to explode.

Stevens began calculating a path that would get them within the required distance of the sun, and where they could be heading the other way safely by the time the missile was destroyed. It would be a challenge to get everything right but if the crew could pull together everything may end well.

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"Deck 7, Sickbay. " K'Rrauw ordered.

Shortly after, he arrived outside sickbay. As he entered he noticed the Senator being up and about. He nodded to her before he motioned to Griffin to follow him to the doctor's office.

K'Rrauw was pacing back and forth inside Griffins office waiting for him to join him. He was only able to wait a few minutes more before he had to return to the bridge again.

What is keeping him. He thought.

K'Rrauw had waited long enough. He walked to the door and popped his head in to the sickbay from Griffins office. "It sounded urgent when you called mme down herre. If you do not mmind Doctorr Grriffin. I ammm needed on the brridge. Would you please join mme in yourr office now? That is an orrderr."

The doctor approached the captain after inspecting a patient in another room of the sickbay.

"Sorry for keeping you captain, but we have a problem."

Just as the last word left his mouth the Romulan senator stumbled to the ground behind the captain. The doctor rushed to her side.

"It's as I thought captain. She must have shared the wrong information with me. This treatment will succeed on Vulcans only. I cannot adjust for Romulan anatomy without more

information.”

The doctor aided the senator to a biobed with the help of K’Rrauw.

”She will die sir, as will the rest of the Romulans on board. They were exposed to the tellurium for too long. The Romulan nervous system is highly complex and not easily repaired.”

The doctor dropped his head and sighed.

”I’m sorry captain, if only we had escaped that nebula a few hours earlier, I would have been able to save them all.”

K’Rrauw then looked up. ”Doctorr, begin ttreating the Vulcans immmmmediately. I want to know as soon as they arre able to rreturn to duty. Especially Mmrr. Rrahl and the Captain.”

Griffin nodded and began to prepare the hyposprays when K’Rrauw had an idea. ”What if we arre able to ttransport these Rrommulans on to the other Alsea and then ttransport theirrs back to ourr ship. If we use ourr access codes to link ourr ttransporters with theirrs and errase the ttransporterr logs then this could work. Orr if we mmanage to stop the mmissile beforre it creates the subspace rift then we would not go through it and no one would end up in the nebula.”

The doctor looked a bit puzzled.

”Have all Rrommulans brrought to the shuttle bay, Doctorr. In case we need to ttransport themm off the ship. I will be on the brridge. Let us know when it has been done.”

”Aye sir...”

With that he hurried back to the bridge to brief the bridge crew and make sure one of the plans would work.

The doctor began his work. He distributed vials of the treatment to his assistants and promptly started to revive the Vulcans in sickbay.

Griffin approached Lt. Rahl and prepared the dose. It was quick acting, and soon the whole sickbay was bustling.

”You’ll be feeling better in no time Mr. Rahl” exclaimed the doctor before he turned to examine the captain.

”Captain, you have been unconscious for the last 20 hours, I’m sure Lt. K’Rrauw would like to brief you on the events.”

The Captain acknowledged the doctor and began to make his way to the bridge. Dr. Griffin followed him out of sickbay and headed towards cargo bay 3, where the remaining Romulans were situated.

Upon entering the room, he announced the plan to move all the survivors to the transporter pad and began to administer the treatment.

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K'Rrauw entered the bridge and was quickly briefed on the progress made by Vol and Donaldson.

"We have two options. Due to the lack of time I have decided that we will work on both. Vol, how far is the Devorgis' sun from the subspace rift?"

"More than 70 million kilometers sir." She replied.

He asked again, irritated of the lack of precision in the answer. "How much more?"

"31 247 kilometers sir." She replied quickly.

He turned to Donaldson. "Will your idea work with that added distance?"

Donaldson entered the new variables in to the simulation on his console. "No sir. We need to be within a 70 million kilometer radius of the sun."

"Then this will become a tricky precision operation. One that hopefully will work better than the one that got us sucked in to the rift." K'Rrauw said.

He had the bridge crew's full attention and continued. "The added distance is well within our transporter range. Stevens, put us slightly within 70 million kilometers from the sun but still in transporter range to the other Alsea. We will use our command codes to override the other Alsea's shields and transporters and use both ships transporters to transport the Rommulans we have on our ship to their ship and theirs to ours. That way if that ship do enter the rift then we would at least have saved all the Rommulans."

The ship repositioned itself in to the needed position.

He felt sick to his stomach hearing himself saying those words. *I would rather let all of them stay dead, but that is not very Starfleet of me.* He thought.

"Then we will erase all their transporter logs of this event after we are done." He added.

"What is the location of the missile?" He asked feeling how time was about to run out on them.

Vol checked the sensors. "Two minutes away sir."

He opened a channel to the transporter chief. "This is the bridge. Are all Rommulans in position?"

"That is affirmative sir." Chief T'Hol replied.

"Lock on to the Rromulans on the otherr Alsea and stand by to ttransport themm herre on mmy commmand." K'Rrauw ordered.

"Arre we in position yet?" He asked Stevens, who confirmed that they were.

"Do we have access to theirr ttransportrerrr Mmrr. Vol?" He asked.

Vol checked. "Yes, full control. Command protocols to delete the logs have been transferred and installed. They will initiate directly after we are done. I've established a lock on the Romulans on our ship and am ready to begin transporting them."

"Chief T'Hol and Mmrr. Vol activate transportrerrr. Donaldson, stand by on activating the parrricle beam the samme mmomment we have transferrrrred all the Rrommulans."

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Rahl could hear the commotion in Sickbay as he slowly regained consciousness. Opening his eyes slowly, Rahl squinted against the painfully bright lights overhead. His headache was still throbbing, but it was manageable at least. His vision now clearing, Rahl could now fully take in the sights of Sickbay.

Nurses were busily walking around the room taking tricorder readings or giving hyposprays to various patients. The medical facility was packed. There were, oddly enough, only people with pointed ears, aside from the medical staff, who were in Sickbay. Rahl could see that most of the patients were Romulan, but he could also see some of his various Vulcan crewman lying about. In an effort to sit up and get a better look around, Rahl only succeeded in amplifying the pain from his headache. After the throbbing subsided a little bit, Rahl gritted his teeth and made another attempt to sit up.

Rahl thought that he was going to pass out again, but somehow he managed to retain consciousness. Looking around the room more now, Rahl saw a familiar face and called out, "Doctor! How long have I been out and when can I leave?"

The Andorian assistant, ensign Trell, approached Lt. Rahl and answered his question.

"Doctor Griffin is currently in cargo bay 3 sir. It will be best if you return to your biobed and await his return, there maybe after effects to the treatment we developed for you. Please... hold tight."

The ensign pointed Lt. Rahl in the direction of the biobed and went about his business monitoring the other patients.

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The Transporter Chief and Science Officer Vol had coordinated the transporters in to precision. In groups of 20 they locked on to the same Romulans on both ships and transported them simultaneously.

"Sir, we have exchanged all the Romulans between the ships." Vol reported.

"Grrreat job. Donaldson engage the parrticle beamm!" K'Rrauw ordered.

As Donaldson engaged the beam the surface on the sun began to build up a massive solar flare. As the flare shot out from the sun directly in the missile's path it first hit the other Alsea.

"Sir, the other Alsea is now caught in the subspace rift." Vol said.

The flare proceeded and now reached the missile which dropped out of warp to a full stop. Moments later the other Alsea had disappeared and the rift had closed.

"Disengage the cloaking device. Lock on a trractorrbeamm as soon as we reach the missile. We need to take it with us to get it analyzed." K'Rrauw ordered.

As soon as the ship arrived at the coordinates, Donaldson activated the tractorbeam.

"Set courrse forr Starrbase 10 mmaximmmmm warrrp, engage!" K'Rrauw commanded.

A beam of light emerged from the ship and focused on the missile just moments before the ship jumped in to warp.

The ship had been at warp only for a few seconds when Captain Thopor entered the bridge.

Vol who were standing next to the turbolift was surprised to see him. "Captain, are you all well now?"

"Yes, I am feeling much better." Thopor responded.

K'Rrauw got up from the chair and turned around the moment he heard he was on the bridge. "Grrreat to see you on yourr feet again Captain. I would like to brrief you on the events that took place while you werre in sickbay."

"Yes, that is acceptable. Join me in my office." He said in his usual emotionless Vulcan voice.

K'Rrauw and Thopor had been in there for hours when they finally reached their destination, the home of Lotus Fleet, Starbase 10.

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The ship had come to a full stop and the crew was disembarking. The doctor, being one of the last aboard, approached the holo-incubator located in his office.

It had been a stressful mission with many casualties, but thankfully, the Pahkwa-Thanh egg the captain handed to the doctor all those weeks ago was unharmed and almost ready to hatch.

Griffin opened his bag, carefully placed the fragile egg into it and began to exit the infirmary. Upon reaching the main door, he turned around and took one last look at his workplace. Elevating his bag, he uttered quietly to the egg inside.

"Well... another mission over and done with."

The doctor then lifted his solemn face and commanded.

"Computer, lights off!"

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K'Rrauw and Thopor was on their way to Admiral Lire's office for a debriefing when they walked past a window showing the Umpqua powered down in drydock. K'Rrauw stopped.

"Captain, I can not seemm to underrstand commpletely why they arre decommmmissioning herr? We worrked so harrrd on the sensorr rrefit forr herr and nevrerr got to test it."

Thopor stopped too and raised one of his eyebrows. "Yes that is most intriguing. I suspect the Admiral would have more information on the matter. We better be going so we will not be late."

K'Rrauw nodded and they entered a turbolift that took them to the Admirals office where they let the Admirals aid know that they were there and sat down and waited to be called in.

Captain Thopor and Lieutenant K'Rrauw had been waiting outside Admiral Lire's office for a few minutes when they are told to enter.

Admiral Niomo Lire was looking out his window when the two men walked in. He slowly turned around and said. "Greetings gentlemen. I've only started to read your report. Care to give me a summary?"

They stood attention in front of the Admirals desk and captain Thopor began to explain. "Yes, sir. We dispatched on our mission as ordered. On our way there, our sensors picked up two warp capable life forms. But at that time we didn't know that they were two biological sentient missiles carrying a pathogen that would destroy the Remans. Their destination was Remus, their home world. When we were working on that a Klingon ship with a damaged Romulan Warbird in tow was detected. We intercepted.

Admiral Lire looked concerned at the direction that the report was beginning to take. "Did these Klingons engage you? If so, were you able to learn what house they were apart of?"

"When we dropped out of warp they engaged us. Just as we were about to respond in force, two Reman Warbirds decloked and engaged the Klingons. Shortly there after the Tal Shiar entered the scene and began firing on the Romulan vessel which lead to it being destroyed."

"Lieutenant K'Rrauw here beamed all of the Romulans off the ship before it exploded."

Admiral Lire raised his eyebrow. "Impressive work Lieutenant. It reminds me of my days in the EPS conduits."

K'Rrauw smiled at the Admirals comment. "Thank you Sirr!"

"Did the Alsea engage anyone?"

"No Admiral, there was no time to. The Romulan Senator Kimara Cretak said we had to stop the two missiles. I ordered us to intercept before the missiles reached Remus."

Then Thopor continued. "We tried to come up with a way to disarm them without killing them. But we were unsuccessful..." He paused to allow the Admiral to make any questions he might want to ask.

"Have we determined who fired the missiles? Or do we only have assumptions?"

"You have to ask the Senator about that sir. She and all other 200 Romulans we saved are in custody of the Starbase Security right now. She had with her a vial with a sample of the biological weapon. But it proved to be of no help to us. Considering the Remans were the victims and tried to help the Romulan ship by attacking the Klingons and the Tal Shiar destroying the Romulan ship our assumption is that the Tal Shiar created these." Thopor continued.

"The missiles were as the crew discovered later some sort of sub space weapon system as well as it damaged subspace and made our engines almost stop. A disconcerting knowledge to have, that the Tal Shiar is developing sub space weapons. But I'm getting ahead of myself."

He went back in the timeline to where he left off. "We tried to get closer to them but then one of them cloaked. When it was clear we couldn't stop the missiles from hitting their target suddenly the visible one changed course towards the Reman colony on Devorgis."

The Admiral blinked. "Devorgis?"

"Yes, they were originally both heading for Remus but somehow it changed course, at the time we didn't know why."

K'Rrauw felt he had to let the Admiral know that he had objected to the way the whole thing had been handled. "If I may speak freely Sir?" He asked anxiously awaiting the Admiral's response.

The Admiral looked at the Lieutenant. "Go ahead."

"I pointed out to the Captain when we learned what these missiles were that even though they are sentient beings and killing them is against the Prime Directive. That it would be worse if they reached Remus, killing millions. So I suggested that we should damage subspace to buy us time to destroy the missiles. We could have done so by simply going around them and blowing up the primary hull's warp core directly in the missiles' paths. Then Remus would not have been hit by that missile and we would not have been thrown back in time."

The Admiral blinked. "Thrown back in time? I think I need to read this report some more. Explain all of this for me."

Thopor looked disappointed at his Science officer. "I can only continue the report a little bit longer as I myself ended up in a coma. We changed course after the cloaked missile hit Remus and pursued the other, still visible, one when we ended up caught in the event horizon of a sub space rift. We devised a plan to get us out of it by imploding it but instead we got

sucked in through the rift. Shortly after that all Romulans and Vulcans were affected of the Nebula and that is when I ended up in a coma. I'll let Lieutenant K'Rauw continue."

"Very well Captain. Lieutenant, can you shed some light into the conclusion of this story? I see that the Alsea is currently in possession of one of these missiles."

K'Rauw continued. "Well yes Sirr, that is corrrrect." He then continued the report. "We had ended up in the Rhizo Henbane Nebula. A, to Rrommulans, well known smmall nebula inside the Rrommulan Emmpirre that is verry dangerous to enterr unless you have an experrienced Rrommulan doctorr on hand."

"Most of ourr shielding was gone. No internal orr external commmmunications. No sensorrs. No captain. As the one with mmost seniorrity of the brridge officerrr, I took commmand, and orrderred helmm to push the impulse engines beyond theirr safety limmits to get us out of the nebula. As we could not jummp in to warp without sensorrs, not knowing wherre we werre going to end up. We eventually got shorrt rrange sensorrs online so we could detect that the ammmmount of parrticles was decreasing in the nebula as we kept on mmoving, which we concluded to that we werre exiting it."

The Admiral slowly rubbed his chin with his hand as he gained a thoughtful look. "Very interesting. What about the Klingons and Romulans? Where were they during all of this?"

K'Rauw didn't understand why he asked that but answered. "As farr as ourr sensorrs showed us, the Klingons, the Tal Shiarr and the Rremmans werre still fighting when we got stuck in the subspace rift, while we werre trying to stop the second mmissile." K'Rauw replied politely and then continued.

"By the time we had left the nebula the Rrommulans on ourr ship werre dying due to the mmassive ammount of Tellurriumm Hexafluorrride they had been exposed to. We mmanaged to get long rrange sensorrs rrestorred but we did not have any deuterriumm left to go anywherre. This was because we had pushed the impulse engines so harrrd they had used it all up. When we werre going to scan forr somme nearrry deuterriumm deposits in the asteroidr in the vicinity then we discoverred that we had been thrown back in timme."

"Sometimes I wish I wasn't trapped behind this desk..." The Admiral mused, "So, how did you discover you were sent back in time?"

K'Rauw didn't envy the Admiral and understood how he would have to feel. "The Astrrommetrrics detected mminute differences in the galactic charrrt commparred to wherre a few commets should have been, Sirr. The difference was verry smmall. We soon werre able to pinpoint it to mminus 12 hourrs. Enough timme forr us to rrisk violating the Temmporral Dirrective."

"And stop the missiles?" The Admiral interrupted.

Not knowing if this was a trick question by the Admiral he replied with the most correct answer he could think of. "We arre not allowed to change anything that could change the timmeline we camme frrom so we trried to avoid being detected." He replied noticing the Admiral noddng in agreement.

"With no impulse we had to jumpp in to warpp and drrop out of warpp on top of a deuteriumm rich asterroid and rreplenished ourr supply. It was somme skillful piloting by ourr helmmsmman Lieutenant Stevens." K'Rrauw continued. "I then had the idea to hide in the vicinity of the battle wherre the Rrommulan ship was destroyed and convinced the Senatorr to give us all the access codes and shield frrequencies of herr ship. Plus the exact location of theirr cloaking device. We had to use a shuttle, cleverrrly disguised as space debris, again done by Lt. Stevens, to expand ourr ttrransporterr range to be able to stay hidden frromm the Klingon, Rremman and Tal Shiarr sensorrs as well as that timmeline's Alsea, Sirr. Afterr that we mmanaged to install and activate the cloak and continue ourr worrk to destroy the one mmissile that had not rreached its tarrget, at the point in timme we went back. But we discovered that the mmissile had not changed courrse as it should so we had to do sommething to mmake it change courrse or the timmeline would have been dammaged."

The Admiral smiled, "Sounds like you needed to play with time anyway."

"I suspect it was a causality loop, Sirr. We werre supposed to be therre to mmake that mmissile change courrse." He replied. "I ordered to firre the prrobe we had worrked on to destroy the mmissiles with. A ttrransphasic shielded prrobe containing nanites to disable it. Instead the nanites made it change courrse. We mmanaged to comme up with a plan to deactivate the mmissile by using the sun in the Devorrgas systemm. Hitting the sun's surrface with a parrticle beamm causing it to crrreate a solarr flarre that would engulf the mmissile."

"But because almmost all Rrommulans had alrrready died I told the crrew to lock on to the Rrommulans on the otherr Alsea and ttrransport theirrs on to ourr ship and ourr dead and dying ones to theirr ship. I was thinking of what the Rrommulan Emmpirre would rreact to a Federration ship full of dead Rrommulans. Afterr the otherr Alsea was sucked in to the rift it closed and we locked on a ttractorr beamm to the mmissile and took it with us back herre forr furrrther study."

"Starfleet does not condone the actions of any officer affecting the past, present or future. So, I don't know what you are talking about Lieutenant." The Admiral winked. "I am glad to see you figured out how to solve these problems."

K'Rrauw sighed in relief. "It was verry educational, sirr."

"Would you please excuse us, Lt. K'Rrauw?" The Admiral asked. "Please wait outside."

Thopor looked at K'Rrauw as he had been asked to leave the room. His tail was swished gracefully behind him and twitched slightly as he walked through the door. Something that had begun after he got his tail caught in the shuttlebay doors on the Umpqua. Thopor then turned back to the Admiral and raised an eyebrow.

"May I ask what you would like to talk to me about in private, sir?"

The Admiral stood up and walked to the big window in his office overlooking the drydock. "Thopor, with these new risks coming from these weapons being devised probably by the Tal Shiar, Starfleet has decided to transfer you to the U.S.S. Grant. It will be patrolling the Federation/Klingon boarder. And we hope that you will be able to monitor and maybe prevent any more Klingon involvement in this conflict." He turned to look at the Vulcan standing at his desk.

Thopor would have been angry if he had been human, but being Vulcan he simply accepted the new assignment and repressed all emotion. "Thank you Admiral for the honor. I hear the Grant is a fine ship."

"That she is. I know this is short notice but after the Umpqua's decommissioning ceremony there is a shuttle scheduled to depart that will take you to her. I know that doesn't give you much time to pack but that can't be helped."

Thopor nodded. "I better get back to the Alsea and begin packing. I never got the chance to really unpack so it will be quick. If I may be excused?"

The Admiral handed over a PADD with his new orders. "Yes Captain you are dismissed. Please send in Lieutenant K'Rrauw on your way out."

K'Rrauw had been sitting outside the Admirals office waiting for the Captain before they went back to the ship. When Thopor exited he stood up and turned towards the door leading to the corridor.

"Lieutenant!" Thopor said with more resolve in his voice than K'Rrauw was used to.

He stopped and turned around. "Yes captain?"

"The Admiral wants to speak with you. I will be heading for the Alsea immediately."

His ears flickered. *What could he want?* He thought. "Underrstood, sirr."

As he entered the Admirals office again, he saw the Admiral standing at the window. He walked up to Lire's desk and stood at attention. "Lieutenant K'Rrauw rreporrtng as orrdered, sirr."

"At ease, K'Rrauw, before you strain something." He said with a smile as he sat down at his desk again. "I have to inform you that Captain Thopor have been reassigned to the U.S.S. Grant effective immediately."

"Not the entirre crew like last timme then, Sirr?" K'Rrauw inquired.

"No, the rest will remain on the Alsea. As few changes as possible will be done on her. A new Chief Science Officer needs to be found. I hope you will be able to help find a good replacement."

K'Rrauw's eyes widened. *Replace me? I'm getting a demotion. Or worse, a court-martial. It's the stupid time travel's fault.* He thought. "Errrr... I will try my best, Sirr. But what will I do afterr I have found a rreplacemment, sirr?" His ears were fluttering nervously as he asked the question.

"You should get the ship repaired and ready for your next assignment captain." The Admiral said and handed over two gold pips on a piece of black velvet.

K'Rrauw was speechless. *Was this a dream? It can't be, but it had to. Being promoted to Captain from a Lieutenant has to be a dream of some sort.* He thought. "But Admmirral... I amm surre I amm going to rregret asking, but arre you surre?"

"Well your actions on the Alsea while captain Thopor was out of commission are proof enough you are capable of handling the job. And even though you haven't held the ranks of Lt. Commander and Commander we need someone to take over the Alsea that knows the crew. We are still recovering from the Dominion war. When it comes to finding good captains it has often been necessary to promote aggressively. And that process is made easy when I look at your service record." He said and leaned back in his chair.

"Thank you Sirr, forr putting yourr trrust in mme. I will mmake surre yourr trrust is not mmisplaced." K'Rrauw said with pride in his voice.

Lire stood up, shook K'Rrauw paw and said out loud. "I hereby promote K'Rrauw to the rank of captain and with that all the rights and privileges thereto."

He handed over a PADD with his new credentials and orders. "The official ceremony will be on the Alsea in the Main Holodeck at 15:00 hours. Then and there Thopor will hand over the command to you. So you better go and replicate a new uniform, captain. You are dismissed." He said with a smile on his face.

K'Rrauw left the Admirals office. It felt like he was floating on air as he walked back to the ship. He must have been smiling so big that his teeth were showing, as a small child hid behind her mother when he walked past them. Back on the Alsea the first thing he did was to replicate a new uniform and try it on. He checked him self out in a mirror. *My family would have been proud, if they had been alive.* He thought. The sadness that he didn't have anyone left to share this with forced him to sit down. But he tried to push those thoughts out like the counselor had taught him to. And it worked. Only minutes later he felt better. Good enough to begin searching Starfleet archives for a new Science officer. He would also have to find a counselor per Doctor Griffins request. A Security Officer to take some of the workload of Donaldson. An OPS Officer to make the bridge run smoother. And a First Officer. That will be a difficult one to find. He thought.

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Captain Thopor had toured the ship, packed his belongings and seen to that they had been moved to the USS Grant. He had had asked if Lieutenant Christopher Stevens could be transferred with him and the Admiral had approved the request and reassigned him as well.

He then opened up a channel to everyone still on the ship and to those who had left for shore leave. "This is Captain Thopor. There will be a short ceremony held due to a transfer of command in the main holodeck at 15:00 hours. For those willing to attend please be on time."

Thopor picked up the PADD with the transfer orders and headed to the main holodeck.

As he entered he started a program that contained a large room with a small elevated platform where he would hand over the command to the new Captain, K'Rrauw. The walls were covered with flags from all the Federation member worlds and the Federation and Starfleet flags just behind the platform.

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K'Rrauw had been trying out his new uniform all day. As his old uniform hadn't felt 100% right, considering all the throwing around he had been through. He made slight modifications after each time he tried it on to get the loose fit he required to feel comfortable to move around.

He had even spilled some food on one of the test uniforms while eating his lunch due to it being so snug that he couldn't move his arms. But now he had found a perfect fit, well as perfect a uniform could be.

But he still preferred his traditional Caitian robes. While in the Academy he had seen in the history books that they had been used on Earth too, in a longer version by the dessert dwellers. They called them galabiyas. Also other places on Earth, usually in the warmer climates had similar clothing. He found it interesting that planets so far apart with so different cultures both would discover that this type of clothing is the best in warmer climates.

Suddenly Captain Thopor's voice was heard over the intercom. "This is Captain Thopor. There will be a short ceremony held due to a transfer of command in the main holodeck at 15:00 hours. For those willing to attend please be on time."

K'Rrauw checked the current time on the monitor in his quarters. 14:50. I need to get down there at once. He thought to himself.

He took a glance in the mirror of himself making sure everything was in place. Pins, badge, uniform and his mane had never looked better. Perfect. He thought.

He left his quarters and headed for the main holodeck. Not meeting anyone of the crew on his way there he wasn't sure if anyone would be there due to shore leave or if they were already in the holodeck waiting, for him.

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Rahl had just finished looking over the mess in engineering that transpired during the mission when he was unconscious when he got a message from captain Thopor. *Bah! Another ceremony. Well, I think I'll attend this one since the Vulcan will be leaving. Now that IS something to celebrate.* He thought.

After getting ready and putting on a dress uniform, Talak walked to the room where the ceremony was going to be held. The room was decorated with all the pomp associated with a command transfer and a promotion ceremony for a Captain. Captain K'Rrauw. Talak had to admit that in the short amount of time that he had known Mr. Kitten, he had been really impressed by the amount of intellect that the old science officer possessed.

Looking around the room, Talak recognized many familiar faces, mostly from engineering, but he noticed a Lieutenant that he had never seen before. Talak shrugged and thought nothing of it and sat down in a random seat next to an Ensign and started talking while thinking about how the huge Caitian would manage his tail in that stuffy dress uniform.

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The doctor was relaxing at the replimat on Starbase 10 with his assistants. He had just begun to eat when their commbadges activated.

"This is Captain Thopor. There will be a short ceremony held due to a transfer of command in the main holodeck at 15:00 hours. For those willing to attend please be on time."

The doctor stood and removed his napkin, as did the ensigns. Dr. Griffin fixed his uniform and addressed them.

"I suggest we all get ready. I'll meet you onboard the Alsea."

His assistants acknowledged and everybody departed for their quarters.

Back in his quarters Griffin walked up to the replicator. "Computer, medical dress uniform, size 8."

The clothing began to materialize. The doctor put it on, flattened out the creases and made his way to the Alsea gangway.

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Donaldson had just finished his duty shift on the bridge. A skeleton crew, most were on shore leave, meant that there were very few crew members aboard the ship apart from the Starbase personnel. Someone always had to be on the bridge, and Jamie managed to get first shift.

He was glad to have been relived, So much had happened over the past couple of days, it was almost too much to think about.

Still. He thought. *I can go back to my quarters and sleep for a week.* Chuckling to himself as his spirits were raised from the prospect of sleep.

He exited the turbolift and swiftly walked towards his quarters undoing his yellow over-shirt. *Ahh, the benefit of rank.* He thought, remembering his spacious work and living area.

Then the captains voice is heard over the comm. "This is Captain Thopor. There will be a short ceremony held due to a transfer of command in the main holodeck at 15:00 hours. For those willing to attend please be on time."

He sighed deeply. Checking the time on a nearby ship status panel, it read 14:40. As much as he respected his now soon to be former captain, he really didn't have the motivation to attend this ceremony. But he felt he needed to. Loyalty, respect and duty were all core beliefs to him and he couldn't, very well, not wish his soon to be former captain a good departure.

Realizing that dress uniform would be required for such an event he hurried inside. Hoping his figure still fitted inside his the infamous shrinking uniform. *It always seems more uncomfortable AFTER the academy.* He thought.

It did luckily still fit and he made a quick change, adjusting the rank pips of course.

Checking the time in the security display panel, 14:50, Donaldson walked out of his quarters, feeling a little over dressed, but hopeful people would realize where he was going.

He reached the holodeck and several junior and N.C. officers were standing outside, *Looks like some of the crew came back from shore leave.* He thought.

Swiftly sidestepping them and only greeting them with a respectful nod he passed through the doors and into the spacious room. It was adorned with flags and regalia of a Starfleet nature. He was glad he wore his dress uniform.

He scanned the room to find a new senior officer present and his fellow officer Mr. Rahl of the engineering department. Not sure who to sit next to, the new officer was... well new and although curiosity was strong in him, he felt almost too tired to spark up a conversation. On the other hand, he didn't mind Mr. Rahl but, he hadn't really had to time to be introduced to him yet.

Thinking quickly, as not to arise the suspicion of him JUST standing there, he would scout round the new officer, introduce himself, and then sit next to Mr. Rahl.

Moving swiftly towards the new officer, he placed a hand on his shoulder. "It's always more comfortable at the academy, the uniform I mean." He said and smiled.

He moved to face the officer. "My name is Lt. Jamie Donaldson, Chief Tactical and Security, and you are?" He asked.

Kyran looked at the man who had stood before him, exchanging pleasantries, he smiled back at Lt. Donaldson.

"Calderwood Kyran, the new Chief of Science. So if you hear the words 'Explosion in the bio-labs', that'll be me." He joked shyly extending a hand to the older male in good faith.

"This is the first time I've served aboard a starship." He smiled gently.

Taking the younger mans hand in a pleasant manner. "My grandpa used to say something on an occasion like this, I believe it went like this 'new meat for the grinder!'"

"This is my first posting as Cheif Tac/Sec so im a little nervous myself" He said and took a seat next to Calderwood.

"Our first mission went well, I'm sure you've been briefed on our last mission. Our ex-science officer/temporary captain really got us through that mess. To me he deserves to get this command. Hopefully Starfleet will post us somewhere a little less dangerous to crew members vital to the operation of the starship." He said and smiled widely.

"Anyway its about time for this ceremony to start, care to join me next to our chief engineer?" He asked and motioned towards several empty seats nest to Mr. Rahl.

He laughed at the Lt. joke. He had to, it was rather crazy. *New meat?* Calderwood thought. *This should be fun, he seemed like a nice enough person hopefully the rest of my peers are*

this warm hearted. Kyran thought and nodded. "Lead the way." Still smiling at the tactical officer.

Walking quickly over to Rahl and nodding towards him when they got close enough.

Talak had finished talking to a fellow crew member and was now just watching people filing into the room, some he knew, some he only knew the faces, and others he had never seen at all. When Lt. Stevens walked into the room, Talak felt a pang of regret since his fellow officer had asked for a transfer with Captain Thopor. He would definitely miss the helmsmen eccentric nature.

Noticing two officers approach, Rahl looked up to see Lt. Donaldson stringing along another Lieutenant while talking very animatedly about something. He had only known Mr. Donaldson for a short while and barely knew the officer since he was incapacitated for a big part of the mission, or so he was told. The tactical officer of the Alsea suddenly motioned in his direction and he felt a bit of apprehension as the two officers walked towards him, but he managed a friendly smile.

Rahl acknowledged the pair as they stopped in front of him and Mr. Donaldson nodded in return while introducing the new officer. "This is Lt. Calderwood, our newest science officer." He then motioned to Rahl. "Lt. Rahl, our chief Engineer." Donaldson said introducing them to each other. "Take a seat." He continued.

"It is nice to see you Mr. Rahl, been busy down in engineering?"

Rahl sighed, "Very. It seems that you guys went through a lot while I was out. I haven't even finished with the mission logs yet." He turned to the stranger, and warned in his most serious tone. "So, you're the new science officer! Be careful, the captain likes to play predator and prey with science officers that don't perform their jobs as well as he does. I've heard of junior science officers who have had to stay in sickbay for a week, just ask the doctor yourself!"

Calderwood smirked as he sat down beside the two men, "Oh I'm sure I can keep two to three paces ahead of him if he does want to play, and I did just replicate him a ball of yarn" he joked as he pointed to K'Rauw's empty seat.

"As for performance, I expect nothing better then the best from myself and my department, science isn't something I often joke about, its my driving force, I'm sure you feel the same way about your department." He said in a less joking tone and then continued.

"And hopefully I might be able to experiment with the warp plasma to kick our max warp up a notch or two" giving a smile towards Talak, "That's if it works, if not we might have a large hole in the ship, due to the nature of the experiment." Calderwood shrugged. "But then science is all about the 'if' and the 'what', I'll be sure to test things first on the holodeck."

Captain Thopor was standing in front of all the crew that had gathered in the holodeck. Captain K'Rauw was standing next to him. Both dressed in their white captain's dress uniforms. When the time was 15:00 hours Thopor opened his mouth to speak and he did it with great resolve in his voice. "I call all hands to muster."

The Federation Anthem began to play and the entire room stood attention. After the Anthem had ended he began to speak. "I have served with you on this ship only for a short time. Some of you I had the fortune to also serve with on the Umpqua and one even further back on the Lotus." He looked at Griffin, Stevens and Rahl.

"All three good ships and good crews. We have had the opportunity to meet two Starfleet legends, Ambassadors Spock and Picard. We have fought against overwhelming odds and live to tell about it. We have done more these last few months together than I could have imagined. You have all served me well."

With that he began to read from the PADD he brought with him containing the transfer orders. "Starfleet Command Order Number Z42A46. To Captain Thopor. When directed by Rear Admiral Lire, detach on Stardate 77794.04 from Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Alsea and report not later than Stardate 77813.2 to U.S.S. Grant. Upon arrival on board report to Fleet Captain Crusher, Commanding Officer U.S.S. Grant for duty as his relief. Report immediate superior in command, if present, otherwise by message. Signed, Rear Admiral Niomo Lire, Chief of Starfleet Personnel. Transferring with me is Lieutenant Stevens as my first officer. I've toured the ship and although it has some battle damage it will soon be taken care of if I know Lieutenant Rahl well enough." He stepped back after he was done.

"I am ready to be relieved." Thopor said in a emotionless Vulcan voice.

K'Rrauw stepped forward and began to read from his PADD. "Starfleet Command Order Number Z42A47. To Captain K'Rrauw. When directed by Rear Admiral Lire, detach on Stardate 77777.7 from Chief Science Officer on the U.S.S. Alsea and report not later than Stardate 77794.1 to U.S.S. Alsea. Upon arrival on board report to Captain Thopor, Commanding Officer U.S.S. Alsea for duty as his relief. Report immediate superior in command, if present, otherwise by message. Signed, Rear Admiral Niomo Lire, Chief of Starfleet Personnel."

He turned to Thopor and shook his hand. "I relieve you, sirr."

"I stand relieved." Thopor replied and walked to his seat which had a ball of yarn on it. He picked it up and looked at it. Intriguing. He thought.

K'Rrauw then turned to Fleet Captain Spawner who were seated next to Thopor. "Sirr, I have properly relieved Captain Thopor as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Alsea."

With a confirming nod from the Fleet Captain he addressed the crew. "I feel honored to be given the command of this great vessel and crew. I know you are the finest crew in the fleet and it is a privilege to serve as your Commanding Officer. I would like to wish Captain Thopor well with his new command and I hope we will run in to each other somewhere on the dark sea we travel on. All standing orders, regulations and instructions remain in effect."

He paused and focused on the crew again. "A celebratory meal has been prepared for Captain Thopor and his First Officer Stevens in the Mess Hall. Everyone is welcome to join us there." He then turned to the Ensign that were temporarily taking over Steven's duties. "Take charge. You are all dismissed."

Everyone began to slowly exit the holodeck and move towards the mess hall.

The young Bajoran weaved his way towards the new captain, he wanted to shake his hand... or paw, he wasn't to sure, there were no Caitans aboard the ship he grew up on.

He stood to attention. "Lieutenant Calderwood Kyran, Reporting for duty as chief science officer. Congratulations sir." He had been on board a day or so but K'Rrauw had been busy, he stated extending his hand. *He's either going to shake it or maim me.* His mind raced.

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"Thank you Lieutenant. Ah yes, young Mmrr. Calderrwood. I have rread mmany grreat things about you in the rreporrts." He took his extended hand and greeted him in the human manner.

He then spotted captain Thopor twisting the ball of yarn he had found on his chair. He couldn't phantom why he would be holding such a thing at a function like this.

Then he switched back to Calderwood. "I hope you don't mind if I drop in for a visit or so to see how things are down in the labs? Have you had time to settle in?"

Calderwood beamed. The way the captain spoke to him was full of warmth and confidence, he couldn't help feeling safe under the Caitian's command. He glanced at Thopor. "I didn't think Vulcan's liked yarn?" He joked. "That was a little 'Welcome' present from myself."

"If you are coming to visit I had to warn you the main science lab is currently being used to test different chemicals some of the ensigns tend to leave some samples lying around so be careful. As for the secondary science lab we're conducting experiments on warp plasma hoping to see an increase in warp speed efficiency by a few notches." He had started to sound like a kid describing his new toy to a father figure, and had the grin to prove it.

"And with your permission I would like to modify stellar cartography to take in astronomical data, a make shift astrometrics if you will, with your approval of course." He said slightly faltering.

K'Rrauw listened to the eagerness of his new replacement and remembered just how he himself had been back when he had just graduated and been assigned to the Voyager.

Focusing back to Calderwood he asked. "I would like to hearr mmorre about the new experriments you have startted in the shorrt timme you have had aboard the ship."

Fleet captain Spawnnner walked up to captain Thopor.

"Good luck aboard the Grant. I look forward to reading your mission reports." He said and continued. "Fair winds, and following seas. Captain."

He then turned to captain K'Rauw who was standing next to Calderwood.

"Captain K'Rauw, I have great hopes for this fine vessel. Keep your crew safe, run straight and true, defend our fleet and ideals."

He then directed his voice to the computer. "Computer, recognize voice, Fleet captain Spawner."

"Voice Recognized." The computer responded.

"Who is currently in command of this ship?" He asked the computer.

"Captain K'Rauw, valid as of this stardate." It replied.

"Excellent." He commented. "To you as well... Fair winds and following seas, captain."

As everyone in the crew was already on their way to the mess hall he motioned towards the holodeck doors. "We can continue to discuss your plans and ideas on our way to the mess hall."

Calderwood nodded. "Thank you sir." He began thinking of what topics to start with. "As I'm sure you're well aware captain the Alsea has a stellar cartography on board, but no astrometrics lab to allow for a more in depth look at the sensor readings and astrophysical data. I mean sure we can know how much space dust is in the sector, but it can also tell us about the region of space a lot better such as comets or stars that may have been in the area years ago." He was eager to tell the captain a lot. "I have more, I could just write a report sir." He said as they walked down the corridor towards the turbolift and the awaiting party in the mess hall.

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