

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0057)

(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - yaS wa'dlch - San'dras- 0059)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - LCDR Dieter Gregory - 0100)
(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Kar'chek- 0102)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - EO Angus McGuyver - 0102)
(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Operations Center - SFI Michael Weston - 0106)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory - 0110)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - EO Angus McGuyver - 0112)
(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Operations Center - Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee - 0115)
(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Operations Center - SO Ensign Andy Taylor - 0116)
(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Operations Center - Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee - 0120)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory - 0125)
(USS Rhyne - Deck 4 - Corridor - Leeza Pel - 0130)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 01.30)
(USS Rhyne - Deck B - TIC - Pilot Lt. Corday, SecO Ensign Andy Taylor - 0130)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 01.32)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 01.35)
(USS Rhyne - Deck B – Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee - 0135)
(USS Rhyne – Deck 1- Battle Operations Center – EO – Ensign Scott Matrix - 0137)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 1- Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal - 0140)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0142)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0143)
(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - yaS wa'dlch - San'dras- 0145)
(IKS Da'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Kar'chek - 0146)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 3 - Personal Quarters - Tamas Laredo - 0148)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 01.50)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal - 0151)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0152)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 01.53)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Dr. Riven Mias - 0153)
(USS Rhyne - Deck B - TIC - FO Commander Sienna Williams-Verin, Pilot Lt. Corday, SecO Ensign Andy Taylor, SFI Michael Weston - 0154)
(IKS Da'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Kar'chek - 0155)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Tamas Laredo - 0155)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Counselor- Dr. Riven Mias - 0158)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice, CTac Lieutenant T'Mur, aCEO Lieutenant Bohb, FO Commander Sienna Verin. SPC Luma Lenai and ACSO Ensign Skashe Winters- 0200)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Tamas Laredo - 0201)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 02.05)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 02.06)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice, Dr. Mason Quincy - 0206)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal- 0207)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 5 - Sickbay - CMO/3XO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice - 0210)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0210)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG - 02.10)
(IKS Hegh bo'Degh – Deck 1 - Bridge - HoD Bar'Tok - 0210)

[illegible]

The pains both indescribable and nearly unbearable. He had no idea why he was in pain. One minute he was fine, more than fine, he felt great, the next pain shot through him like razor blades.

He could hear the words being said around him the pain prevented him from comprehending them, nor even replying. He felt as though he were going to die, and he realized that he had nobody who would even care.

The injections of pain killers were barely noticeable, and did absolutely nothing to give him any relief. It was as if he were being pulled apart, cell by cell.

“Mr. Day, Can you hear me?” Mason asked

The words were almost a whisper through the fog of his pain. He wanted to answer, but all that came out were moans.

"Dust," he called out, "Ned. What's happening to me."

Then he felt the final injection, and the fog of unconsciousness close in on him. His last words were the only thing he could think, “Penn and Tell...”

Then he was unconscious. All of the medical staff looked from the now unconscious Day, who still managed to moan in pain slightly.

Nurse Kelly was the first to speak up, “Should we call them in?”

(reply Quincy, any in sickbay)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Sienna staggered as she was thrust from the time shift, falling to her knees in front of the command chair, scraping her knees hard. For a second she felt T'Mur and she smiled, feeling complete again for the first time since beaming over to this crazed ship. A long blink as she pushed herself off the deck, asking, "Something just happened- what was it?" She asked, looking frustrated when told the time. They had work to do still. The communication with the ship came in and out.

At some point, the Illuminar had tried to move the Rhyne away from the anomalies that littered this section of space. and Sienna hung on as the ship shook and reluctantly began to move. All the while, she was working on the command panels, successfully rerouting circuits, and getting what she hoped was an accurate overview of the ship. And what she saw did not fill her with confidence. Maybe Luma had been right, salvage was going to be difficult. As for the lifesigns, they fluctuated. At one point there were just a few people, then about double, before the internal sensors gave up trying to reconcile the multiple temporal oddities.

=^= Illuminar to away teams. You are to evacuate the Rhyne. Head to the shuttles. ^= Quinna's voice came over the speakers, loud and clear before static sounded.

"Gregory to Commander Verin. What are your orders Ma'am?"

"Commander? Should we not respond?" Lee spoke at the same point that Gregory did. Sienna felt an irrational moment of fear, as if she was cornered.

"Of course." Sienna tapped her comm badge, "Verin to Gregory, Illuminar teams. Move to the shuttle bay, evacuate the ship. If you have found survivors, bring them with you, but exercise caution."

It was at that point that Sienna realized the klingons were threatening the illuminar. They were supposed to evacuate, but she knew what wasn't going to happen, right as she heard Gregory come to the same conclusion.

"Instruments shows the phaser banks are operating at 60%" remarked Lee as he studied the control panel.

Sienna glanced down at her panel, which showed the phasers at about 15% power, then 70%, then 41%... the numbers changing from moment to moment. She stood up and moved over towards Lee.

"Verin to Illuminar Away Teams, I want everyone to congregate in the battle module, Level B. Matrix, divert all available power to shield that specific area. It's near a shuttle bay, an intra-ship transporter and life rescue pods. I want every bit of power we can muster to make a safe place. Move it people."

She ordered, pulling the isolinear chip she had been transferring data too, tucking it into her uniform top, safely nestled against her skin. She wasn't sure why she did it, but she knew it was important.

Lee had cleared the turbolife off the bridge, and Sienna looked around before disabling the bridge, and transferring all control to the battle module. She counted her crew as they filed into the turbolift, entering next to last, Weston following her.

As the doors whooshed shut, the deck rocked as the ship took the first blast. "I hope that it holds long enough for us to get there...." She spoke, as the deck rocked again.

(reply all illuminar teams)

(posted by Mel)

[illegible]

(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Commander Kar'chek/ yaS wa'dlich San'dras-0020)

"hOd we have them!"

The leather creaked beneath him as he turned to his right and a slow smile exposed his teeth.

"Where?"

"Their signature is indistinct, there is interference from a nearby qAr'shAk but I am certain of it."

San'dras turned around and threw the back of her hand across the Klingon's face, "The question was where, qoH?"

The star chart of the sector appeared on the main viewer showing where the *Dac'Kar* was and the probable location of the *Illuminar*. The ship's first officer began to walk towards the screen, her eyes focused on the distortion field around the ship.

“Explain that rojmuluSDaq qhom’a,” she ordered.

The Klingon snarled as he wiped the back of his hand across his mouth, coming away with a smear of purple blood before answering. "It is a pish'nOk, the likes of which I and my honored ancestors have never seen. The readings I am seeing make no sense. Tachyons, plasmodic ionization and other particles that are in constant flux. It is a cauldron of chaos."

"Something new? Could we be seeing the testing of a new Federation weapon?" Karchek growled and squinted at the viewer. "And what of the other ship whose distress call they answered?"

San'dras looked down at her own readings and her quick mind began to put the pieces together. "If the Federation has such a weapon would they use it to take the empire to another dimension, or time? The strategic uses would be... devastating."

Karchek grunted as he placed his chin on his fist. "The Empire is far too large to do so but Qo'nos...", his eyes then opened a fraction wider. For such a vortex to be created to swallow a homeworld that controlled a galactic civilization! "... think not only of the chaos but the power vacuum it would cause." His voice had dwindled to a rumble at the end. He jumped to his feet and began pacing about the bridge as his thoughts went awirl.

"I do not see this other ship hOd. If it is there then the interference is hiding it." Kha'meN'tA threw piercing glances at San'dras back, he would not forget her attempt to humiliate him here. One day she would die by his hand. "I recommend we move close enough to pierce the interference."

Why have you not already done so?" Karchek roared as he spun toward him. "Alter course but reduce speed and tune the scanners to maximum efficiency." He then rounded on his tactical officer. "Warm up the disruptors and prepare the shields and torpedoes. Prepare for battle, before this day is done we will know their secrets."

The pitch of the low hum that permeated the atmosphere of the command center of the ship changed slightly as the course was altered and it accelerated.

He then resumed pacing as his thoughts returned to the matter at hand. "This Rhyne might have been testing the weapon and become caught in its effects. This area of space would be strategically perfect for such a test. Far from Federation space in the territory of a former enemy and far enough away from our own border we would not see it. If we are correct then it is good we intercepted their communication and investigated. The Chancellor will reward us for it and our honor will be greatly increased." To a Klingon warrior honor was everything.

He spun and returned to the command chair then seated himself with alacrity.

"Should I send a communication to the others hOd?"

"Yes. Tell them they must hurry or we will take all the glory for ourselves." He guffawed as he settled back into the chair.

"San'dras what do you think our reward will be?" His eyes glinted. "I plan to make the tale last for 3 days and drink an ocean of bloodwine."

San'dras grunted, "Glory and honor, what more could a Klingon ask for? A seat on the council? You are no diplomat hOd, you are a warrior. You should be rewarded with a post that will put us into battle."

He roared with laughter. "Very true!" After speaking he stood and stalked to his left, coming to a stop beside Kha'meN'tA. "Has there been any change?"

"Yes. We will arrive shortly. The scanners are picking up something." He leaned close to the monitor for his station. "Ghay'Cha!. This cannot be correct!"

"What?" Karchek had been turned toward the forward viewer.

"Look hOd at this power signature."

Karchek loomed over him and he gave a start at the reading. "On'iTsOnii?"

"It is their power level. y'taYnnaN

Karchek was stunned momentarily but rallied back with a snarl. "The tale will be four days in the telling!" While they are mired in the gAr'shAk we strike! But I cannot destroy that ship, it must be salvaged. San'dras signal it."

"oSrlq, hOd," San'dras replied and sent out the orders. "qaD'a' jey jahg HutluH HuH bo. A warrior's challenge."

"How long till weapons lock?"

"Almost there hOd. Qa'pla!"

The viewscreen activated as the whorls and eddies of interference subsided, as though the Maelstrom had intervened and space itself gathered round to bear witness to what was to follow.

Karchek turned with a grim smile to the viewscreen as the Captain of the Illuminar was framed at its center. His lips turned back with a snarl as he issued his challenge.

"tIhIngan maH," San'dras cried out. "Now you will see what it is to be a warrior, Kha'meN'tA," she said turning to the Klingon she had struck. "To face an enemy of such awesome power rather than dreaming of stabbing me in the back, or killing me in my sleep."

She wanted to make sure he knew she had seen his glare. And now, if she mysteriously died, everyone would know it was some cowardice act of his. It was a dangerous game, as he could challenge her, but that was the risk she ran every day.

Suddenly she laughed at the awkward look on his face and knew no such open challenge would come.

"Heghlu'meH QaQ jajvam " she said at the screen.

(Reply: Illuminar communications)

[illegible]

"View screen's up," he said offhandedly. "And from what I can tell, they've done something in engineering to get short-range sensors

Then a staticy message came over their comm badges.

He looked around the bridge and it didn't look like anyone else had heard it. He wondered if he was going crazy. Then he wondered if the others heard it and weren't responding in case they thought everyone else would think they'd lost their minds. The whole thing was making him dizzy. Finally, he responded.

=^=Roger that Mr. Weston. We are part of a medical evac team. Not sure where the rest of the shuttles are, but be prepared to leave as soon as you can.=^=

(reply Verin, Lee, Matrix, any)

"Weston to Gregory, update your status."

(posted by Al Muir)

(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory 2 - 0030)

=^= Weston to Gregory, update your status ^=^=

"Gregory here. Is commander Verin around?" He asked sweetly.

"Well then, when she is ready to take my report, I'll speak to her. Until then, leave the channels open. Gregory out."

(Reply Weston)

(posted by Tim)

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal - 0035)

(Reply: Quinna.)

=^= You are the Captain? ^=^=

His eyes returned to the figure. "Yes. Captain Sekal of the Federation Starship USS Illuminar. What is your purpose here?"

The Klingon looked disgusted for an instant then spat. =^= I am Commander Kar'chek of the IKS Da'Kar I give you one opportunity to surrender your ship before I take it from you Captain Sekal. Surrender now or die! =^=

A green haze appeared in the Vulcan's vision prior to him rising slowly from the command chair due to the unexpected ultimatum.

The ship rocked a bit from enemy fire which told them all they needed to know about what was going on, still they awaited orders.

"Listen up!" Rather than repeat herself Carol opened the security only comm. "Illuminar is under attack. Everyone to your assigned stations, prepare to repel boarders. Repeat, anti-boarding action is in effect. Draw equipment from the armory and take your stations. Boyles and Emery to the torpedo magazine to man that post. You have five minutes people, move it!"

Hammons was already on the move, the armory had been opened remotely.

Inside the "Dark Knight" awaited him, it had everything he needed except for a telescoping rod which he had on his person. He maintained the suit and kept it charged. His handprint and biosign opened the locker and he stepped aside as it was pushed out. It had barely stopped when he slapped the seal and it opened.

Muscling into it and topping it with the helmet as it sealed he fired it up.

"Out of my way!" He growled to the others who had crowded in and they stepped aside. Steven burst out of the armory and was on his way to main engineering to man his post within three minutes.

(Reply: None yet)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 00.40)

The Klingon ship fired their disruptors at the Illuminar. The Illuminar was rocked a bit but the enhanced shields held nicely. She went to one of the tactical stations behind the command area. She scanned the Klingon ship for any weakness to better target their return fire. There is a small area near the Klingon ship's exhaust that would be the optimal spot to hit. She was concerned with how Captain Sekal is controlling his emotions but she couldn't do anything about that now. She leaned over to T'Mur to relay her findings.

"The scan shows a spot near the exhaust to be the optimal area to attack. Direct the phaser and torpedoes there."

(Reply T'Mur, Sekal, Any)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SecO - Ensign Galk, Son of Jos of the House of Kor - 0041)

The tall, burly Klingon warrior showed his teeth and snarled as the Captain spoke with the Klingon Commander, of his people but not of his house and without honor. The Commander was itching for a fight, eager to gain glory to the exclusion of all else. Klingons and the Federation had been at odds for generations, finally becoming allies when necessary and existing in an uneasy peace for decades. Attacking an ally or one under terms of peace, there was no honor in it.

He gave a rumbling laugh at the CO's insult which caused Kar'shek to end the communication in rage.

The ship sprang into action at the CO's command, executing their duties like a well oiled machine. Galk was here as security detail for the Bridge and today was an exhilarating day to be alive!

As shots were fired he rumbled from his position near the turbolifts. "Duras! I know of Kar'shek. They are little changed though they have been earning the Chancellor's favor for being his Grint hounds hunting in Romulan space. He seeks to curry favor with the Chancellor by bringing the Illuminar to Qo'nos as prize."

"He will not be successful, I will do what is necessary to ensure it." Sekal's voice was emphatic.

Galk rumbled in assent knowing the Captain's intent. If necessary he would order the ship to self destruct rather than have it fall into the hands of enemies.

"But that will not be necessary. Illuminar is more than a match for any two ships of the Klingon Empire save for perhaps their newest and most powerful."

Galk nodded silently. He was no member of the technical staff aboard but he was aware of this ship's capabilities. As for its CO? He gave a pleased chuckle. The Captain was not himself certainly, on edge and barely under control at times. He would have to be watched carefully and Galk was one of the very few aboard including Hercules Devers and perhaps T'Mur who could match him physically were he to lose control and have to be restrained.

But at this moment the Vulcan could almost be mistaken for a Klingon. What better way to die than in battle under such a commander?

"No, he will not succeed and his end will be glorious."

(Reply: Any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

Quinna was beginning to get used to the bridge. She still had sickbay on her mind but she could not control what was going on in there. She kept her eyes on Sekal and the view screen. Noting the distortion meant a cloaked ship but she had no way of telling friends or foes. That is until they communicated.

Quinna sprang into action. Amazing how communications seemed to open up.

Quinna lowered her voice so that it would not be a part of the conversation Sekal was having with the Klingons.

=^= Illuminar to away teams. You are to evacuate the Rhyne. Head to the shuttles. ^= Quinna conveyed.

(Reply away teams)

Quinna still had the communications open when the Illuminar went into Red Alert. The ship was hit but with no substantial damage and no casualties. Quinna spun to see Ariel spring into action.

(Reply any on Bridge or away team since Quinna left the comm open)

(Posted by Kris)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory 1 - 0044)

=^= Illuminar to away teams. You are to evacuate the Rhyne. Head to the shuttles. ^= Quinna called over the coms.

Gregory tapped his COM badge. "Gregory here. Why? Whats going on?" he asked

(Solice)

He shook his head at the answer. Klingons! Here! Attacking the Illuminar. Tapping his COM badge again, "Gregory to Rhyne. Belay the shuttle order," he called before a second tap, "Quinna, makes no sense adding small craft to the combat area. We'll support you from here."

(Solice)

Turning to Taylor, "Get up to the Battle Module, see what torpedo's we have left."

He tapped his badge again, "P'Rah, find the nearest transporter and get to the battle module and assist Mr. Taylor."

=^= Aye, Sir ^= the Caitain replied.

(Taylor IYW)

Gregory finally tapped his badge again, "Gregory to Commander Verin. What are your orders Ma'am?"

(Verin)

(Replies Quinnam Taylor, Verin)

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne – Bridge – Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee - 00.45)

She turned to Trei as a thought came to her, “Keep watching those exhaust trails, in case they decide to cloak.”

(reply Trei, any)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck 4 -Medical Center - MO Dr. Kyllee Stev - 0046)

The open comm lines were a bit distracting. They'd spent so long with no communications, the sudden intensity was a little over whelming.

=^= Illuminar to away teams. You are to evacuate the Rhyne. Head to the shuttles. ^=^=

The conversation between Solice and Gregory gave Stev all the information he needed. Klingons. Klingons? Klingons!

=^=Quinna, makes no sense adding small craft to the combat area. We'll support you from here.=^=

Kyllee had to agree with Gregory, that throwing a shuttle into a battle zone was ill advised. But his estimation of their ability to help was very... optimistic.

The results of the tests he'd been running on P'Rah since he'd removed his environmental suit and the rest of them in sickbay, including Fred Mertz, showed that the suits were doing them no good.

"Kyllee to Verin and Gregory, I've just completed several tests of ourselves and Mr. Mertz and I can assure you that these environmental suits are not necessary. We are all being affected by whatever is affecting the ship, even with them on. I do not recommend them as an environmental necessity."

(reply any)

He looked at Alyl, and Dever and shrugged. He began to removed his own suit. “Whatever’s affecting us, these aren’t making a difference.”

(reply Ayl, Dever, P'Rah, any)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Illiminar -- Bridge Deck 1 -- 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice - 0047)

=^= Illuminar to away teams. You are to evacuate the Rhyne. Head to the shuttles. ^= Quinna called over the coms.

Gregory tapped his COM badge. "Gregory here. Why? What's going on?" he asked.

=^= Captain Sekal has ordered your return to the ship.=^=

Suddenly the federation ally was attacking the Illuminar. Quinna turned back to hear Dieter in her ear.

"Quinna, makes no sense adding small craft to the combat area. We'll support you from here."

=^= No kidding, we were just fired upon. We will take the support, Stand by.=^=

(Reply IYW)

(Posted by Kris B)

(USS Rhyne - Deck 4 -Medical Center - CSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl, Dr. Kyllée Stev, Security PO3 P'Rah, PO3 Hercules Devers - 0047)

"Kyllee to Verin and Gregory, I've just completed several tests of ourselves and Mr. Mertz and I can assure you that these environmental suits are not necessary. We are all being affected by whatever is affecting the ship, even with them on. I do not recommend them as an environmental necessity."

Jaton chortled. "You first."

He looked at Alyl, and Dever and shrugged. He began to remove his own suit. "Whatever's affecting us, these aren't making a difference."

Jaton stood. “As they say on Earth, in for a penny in for a pound.” He started stripping out of his suit as well. As he took his helmet off, he sniffed the air. “Oof,” he exclaimed. “My tricorder wasn’t lying! That air is stale.”

Devers had stripped out of his suit and checked his equipment.

Over their COM badges came the order, "=^=Verin to Illuminar Away Teams, I want everyone to congregate in the battle module, Level B.=^="

Devers and P'Rah looked at each other and the two officers. "Orders Sirs?" Devers asked

Jaton looked over at Stev. "I mean unless you want me to assume command again..."

Kylle rolled his eyes at the statement. He really didn't want this to be a manhood measuring contest. "Look Lieutenant, this doesn't have to be a competition. Clearly, now that communication has been restored, Commander Verin and Lt. Commander Gregory are in command. If you feel more comfortable joining them in the battle module, feel free to go. I do my best work here."

He looked at Mertz noting he was not able to make that journey yet, “I do not believe Mr. Mertz is prepared to travel just yet. I will explain to the commander. I would appreciate it if one of you would stay with us,” he said to P’Rah and Dever. The other should probably accompany Lieutenant Alyl to the battle center.”

Jaton nodded. "Right, if there are no objections, Dever, you're with me. P'Rah, you stay here to make sure Stev and Mertz are okay. As soon as the transporters are restored, we'll beam you away."

"Fair enough," Stev said, and went back to his work. He tapped his comm badge as Alyl and P'Rah left.

"Kyllee to Commander Verin," he reported, "Lieutenant Alyl is returning with Mr. P'Rah. We have a survivor here and I am not comfortable moving him just yet. We can join you when we are able. I'll hang on to Mr. Dever for protection."

(reply Verin)

The two security officers looked at each and shrugged. P'Rah headed over to the science officer. "Let's go, Sir," he said, his phaser rifle in his hand.

Jaton shrugged. He wasn't exactly thrilled to be stuck with P'Rah after that incident with the vole, but he'd find some way to make the best of the situation. "Very well. Move out." He stood and gestured towards the door. "After you."

"Very good sir," the Caitain replied and led the way out of sickbay.

Devers walked over to the Doctor, "How can I help you, Sir?"

Kyllee was still feeling the irritation from Alyl, and the twinge of panic of someone watching them, "I just need someone to watch my back while I work on getting Mr. Mertz into some kind of condition to get out of here, and off this ship."

"Copy that, Doc," Devers replied, "Watching your back Sir."

Stev returned his attention to his patient, who seemed to be considerably less agitated now. As he worked he talked.

"So tell me Mr. Mertz, what was your position on this ship?"

Fred blinked as if he were working hard to remember, then said, "Computer Specialist, I was part of the original team that put the computer core on this ship, and did most of the programming."

"That's incredible," Kyllee said honestly. "I'm lucky to be able to make the computers in sickbay give me the reports they're programmed to give. I think they hate me."

Mertz chuckled, "Funny, I used to think that computers weren't capable of emotions, like hate. I'm not so sure now."

"Really?" the doctor said, "that's an interesting admission. What would have changed your mind?"

"The ship," Mertz said, "it seems to have grown a life of its own. Haven't you noticed, everything is trying to kill us?"

(reply any)

(posted by Al Muir, Spencer and Tim B)

[illegible]

Kar'chek was boiling still over the insult from the Vulcan. To see one as an adversary had been disappointing at the beginning... until he had with typical Vulcan precision wished him a dishonorable death with a guarantee of victory. It had not at all been what he had expected. To be precise it had shocked and enraged him.

"Disruptors firing."

Kar'chek grunted an acknowledgement and walked to the tactical station expecting a palpable hit. Once again he was surprised.

"hOd there was no appreciable damage."

"What?" His voice was incredulous.

"Their shields shrugged it off as though it were nothing."

"?OniL!ljhaYhoj." (What? Impossible!)

"ji'ganNact'O" (They are firing)

"The Da'kar rocked as energy slammed into its shields. A whining groan arose from the vibrations.

"hOd our shields! Port forward down 23%!"

He throttled the desire to pull his sidearm and burn down the tactical officer. "Fire torpedoes and follow with disruptors."

The thump of emerging torpedoes came in rapid succession followed by another searing orb of energy that streaked toward the Illuminar.

The Da'kar then swept to starboard in an evasive maneuver and to line up for the following shots. Kar'chek turned to the main viewer to see what effect they would have.

As he did so the incongruity of the situation struck him. The profile was like that of an old Starfleet design, an Intrepid class science vessel. Hardly a fighting ship and more suited to monitoring neutron stars. That it could give such a punishing blow was unthinkable. Another blast from its phasers struck the Da'kar just before the torpedoes impacted and his ship reeled from the blow. Kar'chek's attention was snatched away by a damage report.

"Forward shields down 42 percent. Cloak is down."

He howled. "Get it back up! What damage to the Federation ship?"

(Reply: San'dras)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory - 0048)

=^= Kylvlee to Verin and Gregory. I've just completed several tests of ourselves and Mr. Mertz and I can assure you that these environmental suits are not necessary. We are all being affected by whatever is affecting the ship, even with them on. I do not recommend them as an environmental necessity. ^=^=

Gregory smiled, "Good work Doctor!" he replied.

Shedding his suit, he rolled his neck, "Ok, this is more like it."

"Scanners?" he called out

The Android replied, "Short range sensors are online, long range will take more time. I would not recommend warp at the present time."

Gregory nodded. Things were starting to look up. Once he had a report from Ensign Taylor, he'd know how much they could help out the Illuminar, not that she needed the Rhyne's help, and with a skeleton crew, it would be tough, but if they didn't try, the ship was a sitting duck. He slammed the pool and suddenly three green lights came on. "Damn," he said. "Taylor was right," he chuckled.

Tapping his COMM badge, "Medic Mulder, Who's the shuttle pilot?"

(Reply Mulder)

Nodding at the response, "Lieutenant Corday, can you pilot a ship of the line?"

(Reply Snoopy)

"Good, take one of the medics and make your way to the bridge post haste. I'll let 'em know you're coming. Oh, and send that engineer to me in main engineering."

(reply Snoopy)

"We might just make it, Outrider. Thinks are looking up."

"As you say, Sir," the android replied.

(Reply Mulder, Snoopy)

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne – Bridge Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee – 0050)

Arthur rolled his eyes, “Get out of here.”

Scully returned the smile, "Race you to the bridge."

(posted by Al Muir)

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 00.50)

"Understood. I will check for areas to hit. "

(Posted by Edward)

(USS Rhyne – Deck 1- Bridge – SFI - Michael Weston - 0051)

"Something happened- what was it?" she asked, her voice a little strained.

She gave him a look that said mind your own damn business, and Weston happily obliged her, and left her to do her command stuff. Still, he didn't move too far away.

=^=Gregory to Rhyne. Belay the shuttle order. Quinna, that makes no sense adding small craft to the combat area. We'll support you from here.=^=

"Verin to Illuminar Away Teams," the Commander called out, "I want everyone to congregate in the battle module, Level B. Matrix, divert all available power to shield that specific area. It's near a shuttle bay, an intra-ship transporter and life rescue pods. I want every bit of power we can muster to make a safe place. Move it people."

McGuyver was a little tentative, keeping an eye out for the spider creatures, as he stepped around a corner to find a man in an environmental suit, huddled in a corner, quivering. He drew his phaser and nodded for Mulder to go check him out.

The medic moved quickly, kneeling beside man, and scanned him with his tricorder.

"He buddy, it's okay," Mulder tried to reassure the weapons figure. "What's your name?"

His first reaction was one of horror, he quickly noticed who it was and reached up to grab onto Mulder.

"Mulder?! It's me, Klinger."

"Klinger," Mulder sounded shocked. "What are you doing down here?"

"We came to find a shuttle," Klinger managed to pull himself together slightly, "and... and ... they're dead. They're both dead."

"Who's dead?" Mulder asked.

"If ye don't mind," McGuyver interrupted, "can we save this reunion till we get to engineering."

Mulder nodded, "You're right. We've got a climb ahead of us Klinger. Can you move?"

"Yeah," Klinger replied, "but I've got a horrible confession to make."

Both men looked at Klinger oddly, "Out with it man," McGuyver was running low on patience.

Klinger looked at his feet, "I've made a mess in my environmental suit."

Mulder sighed, "The suits aren't helping, let's get it off and we can go."

He reached out and helped off with the helmet. The smell of the vomit wafted out from the hole.

"Sweet holy..." McGuyver exclaimed. "How much did you puke?"

As they peeled of the suit they noticed what he was wearing.

"Klinger, are you aware that's a female uniform?" Mulder asked.

My uniform was, umm, ruined and this was all I could find," Klinger admitted.

"Well this one's not much better," Mulder said, noting the puddle of regurgitation plopping onto the deck. "Get that off too."

Soon Klinger was down to his skivvies. They found a set of overalls over a crate and Klinger put it on quickly. Leading him to the access hatch McGuyver led the climb. Klinger followed and Mulder brought up the rear. As the medic pulled himself in he could swear he felt something grab at his leg.

He rushed up the ladder, calling up, "A little faster, something weird is down here."

[illegible]

It was eleven levels to the bridge. Arthur was probably up for the climb, and Scully looked fairly athletic, but it became a matter of time. They were going to have to trust that the turbo lift was going to have power to get them to the bridge.

The door opened as they approached it. "Bridge," Corday called to the control panel. It beeped in response and the lift started to move. Both Scully and Corday breathed sighs of relief. Then the lift suddenly slowed down and stopped and their hearts sank.

When it stopped the door opened and there was a man in a security uniform standing there. "Bridge?" he asked.

"Uh, yeah," Arthur replied.

"They all transferred to the battle module," Taylor said. "I'm Andy Taylor."

Corday nodded, "Arthur, Corday, they call me Snoopy."

“Snoopy?” Taylor looked quizzically.

“Long story,” Arthur said. “This is Medic Dana Scully.”

"Ma'am," Andy smiled and moved in between the two.

Corday tapped to control panel, "Change destination to battle module, Deck A."

The computer chirped and the turbo lift shot off again.

(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Module Operations - Pilot- Lt. Arthur 'Snoopy' Corday, Medic Dana Scully, Ensign Andy Taylor - 0100)

The turbo lift door opened and the trio exited to find a small crew of people there already. Corday picked out the Commander from the crowd and presented himself to her.

“Lt. Arthur Corday, ma’am,” he said sharply, and stepped to the side. “May I present Medic Dana Scully and Ensign Andy Taylor.”

Taylor nodded at the commander, "Compliments of Lt Commander Gregory."

(reply Verin)
(posted by Al Muir)

By the time they reached the hatch on deck 11 everybody's legs were burning from the lactic acidosis build up. Mulder kept looking down but nothing was following them.

“Lt. Commander Gregory? Engineer Angus McGuyver, reporting. Looks like we managed to pick up one of your strays along the way.” McGuyver indicated towards Klinger. “How can I help?”

[illegible]

Quinna sat up straight. “What about the neck?” Quinna asked.

“The Bridge of that ship is connected with a small tether (Vor’cha Class, 2022),” Quinna started. “What if we target the area and cut the head of the bird off, in a manner of speaking.”

It is a Vor'cha class ship. It has a secondary hull made of duranium alloy (Vor'cha Class, 2022). So their weakest part would be the bridge tether and would also cause the least casualties.

[illegible]

T'Mur checked her board, "We have sustained no discernible damage. Shields holding at 92 percent. The Klingon vessel. Has received notable strikes reducing their shield efficiency to 42 percent. There is

a sizable energy fluctuation in their engineering area, and as they have not employees their cloaking device I would assume that would be the source.”

"What about the neck?" Solice suggested.

"The neck?" T'Mur did not quite understand the reference.

“The bridge of that ship is connected with a small tether. What if we target the are and cut the head of the bird off, in a manner of speaking.”

T'Mur was impressed. She didn't realize that Quinna had such a working knowledge of Klingon war ships.

“That is an excellent suggestion,” T’Mur said, “Lt. Commander.” It was the first time she had used that title for Quinna. “Just so you are aware, these Vor’cha class ships have a much larger “neck” than the older Klingon vessels. I have been attempting to strike at the power sources. I can change the parameters of our attack.”

There was another shudder from the ship as the Klingon ship struck with their own torpedoes, followed by disrupter fire. T'Mur recognized the strategy. Weaken the shields with torpedos enough, and then make a disruptive strike at the same spot to try and find a weakness in the shielding. However, the new shields on the Illuminar were a decent match for their current strategy. However, she could see a different outcome with a significant change to their paradigm.

“Mr. Montero,” she called out, I will need a better angle,” the Vulcan called out. “We need to come up from under them. Bring us to 137 mark 8.”

She readjusted the targeting computer and fired a volley of torpedoes at the base of the Vor'cha class ship's "head."

There was an alert on her sensor panel. T'Mur raised an eyebrow the. Turned to the captain.

“Captain, long range sensors have picked up two more Klingon ships approaching.”

(reply Sekal, any)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - yaS wa'dlch - San'dras- 0059)

“What damage to the Federation ship?” Kar’chek growled.

San'dras recognized the danger in the hOd's voice. She looked at the readings with disbelief.

“Inconceivable,” she said, accidentally out loud. “The ship has hardly taken any damage. It’s shields at near full strength. There are small areas where I have targeted disrupter fire directly at the impact sight of torpedoes. But it is not enough.”

“PtaQ,” San’dras growled. “gHos tuH (evasive maneuvers)”

San'dras examined the station. Seeing it useless she jumped down to the helm, grabbed the pilot and tossed him from his seat.

She moved her hands over the controls at the war ship moved under her guidance. The yaw of the turn made the structure groan slightly but the next attack from the Federation ship completely missed.

(posted by Al Muir)

The idea of hitting the neck of the bird was a good one but it had to be precise. She worked with T'Mur to be as accurate as possible. She gave the precise target coordinates to T'Mur and gave her the go ahead to execute the strike.

(Reply Quinna, T'Mur)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

“Lt. Commander Gregory? Engineer Angus McGuyver, reporting. Looks like we managed to pick up one of your strays along the way.”

Gregory nodded to Klinger as the young man continued. "How can I help."

"Klinger, Mulder, report to the Tactical Information Center, Deck A of the battle module and assemble with the rest of the crew."

"Mr. McGuyver, I need you here, with me and Outrider 1. We need to get this ship operational. We have some control, the warp drive is online, but our sensors are short range only. We need to get shields up and at a minimum I want to see what is out there. First priority is shields."

(McGuyver)

Gregory tapped his Com badge. "Gregory to Verin. Ma'am, I'm sending two more medics your way. Outrider 1, engineer McGuyver and I are in Engineering and are working to make sure shields are operational. Is Matrix with you?"

(Verin)

"We have short range scanners, torpedo control, shields are at 50% and we're working on that. We have phasers as well. We're bringing the air scrubbers online. Anything else Ma'am?"

(Verin)

"Very good, Ma'am."

(Reply McGuyver, Verin)

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - EO Angus McGuyver - 0102)

McGuyverlooked at the 20 as he ordered the medics on their way, without escort. He had to wonder about the wisdom of that, but that's probably why he wasn't in a command position.

"Mr. McGuyver, I need you here, with me and Outrider 1. We need to get this ship operational. We have some control, the warp drive is online, but our sensors are short range only. We need to get shields up and at a minimum. I want to see what is out there. First priority is shields."

McGuyver nodded, and he replied with his heavy brogue. "You've got it Commander, shields are priority one."

He sat down at the console Taylor had been using and looked at the configuration of the power grid. Suddenly he sat back, threw his hands in the air and yelled, "What in the bloody blue blazes? Whoever was working on this was idiot."

He sat forward again, cracked his knuckles, and leaned in to the screen. Whoever had been attempting to get the shields going hadn't done as much damage as was first assumed. He had crossed some lines that should not have been crossed.

Suddenly he crawled under the console and pulled of the access hatch to the inner workings and began to look at the iso chips. After a minute of contemplation he began to move the chips into new slots. He would check periodically to see what the changes did. Then the power to the shields suddenly failed.

"Crappy Martian engineering," he cursed under his breathe.

Then he moved two more chips and the power came back on and a song of power relays sang to him. He jumped back to his feet and looked at the monitor. With a smile he tapped a button and was met with the pleasant sound of the shields powering up.

“Lt Commander,” he called over his shoulder, “we have shields. That’s the good news. The bad news is that the batteries need to be charged from the warp core. I’d estimate that we’re at 35 percent.”

(reply Gregory)

“Now be honest with me commander,” McGuyver said, “what would you rather have, weapons or long range sensors. I canne give you both. At least not for a wee while.”

(reply Gregory)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Kar'chek- 0102)

"The Kha'jE and i'Jue are near. Two minutes until they engage!"

"Order them to target the ship's warp nacelles. Change targeting to those nacelles!"

"Yes hOd!"

"BaH!" (Fire)

The warp nacelles on this class of ship were smaller and closer to the hull which made them a more difficult target to hit and damage. Kar'chek wanted, needed to bring this ship to the homeworld but he was also a realist, if he did nothing the Vulcan would make good on his promise.

"The cloak is available."

"Ghos!"

The warship shimmered and was gone to standard sensors.

"Turn us about. So'wi'chu!"

This particular class of ship had sensors that were better than standard and a crew that knew how to use them. Still targeting a cloaked vessel was not a simple matter. A spread of quantum torpedoes lashed put from Illuminar, 2 missed, the third detonated in near proximity.

The Da'kar rocked hard to starboard. Kar'chek remained on his feet due to a supreme effort and one hand on the chair.

"We have lost cloak again! Shields weakening."

"Kajunpak't! All emergency power to the shields!"

"The others have arrived!"

"Quapla! CHEG- chu-jaj-VAM-jaj-KAK!"

"hOd! The other ship!"

"Hold until the other ships are well engaged then we will Mak-cha! it. Shielded?"

"No hOd, minimal power readings."

"Kesh!" It wasn't his target but he would make sure it was defenseless and could not enter the battle, when attention to it could be spared.

(Reply: San'dras)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck A - Battle Operations Center - SFI Michael Weston - 0106)

The turbo lift slowed and came to a halt. Weston positioned himself between the entrance and center. He looked at the Commander. "You should stay in here until the room is cleared. I vote for Mr. Lee to clear the room."

He looked over at Lee playfully, who only frowned back. “No? Perhaps together then.”

(reply Lee)

The two men exited the lift and went down the opposite sides of the Tactical Center until they were both satisfied that they were alone there. Then they made their way back to the lift.

“We’re clear,” Weston said. He reached over to a console and brought it to life. With a few buttons the rest of the “Battle Bridge” woke up.

(reply Verin)

As the group spread out the turbo lift door opened again. Three people stepped off looking a little lost.

A child stepped up to him, "Lt. Arthur Corday, Commander Verin?"

Weston laughed, “Not likely. Over there.” He pointed Verin out in the crowd. “And your friends?”

“Oh yeah, Medic Scully and Ensign Andy Taylor,” Corday introduce his companions.

He looked the group over and turned to the medic, "You might want to start with checking in with Commander Verin. I believe she's in some kind of distress."

Then he turned to Taylor, "Security? I'm sure you're familiar with Lt. Lee. He's over there."

The trio dispersed. Weston watched them and shook his head. “We’re all gonna die,” he said softly to himself.

(posted by Al Muir)

(USS Rhyne - Deck 11 - Main Engineering - 2/O LCDR Dieter Gregory - 0110)

As he worked over the master systems display table, he felt he was chasing ghosts. As soon as one area of the ship was green, another went amber or red. He listened as McGuyver cursed at the repairs that had been done to the defensive station.

"Noted, Mr. McGuyver," he called out. "Shields are online, I am shunting power directly to the shields from the warp core. See if that helps," he replied. "Batteries will take too long to charge up. I can try to pull additional power from the impulse generators." Working through the commands, "Shield power at 40% and climbing."

"Weapons, Man. Get me phasers," he said. "We can solve the long range problem later."

Gregory tapped his COM badge, "Commander Verin, we have shields. Should be full strength shortly. I've got McGuyver working on the phaser arrays now. We only have short-range sensors, but I am tying them into the targeting and battle computer. Mr. Taylor should be with you now, I recommend you put him at tactical. Did Mr. Snoopy make it there?"

"Good. I can give you impulse drive, and up to warp 2 right now till we get the rest of the sensors on-line," he said.

"I'm here Ma'am. Mr. McGuyver, Outrider and myself will keep Engineering up as much as possible. I am diverting power from non-essential systems, but have put the life support on high to clean the air."

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible]

"Weapons, man. Get me phasers," Gregory said. "We can solve the long-range problem later."

McGuyver shrugged, "You're the boss."

The engineer began to pull up the programs for the phasers and started to reroute power around areas of dead gel packs. Those were going to have to be replaced, eventually, but what he was doing should work for a short-term solution. After a few minutes he jumped out of his seat and ran to the other end of Main Engineering and pulled a panel from the wall. He dug his arm deep into the bowels of the opening and pulled out a handful of wires. Then he meticulously followed to the wire trails until he found the two he was looking for. He quickly switched the terminals of the wires and ran back to the station he'd been working at. Finally he tapped a few keys, and nothing happened.

A string of curses flew from his mouth, and he brought his fists down on the panel in front of him. Suddenly there were a series of beeps, and the hum of power being redirected to the phaser array emitters. With a smile on his lips he swiveled around in his chair.

"And that's how it's done," he said triumphantly. "We have phasers. Every third emitter is out, but since this ship will still pack a whallop. And I wouldn't recommend keeping it this way. I'll need to make repairs down the line, but it'll hold together today."

(reply Gregory)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Lee continued to remain alert as the turbo lifted halted and was about to take point when the doors open but Weston seem to got in the way. “ “You should stay in here until the room is cleared. I vote for Mr. Lee to clear the room.” He spoke to the Commander. Lee was puzzled, why was Weston giving orders. It was annoying at the least and frowned silently at him

“No? Perhaps together then.”

If Weston wanted to play “I’m the real boss here’ then let him, thought Lee.

"Yes, lets. On the count of 3. 1..2..3. Go"

Lee and Weston rushed into the Tactical Center. Lee with his phaser rifle as he went into the opposite direction of place..alert as always as he scanned the room but there was nobody around.

“clear” called out Lee as he joined Weston to return to the turbolift. He wondered why there was nobody on the ship. Where was everyone

The turbolift doors opened again as Lee aimed his phaser rifle. Three people stepped out and introduced themselves

As the group spread out the turbo lift door opened again. Three people stepped off looking a little lost and introduced themselves as Lt Arthur Corday, medic Scully and what was Andy Taylor doing here?

“Ensign Taylor” said Lee, who lowered his rifle. “What are you doing here. Report”

(reply)

(posted by John)

[illegible]

"Ensign Taylor, what are you doing here?" Lee asked. "Report."

"Sir," Taylor began, "I was sent up under Lt. Commander Gregory's orders. We've been working on the weapons systems and shields. When Commander Verin called for everyone to meet up here he sent me on ahead."

He looked at the Security Chief almost apologetically, "He has Outrider and an engineer there now. Guess I was just in the way. I tried to protest but he wasn't having any of it. Sooo... what can I do for you here?"

(reply Lee)

(posted by Al Muir

[illegible]

There was a sense of relief from the Security Chief of having an additional security officer around.

“Ensign Taylor. Welcome to the party. Just keep your eyes and ears open.” Said Lee “I also assigning you to be the Commander’s close protection officer.”

(reply if any)

Lee turned to Commander Williams-Verin “What are your orders, Commander?”

(reply)

(posted by John)

[illegible]

"Commander," Outrider spoke, "If you will confirm my work, I have the navigation sensors back online."

"Good work, Outrider," Gregory said as he confirmed the results. "Where are my phasers Mr. McGuyver."

"Sir, I have the dorsal phaser array online, but the ventral phaser arrays don't seem to be responding to commands. I'll need to go check them later," the engineer responded.

"Very good," Gregory replied, "Its better than nothing."

Tapping his COM badge, "Gregory to Corday, you in position? Navigational sensors are online now."

(Reply Snoopy)

"Excellent, you have local control," Gregory replied, releasing control to the pilot.

"Gregory to Taylor. We've restored the dorsal phaser array. Mr. Taylor, how many photon torpedo's do we have?"

(Reply Taylor)

"Damnit, I need you on tactical. I've got petty officer P'Rah on his way to your location, he can take over babysitting duty."

(reply Taylor)

"Very good, Mr. Taylor."

His chess pieces in place, he tapped his comm badge again, "Commander Verin, we have navigational sensors and Mr. Corday is ready at the helm for your commands. We've also got the dorsal phaser array and are waiting on a photon count. I've moved Mr. Taylor to tactical and Petty Officer P'Rah should be arriving shortly. We are continuing to affect repairs from engineering."

(Verin)

(reply Corday, Taylor, Verin)

(posted by Tim)

[illegible]

(USS Rhyne - Deck B - TIC - Pilot Lt. Corday, SecO Ensign Andy Taylor - 0130)

=^=Gregory to Corday, you in position? Navigational sensors are online now.=^=

Corday sat at the flight operations station and pulled up the controls, "I'm in Lt. Commander. Assuming navigation control."

=^Excellent, you have local control.=^=

Corday chuckled, thinking to himself, ~That would be a first.~

=^=Gregory to Taylor. We've restored the dorsal phaser array. Mr. Taylor, how many photon torpedo's do we have? ^=^=

“Sorry sir,” Taylor said, “But Lt. Lee has me on guard duty for Lt. Commander Verin. Apparently he doesn’t think Mr. Weston is up to the job alone.”

=^=Damn it, I need you on tactical. I've got petty officer P'Rah on his way to your location, he can take over babysitting duty."

Taylor stepped around Lee, uncomfortably, and sat at the tactical station. He pulled up the torpedo inventory and whistled. "It's not a full load, sir, but I'm seeing over 300 torpedoes. 307 to be exact. Apparently they spent a few. Inventory shows they had a full load when they last took on supplies."

=^=Very good, Mr. Taylor.=^=

Andy moved uncomfortably in the chair as he felt Lee's stare at the back of his head. This was not going to end well for him.

=^Commander Verin, we have navigational sensors and Mr. Corday is ready at the helm for your commands. We've also got the dorsal phaser array and are waiting on a photon count. I've moved Mr. Taylor to tactical and Petty Officer P'Rah should be arriving shortly. We are continuing to affect repairs from engineering.=^=

(reply Verin)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Leeza Pel awoke in her little bed and looked around. No one was there. Usually, her Mommy or Daddy was there but this time she was alone. She started crying out of fright. The 2-year-old little girl was never allowed to wander the ship alone but with her parents missing she took it upon herself to find them. She put her shoes on, though they were on the wrong feet, grabbed her blankie, made her way out of her quarters, and walked with her little Trill dolly complete with removable symbiote in her hand.

She heard someone move down the corridor. She knew that someone would help her and she headed in that direction. Tears started to fall down her eyes as she could not find the source of the movement. Looking around, she was lost. She could not read the signs as she was too young to read. “Mommy! Daddy!” She screamed out.

(Reply any)
(Posted by Kris B.)

[illegible]

She waited for her next orders to act but she couldn't help by imagine the tension over at the Rhyme. If she had her abilities back she would send some soothing waves over to them but she couldn't. This was a certain level of frustration for her. She just had to keep working and find more ways to help the

situation. She wondered if Luma could help her with what the away team is feeling but its better to keep busy.

(Reply None)
(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

She was monitoring the field where she thought the Klingon ships were located. She had a thought to how they can locate the ships by the sound they make when running. She thought Luma could help in that regard. She leaned next to T'Mur and told her of her theory.

"Say we track the sound the Klingon ships emit as they are running. Luma can help in this regard. We can use this to target them without them knowing how we did."

(Reply Luma, T'Mur)
(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

Lee put an hand to his mouth as he stopped himself from yawning and stood behind Taylor who was at the tactical station checking the torpedo inventory. He felt a little bit miffed when Taylor was ordered to man the station. Lee whispered to Taylor “You better watch yourself. I did not say that Mr Weston was not up to the job alone. Infact he is more than capable! But nevertheless you will remain alert even when Petty Officer P’Rah takes over close protection duties.”

Lee straightened up and turned to Commander Vein “Anything you would like me to do, Ma’am?”

(reply Verin)

(posted by John)

[illegible]

After relaying the theory to T'Mur she walked over to the science station to get T'Shalath involved. She relayed the theory to her to see what she can do with it.

"Can you detect the cloaked ships with the theory. What can I do to help?"

(Reply T'Shalath)
(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

The operations center was light up like a Christmas tree. Scott was keeping up, barely. The monitor screens were constantly updating status and alerts as the away team managed the Rhyne's systems. Scott managed to notice the navigational sensor alert blink green, indicating it was operational.

"Scott to Commander Verin...I really can't do much more here. Where would you like me to go? Engineering?" Asked Scott.

(Reply Verin)

Scott secured the station and placed everything in observation mode. He tapped his comm badge and took the center chair briefly. The tactical display wasn't working or at least displaying anything of value. He tapped it, hoping to motivate it to do something useful. The display wasn't cooperating. He smacked it this time and the display flickered and went dark. ~Lovely~ he thought.

Scott pulled out this tricorder and made a few scans of the tactical console and shrugged his shoulders. "Okay...be that way." He said aloud to no one. He stashed the tricorder and opened up a sonic driver and made a few adjustments to the console. Whatever he did, it made the display console reset and in a few moments it was displaying properly. ~Nice!~

(Reply Verin, any)

(Posted by Steve)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1- Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal - 0140)

The Klingon Vor'cha class had been a notable contender for decades. While much smaller a Bird of Prey was essentially a ship built around a formidable weapons system and had given a knockout blow to many Federation ships over the years. The Battle Cruiser however had a more powerful disruptor, was heavier and well armored. The Illuminar however had surpasses it and was the heavy weight in this fight. Sekal didn't relax however, many battles turned quickly on the smallest details.

“What about the neck?”

He turned to his 3/0. "Interesting."

"The Bridge of that ship is connected with a small tether. What if we target the area and cut the head of the bird off, in a manner of speaking? It is a Vor'cha class ship. It has a secondary hull made of duranium alloy. So their weakest part would be the bridge tether and would also cause the least casualties."

He nodded and turned to tactical. "What is the status of their shields in that area?"

(T'Mur, T'shalaith)

"When their forward shields are down target that area."

(Reply:T'Mur)

What happened next was not a small detail however as another battle cruiser decloaked along with a Bird of Prey and targeted the starboard warp nacelles. The Bird of Prey cloaked once again after firing while the Vor'cha remained as a visual target to draw fire. It's shields were harder than the smaller ship and it could absorb more punishment.

The Illuminar rocked to port due to the twin blows, one of which hit the shields over the nacelle and the other slightly aft of it.

"Status report on the shields." He called out as the Dac'kar maneuvered in an attempt to fire at the port nacelle, its volley hit the aft of the saucer section.

(Reply: Any)

Illuminar was caught in a pincher movement, the only way out was to force its way out.

"The Dac'kar is weakened, continue to target it. Helm turn us toward that ship and force it to turn. Phasers and torpedoes in a minimal spread."

A surgical strike was now out of the question, they would need to pummel the ship out of their maneuvering route.

(Reply: All)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

"What is the status of their shields in that area?"

“Unsurprisingly, that is where their shields are strongest,” T’Mur reported. “They are aware of the structural weakness. There are even extra shield generators protecting a separation plate by their tactical bridge.”

"When their forward shields are down target that area."

“Already programmed,” the CTO said, having anticipated that eventuality.

The incoming ships had disappeared from her sensor readings. Clearly they had cloaked. Trei leaned over and said. ""Say we track the sound the Klingon ships emit as they are running. Luma can help in this regard. We can use this to target them without them knowing how we did."

T'Mur raised an eyebrow, and thought. "Technically, ships don't make noise in space, however, that being said, we can adapt the sensors to read gravitational waves as the cloaked ships move through the fabric of space. That creates spacial compression that can be detected. Ensign T'Shalaith can you make those adjustments?"

(reply T'Shalaith)

Suddenly another Vor'cha class warship and a Bird of Prey decloaked and immediately opened fire. The Illuminar rocked as they struck the warp nacelles. Then the bird of prey cloaked as it moved off. The second Vor'cha warbird turned to face them. T'Mur has already begun to return fire, making point blank torpedo strikes followed by phasers.

"Status report on the shields," Sekal called out. The Dac'kar moved in and fired. A volley of torpedoes hit the aft of the saucer section, once again sending shock waves through the ship.

"Shields are down to 80 percent," T'Mur replied. "However we have sustained damage to the port nacelle and warp engines are off line."

"The Dac'kar is weakened," Sekal noted, "continue to target it. Helm turn us toward that ship and force it to turn. Phasers and torpedoes in a minimal spread."

T'Mur fingers flew over the controls and fired a barrage of torpedoes and the neck of the Warbird. Then she fired phasers, as the torpedoes exploded. The timing was impeccable as the the phasers made their way through the shielding and ripped through the hull of the Klingon ship. That ship was no longer a viable threat to the Illuminar. T'Mur wonder how much longer it would hold together. By her calculations, not very long.

(reply T'Shalaith, any)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

The Illuminar was now getting pummeled by the new warbird. The Bird of Prey declaimed for a strafing run and then cloaked again as it moved off.

T'Mur continued to make shield adjustments while returning fire. At the same time she monitored the Rhyne. She couldn't help but smile when she saw its shields power on.

::Good girl, Sienna.::

Then she saw the Dac'kar change its heading towards the near defenseless ship.

“Captain, the Klingon ship is moving towards the Maelstrom and attempting to target the Rhyne.”

::Sweet Sienna, Luma help::

(reply Sekal, Luma)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(IKS Dac'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - yaS wa'dlch - San'dras- 0145)

San'dra, now at the helm, turned the Warbird towards the immobile ship in the center of the anomaly it most likely had created. However there were some strange readings coming from the ship.

She had begun to lock weapons on it when her sensors suddenly registered shields raising and power to their phasers increasing.

“Va!” she exclaimed, “This rQI targ is showing its claws. Perhaps it still has some fight in it yet. Disrupters are armed but I cannot get a target lock with the computer. All the better. I will target it on manual.”

She looked over her shoulder at the hOd, her eyes blazing with intention as she prepared to fire at the Federation vessel.

Suddenly a wave of disorientation hit San'dras. Her vision blurred momentarily, then refocused. She checked her readings quickly and immediately realized that something was wrong. It took her a minute to realize what it was.

“hOd,” she called out, “look at our thlaq, it’s ... wrong. It appears we just experienced a 40 minute time jump. It appears that this area of space is temporaly unstable. Perhaps a side effect of their weapon.”

(reply Kar'chek)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

The other ships had decloaked and fired on the Illuminar, whoever was flying the ship made it hard to target easily however. The other cruiser had hit the nacelle while the Bird of Prey had missed aft. The Da'kar likewise had missed its target hitting the saucer section instead.

It was the other ship's next maneuver that had him cursing.

"Geck! The Vulcan is a devil. Hold course! All emergency power to the forward shields!"

The Illuminar was attempting to force its way out of the snare it found itself in and he had two options, attempt to hold it in place or give way. He had chosen the former. But his ship wasn't up to the task.

When the barrage hit the Da'kar reeled like a drunken sailor, there was a rending crash, command center lights went out, blinked momentarily then came back on dimly as emergency power kicked in. Kar'chek was thrown to the rail on the port side and bounced off, grabbing onto it kept him from reeling back toward the command chair. Yellow lights flashed from the boards and a siren blared.

"Damage report!"

To his left one of the crewman slumped over his board which was smoldering, shards of metal were embedded in his skull. Curses and shouts from the others quieted at his order.

"Damage to the power conduits aft of the command center. Weapons and flight controls offline. Da'kar is drifting."

"Reroute! Get me power and command/control to the command center Petaq!"

"Rerouting now."

Power was restored momentarily and scanners revealed the other ship which had up to now gone unnoted.

"Va! This rQI targ is showing its claws. Perhaps it still has some fight in it yet. Disrupters are armed but I cannot get a target lock with the computer. All the better. I will target it on manual."

He showed his teeth. Da'kar was out of the fight with Illuminar but there was still available prey.
"Weapons control."

"Powering up disruptors."

"Scan that ship. What of its shields?"

"Standard hOd, our weapons will cut through it."

"Target it San'dras. Fire when ready."

"hOd look at our thlaq, it's ... wrong. It appears we just experienced a 40 minute time jump. It appears that this area of space is temporaly unstable. Perhaps a side effect of their weapon."

"Geck!" He snarled. "This area of space is certainly unstable, the sooner we get out the better. But first we deal with the Federation slime devils."

(Reply: None)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 3 - Personal Quarters - Temas Laredo - 0148)

Temas lay on his bed holding his hands around his ears, knowing that the sounds he was hearing were not with the man. It had been a long time since he'd lost focus and control of his abilities in this way. But the voices he was hearing, they weren't voices from the Illuminar.

The voices were crying out to him from far away. Thousands of them. Crying out in anguish and despair. Incessantly calling out. And no matter how hard he tried he could not block them all. There were just too many. And they never stopped. It was the bad days all over again.

He rolled out of his bed and crawled across the floor until he could find a hand hold so he could leverage himself to his feet. From the counter he staggered to the door. As the door opened he fell through the door space, to fall against the wall across the corridor.

Laredo had half run, half staggered, through the voices, through the pain, until he wound up at the one place that he knew he could get help. The one place he could always get help. The two people, the only two people, who had ever been able to help him.

“Help me,” he called out, hope for unconsciousness to take him, but it refused.

[illegible]

When they were hit this time the ship rocked. She was flung down the deck like she was yanked by a cane. She tried to make her way back to her station but it was difficult like she was running on a reverse treadmill. She channeled her anger to fight her way back upright to access her station. When she was able to view the display, she saw the disabled klingon ship drift toward the maelstrom. She could see the Rhyme at the edge of the storm. The disabled Klingon ship was powering up their disruptors targeting the Rhyme. She hoped the Rhyme could take care of itself but they had two cloaked warbirds to deal with. She offered a theory to locate the two warbirds.

[illegible]

The two reports came quickly, one on the heels of the other.

"Captain. I am detecting movement through the debris. We can target the cloaked ship without them knowing how we did it. What are your orders sir?" From Lieutenant Trei.

The Da'kar was still on the main viewer, it had begun moving as it turned and was accelerating toward the Akira. Sekal stood up from the command chair as he followed it with his eyes. The Rhyne was in no shape for a battle, much less with the disruptors of Da'kar on the best of days.... and this was far from its best.

Illuminar had two ships to deal with but that could be done without warp capability. The engines were still online though the warp coils had been reported down. Self preservation was not necessary at this time.

"Target the Da'kar and fire as soon as you have lock. Phasers and torpedoes."

(Reply: T'Mur)

"Lieutenant Trei do not lose track of that Bird of Prey, as soon as the Da'kar is dealt with it will receive our full attention."

(Reply: Trei)

The ship rocked again as the Vor'cha unleashed a new barrage, the Bird of Prey was out there watching for an opening. Sekal's mind was primarily on the Da'kar however.

Three muted thumps signaled the launch of torpedoes and phased energy ravened toward Da'kar. If they hadn't fired in time the other ship could expect severe damage.

(Reply: All on the bridge)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0152).

"Target the Da'kar and fire as soon as you have lock. Phasers and torpedoes," Sekal ordered

T'Mur was struggling with the target lock for the torpedoes. She knew that she was only going to have one shot at this. If there was a mistake in her calculations it would cost Sienna and the others their lives, and the fault would be hers.

She blocked out the other conversations on the bridge, took a breathe and refocused. It was taking too long. Breathe. Focus. Then it was there. Fire. Fire. Fire.

Three torpedoes launched and sped their way the their target. She watched as the Da'kar powered its disrupters and prepared its own attack. Then she fired the phasers, directly at the point of impact of the torpedoes.

Everything seemed to strike the Klingon warbird at the same moment at the point of the connection on the head of the ship. The explosion was mesmerizing. And when the flash quickly dissipated... the ship was still there. Still there, just hanging in space, nearly lifeless. Nearly lifeless.

It was no longer showing power to any system other than the disrupters. It was still turning on its axis towards the Rhyne. She would not be able to fire again in time. T'Mur held her breath for what was inevitable.

Then the unthinkable happened. The Rhyne fired its own phasers. At near point blank range, the Klingon ship with no shields, the phaser barrage struck it. The ship immediately exploded, sending shockwaves out into the universe.

T'Mur finally breathed. She looked down at her sensor readings and a new wave of panic set in. The Rhyne was starting to slip back into the Maelstrom and phase out of this universe.

“Captain,” she called out, “the Rhyne! It’s falling into the Maelstrom’s gravity well. It’s starting to disappear.”

(reply Sekal, any)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Yes his and Michaela's quarters were still here which would be strange on the surface. Riven was acting in the capacity of ship's counselor though he always deferred to Alaya and sought out her opinion. The reason? Dammit she had been on the ship since launch and was highly qualified while Riven had come aboard at her request and the Captain's to help her out. This was the way he looked at it and no one could tell him differently. But back to the subject of his quarters, counselors don't get VIP quarters but Federation Ambassadors do and you couldn't take that designation away from him.

But WHY was he in his quarters now? Good question: the ship was in red alert during a battle on the heels of a harrowing investigation into the other Federation starship, you would think he would be on post in medical. You would be wrong on two counts. Number one Alaya had relieved him of duties for the day and taken over, he would be returning to duties tomorrow. The second would be that Ambasssdorial designation. According to StarFleet regs he was required during a conflict to remain in secure quarters for the duration of the battle. Would he follow those regulations strictly? If you are thinking yes then you don't know Riven Mias, if an emergency arose that required his expertise nothing was going to stop him.

Was he sleeping? Hell no! Who could sleep when the ship you are on has blaring sirens and is getting knocked about by concussive force?

So the Betazoud mind healer, priest and Ambassador was in a dark blue robe and sandals, sitting in the living area and reading. When that is he wasn't concentrating on his surroundings.

The whole time they had been here he had had an uneasy feeling as though being watched. He knew Luma wasn't doing it because they were in close contact now and again chatting about old times, how she was feeling, how the bond with Temas was holding up and how well they were getting along.

Let's face it, Luma is naturally the chatty sort and she had been by herself for an unbelievably long time. She had her bondmate now in Temas but that doesn't mean she couldn't talk to others, she wasn't cheating on Temas by speaking with Riven telepathically. Riven also found Luma to be a delightful creature and enjoyed listening. Oh the things she knew if one would only ask... or read between the lines.

But at this point Luma was not herself, nor were many others. It had started slowly and built inexorably over time. When he opened his empathic senses there were a plethora of emotions flooding in; fear, pain, doubt, pleasure, euphoria. The dichotomy was puzzling as there were many conflicting emotions from many different people. Many were doubtless being affected, but no two it seemed in the same way.

His head snapped toward the door, someone was in anguish and they were close. He jumped to his feet and was at the door when it chimed. He slapped the button and as the door opened grabbed Tamas as he fell.

“Help me,”

"Settle down Temas." He said in a soothing tone and half dragged him toward the couch. "Michaela prepare a sedative and quickly. And add a psionic suppressant. I'll stabilize Temas until you get them in him."

He dropped Tamas onto the couch then pushed his legs up with him so that he was reclining. "Tamas I'm going to shield you just like we've done many times before. Relax and don't fight me."

(Reply; Temas)

Riven pulled a small chair next to the couch then perched himself upon it and closed his eyes. His mind reached out and found the young Betazoids. Entwined with Temas was Luma's mind and that would add difficulty ... until the suppressant kicked in. At that point Luma would be frantic but he had already planned for that, he would seamlessly take over the bond until Temas was able to rejoin with her.

::Relax and give your mind over to me::

(Reply: Temas, Michaelaella)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

She saw the torpedoes hit the Klingon ship just as it was going to fire disrupters at the Rhyme. The torpedoes tore into the Klingon ship like a great marksman shooting through a model ship at battle practice. She imagined the torpedoes blowing up the heart of the dishonorable Klingon with satisfaction and sending him to Sto'vo'kor crashing on the ground like the vile dog he is. When she looked back at the screen, she saw the Rhyme drift back into the maelstrom out of sight. That concerned her but they had two cloaked warbirds to worry about. She would have tried to soothe T'Mur if she had her abilities but could not. She continued to monitor the warbirds as ordered.

(Posted by Edward)

(USS Rhyne - Deck B - TIC - FO Commander Sienna Williams-Verin, Pilot Lt. Corday, SecO Ensign Andy Taylor, SFI Michael Weston - 0154)

As everyone settled into different jobs in the crowded space of the makeshift battle bridge on the Tactical Information Center, Taylor had managed to access the sensors that had been brought on line and found a display to show what was happening outside. Suddenly he grew concerned.

“Ummm...Commander?” he called out. “There’s a problem here. The Klingon ship is turning to fire on us.”

Sienna had been walking around the place she had chosen for the crew to shelter until the Illuminar dealt with the Klingon threat to the Rhyne. Sienna turned as she heard something whisper behind her, but as was usual on the Rhyne, she too was hallucinating. They all were. Gregory had decided to stay in Engineering rather than obey her order, which irked her. She took deep breaths to calm her irrational anger. Her head shot up when the emotional contagion changed to startled fear in the room and she too felt fear when she heard what the Ensign had to say. ::Shoot:: She sent telepathically. Something seemed to echo her, as if she heard herself say it multiple times.

“Quickly, reinforce our shielding here, and in engineering. I wanted us here because it was the most reinforced area on the ship.” She stared, hoping the Illuminar would move to defend them. Her mind reached across to T’Mur, connecting with her for a moment. ::I love you:: She sent to T’Mur.

There was a bright flash at the base of the head of the Warbird. When it dissipated the ship hung in space, spinning slowly on its axis. The sensors showed that it was dead. Well, almost dead. There was still a power signature in their forward disruptors. And watching the spinning it would be pointed at the Rhyne in a few seconds.

“The Klingon ship still has power to its disruptors,” Taylor announced. “It looks like they’re waiting to align their weapons with the Rhyne, which should happen in about 12 seconds.”

“Keep up our shields, and fire phasers,I think there might be just enough charge to target them. Do so and time it well.” She touched Taylor’s shoulder with a smile. She still expected to die in the next few minutes.

"Yes ma'am," Taylor replied.

He moved his hands over the controls and brought up the phaser controls. There was really only enough power for one full powered shot. He was counting down in his head as the phasers came to life. Five.... Four... three... two....

He received the green light and fired. A bright bolt of phased energy shot out from the Rhyne's array and struck the Warbird. The ship suddenly burst into a ball of energy discharge. The shock waves

struck the Rhine and shook the ship. Taylor clung to his seat, but those who had been standing were not nearly as lucky, as they were thrown to the ground or against bulkheads.

“Good news and bad news, Commander,” Taylor reported. “The good news is that the Klingon ship is destroyed. The bad news is the concussive blast has pushed the Rhyne deeper into the anomaly. We’re caught in some kind of gravitational well.”

Corday worked the helm as best as he could but there was not enough power in the engines to make any head way.

“Damn it,” he said more to himself than anyone else, as he realized that they were losing ground. “Whatever’s in the center of this anomaly, it’s got a good hold on us Commander. I can’t stop this.”

Sienna looked around her and was confused. She could hear Corday reporting in, distantly as if she were under water. What she was seeing looked to be moments of time that were overlapping, instabilities in the timeline causing her to fluctuate. Sienna looked down at her hand and could see through part of it. Pain wracked her body, fear was on her features. She had no idea what was happening. It felt like something was ripping her apart, molecule by molecule. She couldn't speak, she couldn't move. She could only experience the horror. She thought she was dying. The pain was indescribable.

Weston had been keeping his eye on Verin and saw her literally dissolve into thin air. He jumped over the rail in front of him and reached for her. His hand went through her as though she were a Ghost. He looked into her eyes as she disappeared, and all he could see was the fear.

“Commander Verin! Sienna!” But it was too late. Sienna was gone. Where was the question. Was she even still alive?

(reply any)

(posted by Al Muir and Mel G)

[illegible]

(IKS Da'kar, Vor'Cha class- Deck 1- Bridge - hOd - Kar'chek - 0155)

"Illuminar is targeting us. Firing!"

"Ghay'cha!" He snarled.

Da'kar seemed to buck and spin as the shots hit home. Sparks and flames exploded from panels and the command center was quickly filled with smoke. They were alive still if just holding on.

The Akira on the flickering screen however was no longer passive, weapons fire reached out from it.

"CHEGH-Chew...." He didn't get to finish the sentence as pain shot through him and his body was atomized in the explosions that ripped the Da'kar apart. The world as it were ceased to exist for him as he departed screaming the ritual phrase of glory earned through combat.

(Sto'Voh'Kor - Kar'chek - unknown)

Small stones could be felt digging into his face and fingers, as he stirred sand shifted beneath him. He heard the distinctive sound of waves washing upon a nearby shore and the creak of wooden gunnels as well as the lap of water against them. The distinctive odor of brine wafted into his nostrils and his eyes shot open to darkness. From somewhere a ship's bell rang.

Fog pressed around him but he could make out the flickering illumination of fires suspended above the ground not far away. Kar'chek pushed himself to a sitting position and flexed his fingers, the leather gauntlets he wore whispered and creaked as he did so. He felt his chest and midriff then grinned contentedly. He remembered his final words and blackness then ... here. Where was here? Where else could it be but the place of glory befitting a true warrior?

Rising to his feet he made for the illumination, walking through the soft sand until he was close enough to make out the braziers hanging from posts and suspended above a plank path. "So here I am. The place of the honored dead." He didn't feel dead, technically he felt more alive than perhaps at any time before. But dead was dead.

He made his way down the path, his boots clomping upon the wood and soon could make out a large, bright patch ahead. Off to his left the wash of water upon which the wooden ships rode and the pungent odor of salt was ever present.

Stone structures soon hove into view and with them other sounds, laughter and guttural shouts. He smiled in pleasure at that. Where merriment abounded so would bloodwine and gakh.

His steps came to a halt as he left the plank path and stood among the buildings, the largest was to his right and closed with a heavy wooden door, this edifice was where the sounds emanated from so he walked toward it. Braziers flared and smoked, hanging on metal arms from tall posts driven deep into the ground before them and to each side.

The heavy door opened before him as he pulled and the sounds of merriment hit him full force. The interior was smoky but cavernous, lit by candles and hanging sconces and the honored dead sat upon wooden benches at long tables arranged about its length. He gave a roar of delight and made his way inside, many turned their heads to look upon the new face among them. Others seemed oblivious to his entrance, perhaps they had been here so long that a new arrival held no interest for them.

A table to his left held flagons and covered bowls so he made for it. Something he saw on the way however arrested his attention. He stopped and looked, thunderstruck. A human! Sitting at a table with Klingons, drinking from a flagon and dipping his fingers into a bowl! Laughing and jesting with the rest!

A growl rumbled from his throat and he stalked toward the table. The human saw him coming and gave a look of resignation before rising after a quick sip. He wasn't tall, had dark hair and a jaunty mustache. The rest noted the coming showdown and got up to stand clear, watch and enjoy the spectacle.

"Why are you here petaQ? How?" Kar'chek roared as he neared the table while wondering why the human was smirking.

A blow from the left crashed into his face and sent him reeling to the floor. His left hand went to his burning cheek as he shook his head to clear it then looked up to see a mountain of a Klingon looming over him. The honored dead was snarling down at him.

"I was as surprised as you mon' ami when I arrived"

Kar'chek's eyes turned to the human who was now smiling.

"You have met my friend and former first officer Commander Galk I see." Those smiling eyes were mocking. "But where was I? Oh yes! It was he who welcomed me to your warrior's paradise after our ship was destroyed by the Nimitz. I must admit it has been great fun, warring all day and celebrating all night, you Klingons know how to fight and throw a party. My appreciation is unbounded." He gave a slight bow. "Captain Henre' LeBeau at your service, formerly of the USS Alamo."

"Federation." Kar'chek spat as he got up from the floor.

He was helped up by Galk's fist clenched in his collar. He was lifted until nose to nose with the bigger Klingon. "Listen closely petaQ. I will kill you if you attack him." The flat of a Dakh'tang was pressed to his right cheek.

At his surprised look the mountain of muscle rumbled. "Yes. You will return at the beginning of the next night every time you die in time for the celebration but I will be waiting to kill you again... and again until you learn. He is my cha'Dich, he fights with us against our enemies among the other encampments of the honored dead. An eternal war followed by a long night of celebration. The way we lived so we continue to fight... sometimes we are victorious, sometimes we lose but always we fight and glory in the battle."

Kar'chek understood. What better afterlife for such as he? "I understand." He pushed away from Galk and looked away from the weapon. "And what if I just wish to engage in a good fight?"

Galk put away his blade. "Then I shall watch you pick yourself up afterward. He has been with us for quite some time."

Kar'chek looked to the Captain. "The Federation Civil war?"

"A good guess." LeBeau nodded. "I've heard from others how it ended. How the Federation then withdrew back into itself."

He moved from behind the table as the others formed a circle and cheered.

"Well they are back." Kar'chek stepped back to prepare.

"Oh?" LeBeau rolled up his sleeves.

"One of your ships sent me here."

"A Sovereign? An Odyssey class?"

"No. A new ship modeled on a science vessel. Commanded by an acid tongued Fek'lir with the face of a Vulcan."

Henre' laughed as he brought up his fists. "Against your Bird of Prey?"

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"No." Kar'chek flexed his arms and set his feet. "A Vor'cha. With another and a Bird of Prey. I shall tell the full tale when we are done."

"Sounds positively delightful." LeBeau's eyes looked wistful. "But that is another life. Shall we begin?"

The two men leapt at one another with a roar.

Later he picked his battered form up from the floor as Galk had predicted, LeBeau was raising his flagon in a toast. "To the honored dead." It was echoed from more than a hundred throats including his own.

(Reply: None)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice, Dr. Mason Quincy - 0206)

Quinna looked around the bridge. She knew where she was supposed to be but knew where she needed to be. “Captain, sickbay is understaffed now with a doctor and several medics now missing with Rhyne. Mr. Quincy is overwhelmed.”

(Reply Sekal)

“My place right now is with Commander Verin.” Quinna said, “and that is the Chief Medical Officer talking.” Quinna turned on her heels and headed out to sickbay.

In the turbolift, Quinna managed to let herself be overwhelmed with emotions. She put a hand over her mouth and bent over her upset stomach. She let out a bombardment of tears and screamed out in frustration. Her tantrum continued as she kicked the turbolift. Her heart was breaking.

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Temas Laredo - 0155)

Riven's words could not register in Temas' brain. He could hear them, he just was not capable of comprehending them over the din of the thousands of voices raging in his mind. Screaming for help. Dying.

"Temas I'm going to shield you just like we've done many times before. Relax and don't fight me."

Riven pulled a small chair next to the couch then perched himself upon it and closed his eyes. His mind reached out and found the young Betazoids. Entwined with Temas was Lumas mind and that would add

difficulty ... until the suppressant kicked in. At that point Luma would be frantic but he had already planned for that, he would seamlessly take over the bond until Tamas was able to rejoin with her.

::Relax and give your mind over to me.::

Those words were so familiar that he actually managed to release his mind.

A five year old Tamas lay on the floor of his chamber, rolled into a ball. The image of the faces of disgust and fear of his parents filled his mind. There was no compassion for their obviously incapacitated child in those looks. He had embarrassed them too many times. He had hurt them too many times. On a world where there were no secrets but those one could drive deep into the recesses of your mind, he had exposed even those. Not only of his family, but of anyone that was within range of his mind.

His parents were nowhere near him, but his mind still sought them out and found them, seeking some kind of solace from them. All he met with was the same thought he usually found.

::Get out of our heads. You are not allowed in here.::

Then wave after wave of the thoughts of others washed through his mind. Most of the thoughts were thousands of banal pieces of information. Some were deep and dark. He would try to push them all away, but he could not. He latched onto a mind that was close. Someone with some strength, who was attempting to shield their thoughts from him. The strain for both of them was so great, and he could see through the eyes of the other, and blood streaming from their hemorrhaging brain through their nasal passages and ears. The horror of the sight only created a greater panic in the five year old.

Then, through it all, came that calm, kind voice saying ::Relax and give me your mind over to me. Don't fight me.::

There was something about that voice that drew his focus, and slowly he managed to relax. One by one the voices disappeared, until finally there was only one voice. A woman's voice, and she was singing a song. A soft, loving, soothing song.

::Hello little man. The soft voice said. I am Michaela, and this is Riven. We will help you.::

And he believed them.

Tamas opened his eyes and looked at Riven. He tried to give a weak smile.

"I am so sorry Riven," Tamas said, his voice barely a whisper. "I don't understand what's going on. Who are those voices. The horrors I was seeing. I haven't lost control like that in years."

He could feel his mentor's mind entangled with his own, holding the voices at bay, and keeping his own mind in check.

"I thought Luma was going to help me with this," he said, almost pleading.

[illegible]

That Sienna had not been chosen for the second command had been a shock. Starfleet had chosen Saleke's son as the other commander. Sophie had gone hunting Saleke, intending to murder him for the insult to their family. Sophie had not been successful, but everyone knew that she had been trying. Saleke was her fellow Admiral, and was as well guarded as she was.

It had been an object lesson in why the resistance did what it did.

And she dreamed.

[illegible]

Riven could hear the words as though they had been spoken on the far shore of a lake and carried across the water. His own mind was elsewhere, differentiating the thoughts of Temas from Luma.

"I thought Luma was going to help me with this."

::Be calm Temas, Luma is being affected as well and the panic in the minds of both is feeding off of the other through your bond. One moment.::

He sensed Michaella nearby and felt rather than heard her preparing the hypo. He projected his mental shielding over both himself and his protegee, blocking out the other intruding minds and emotions.

::I can shield you but not indefinitely. Michaella is going to give you a sedative. You understand this?:

(Reply: Temas)

::Good. You are going to be asleep for a while and the intrusions will be blocked for about twelve hours. I won't leave Luma alone but will take your place temporarily. When you are back to full strength we will make the exchange once again. You do understand Luma will be all right?::

(Reply: Temas)

∴I wouldn't dream of letting her suffer. We will have a lot to talk about∴

He heard the hiss of the hypo and maintained both the shielding and mental support as Temas became drowsy.

(Reply: Temas)

(Posted by Charles G)

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice,
 CTac Lieutenant T'Mur, aCEO Lieutenant Bohb, FO Commander Sienna Verin. SPC Luma Lenai and
 ACSO Ensign Skashe Winters- 0200)

The torpedoes exploded in bright flashes against the Da'kar's remaining shielding as the phased energy raged against it. The timing at short range was impeccable. Though the ship was heavily damaged it wasn't destroyed or de-fanged ... yet.

Sekal's eyes narrowed in concern until the Rhyne fired as well, which was completely unexpected. He stepped to the side as he muttered. "Good, well done."

The energy pounded against Karchek's ship for nearly two agonizing seconds before it erupted into several blazing balls of energy which started at the Klingon ship's nose and continued aft. The center of the screen threw off a dazzling cascade of light which he squinted his eyes at until it subsided.

Quinna shifted in her seat a bit. It was a positive sign from the Rhyne. Leaving her eyes closed she listened to the noise around her. Movement of the crewmen, the tapping of the consoles.

“Captain, the Rhyne! It’s falling into the Maelstrom’s gravity well. It’s starting to disappear.”

Quinna's eyes snapped open. Her first thought was of Michael then of course the rest of the crew.

The Akira class ship with a large portion of Sekal's officerial complement was indeed falling toward the Maelstrom; he darted to the operations station.

"Can we get a tractor lock on it?"

'Negative,' T'Mur replied, fighting back the wave of panic, "there is literally nothing to lock onto."

"Aren't the transports working again? Can we pick them up with the Transporter?" Quinna asked calmly.

"Negative." The Captain called over his shoulder as another disruptor blast struck the shields, he grabbed the conn to remain upright. "If we lower our shields this ship will be destroyed."

There was a sudden shout and his head shot toward science to see Ensign T'shalaith catapulted away from her station by a power surge. He was already shouting orders before she hit the deck. "Call a medical team and get Skashe Winters to the bridge!"

Quinna rushed to Ensign T'Shalaith's side but not before pulling the emergency medical kit from behind the command chair. Opening the device, she pulled out the medical tricorder and scanned. She noted an internal brain bleed. It was not at a level that required surgery as of right now. She pulled a hypospray and programmed Mannitol to control the bleed and stabilize T'Shalaith.

When the medics came. Quinna looked at them, "Tell Dr. Quincy to monitor for the next 4 hours. And to contact me with her status."

"Yes ma'am." Nurse Kelly replied. She tapped her comm badge. "Kelly to sickbay, prepare to receive a wounded officer, and myself. Prepare Dr. Quincy for our arrival. We're transporting to trauma room 1. Computer, STS to Sickbay, Trauma 1."

The nurse and her patient disappeared from the bridge in a hum of transporter effect.

Suddenly the ship rocked again, bringing everyone's attention back to the threat at hand.

After rolling around the floor like a hot lover in bed, Quinna sprung to her feet to find the safety of her seat.

"Tactical target the Bird of Prey, torpedoes on proximity detonation and fire when ready."

T'Mur's eyes tore off the view of the Rhyne drifting back into the center of the Maelstrom and automatically began to fire torpedoes. She anticipated the trajectory of the cloaked vessel but it was already too late.

She looked over at Sekal, seeing the tension in his neck and shoulders, and admiring his self control. She had not had the benefit of his emotional training. As a member of the merchant class it was ill advised to be completely devoid of emotions as so many species required some form of emotional connection to their vendors.

She took a deep breath and closed her eyes. Her hands almost stroked the controls. As the Bird of Prey decloaked she fired a volley of torpedoes. Set to proximity meant they were not as destructive, but the conclusive force of the explosions shook the Klingon ship. As it moved out of phaser range, however, it did not recloak.

"Helm turn us about, target the Voh'rta.

"Captain, it's gone."

"What?" His head whipped around.

"The Rhyne sir, it's no longer on sensors. It just ... disappeared."

At that one singular moment, everything froze. In that one beat of her heart, Quinna felt disconnected with the universe. "Michael" She said softly under her voice. She snapped back into her reality.

The CO returned to the command chair and activated the pop-up screen as he dropped into it.

Sky rushed through the turbolift door and over to the science station which was unmanned. ~During a battle? What the hell happened?~ His eyes scanned the board and tapped a few keys, finding it dead he dropped to his knees and popped open the access panel. "Board is dead Captain, troubleshooting now."

"Negative Mr. Winters, we do not have the time. Use one of the secondary panels."

"Yes sir." Sky jumped up and went to the rear of the bridge then began setting up the programmable station.

The news of the Rhyne disappearing hit T'Mur like a punch in the face. She fought with herself, her desire to show emotions, and her need to keep the Illuminar and the rest of the crew safe. What little sense she had of her mate had dissolved away.

::Sienna... don't leave me.::

Tears stung in her eyes as she held them back. To a casual observer they might notice that her eyes were a little watery. But she knew that she wouldn't fool Sekal.

She made a suggestion, already knowing that it would be denied and considered foolhardy, which it was.

"Captain, if I took a shuttle and got close enough to the Rhyne, I may be able to pull them out."

He was looking at the screen as she spoke, his eyes drifted up from it as he remembered Sienna requesting his permission to make her quarters aboard Illuminar immediately after its commission due to personal issues, her obsessive work in the Arboretum on Mars which turned it into a thriving ecosystem, him carrying her to medical after she had over-exerted herself, the roses she had

meticulously chosen for every deck of the ship which had become her home... nattering over him like a mother hen while he was recovering from the knife wound that had nearly killed him.

His finger poised for several heartbeats before coming down on the button. The viewer retracted and his voice was subdued as he spoke. "Negative. The ship is no longer there." He closed his eyes for an instant before standing up from the chair. The desolation he was feeling was no more welcome than the anger that was rising in its wake and he was struggling against both. Kar'chek had been promised death and he had received it, the other two ships would receive no quarter, no mercy.

Sekal shook his head savagely as though to shake the thoughts from his mind or quench his building rage. The fingers of his left hand left imprints on the arm of the chair he was clutching.

::Luma. We're going to lose her:: T'Mur sent

The Illuminar did something. To the crew on the Bridge; for a brief second they were merged with the Rhyne. Power flickered as the Lenai pulled hard on the Aneulurian crystal drive to put the Illuminar almost in the same place as the Rhyne. Almost, for two objects could not inhabit the same place and time, but she could bend that law. The misbehaving small ones had given her the idea.

The haunting of the Rhyne hit the Illuminar crew in that brief second, then the ship had moved. Had the warp drive been online, it would have been easier. Luma blew the engineering console in a surge.

In a flash it was over, and the Illuminar was in a different spot spatially, away from the anomaly. The hallucinations, the haunting ceased. The sense of vertigo and nausea was still there - corporeal beings were not meant to be pulled through space this way.

But Sienna was curled up in the fetal position on the deck, right in front of her command chair. She looked like she had been through hell. Her uniform was faded and she had lost a substantial amount of weight, Luma needing the energy to come from somewhere to grab her. As she sat up, her long dark hair that was usually braided back in a crown braid had escaped and seemed dull. She stared at her hands, as if unbelieving that she was still alive.

Quinna slid from her seat right next Sienna. During the last attack from the Klingon's the med kit had been thrashed about the bridge. Eyeing the medical tricorder next to the helm, Quinna crawled on her hands and knees and retrieved it.

Dark circles were under Sienna's eyes, which were glassy. Her skin was pale and she was perspiring from shock and pain.

=^= Luma is sorry!! Luma disobeyed the rules, but Sienna's T'Mur was breaking and Luma could not allow it to happen! Luma could not lose her Sienna!! ^= The Lenai's voice sounded faded, tired. The crew knew that she could do these sort of things, but not what the cost was to her for bending the rules.

Sienna found herself gagging, trying to control the nausea to not throw up on her bridge, in front of the crew. She couldn't seem to get enough air into her lungs. She didn't seem to recognize anyone for a long moment, then her eyes went to T'Mur.

:: I promised I'd come back. :: And with that her eyes rolled back in her head and Sienna collapsed. Her system was in traumatic shock, her mind was in psychic shock. But she was back with the Illuminar and T'Mur.

Quinna was once again by Sienna's side, scanning her. But someone pushed her to the side for the moment.

Without thought, T'Mur leapt over her station and was kneeling beside Sienna. The relief of her presence in her mind was almost overwhelming. She reached down gently and stroked her cheek, reaching into her mind with the contact and sending smoothing waves of relief. Suddenly, the CTO was aware of the others looking at the scene. She stood up and straightened her tunic.

"She appears to be alive," T'Mur reported, then turned and went back to her station.

"Thank you, Lt. T'Mur. I see that Starfleet Medical Extension course paid off." Quinna snapped.

T'Mur's eyes narrowed slightly and she froze on the spot. Apparently the doctor was making a sarcastic comment, unaware that T'Mur was simply trying to regroup her emotions.

"I am certain you are well aware, Doctor Solice, that I have not been part of such an educational program," the Vulcan said, feeling her calm return. "If I had I would, most likely, have a different bedside manner." She then continued to her station and began to run scans of the system, looking for possible Klingon activity.

"Medics to the Bridge," Quinna called out. "Luma, where are the others?" Quinna looked around the bridge, she was not happy with what she was seeing on her tricorder. She bit her lower lip waiting to hear anything about the others.

Luma made an apologetic sound, =^= Luma did not have a bond with anyone there who was psionic, except our Sienna. And moving another without the psionic connection is not advisable. Our Sienna is not fully Betazoid, and this has made her ill. The corporeal form will right itself in a few days, but the symptoms are.... Distressing. Keeping her stabilized will help, and she must rest. The others are... no longer in our plane. They may be in a side dimension, Luma can't tell because Luma strained herself. The place we were in, the lines between the dimensions are weak and...=^= The Lenai's voice sounded fearful, =^= They could be anywhere, and in anywhen of the multitude of realities. It is most likely that the other small ones could be in an adjacent reality. The small ones can assist Luma in searching....after we repair the skin. Luma may have cracked a crystal.=^= She sounded... embarrassed.

Quinna watched as the medics entered the bridge again. She wanted to drown out the commotion. Looking at the medics. "She needs to get to sickbay. No beaming. Secure her to a stretcher and take her. Be delicate. Dr. Quincy will be waiting." Quinna had taken in all that Luma said. She wasn't liking any of this but it was reality and Quinna understood.. "No worries Luma. At Least you got Commander Verin home." She was looking at T'Mur at the time.

The look did not go unnoticed, but the intent of that look was uncertain. Was that an accusation? It was true. She was not able to save Sienna.

=^= Our T'Mur was breaking as Our Sienna went away, Neither would have survived.=^= There was always a price to be paid, and sometimes the lesser of two bad choices was still not a great one. Luma's voice was sad, apologetic and embarrassed. ^= The klingon ships will figure out where we went? Soon?^= And Luma had drained a great deal of the reserve energy with her maneuver.

Quinna started thinking. Sometimes those thoughts came out loud. "A probe." Quinna shook her head. "Probably not"

"A probe?" Sekal turned his head to look at Quinna.

"I just thought if we sent a probe, we might get some information of where they went. But that was me just thinking out loud." Quinna said.

The Captain shook himself internally, he had been watching the unfolding scene closely. He knelt at the other side of Sienna on one knee and looked at his third officer. "An excellent suggestion."

Turning his head. "Mister Winters, what is your status?"

"The panel is now active Captain, I'm feeling a bit queasy, orders?"

"Prepare a Class IV probe. What is our current position?"

"The star charts show we have been moved ... 2.3 light years sir."

"Place the navigational chart on the main viewer."

He looked at the viewscreen as the turbolift doors opened and was studying it as a hand was placed on his shoulder. He looked down at Sienna then back up at the medic, rising slowly to make way for the anti-grav gurney. As they moved in, he returned his attention to the view screen. "Relay these orders to the shuttles that were left behind. They are to leave location and rendezvous with the ship at DV13 in five hours. Helm turn us about, 183 mark 5 and go to full impulse."

"183 mark 5, turning sir." Tempest turned the ship to port slowly, the damage to the ship was not severe but she was testing its responses. Impulse power and maneuvering thrusters appeared unaffected and the course correction was crisp. "Holding heading 183 mark 5, initiating drive. The ship started out slowly as she eased into it, another test which went well so she fed it more power. "Full impulse in ten seconds."

Sekal then stepped to his chair and hit the comm. "Engineering send a detail to the bridge." He glanced at the smoldering ruin that was once the engineering panel. "Send up a replacement for the bridge engineering panel with them."

=^=What in the wide world of sports did you do up there? Never mind, I already know. I have the parts and will be there in a minute. Bohb out.=^=

He deactivated the comms. "Mister Winters what data have you been able to retrieve?"

"Working on that sir, Astrometrics is trying to make sense of the readings that were coming in during Rhyne's disappearance."

"Would you care to share those readings with me?" Sekal turned to look at him fully.

"Sorry sir." Skashe felt like squirming like a bug in a bird's beak at that stare. "The gravimetric readings show a gravity well approaching that of a neutron star yet the Maelstrom itself has near zero mass, in normal space that kind of pull would be impossible. There are some theories on this they are working on.

The expected time of its disappearance as noted in the log by Ensign T'shalaith was off by an hour; it took approximately two hours rather than her estimated one.

As for the readings from its coronal emissions, elevated readings of tachyonic resonance suggests a time slip for lack of a better term occurred at that instant. There is also evidence of an anti-matter flare from its core and what that suggests we have no idea as of yet. What we do know is that the fractal patterns in that area show a high probability that the Maelstrom itself may cross dimensional boundaries into another space/time. A gateway to another dimension in other words."

"I am well aware of what that means Mr. Winters."

"Of course you are sir but there may be others here who don't. The gravity well was also restricted to a very short distance from the Maelstrom else we and the Klingons would have been pulled in as well. This indicates it was not naturally occurring and the result of an interaction between our space/time and another. It is possible that the gravity well scanned was not an accessory to the Rhyne's disappearance but was caused by it."

As the turbo lift doors opened for the medics to leave Bohb entered, stepping slightly to the side, looking down at the unconscious form of the first officer. He dropped his "bag of goodies" and moved over to Sekal.

"Son of Saleke," Bohb announced his arrival with a heavy, but reassuring hand, "I see we have Commander Verin, such as she is. Am I to assume that is the reason we had a sudden 87 percent drop in power right before we were cellularly ripped apart?"

"Indeed." Sekal cast a look in the direction of the turbolift before giving Bohb his full attention. "Luma used her abilities powered by the warp engine to retrieve the Commander and move the ship. She is concerned the Anelurian crystal is cracked and needs replacement."

Bohb frowned, and then shrugged. "I may have a remedy for that. Something I've been working on with Mr. Gregory. Meanwhile I will get to work on the engineering panel," Bohb said. "I should have it operational fairly quickly. It won't look pretty, but it'll work."

"Function trumps form in this instance Mr. Bohb, as long as it is operable I will be satisfied. There will be time later for a full replacement."

He turned as the Engineer moved off to begin his task. The sense of loss had completely vanished but the anger was ebbing away only slowly. While Sienna Verin had been returned, a number of officers and crew still remained on the ship that had disappeared. Were they still alive somewhere; somewhere? And if so would they be able to retrieve them?

The Klingon ships that had attacked Illuminar, pushing the Rhyne into the Maelstrom and inhibiting rescue efforts had much to answer for, they were limiting access to the area even now and he was going to make them pay dearly for it.

Sekal's crew was not only his command, it was his life and he had sworn to protect them. And if he received another opportunity he would not fail a second time.

He hit the yellow alert button signaling a temporary reduction in alert status.

"Lieutenant Trei I will need yourself and Lieutenant T'Mur to give me recommendations concerning the two remaining ships, what their weaknesses are and how to best exploit them." He turned his eyes to her and dipped his chin for an instant. "You performed admirably in the battle and I will expect your presence on the bridge during such confrontations in the future."

(Reply: Trei)

(Posted by
Charles G- Sekal, Skashe
Melinda G- Sienna, Luma
Kris Bailey- Quinna
Al Muir- T'Mur, Bohb)

[illegible]

The only voice that Temas could hear clearly was that of Riven in his mind.

:I can shield you but not indefinitely. Michaella is going to give you a sedative. You understand this?:

::Yes, I understand. We've been here before haven't we::

::Good. You are going to be asleep for a while and the intrusions will be blocked for about twelve hours. I won't leave Luma alone but will take your place temporarily. When you are back to full strength we will make the exchange once again. You do understand Luma will be all right?::

Temas wanted to protest, ::But Luma will think I've left her. I don't want her to feel abandoned... again.::

∴I wouldn't dream of letting her suffer. We will have a lot to talk about.∴

There was sudden sharp sensation on his neck and an instant wave of relief washed over him. He could feel his eyes getting heavy. Suddenly there was a sensation. The universe suddenly grew very

large, then suddenly very small, and he felt that he was there in the center of that universe. Then he felt that universe slip away, and his connection to Luma dissolve. He was alone, for the first time in a long time. Then his world became dark and he was unconscious.

(reply none)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 02.05)

She was honored that Captain Sekal appreciated her efforts and counted on her in future situations. She kept monitoring the two birds of prey for any activity. There didn't seem to be any for the moment which would give the Illuninar a chance to figure out what to do. She had some theories to try but waited a moment to propose them.

"Thank you sir."

(Reply Any)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 02.06)

She had a theory that could take out one of the birds of prey using the maelstrom to do it. Essentially the maelstrom will blast one of the Klingon ships with a massive bolt of electricity and give the illuminar time to figure things out. She imagined the maelstrom unloading a massive bolt of lightning like a giant thundercloud. The question is how they were going to execute the action. She addressed the Bridge.

"I have a theory sir. Say we use the maelstrom to unload a massive lightning bolt on one of the birds of prey like a giant thundercloud. This will potentially take out one of the birds of prey and give us time to figure things out."

(Reply Sekal, T'Shallath, Any)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal- 0207)

The Captain was stalking about the bridge uncharacteristically, the report from Skashe Winters would have to be analyzed rigorously and the probe would give them even more information to digest and consider but they would have to get in close to launch it. The klingons if they ran to form however would actively hunt Illuminar and if they believed they had reason to return to the Maelstrom would be watching it closely.

His emotional controls were returning slowly but they were returning, had he a chance to leave the bridge and meditate he would have been back to normal, so far that opportunity had not presented itself.

“Captain, sickbay is understaffed now with a doctor and several medics now missing with Rhyne. Mr. Quincy is overwhelmed.”

He turned to regard his third officer, she was of course correct.

"You may assist the medical staff doctor as you deem fit and I will expect regular reports on the condition of Commander Verin. If you are required on the bridge I will call you."

"My place right now is with Commander Verin, and that is the Chief Medical Officer talking." She noted.

He nodded as he watched her turn on her heel and walk off for an instant, there would be no respite for now, it would have to wait.

"Mr. Winters has there been anything else to report on the anomaly?"

"No sir, we have a lot of data that appears to conflict on the surface but the probe should give us the insights we need once it is launched. The probe itself is almost ready."

"Acknowledged. Tactical do you have any readings on the Klingon positions yet?"

(Reply: T'Mur)

"Activate the cloak as a precaution. We will thoroughly investigate the rendezvous area before decloaking to ensure they were not followed and catch the enemy by surprise if they are."

(Reply: T'Mur, Trei)

"Mr. Galloway what report on the warp drive?"

"Warp drive is still offline, estimated time of repair 2 days Captain, we will have an updated estimate once Lieutenant Bohb has had a chance to look at it."

"Acknowledged, as you were."

He looked about the bridge as the ship drew slowly closer to the rendezvous location for the shuttles as Illuminar wavered then disappeared from sight.

(Reply: Any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(IKS Hegh bo'Degh – Deck 1 - Bridge - HoD Bar'Tok - 0210)

The Bird of Prey had been coming around for another strike when his 'or called out, "HoD, the Da'Kar is turning towards the Federation ship in the middle of that pab'jev. "

"PAH," Bar'Tok growled, "That worm Kar'chek has finally found a foe worthy of him. Leave him to his prize. We are after greater glories. Turn back on this Illuminar, and prepare to fire."

“HOD, the other ship...” the voice of his second in command was astounded, “ it has destroyed the Da’Kar.”

Bar'Tok laughed, "A good death then for Kar'chek. Aim weapons at the Illuminar."

As he said it he watched the Federation ship almost dissolve in front of them and disappear. A cloaking device? No!

"Where are they," the captain bellowed. "Find them! Now!"

The officer behind him called out, "It is over two light years away. How?"

"I do not know," Bar'Tok said silently contemplating what happened. His silence made them all nervous.

“Shall we pursue?”

“Yes,” he replied, then a moment later he cried out, “No! These pataq have left their shuttles behind. They shall return for them. Look they go to meet with their mother ship, like good children. We will stay cloaked, and stay close, and have Ql’tu’. When the time is right we will strike. Inform the other ship of our plan.”

"Hi'ja HOD," a Klingon nodded and began to send their message.

Bar'Tok sat back in his seat watching the screen, envisioning the battle before them. Picturing his tactics and possible reactions. It was the closest to playing Klin Zia that he had had in a long time. Oh he was going to enjoy this battle.

(reply none, yet)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG - 02.10)

One of the Klingon ships turned to pursue them but a low warp which was intriguing in itself. The illuminar made it way to the rendezvous point. they cloaked as a precaution. She kept monitoring for anything that needed reporting. Nothing needed reporting at the moment

"The klingon ship is still slowly pursuing but no significant activity to report sir."

(Reply Sekal, T'Mur, Any)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Bridge - CTO - Lt. T'Mur - 0210)

T'Mur found herself uncharacteristically distracted from the moment that Sienna had been taken from the bridge. She had not been able to reconnect with her completely. At least she could feel her alive, and that was nearly enough. It would have to be. She was aware of the doctor telling Sekal that she was going to sickbay to tend to Sienna, but it wasn't until she heard his voice did she force herself back into focus.

"Tactical do you have any readings on the Klingon positions yet?"

She blinked and looked at here readouts, focusing on where they were, and more importantly, where they were.

“2.3 light years is well within the range of our long range sensors, Captain,” T’Mur finally spoke. “However the Bird of Prey must still be cloaked as they are not showing. The Vor’hta class, however, has turned in pursuit of us. Curious, they appear to be moving at slow warp.”

She tapped a button and put the tactical view on the main viewer. “I have coded the Klingon ship to show red and the shuttles to show green. Shuttles appear to be moving at maximum velocity. I do not comprehend why the Klingons do not over take and destroy them. And I am concern that the Bird of Prey is, as of yet, undetected.”

"Activate the cloak as a precaution. We will thoroughly investigate the rendezvous area before decloaking to ensure they were not followed and catch the enemy by surprise if they are."

T'Mur nodded, "Yes sir."

She was not completely surprised by the choice, although they were still suffering from the power drain caused by Luma's maneuver. She would have to closely watch their power levels. The controls to the cloak came on and with a gentle tap the bridge lights dimmed momentarily as the cloak engaged and the shields dropped to compensate.

T'Mur turned to Trei, "The information is unreliable at this distance, but keep attempting to locate the Bird of Prey. Your theory of spacial displacement is still our best option."

(reply Trei)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Quinna was all back in composure when she reached sickbay. She ripped off the red tunic and started over to Commander Verin. Medics were getting her cleaned and settled on a biobed. Let's start with the standard tests. Bet a blood culture and let's get some neuro reading." Quinna said.

Mason joined her, “What is going on?”

Quinna shook her head and Mason knew that it was not good.

Reading started to populate the monitor, "I have seen some of these readings before." Mason said. He then turned to the nurse, "We need a cellular culture."

"What?" Quinna looked puzzled.

"Mr. Day has some of the same readings," Mason said. He then handed Quinna a report.

"Temporal displacement?" Quinna questioned. She had not seen Larry Day and now she was more intrigued. Quinna looked at the read-outs on Commander Verin. "Her body is in shock. Let's administer some Dopamine, get some warm blankets on her."

Quinna looked at Mason, "She is in Neuro shock. Let's also get her some IV Fluids and Let's also administer some Norepinephrine. Those neuro readings cannot dip. She is showing limited/low brain activity." Quinna pulled up the 3-D interface. She turned to the Commander, "What the hell happened?" Quinna said quietly. Also noted that Commander, cellular age was 6 months older than what it should be.

(Replies any)

(Posted by Kris B.)

"I would like to stay and be with her for a while, if you feel that is appropriate," T'Mur said.

"I don't see why not. See that chair." Quinna pointed to the chair on the far side of the biobed. "That is my chair. You can use it for a while. Then I have to insist on you resting as well." Quinna said, "Talk to her." Quinna turned and left.

T'Mur found a seat and sat at the bottom of the biobed and looked at the unconscious Sienna. She'd watched Sienna sleep many times. Perhaps her love would be uncomfortable knowing how often that occurred. This was different. Her breathing pattern was not as restful, nor did it have its usual rhythmic pattern. It was as if she were still struggling, but to do what was uncertain.

She closed her eyes and brought her Vulcan focus to bear. She found the thread of their connection and slowly followed the thread until she was able to encounter the fringes of Sienna's mind.

::Oh my love, I wish that I could bear this for you.::

She followed the thread past her preliminary shields along to the activity that she was sensing.

Sienna had been aware of very little after her collapse on the bridge. The hell that she had been through felt like forever. The temporal shock had caused her to age 6 months. She had a grey 1 inch lock in her long dark hair. Her eyes were bruised, her skin was cold still and clammy.

She was gaunt. Luma had burned a lot of Sienna's body fat in order to get her onto the ship in one piece. She was extremely malnourished. Her mind was a fragmented jumble of the sensory hell that the temporal displacement was, and a mess of memories that were not hers. Images of pain, a woman who looked a lot like Sienna fleeing in a shuttle, a truly evil looking man that looked like an older and crueler Sekal pursuing her. Her twin holding a phaser on her, threatening to kill her. Her disabling him as she fled. The memories felt real, but they didn't have the feel of 'Sienna' to them. It was like she was mixed with the memories of another universe's Sienna.

Deeper in the memories were conflicting ones of the way she had been raised from childhood. In one set she was raised in a cold, calculating family that lived in a gleaming glass and metal tower that was not currently in this universe's San Francisco. Her mother, Sophie Verin, fitting her for a leather uniform when Sy was 16. The cold slap from her father, Duke Williams, for assisting someone inferior on an academy test. The pleasure of Sienna's first assassination as she slid her knife up and into the body of her immediate supervisor on her first posting on the Mystique.

These were not the memories of the Sienna that T'Mur knew. This was something else. Something new, and yet something old. It was Sienna, but not Sienna. T'Mur knew that most beings with a brain had a duality to them but this was different.

Along with those wrong memories was the truth of Sienna's loving, wonderful upbringing, the day that both of her parents accompanied Sy and Trip to get their standard cadet uniforms fitted. The approval in both parent's eyes that the twins were following in their footsteps into Starfleet.

As T'Mur scanned the deeper recesses of Sienna's mind, T'Mur could sense a tie. To another Sienna. The one who truly held those memories. And there was a problem with this. That Sienna felt far too

close. Another flash and T'Mur could see that the other Sienna was in a highly damaged shuttlecraft, currently hiding in the trail of a comet. Was this other Sienna here, in this universe? Would the tie between them fade with distance from the Maelstrom?

Sienna's fractured mess of a mind finally clarified for a moment, a moment that Sienna was able to latch onto T'Mur, and used their connection to pull herself closer to wakefulness.

Then her body's tension relaxed suddenly, the lines of pain on her face resolving. For a moment she was T'Mur's Sy, then she was deeply asleep, her exhausted body beginning to respond to the treatments.

T'Mur continued to search for that connection to the other memories, but they were gone. They did not register, even in Sienna's own mind. It was as if they had only been a dream, but a dream that had a sense of realism to them. It was too real for T'Mur. She needed to tuck that thought away for a time when she would be able to examine it more thoroughly.

For now, she lay her mind beside her Sienna's, imaging the two of them together, snuggling, her arms wrapped protectively around her. Then she felt her mate settle into her familiar breathing pattern, so rhythmic and soothed.

When T'Mur opened her eyes she realized that she was holding Sienna's hand. Slowly, reluctantly, she released it and sat back in Quinna's chair. She steepled her fingers, and as she watched her love's chest rise and fall began to contemplate the visions they had shared.

(reply none)

(posted by Al Muir, Kris B. and Mel G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Starboard Warp Nacelle - EO – Lt (jg) Bohb- 0523)

Two hours later, the young woman who had thought she knew how a warp nacelle worked was eating those words. She had studied the workings of the nacelles, but Bohb had been having her dismantle the plasma injector, piece by piece.

"Sir," Ensign Sato asked. "Are you certain that this is necessary?"

Bohb stopped his work on the warp coils and narrowed his eyes, “How long do you expect this repair to take, Enign Sato?”

His question caught her by surprise. She blinked then thought, then answered with a heavy sigh, “Most likely, without the intervention of another ship bring what we need, a week, maybe two.”

Bohb nodded, “My assessment as well. However, if we fabricate what we need and build our own plasma injector, and resurface the warp coils I believe we can affect these repairs in three days, maybe two.”

Cadet Stephanson gasped from the other side of the nacelle, “Two days!”

Bohb nodded, "But your disassembly of the injector must be methodical and exact. Otherwise, the results could be... catastrophic."

The room became silent once again, and Sato began to work with more diligence than she had before. Bohb turned back to his own work and began to chuckle to himself. It wasn't completely dishonest. He had already disassembled and reassembled plasma injectors several times on the holodeck. It would take the time he had confessed, but now he would have taught others how to rebuild an injector as well.

(reply none)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar -- CMO Office -- Deck 5 -- CMO/3XO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice --0715)

Quinna left her office. She managed to get in a nap here and there but with Michael not being there. Even not knowing, where he was, haunted her dreams. Mason had taken care of sickbay once all the patients were all settled. Quinna's place was back on the Bridge. She reached over on her couch. Pulled the RED jacket off the couch and put it on. She felt the neck was tighter than the one on her medical blue jacket. Made her way to the bridge, but before she made one stop. There was something she needed to do.

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar -- The Rec Room -- Deck 11 -- 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice -- 0718)

Quinna walked into the lounge. Not thinking of the time she looked for Becca. She wanted to cancel the Wetting down. She was no longer in the mood for any party. Quinna saw no one and realized the time.

“Oh, Quinna you are so stupid right now.” Quinna shook her head. “Of course, no one would be here...” She turned to head back out of the lounge.

(Reply any IYW)

[illegible]

USS Illuminar – Deck 1 - Bridge - CO - Captain Sekal- 0720)

Illuminar was closing in on the shuttles that had already arrived at the rendezvous location. Cloak was still active and backup power had been restored to 68%. On many ships this would be considered detrimental however the warp drive engine was more than sufficient to handle the task of running cloak along with any other systems needed.

With the warp drive offline every bit of high energy plasma was going to other systems while the engine itself had been reduced to 20% output. Environmental and other systems had been switched over to the warp engine to allow the impulse reactors to operate more efficiently. Backup generators were on standby to handle the load in the event of an emergency. In short Illuminar was operating just as intended.

The location of the rendezvous had been chosen for a particular purpose, a comet had recently cross this area of space leaving a wide trail of ice and particulate matter. A cloaked ship would need to remain outside this zone or risk detection. Illuminar had made a significant alteration to its course and elevation to come upon the location from the far side.

Sekal was no fool, any Klingon ship attempting to find them would not be able to resist following the shuttles to the mother ship. It was basic tactics 101, lead the enemy into a compromising location.

The Klingons in short had been led into a trap.

The Vulcan CO himself was more or less back to normal. "Helm take us into the comets tail and signal the shuttles to prepare for a return to the ship."

"Aye sir, reducing speed to one half impulse, rendezvous in 10 minutes."

"Tactical decloak. Torpedoes on proximity detonation and stand by, if you have a target fire at will."

(T'Mur, Trei)

"We have entered the tail Captain." Lieutenant Grey Wolf called out.

He leaned back in the command chair and with his right hand ready to tap the red alert button if an enemy was sighted. This game was afoot and for the Klingons a glorious day to die.

(Reply: Any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

T'Mur was back at her station, monitoring all of the tactical systems. Her time in Sickbay with Sienna did not give her the ease that she had hoped that it would. She doubted that she would fully relax until her mate was back home. She had taken some time to go to their quarters to tend to Sienna's cat, Kenna. T'Mur was certain that the feline was not fond of her intrusion into their lifestyle. And the Vulcan was not, what anyone would call, compassionate with the animal. Still, Kenna must have been somewhat aware that her mistress was in trouble, or that T'Mur was in need of comfort. She had curled up into T's lap and purred a comforting purr. She could still feel that purr in her fingers now, as she scanned for the Klingo vessels as they approached the shuttles

"Tactical decloak. Torpedoes on proximity detonation and stand by, if you have a target fire at will."

T'Mur didn't really need the direction as the preset controls had already been there. She tapped the button and there was a slight hum, and the lights on the bridge shifted slightly as the Illuminar came out of cloak mode.

(Posted by Kris B.)

"Excellent. Remain at our current heading. Have the shuttles set up position aft of the shuttlebay and fifty meters from the hull then open a point to point communication with them on a coded frequency." Illuminar had come into the comet's tail from the opposite side which meant that a cloaked ship if one was there would have to maneuver around behind them for this if they wished to fire on an unprotected section of the ship. To do so without being spotted would be impossible. What he was about to order was not standard procedure and carried an element of risk, but one that could be managed.

Illuminar was held in place by maneuvering thrusters as the three shuttles which had been sent out for the emergency evacuation of the Rhyne left their positions and began moving aft of the ship as the Captain waited patiently.

"What is Commander Verin's status?" He asked Quinna as they stood by, the bridge was currently quiet save for the beep and whirr of consoles.

(Reply: Quinna plenty of room)

"Mr.Ogilvie listen to my order closely, on my mark you will deactivate shield emitter number 12 for exactly 10 seconds, no more. Do you understand?"

"Sir?" The operations officer turned in his seat and frowned for an instant before the location struck him and he chuckled. "You mean the shield emitter that protects the aft of the secondary hull of course."

"Exactly. Lieutenant Grey Wolf, open the docking bay doors."

"Aye sir. Doors opening. The shuttles are almost in position."

"Open that channel."

He listened to the shuttles check in before speaking. "This is the Captain, are your shields active?"

=^= Aye sir, yes sir, affirmative.=^= Came from the three.

"Move forward slowly until you contact the shielding just aft of the docking bay and begin remodulating your shielding,.you will not be there long enough to get a match however. On my mark the Salvador, Cabrillo and Johnson will make directly for the shuttlebay. Do not dawdle gentlemen, you have only ten seconds for all three craft to get within the shielding. and make your landings quickly."

=^= "Yes sir. On your order. Moving into position.=^=

His fingers rested near the alert controls as he waited for them to report ready.

"Captain, shuttles report they are in position and in contact with the shielding."

"Now Mr. Ogilvie."

"Shield emitter 12 down."

“Go easy degh,” Bar’Tok said to his helmsman. “Bring us around the far side of the comet. We will drop our cloak, raise our shields, and run through the comet’s tail. If we coordinate this with the attack of the Hak’chu we should be able to exact some damage before they can stop it.”

Bar'Tok watch the space field shift as they maneuvered to where he had wanted. He believed that the tail of the comet would produce enough radiation to mask their exact position.

(reply Illuminar)
(posted by Al Muir)

T'Mur raised an eyebrow at the suggestion of Trei to leave the shuttles out as bait for the Klingons. Not nearly as surprised as she was by Solice's response. She was actually encourage a sacrifice? That did not sound like her Quinna.

(reply Trei, Solice)

“No sir,” the Tactical Officer replied. “However, they could be sitting still, which would not leave any trace of special displacement.”

“Agreed,” T’Mur replied. She pulled up the inventory to see exactly how many torpedoes they had remaining.

"Aye, aye sir. I'm interfaced with the tactical station now and can feed it coordinates in the event of gravimetric distortions or tachyon particle readings. Due to the particulate dispersal in this region any material displacement will also be impossible to hide. If you don't mind my saying so it looks like you picked a prime spot for an ambush."

She watched as the young Mr. Winters accessed her station. With the tap of a few keys she was able to share information, both ways. She could also see what he was finding on his station. She downloaded the programing to scan for the distortions that he was looking for. Tachyon particles were

difficult to look for as they tended to have random readings in space, but it could give them a early warning.

The captain ordered the ship into position to pick up the shuttles, around the tail of the comet. The problem of this trap would be if the Klingon ship did not come all the way around the tail, but foolishly decided to travel through it, in a more direct attack.

"Helm are we in position to pick up the shuttles?"

"Yes Captain, standing by."

Suddenly the captain asked Solice about the condition of Sienna. T'Mur focused her hearing to catch the response, however, she already knew what the doctor was going to say. She could feel it through their bond. Sekal gave his orders to the Ops officer to adjust the shields for ten seconds. This was the moment they had been waiting for.

"Captain, shuttles report they are in position and in contact with the shielding."

"Now Mr. Ogilvie."

"Shield emitter 12 down."

"All shuttles begin your maneuver."

"Shuttlecraft heading for the docking bay Captain."

"9 seconds, eight...."

There was an alert from her panel, “Captain, Kligon Vor’cha class ship decloaking forward, and firing. Adjusting shielding.”

The ship shuddered slightly. Then her panel beeped again. "A second ship, Bird of Prey, is coming through the comet's tail," she reported. "Firing."

She fired phasers, concentrating on the Bird of Prey, a second volley phasers was followed by a series of three torpedoes. The Bird of Prey had three direct hits. It continued its forward motion but the scans showed that it no longer had shields and showed substantial damage. Then she took a breath.

“Captain, the Bird of Prey is in the process of a warp core breach,” she said. “It has set a direct course at us.”

(reply Sekal, any)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

"Captain, Klingon Vor'cha class ship decloaking forward, and firing. Adjusting shielding."

The Vor'cha appeared on the screen as its cloak was deactivated and a virulent red glow built quickly at its nose where its main disruptor cannon was located. Sekal's index finger had already tapped the button at her call and battle alert status was sounding. The corruscating red and orange ball of energy and superheated plasma leapt toward Illuminar and was absorbed by its forward shielding. Situated as they were within the comet's tail however gave his ship a more distinct advantage as Illuminar rocked from the deadly release of energy. The Bird of Prey was his more immediate concern due to their role in this shell game but in order to play they were going to have to expose themselves, willingly or not.

"A second ship, Bird of Prey, is coming through the comet's tail," she reported. "Firing."

Sekal's fingers danced on the master control for the viewscreen situated to his left and the screen switched to follow the torpedoes as they neared their targeted location. Two detonated and the Bird of Prey shimmered into existence within the afterglow of their explosions. Phaser fire followed immediately and struck the ship which had completed its turn toward them. Violent energy danced over its shielding before it collapsed and the area around its disruptor cannon and port nacelle flared as the phased energy superheated the metal, some of which broke away in brilliant sparkles.

"Captain, the Bird of Prey is in the process of a warp core breach," she said. "It has set a direct course at us."

"Switch main phaser bank to dark matter alignment and fire Lieutenant."

(Reply: T'Mur)

A simple knowledge of tactics had warned him to expect an attack here, an equally simple knowledge of Klingons explained why they would choose to commit suicide by attempting to ram his ship hoping to take an enemy with them into death. Sekal leaned forward expectantly as the phaser bank was cycled then released a barrage upon the weakened enemy.

The violet stream of energy sizzled through space, consuming ice crystals, dust and micron sized debris with equal hunger, each contact flaring for a microsecond until the entirety of its course was lit by a nimbus of violent destruction as the atomic structure of matter was literally ripped to shreds by it. Not that it was a long and drawn out spectacle as all of this occurred at the speed of light. The Bird of Prey flared for an instant, surrounded by the purplish halo before disintegrating in a massive explosion as tens of thousands of metric tons of matter was completely disrupted all at once. The flare of its destruction would last for millennia as the light from the explosion traversed space.

"Shield 12 is active!"

"Lieutenant Grey Wolf, are the shuttles down?"

"Shuttles down sir, my board reads green."

"Close the hanger doors and begin evasive maneuvers, Lieutenant T'Mur, return to normal phaser alignment and target the Vor'hta., fire when ready."

(Reply: T'Mur)

Sekal leaned back then into the chair as the ship shuddered again from another disruptor blast. 2 of the 3 enemy ships were now permanently out of the action, whether the Vor'hta was destroyed, disabled or put to flight didn't matter, as soon as it was dealt with they could return to the Maelstrom and begin investigating if and how he could get the rest of his crew home. The final disposition of the Hak'chu didn't concern him, they would make their own fate. They were now merely another obstacle to overcome and would be treated accordingly.

(Reply: Any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

"Bah!"

The disruptor cannon flared and its deadly cargo was launched at the Federation ship. The impact splashed across its shields with no perceptible damage.

"No damage hOd."

"Gehk! WHY? Why do our weapons do no effect to this ship?"

""In their words Quantum Displacement Shielding. It must be."

"What?" He rounded on his tactical officer. "yIDoghQo! There has been no evidence they have made this breakthrough!"

"Look at their power curve hOd. This ship is beyond anything they have ever sent out."

Pel'kash was no fool but the idea of this type of shielding being developed by the Federation had been hinted at for over 30 years and they had never successfully done so.

"hOd! The Hegh bo degh!"

His eyes had caught a brilliant flash from the screen and his head around to to see the Bird of Prey struck by phasers.

"Bah! The Fek'lir take you. Bah! jagh yibuStaH1"

"hOd.! THier reactor will overload, they seek to ram."

He chuckled. "bISeH'eghlaH'be'chughlath Dara'laH'be"

What he saw next as the Hak'chu fired made his mouth snap shut then drop open in surprise. A brilliant beam of purplish energy lashed out from the Illuminar and struck the Hegh bo degh amidships. The ship almost immediately began to glow that same deep shade of purple before erupting in a titanic explosion.

He stepped back in shock as he heard cries of disbelief raised around him. What was that? Quantum Displacement shielding, was it possible? And what was this new weapon?

"Orders hOd! What are your orders?"

"meqtaHbogh qachDaq Suv goH neh! Turn us about and go to warp petaQ!"

As the Illuminar turned its attention back to the Hak'chu is was already beginning to accelerate away.

Pel'kash stepped to his command chair and sat down as he waited for his ship to be likewise incinerated. Two Klingon ships, one like his own, had already been destroyed and only a fool fights in a house that is burning. Pel'kash was no fool and Sto-Voh-Kor was not the reward of fools but warriors.

What shielding the other ship was using couldn't yet be proven but his superiors would wish to know the things they had found out here today. There was no glory to be found in this battle, only mindless death.

(Reply: None)

(Posted by Charles G)

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Bridge SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 07.50)

"Yes sir. Firing at the snake infidels and enjoying it sir."

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Bridge 3XO/CMO Lt. Commander Quinna Solice -- 0755)

(Reply Sekal)

Quinna sat and thought for a moment. She was about to apologize for her change in behavior when she felt the shake of the incoming fire. Quinna turned to Trei who seemed to be enjoying this a bit too much.

"Yes sir. Firing at the snake infidels and enjoying it sir."

Was it wrong that Quinna wanted to laugh right now?

(Reply Sekal, Trei, T'Mur, any)

(Posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Bridge - CO, Captain Sekal -- 0800)

"It is good right now. Her body and mind have gone through some shock. She is responding to the meds. But what is troubling me is...I am not sure how, but her body, her uniform, are all approximately six months older than yesterday. The instant aging is what sent her into shock. And apparently, she is not alone in this. Another patient in sickbay is experiencing temporal displacement as well. I am not wanting this to get around."

Sekal nodded slowly.

"Dr. Quincy is monitoring them now,"

"Excellent work."

"Yes sir. Firing at the snake infidels and enjoying it sir."

Sekal turned an eye toward Lt. Trei for an instant who was showing obvious pleasure at her work. "Illogical." He was prepared to say more but was interrupted.

"The Klingons are running sir."

His attention returned fully to the viewscreen where the warship had turned and was accelerating away, a final phaser blast hit their aft shielding before the ship went to warp and disappeared.

"Mr. Winters, follow that ship."

"Scanners following it now sir, they are going to high warp and maintaining their heading."

"Estimated destination?"

"If they stay on course sir, well it looks like they're going home. They are on course for Qo'nos according to navigational charts."

"Cease fire and power down weapons, you may lower the shields Lieutenant T'Mur but maintain your vigilance."

(Reply: T'Mur, Trei)

His finger hit the 'all clear' button and the alert lamps went out.

"Lieutenant Grey Wolf set course back for the Maelstrom at best speed."

"Aye, aye Captain, laying in course. ETA 18 hours at full impulse."

"Engage."

Illuminar turned and accelerated.

He tapped a button and spoke, his voice carrying through the bridge. "Captain's log, addendum. With the loss of the Rhyne Lieutenant T'Mur is hereby given the responsibility and oversight of both Tactical and Security and will remain head of a united department unless and until conditions change. By order of myself, Commanding Officer, Captain Sekal."

He then switched it off and turned toward Quinna.

"Lieutenant Commander, our presence is once again necessary in that sector in order to determine the final fate of the Rhyne, I would suggest efforts be geared toward finding a solution to the destabilizing factors there or we will once again be faced with madness and a deranged crew. You have 18 hours to accomplish this, after you take some downtime of course.."

(Reply: Quinna, any)

His finger hit the shipwide comm. "Gamma shift will remain on duty for the next six hours, alpha rotation will resume at 0600 tomorrow, beta rotation begins at the normal time. All crew not on gamma shift are to take a mandatory 6 hours of downtime." His finger tapped the button again as his eyes turned to Quinna. "That includes yourself doctor and is an order."

(Reply: Quinna, any)

(Posted by Charles G)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

What is the meaning of time in a timeless place. In truth it is unknown because there past, present and future intermingle. There is no then, now and later, it is all NOW! Which is why those who came before the Sisko and those who came after him are, were, will be an anomaly. How can you exist in the present but live in the past through a memory yet still remain in the now in linear time? Even more importantly how can there be a beginning and an end when all one knows is NOW? The one once known as Benjamin Sisko was well aware of the paradox among the others and had tried to explain it. The one known as Jatun Aylt was aware of it as well.

"Now I'm even more confused than I was before. First Q then you claim to have brought me back to life and now I'm here in the Celestial Temple, wherever here is. And you claimed I had a purpose but look where it all ended up. I'm dead again but I guess this is preferable to an eternity of darkness and ... nothingness."

The Sisko turned to the one known as Jatón. They were standing in a field of tropical flowers under a clear sky. The verdant foliage hinted at Trill, a place out of memory for the other.

He didn't answer the comment immediately but looked around. "Dax told me a lot about this place, enough that it almost feels familiar."

"What? Here?" Jatón looked around then shrugged. "It was my home planet, the last time I saw it was during a diplomatic mission ... and my brother." He grew silent for a moment. "You haven't replied to my comment."

Sisko turned to him with that disarming smile. "Why are you in such a hurry? There is no end of time for it."

"Yes, I understand that." Jatón snapped, he was a bit peevish about the whole situation and Sisko's manners weren't helping his mood. "Perhaps if you replied within the first thousand years it would be helpful."

Sisko laughed and picked a flower, it snapped off the stem perfectly, its aroma brought his mind back to earlier times within his linear time frame.

"You accomplished your purpose."

"And what was that?" Jatón started pacing around, in the back of his mind he knew he was expected to be as happy as a pig in slop as the old Terran saying went but he was saving that for later... after he had some answers.

"All right then I'll speak metaphorically." Sisko stuffed the flower into a pocket that hadn't been there before. "It has religious significance which is very profound, see if you can follow it."

"Hit me!" Jatón was eager to get some answers at last.

"I've been laughingly called the wormhole Jesus at times, had you heard that?"

"Said it myself a few times, especially after you showed up."

Sisko laughed. "There was one of him, one savior on Earth but there have been a number of emissaries, I was the last."

"Was?"

"Yes. You had thought you might be another Apostle Paul."

"And what of it?"

"You were more of a John the Baptist, a forerunner."

"Say what?"

"A witness, a stepping stone to the new emissary."

"I don't understand."

"He was right under your nose, and now your task has been finished."

"Under my nose? Where?"

Sisko smiled but was interrupted before he could say anything.

"My, my. A theoretical metaphysical discussion. Do you mind if I join in?"

For the first time in a very long time.... or was it only a few seconds ago? Time had no meaning... Sisko frowned as he turned to face the interloper.

"Q."

"Yes. I'm sure you missed me didn't you?" Q stood before them looking no different than the day Benjamin Sisko had last seen him.

"I certainly have not missed you Q."

"Neither have I." Jatun gave the being a disgusted look.

"The last time I saw you I punched you in the nose and I can do a lot worse now Q. You had better say what you came to say quickly then leave."

Q chuckled at the Sisko's glare. "Yes you did and yes you can, you could even expel me from your dimension if you wished but why? I've done nothing to offend and actually came to offer my services. To just get rid of me on a whim? Now, now there. You should at least try to play the good host for once. Benjamin."

"And what service do you think you could offer any of us Q?" Sisko's eyes narrowed in suspicion.

"Why, I could watch over the little tyke for you."

Sisko's jaw clenched and his right hand balled into a fist.

"Going to revert to old habits eh? How quaint. Oh yes I know about your future emissary, nothing happens in the universe I watch over without me knowing about it." Q gave his most disarming smile.

Sisko stepped directly up to the mercurial being and glared at him. "Don't even think about touching that child Q."

He only laughed. "Mui? I wouldn't think of it. Oh how little you think of me."

"You have no idea how little I think of you Q." Sisko growled in his face. "Now leave and don't come back. And if you try anything...."

Q shrugged his shoulders smugly. "I know, I know, there's no need for threats." he gave a sly look and his voice upon speaking was droll. "But I'd like to see you try. Goodbye for now, It's been a joy rehashing old times." With that he raised his right hand and snapped his fingers.

"I don't like that guy." Jatton muttered when he had disappeared in a flash.

Sisko turned to him with a serious look. "It appears the devil has put in an appearance at the heavenly court. His reason for coming here was obvious, he wanted us to know that he knew." Sisko turned away. "And that concerns me."

(Reply: None)

(Posted by Charles G)

-----END TRANSMISSION-----