

STAR TREK



TERRAN

"The First Frontier"

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Based on "Star Trek"

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TEASER

ON BLACK

The FIRST NOTES of the STAR TREK THEME ECHO through--

SPACE

Stars, moons, worlds appear around us, shining brightly.

We PAN AROUND until a familiar blue planet fills our screen.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Earth. Birthplace of humanity.
Cradle of civilization. Beacon of
diplomacy.

CHYRON: 2261

We come CLOSER to the planet and see a Federation-class dreadnought ship orbiting it: the **U.S.S. TELLUS**. Large, imposing, safe.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

We are the explorers of progress
and unity. The seekers of hope and
knowledge.

We continue to PUSH IN on the ship, until we go INSIDE--

INT. U.S.S. TELLUS - HALLWAY - DAY

The man talking is PRESIDENT DAVID KENDRICK (early 40s), the charisma of David Palmer meets the allure of Andrew Shepherd. He's rehearsing a speech from his PADD (23rd-Century tablet).

KENDRICK

On the other hand, we are-- Wait,
"seekers of hope"? "Beacon of
diplomacy"? This sounds way too
pretentious.

DRAZEL (O.C.)

You're just delivering an
anticipated narrative.

KENDRICK

Coming directly from a human, it's
cocky. That would be like you
mentioning something you're amazing
at. I don't know, swimming.

DRAZEL

And you're butchering the rest of
the speech. Don't just randomly add
"on the other hand."

The woman honing on semantics is DRAZEL VAXX (20s), a blue-skin BOLIAN, who happens to be the President's speech-writer.

KENDRICK

Honestly, this is just too flowery.

DRAZEL

It's perfect. Trust me. When every word matters, every word is remembered.

KENDRICK

They don't even like speeches.

DRAZEL

Yeah, well, you can do it for me.

He smiles. Maybe they're more than coworkers.

SECURITY OFFICER (O.S.)

Knock knock.

A STARFLEET SECURITY OFFICER intrudes on the couple.

SECURITY OFFICER (CONT'D)

Sorry to disturb, but the Ambassador is about to be on.

KENDRICK

We'll be right there.

(back to Drazel)

Here we go.

DRAZEL

Please don't embarrass my work.

KENDRICK

(grinning)

Never!

OFF Drazel, shaking her head.

INT. U.S.S. TELLUS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A large conference room has been redecorated specifically for the occasion. FEDERATION and ARDARAN FLAGS adorn the place.

A small INTER-SPECIES GATHERING surrounds a stage with AMBASSADOR REID (60s) currently working the microphone.

AMBASSADOR REID

It is now my great pleasure to introduce the man without whom this joining could not have been accomplished.

(MORE)

AMBASSADOR REID (CONT'D)

(to Kendrick)

Mr. President, the stage is yours.

A palpable BUZZ in the room as Kendrick goes up.

KENDRICK

Thank you, Ambassador.

(to the audience)

Earth is...

(beat)

One hell of a planet, don't you think?

Laughter through the crowd, charmed. Not Drazel.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

And Ardana is pretty amazing too.

Flying cities, astonishing art,
great people.

We briefly see in the audience HIGH ADVISOR KELSUS (mid-50s), the ARDANAN executive leader. Ardanans are physically indistinguishable from humans, but highly cerebral and sagacious.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Yet we are not here to talk about our worlds. We are here to let one hand join the other. We are here because our family is welcoming a new member. We are here, together.

Polite applause.

Kendrick leaves the stage. Goes to Drazel.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

(sotto; to Drazel)

Sometimes a little ad-libbing is better than a long speech.

DRAZEL

As long as you say what I actually wrote at the hundredth...

High Advisor Kelsus moves over to the stage.

KELSUS

(almost sardonic)

Thank you Mr. President for such an inspiring statement. For us however, the fewer words mark the greater occasions. I will simply convey that we look forward to a longful and prosperous relationship between our worlds.

MOMENTS LATER

Everyone has moved to an ELONGATED TABLE for the signing. The President and his Federation entourage are lined on one side, while the High Advisor and the Ardanans are on the other. Journalists and photographers are recording the event.

On the table is a large PADD, with a stylus next to it.

KENDRICK

Let's make this official.

The President grabs the PADD and e-pen. Poses for the cameras. A few FLASHES ring out.

He signs the digital document. It feels like an official moment. He then hands the device to the High Advisor.

Kelsus is about to take his turn to sign. He hesitates.

KELSUS

I don't suppose I have to read this.

KENDRICK

High Advisor, I assure you, everything's in order.

KELSUS

I just wanted to make sure. For both our sakes.

The President lets out a tense laugh. Even if the Ardanan is not joking. And as pen is finally about to meet paper--

EVERYTHING GOES DARK.

After a beat, EMERGENCY LIGHTS go up.

The President tries to keep his cool. Smiles.

KENDRICK

(to Kelsus)

I'm sure it's just a malfunct--

BRRR-- HUGE TREMBLE. Kendrick and Drazel exchange a look.

VLAM-- The ship JUMPS. Not a malfunction.

PANIC sets in as PIECES from the ship start FALLING OUT.

The ship begins to SHAKE MORE VIOLENTLY. AND DOES. NOT. STOP. EVERYBODY RUNS.

Two SECURITY OFFICERS swoop in, GRAB the President. Not fucking around. They usher him into the--

HALLWAY

The ship starts CRUMBLING left and right. IT'S PANDEMONIUM.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

DRAZEL!

(to the officers)

No, no. We can't let her--

SECURITY OFFICER

We need to get you out of here.

A BLOODIED WOMAN bumps into the President. No time to help as officers PUSH HER ASIDE and CONTINUE SHUTTLING THE PRESIDENT.

The hallway seems never-ending. SCREAMING all around.

DUST falls. We CAN'T EVEN SEE where we're going anymore.

A GIANT PIECE OF METAL FALLS from the ceiling, BARELY MISSING the President, as we're swooped into the--

TRANSPORTER ROOM

People are already BEAMING THE FUCK OUT. A TERRIFIED TRANSPORTER OPERATOR is working the console.

One of the bodyguards SNAGS whoever is about to teleport and THROWS THEM OUT OF THE TRANSPORTER PLATFORM, REPLACING THEM WITH THE PRESIDENT.

SECURITY OFFICER (CONT'D)

ENERGIZE. NOW!

As the transporter room is about to go DOWN IN FLAMES, we are BEAMED WITH THE PRESIDENT OUT OF THE SHIP TO--

EARTH

We barely catch a glimpse of the EIFFEL TOWER IN THE BACK as we go AROUND THE PRESIDENT to see WHAT HE'S STARING AT:

THE U.S.S. TELLUS DISINTEGRATING INTO THE ATMOSPHERE ABOVE.

No time to stain our pants as ANOTHER STARFLEET SECURITY OFFICER TAKES THE PRESIDENT AWAY.

OFFICER

Mr. President, we have to go.

The officer moves the President inside a GLASS BUILDING. An iconic EMBLEM is etched on the outside. It's the--

UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE**EXT. MUSEUM - DAY**

A symbolic LARGE RIBBON has just been cut in front of a blue newly-inaugurated museum.

On the steps, a few REPORTERS and photojournalists are huddled around a podium, informally covering this "event".

At the microphone is ZORA GUILLORY (30s; warm exterior but stern when needed), the UNITED EARTH PRIME MINISTER. She's busy fielding questions while straining a smile.

TELLARITE REPORTER

Madam Prime Minister, do you have any concerns that the Ardanan membership might have been ratified prematurely?

GUILLORY

Xav, I don't think this is the place nor the time to discuss this. But I'll be happy to answer any questions about the museum.

HUMAN REPORTER

What are your thoughts on the Federation council's proposed new security measures?

As Guillory is about to answer, a GOVERNMENT AIDE swoops in.

GOVERNMENT AIDE

As a planetary executive leader, the Prime Minister cannot publicly speculate, comment or review any Federation-related policies, laws or measures currently on the floor.

A couple of COMMUNICATORS start ringing among the reporters.

HUMAN REPORTER #2

Would you talk about the recent African Confederation protests on--

GUILLORY

I would actually love to talk more about the museum we just opened. In partnership with Starfleet, it--

Communicators continue lighting up in the crowd.

A SECURITY OFFICER comes over to the Minister, whispers something in her ear and escorts her into--

INT. PRIME MINISTERIAL LIMOUSINE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The Prime Minister lands inside the car, faced with a STAFFER handling a PADD. Smiles are gone. The door closes on Guillory as the limo immediately drives away.

GUILLORY

What about my wife?

STAFFER

She wasn't on the manifest. We're still trying to reach her right now. I'm sure she's fine, Madam.

GUILLORY

And the victims?

STAFFER

The President was beamed off to Paris just in time. The Ardanan High Advisor is presumed dead.

GUILLORY

(sotto)

So much for peaceful membership.

(to the staffer)

Schedule a meet with whoever the new Ardanan leader is.

STAFFER

I don't think the Embassy will answer my calls.

GUILLORY

Try.

(then)

Who else?

STAFFER

Potentially, Minister Arken, Signatory Johnson, Ambassador Reid--

Guillory lets out a groan.

GUILLORY

Let's go to the Federation council.

STAFFER

They've evacuated the chamber. I doubt we'd get close.

The Minister realizes they're on the move.

GUILLORY

Then where the hell are we going?

STAFFER
 (sheepish)
 A secure location?

GUILLORY
 What does that even mean? Drive me
 to Starfleet Intelligence.

STAFFER
 Madam, I think it's safer if we
 follow protocol.

GUILLORY
 A Starfleet ship exploded in orbit
 with United Earth, Federation and
 Ardanan personnel on it. Damage
 control starts now. Regardless of
 protocol. Get me Admiral Barros.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - DAY

The Prime Minister's limousine turns around as we reveal the
 iconic steep streets of SAN FRANCISCO, 23rd-Century style.

CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET ACADEMY - U.S.S. SIMULATOR - BRIDGE - DAY

STARFLEET ACADEMY CADETS in their early 20s are manning the
 various consoles on this vanilla U.S.S. bridge.

In the captain's chair is WARREN, a Kirk wannabe with all the
 ambition but none of the talent.

WARREN
 Divert auxiliary power from port
 nacelle to shields!

BAM! Something HITS the ship. The room VIBRATES.

WARREN (CONT'D)
 Conn, report!

Intently working the helm is ELLIS. He's barely hiding a
 contemptuous EYE-ROLL at his aspiring captain.

ELLIS
 Shields at seventy percent.

COMM OFFICER
 A THIRD Romulan Bird-of-Prey
 just came out of nowhere!

TACTICAL OFFICER
 Photon torpedo reserves
 almost depleted, Captain!

WARREN
 (to operations officer)
 How many on board?

OPERATIONS OFFICER

Half of the civilian ship, Captain.
A lot are left to beam out. I don't
think I can hold that EM window
open much longer!

WARREN

Do your best.

BOOM! ANOTHER HIT. As the bridge SHAKES, we-- CUT TO:

INT. STARFLEET ACADEMY - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A giant ONE-WAY GLASS WALL overlooks the action on the
bridge: it's all a SIMULATION.

Evaluating the scene is a striking DELTAN WOMAN (30s) wearing
a GOLDEN RED Starfleet Academy uniform. She's bald, magnetic,
intense. And right now intently focused on a specific cadet.

INT. U.S.S. SIMULATOR - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

TURMOIL on the bridge. Ellis is more frustrated.

ELLIS

Shields at thirty percent. Make
that twenty-five percent.

TACTICAL OFFICER

We're losing main power!

WARREN

Stay put!

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Deltan turns to a SIMULATION TECHNICAN in the room.

DELTAN

Activate the next wave.

INT. U.S.S. SIMULATOR - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Ellis quickly working calculations on his console.

COMM OFFICER

Fourth Romulan ship!

OPERATIONS OFFICER

EM window about to close.

ELLIS

Twenty percent. We have to
consider a warp--

WARREN

I said stay put, Ellis.

He's about to protest yet again, but--

ELLIS

SHIELDS DOWN!

KABLAM! Worst hit yet. DEBRIS bouncing around the simulator.

TACTICAL OFFICER
HULL IS BREACHED!

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DELTAN
Come on.

INT. U.S.S. SIMULATOR - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

ELLIS
We have to warp, now!

WARREN
We're waiting.

COMM OFFICER
Fifth ship!

OPERATIONS OFFICER
EM window CLOSED! 80% of crew
on board.

NAVIGATOR
Captain, WE'RE MOVING!

ON WARREN: What the fuck?

NAVIGATOR
I've lost control! We're about to
enter warp!

WARREN
(realizing)
ELLIS! TURN BACK AROUND!

The ship ENTERS WARP SPEED.

Ellis smiles to himself, still focused on the helm,
completely ignoring the chaos behind him.

The ship resurfaces ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

NAVIGATOR
Sir, it appears we've
warped...through.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Through what?!

TACTICAL OFFICER
Our weapons are target-locked!

The ship FIRES TORPEDOES on the Romulan ship.

They CONNECT. BAM! BAM! BAM! All five Romulan ships EXPLODE.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

SIM TECH
Enemies neutralized.

DELTAN
Time?

SIM TECH
15 minutes. New record.

INT. U.S.S. SIMULATOR - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The ship goes back to warp speed. Leaving the battleground.

NAVIGATOR
Warp 2 and counting, Sir.

Warren RISES and DARTS over to Ellis. Pissed.

Ellis stays seated, like a cucumber. Eyes locked on screen.

The faux-captain GRABS Ellis' chair. Swings it around.

WARREN
Face your captain!

DELTAN (O.S.)
Cut the sim.

The Simulation turns OFF. Screens go dark, lights go up.

The Deltan is standing on the bridge. All eyes on her.

She's staring at Ellis.

DELTAN (CONT'D)
You.

INT. DELTAN'S OFFICE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The Deltan is sitting behind her Starfleet Academy office desk, looking at an embedded video monitor. A large window gives out on the Golden Gate Bridge.

Ellis is sitting across, borderline complacent.

DELTAN
Three insubordinations in as many simulations. And I see that you've also cut at least a dozen classes in the past semester, ranging from Basic Warp Design to Tactical Analysis.

She glares back at Ellis.

ELLIS
Well, I was right about not following the orders given. All three times. And I only skip the classes I already know.

DELTAN

Do you really believe sims are
about blindly following orders?

ELLIS

I understand that the idea is to
trust and follow the captain, not
the orders. But when they're both
stupid, I just can't help myself.

The Deltan represses a smile.

DELTAN

I'll be blunt too. With this
record, any officer would be happy
to suspend you right now for your
apathy and complete disregard
towards the Academy.

Ellis straightens up.

DELTAN (CONT'D)

Fortunately for you, the officer
you're facing is me. I don't agree
with the way you're handling
yourself, but I respect the
results. You found a solution to
the Romulan Knot in record time,
and you went for it. Which is why I
would actually like you to join my--

DING. DING. DING. An EMERGENCY TONE echoes out in the room.

PA SYSTEM

All Academy students please report
to the Archer Auditorium
immediately.

The video monitor RINGS as ADMIRAL BARROS (60s; overworked)
appears on screen.

ADMIRAL BARROS

Emergency intelligence briefing.

Barros hangs up on the Deltan before she can respond.

EXT. STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

SENIOR STARFLEET PERSONNEL are clustered around an arched
table. The Deltan is in the back, observing.

Some are video-conferenced in. Screens dispersed across the
room show pictures and data about the Tellus disaster.

Leading the meeting is Admiral Barros.

ADMIRAL BARROS

Logs show a cascade of internal failures, either resulting from or leading to core explosions throughout the Tellus. Our priority is to figure out what happened up there. Scour whatever wreckage is left, and any data you can find. Piece this together, and report.

Everyone scatters, except for the Deltan. Staying put.

Barros walks over.

DELTAN

I'm still not sure why I was called for this meeting, Sir.

ADMIRAL BARROS

Were you not paying attention to what I said? Information.

DELTAN

Respectfully, isn't that everybody else's job?

ADMIRAL BARROS

The Ardanans are already doing their own investigation of the Tellus. Privately. I don't want to risk my team being too PC about what amounts to a Federation tragedy. I need your outsider's perspective.

DELTAN

I'm in the middle of Academy recruiting. I'm not sure what I can bring to the table.

ADMIRAL BARROS

Given your squad's alumni and keen judgement, I'm sure what you find will be just as compelling as any other officer. Think of it as another way to serve Starfleet.

And as he departs, we-- CUT TO:

INT. PRIME MINISTERIAL HOME - FOYER - DAY

A lone COMMUNICATOR vibrating on a glass table. A woman is gawking at it, not budging: KYLLI MOON (mid-30s; disheveled). She's almost SCARED of the device.

A different RINGTONE is suddenly heard. Kylli reacts and turns around to answer the call on the SCREEN facing the table. We briefly glimpse her WEDDING BAND.

On the other end comes LAUREN, the Federation President's PRESS SECRETARY, looking back at her.

LAUREN

Morning Kylli. I'm about to start the emergency briefing. FNN told me to loop you on the vidcall.
 (noticing Kylli's stare)
 Is everything all right?

KYLLI

(clearing throat)
 Yeah, yeah. All's fine.

LAUREN

You're sure? Your hair is...

And that's when Kylli sees her REFLECTION on the table: terrible bed hair. Hard to hide it.

KYLLI

Water's out. You know how it is.
 (forcing a strained laugh)
 Patch me in. I'm good.

LAUREN

(unconvinced)
 Okay...

INT. PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING - PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren is sitting behind an electronic console. She presses a button and addresses her screen.

LAUREN

Morning, afternoon and evening to you all. I will now be making a brief statement, after which we can all share in some questioning.

REVERSE ANGLE: A WALL-SIZED CURVED SCREEN. Dozens of video-conferenced JOURNALISTS from around the globe make out this split-screen tapestry. Kylli Moon is one of them.

Lauren is working on her console, quickly going over what she's about to say.

She calmly starts reading the official statement, as reserved and focused as she can.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

At 16:47 GMT the diplomatic vessel U.S.S. Tellus crashed in orbit following internal technical failures. Starfleet Intelligence is currently investigating the detailed causes of the crash and establishing a timeline of events leading up to it. The current list of casualties--

She pauses. Breathes in. Trying to stay unemotional.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Current list of casualties amounts to 58 people, with 46 Federation citizens and 12 Ardanan representatives. High Advisor Kelsus and Ambassador Reid were among the victims.

Murmurs are heard from the journalists. Lauren presses.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

The President of the Federation, as well as a few other people, were successfully transported back to the Presidential Building in Paris. Following Ardanan customs, the President has decided not to make any official declarations about this disaster until memorialization of all victims.

She looks up at the wallscreen.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I will now take a few questions.

JOURNALIST #1

Will the Federation council be issuing any condemnation of these attacks?

LAUREN

As far as we know, the U.S.S. Tellus endured a technical failure. Starfleet is still investigating.

JOURNALIST #1

Are you saying you're ruling out the possibility of a terrorist act?

LAUREN

I cannot comment on what may or may not have happened.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
 Right now, preliminary
 findings only indicate an
 internal technical failure.

JOURNALIST #1
 "Internal technical failure",
 yeah got it.

JOURNALIST #2
 I'm still confused here, Lauren. If
 the President isn't issuing a
 response to what happened this
 morning, what is he doing now?

OFF Lauren, carefully considering her answer.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - EVENING

A splendid sight of the EIFFEL TOWER from a giant window.

An argument is taking place in the hallway outside the
 office, between a Presidential SECURITY OFFICER and a WOMAN.
 The sound is MUFFLED by the closed doors and walls.

WOMAN (O.S.)
 What you are saying to me is
 nonsensical.

SECURITY OFFICER (O.S.)
 Ma'am, I'm not sure we can
 securely scramble the ship
 for tomorrow.

We SLOWLY PULL BACK into the PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE.
 Surprisingly rustic and simple.

President Kendrick is seated behind his desk. Lost.

WOMAN (O.S.)
 In case you are not aware,
 Officer--

SECURITY OFFICER (O.S.)
 (CONT'D)
 Gregory, Ma'am.

WOMAN (O.S.)
 Gregory, the President wants to--
 no, needs to attend tomorrow
 morning a very special occasion on.
 And the day after that is
 Starfleet's 100th. All of which
 will require transport.

SECURITY OFFICER (O.S.)
 Protocol dictates regional lockdown
 until Starfleet Intel--

WOMAN (O.S.)
 Please do not interrupt my
 reasonings, Gregory. What I am
 asking you to do is simple: your
 job. Securing things.

(MORE)

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Of course, you can also not do anything, in which case we will follow the logical conclusion to that path, and it is not a positive one. Now, if you will excuse me.

Doors open as the WOMAN enters: VAL (40s), Kendrick's direct and assertive CHIEF OF STAFF, who also happens to be VULCAN.

VAL

Lauren is almost done with her statement. I have secured the water cemetery for Drazel's funeral tomorrow. Need-to-know, evidently.

She doesn't notice that the President is staring at something on his desk.

VAL (CONT'D)

We will be officially arriving early for the Starfleet speech. Once we come back, replacements for the ambassadors will be needed.

She walks over to his desk and puts down a PADD.

KENDRICK'S POV: Decorative OBJECTS on the desk, most of them look alien to us, souvenirs from other worlds.

VAL (CONT'D)

I have prepared a list of potential candidates for nominations. Nathaniel Lisenby and Lesley Baxter seem adequate for...

Val's voice starts to TRAIL OFF into a DEEP RUMBLE.

CLOSER KENDRICK POV-- In the CORNER of Kendrick's desk stands an ORIGAMI HORSE made out of translucent paper. Very detailed. Perfectly folded.

We fixate on it.

Suddenly: a HAND appears on Kendrick's shoulder.

VAL (CONT'D)

Mr. President.

We snap out of it. SOUND returns to normal.

The President looks up to see the neutral face of Val, standing next to him.

VAL (CONT'D)
 Departure is in a few hours.
 (dry)
 You should wash up.

The President looks at his hands, registering that he's still covered in dust and blood from the Tellus crash.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The President washes his hands. He takes some water and rinses the dust off his face.

He grabs a hand towel. Stares it. A bulb lights up. He takes a SECOND hand towel and exits the bathroom.

INT. STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE - ADMIRAL BARROS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Admiral Barros enters his lush Intelligence office to find Prime Minister Guillory sitting in a chair, waiting for him.

ADMIRAL BARROS
 Couldn't wait another day?

Minister Guillory walks up to him. They hug.

GUILLORY
 Hell of a day.

ADMIRAL BARROS
 You and me.

GUILLORY
 I wanted to make sure the hammer didn't fall too hard. I can only imagine the load of work and pressure Intelligence has with the U.S.S. Tellus.

ADMIRAL BARROS
 Is that really where your mind went? Or are you about to ask me something?

GUILLORY
 To the point. Alright. Whatever it is you find, I think I should be the one taking it up top.

ADMIRAL BARROS
 (smiling)
 If you want a favor, you should just say so.

GUILLORY
 Only trying to protect you here.

ADMIRAL BARROS
Obviously.

GUILLORY
The President's lady friend--

ADMIRAL BARROS
Alleged.

GUILLORY
--alleged lady friend was on board.
I'm guessing he's about ready to
shoot the messenger, whatever the
message. With the Federation
already antsy about Starfleet
Security, I don't think you want to
be caught in the crossfire.

ADMIRAL BARROS
So you want to do the honors of
presenting our intel to him?
Selfless Zora. Inspiring.

GUILLORY
And more importantly, correct.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING - POOL - NIGHT

A large indoor pool with an amazing view of Paris.

Small waves ripple throughout the water.

A man is swimming in it, back-and-forth. President Kendrick.

He stops near one side of the pool. Grabs the two dangling
HAND TOWELS near the edge. Considers them. Then WRAPS THEM
around each hand.

He takes a DEEP BREATH and then DIVES IN. We go

UNDERWATER

with him as he swims down to find--

A demolished spot in the pool's tiled wall. Dented. Punched.

BAM. The President smashes his right fist against the spot.

BAM. The left fist connects.

BAM. BAM. BAM Kendrick starts ANGRILY PUMMELING THE WALL.

Faster and FASTER. He's funneling his rage and anger through
EVERY. SINGLE. PUNCH.

And as he CONTINUES SMASHING THE WALL, we-- CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER

The President RESURFACES. Gets out of the water.
He's not exhausted. He's composed and collected.

Kendrick goes over to a chair with his things. He dries
himself with another towel.

He puts on his clothes. His shirt. His tie.

And he walks out. Serene. Ready. Presidential.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. CAFE CASSIOPEIA - DAWN**

The Starfleet Deltan is sitting at a small cafe terrace.

Someone approaches, starts to hover near the table.

She turns her head to see standing: ELLIS, the cadet she called from the ship simulator. He's gaping at her.

DELTAN

Please stop staring.

ELLIS

Sorry. It's just weird seeing a superior officer outside school.

DELTAN

You should sit down and relax.
You're scaring customers away.

ELLIS

I'm still not sure why you asked me here. I thought there was an Academy curfew since yesterday?

DELTAN

We were interrupted last time, so I wanted to finish our conversation.

ELLIS

The one where you were about to suspend me?

DELTAN

The opposite. What you did in the sim showed that you knew enough about tactical analysis. Which means you studied Command Mechanics on your own. Pretty advanced for someone at your level.

ELLIS

I thought I showed "complete disregard and apathy" towards the Academy?

DELTAN

You're skipping classes, but I know you want to be in Starfleet. You look at the other cadets like you're staring at them from under an elm tree. Far removed.

Ellis blushes.

DELTAN (CONT'D)
 Tell me, when you look up at night,
 what do you see?

ELLIS
 (confused)
 Uh, stars and planets?

DELTAN
 Number one: don't take everything
 literally. I didn't ask what you're
 looking at. I asked what you see.

Ellis thinks for a beat, then:

ELLIS
 Where I want to go next.
 (off her reaction)
 As much as I like Earth, I really
 want to explore.

DELTAN
 So, Starfleet. Smart. I think the
 response I gave was a little bit
 more trite. But we are similar. For
 instance, you don't have friends.

Ellis sneers, but quickly looks down. Self-conscious.

DELTAN (CONT'D)
 Eyes up. No more sullen looks. Now,
 what's number two?

ELLIS
 (guessing)
 Have friends?

DELTAN
 Never be ashamed of who you are.
 The relevant people see your
 potential. In fact, we've been
 watching you for a while.

ELLIS
 (creeped out)
 Okay.

She peers straight at Ellis, looking for a reaction.

DELTAN
 What do you know of 47, the Red
 Squadron?

A twinkle appears in his eye.

ELLIS
47 is the best cadet unit at
Starfleet Academy. Full missions,
unit commands, real situations.

DELTAN
Why "best"?

ELLIS
Composed only of the elite from the
Academy. Best scores, performances--

DELTAN
Number three: Just because your
peers believe something doesn't
make it true. People goggle at us
and think we are the best. They're
dead wrong. The truth is that we
are the best of us. This isn't
about being superior to everyone.
It's about achieving yourself.

A smile creeps up on Ellis' face. Hook, line.

DELTAN (CONT'D)
I need you to research something.

She hands him a Starfleet RED PADD. He takes it, confused.

DELTAN (CONT'D)
To prove yourself.

EXT. LOW EARTH ORBIT

The PRESIDENTIAL SHUTTLE enters LEO, travelling from Paris
all the way to the USA West Coast, as we TRACK IT to--

EXT. UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS EXECUTIVE BUILDING - DAY

The sight of the GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE and TRANSAMERICA PYRAMID
BUILDING amid futuristic structures remind us that the
President has now arrived in San Francisco. The sun is rising
over the city.

As we behold for the first time the view of the UNITED
FEDERATION OF PLANETS (UFP) EXECUTIVE BUILDING, the
Presidential shuttle LANDS on a PRIVATE SHUTTLEWAY near it.

A few officers exit the vehicle first, securing the way
before President Kendrick and Chief of Staff Val step out.

They exchange a look as Val leads him down a path to a
private limousine.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The limousine arrives at a CEMETERY. There's an intimate gathering outside, near a lake.

Kendrick is looking out the window, pensive. Val opposite.

VAL

Drazel's family are still a few days away. I was, however, able to find a Bolian priest.

He barely registers.

VAL (CONT'D)

I have also made the people attending aware of the official gag order from the Ardanans.

Still unresponsive.

VAL (CONT'D)

Sir, they are waiting for us.

He turns to her.

KENDRICK

Did you ever notice those little origamis on my desk? She'd fold a different one every morning before I arrived.

ON KENDRICK, looking back outside.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

"Everybody should start the day with something new."

EXT. WATER CEMETERY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

A BOLIAN PRIEST, eyes closed, begins pontificating.

BOLIAN PRIEST

For the Great Bird of the Galaxy once set its wings to the Sea, and seeded a grain as water flowed. Tides came, tides went. And on the tenth day, a creature swam out to shore. Connecting water to air. Sea to land. Planet to galaxy.

Kendrick and Val make part of the SMALL GATHERING, no more than a dozen people, grouped near the shore of the San Francisco Water Cemetery: a LARGE ARTIFICIAL LAKE for water burials of Federation citizens.

BOLIAN PRIEST (CONT'D)

Many moons came, many moons went.
 And the creature grew. Curiosity
 turned into wisdom. And the child
 turned adult as the stars above him
 grew brighter.

A FOLDED BOLIAN FLAG and a FOLDED FEDERATION FLAG have been
 laid side-by-side on the lake, in lieu of a body. They're
 floating close to land, next to two officers.

BOLIAN PRIEST (CONT'D)

"What is beyond here?", he asked
 himself every night. And on one
 morning, the Great Bird finally
 came for his lost creature. Come
 now, child, it is time to fly away.
 But the creature took offense:
 "Bird, I am no child. I have seen
 forests grow, and trees wither.
 Ranges rise and mountains fall.
 Witnessed births and beheld deaths.
 I have grown adult." So the Great
 Bird leaned next to the lost
 creature, and whispered: "To your
 own seas and own lands you may be
 an adult, but to the stars and
 galaxies, you are merely a child."
 And the Great Bird flew away.

Moment of silence. The priest opens his eyes.

The FEDERATION ANTHEM starts playing, as the flags are GENTLY
 PUSHED by the two officers. They float away on the lake.

MOMENTS LATER

Kendrick is seated near the shoreline, staring at the two
 flags, now far out in the water.

A man sits next to him, DOCTOR RICHARD DAYSTROM (40). Rich,
 smart, ambitious, he's a 23rd-Century Miles Dyson.

DAYSTROM

Who knew they were so fond of Big
 Bird.

The President eyeballs Daystrom. Then smiles. The first one
 in a while.

KENDRICK

It's good to see you.

DAYSTROM

You don't call, you don't write.
Had to hear about Drazel from Val
of all people.

He nods at Val, busy working a communicator.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)

I used to have late-night chats
with her about you. A while ago
obviously, but still. She always
had a fondness for you.

Daystrom stands up.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)

Time to refresh the mind with
spirit.

KENDRICK

Here?

DAYSTROM

I brought my own car. It carries
the best of liqueurs.

KENDRICK

I knew Starfleet was pandering to
you but I never thought they'd
stoop this low.

DAYSTROM

Don't hate the players.

He extends a hand to Kendrick, who takes it.

INT. STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE - ADMIRAL BARROS' OFFICE - DAY

Admiral Barros is enjoying some tea. The Deltan knocks at the
door, shaking a PADD at the window. He signals her to enter.

DELTAN

I may have some information on--

She notices that Prime Minister Guillory is on a conference
screen. The Deltan is reticent to continue.

GUILLORY

It's quite all right. I'm here to
save some red tape.

DELTAN

(to Barros)

Sir?

ADMIRAL BARROS

You can proceed.

Guillory gives the Deltan a reassuring smile. She softens, going over her report on the Tellus incident.

DELTAN

Since everybody at Intelligence is trying to piece together what happened during the fall, I wanted to see what was going on before the ship even left Earth.

The Deltan pulls up documents on the red PADD she gave Ellis.

DELTAN (CONT'D)

I searched the cargo manifest. I found flags, banners, a bunch of diplomatic stuff. And zenite.

GUILLORY

Ardanan ore. They probably wanted it for some custom thing.

DELTAN

That's what I thought at first, but then the quantities were so massive that it still seemed a bit strange. So, I checked the cargo logs.

She hands over the tablet to the Admiral. He glances over it.

DELTAN (CONT'D)

There was a silent alarm triggered by refined magnesite an hour before the Tellus launched. The alarm was suppressed a few seconds later.

ADMIRAL BARROS

(that's it?)

It's reactor maintenance.

DELTAN

That's the thing. What triggered the alarm wasn't the delivery of magnesite. It was the zenite. Which, when properly bonded with refined magnesite, can be triggered to serve as an explosive. Depending on where the detonation was, it could've easily created a chain reaction to internal failure.

ADMIRAL BARROS

And a re-entry attempt without shields. No wreckage. No trace.

GUILLORY

No proof either. Only a theory.

DELTAN

(shaking the red PADD)
And this record.

INT. 1950'S-STYLE AMERICAN DINER - DAY

A hackneyed 1950s American diner. Like a Johnny Rockets on crack (minus rollerblades).

We find in one of the booths a SCRUFFY MAN with the jitters. Nervously sipping his glass. Waiting for someone.

An ANDORIAN sits down opposite him. Let's call him THELOS. Despite having BLUE SKIN and WHITE HAIR, the first thing anyone notices about Thelos is the ONE ANTENNA on the LEFT PART OF HIS FOREHEAD, instead of the usual two attributed to Andorians. A SMALL SCAR marks the location of the missing right one. He's wearing an entirely BLACK OUTFIT.

Thelos is definitely NOT the guy Scruffy was expecting. He reacts and is about to get the hell out. Thelos uses his legs to grab Scruffy's ankle, forcing him back down in his seat.

THELOS

(matter-of-fact)
You have two brothers, one sister,
a mother in Kansas and a missing
father. And none of these people
know yet that you helped take down
the Tellus a few seconds ago.

Scruffy clenches, apprehensive. A WAITRESS comes over to their booth. Bringing two fresh glasses of water, and ready to take their order.

WAITRESS

(to Thelos)
What can I getcha, hon'?

Thelos' demeanor is smooth and nonchalant, almost *too* cool. The polar opposite of Scruffy.

THELOS

Could I get your steak and eggs,
medium-rare, over-easy, and no hash-
browns or toasts.

WAITRESS

(jotting down the order)
Sure thing. Coming right up.

The Andorian engages Scruffy as soon as the waitress leaves.

THELOS

Sorry about all the trivia. It's my experience quick personal facts get a person's attention faster than anything else. I know you were expecting someone different, but Patric is not joining us.

Scruffy glares at him. No idea what to make of this alien.

THELOS (CONT'D)

Actually, I'm kind of surprised you still haven't left Earth. Stupid move if you ask me.

Thelos notices Scruffy glaring at his missing antenna.

THELOS (CONT'D)

A few years back, I used to be a cadet in Starfleet. And every night after class, I would go to this gorgeous fountain a few miles out of the Presidio. A little bit out of the way, but worth it. One night, I go to the fountain, and there are these three boys hanging out. I'm just some kid with homework, so I walk over to my spot. And then these three start harassing me. "Blue skin this, antenna freak that, yadi yadi yada." Four quips later, they're pushing me around. My Andorian reflexes kick in. I start clobbering them.

Thelos continues talking as he pulls out of his jacket a THICK YELLOW ENVELOPE, sliding it in front of Scruffy, and a PENNY KNIFE that he puts next to the diner's utensils.

THELOS (CONT'D)

Bam, I lay the first one down. Second goes out easy with an undercut. And the third just falls over. But, then, a fourth guy comes out of nowhere. ZAP! He pulls his phaser and stuns me. I'm out cold. I wake up in this back alley somewhere, on my knees. Three are keeping me down while the fourth one pulls out this knife of his. He walks over. Grabs my antenna, and--

The WAITRESS comes back with the ordered food. Lays it all on the table in front of the Andorian.

WAITRESS

Here ya go. Anything else I can do for ya, sweetie?

THELOS

I think we're good. Thanks.

WAITRESS

Enjoy!

She departs. Thelos continues talking WHILE EATING his food. He's cutting the meat using HIS OWN PENNY KNIFE.

THELOS

Now, I'm no expert on human knives. But Andorian antennas are extremely sensitive. Tip of human fingers, tenfold. So, when he starts slicing mine away, you can picture me feeling literally every single millimeter of it. Blinded by the pain. And yet, what I'm thinking about in that moment is what type of knife this guy's using on me. And I realize that it has to be some kind of pocket knife. Because if he had been using a full knife, this thing would have been over ten minutes ago.

Thelos puts his utensils down. He leans in towards Scruffy.

THELOS (CONT'D)

I despise speciests. No honor, only ignorance and hatred. And that means, if someone like me offers someone like you a ticket out--

Thelos taps the envelope. Scruffy eyes it. Considers it.

THELOS (CONT'D)

You take it.

Scruffy finally picks it and goes away.

Thelos wipes the penny knife. Puts it back in his jacket.

EXT. STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Prime Minister Guillory is exiting the Intelligence building on Starfleet grounds.

While walking, she juggles between reading the red Starfleet PADD and calling someone with her communicator.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. WATER CEMETERY - DAY

Chief of Staff Val, near the cemetery lake, answers the call.

VAL
This is Val.

GUILLORY
And this is Prime Minister
Guillory. How have you been? When
did we see each other last?
Andorian dinner?

VAL
I am sure you have more important
things to do than waste my time
with small talk.

GUILLORY
No need to be insulting, I'm here
to extend an olive branch.
Information you may find compelling
about the Tellus.
(beat)
Hello?

VAL
I am waiting for the information.

Guillory lets out a dry laugh.

GUILLORY
Since the President is in town, I
actually would love to have a
sitdown with him. In person.

VAL
Zora, the President is in no
condition to receive anyone at this
time. And the Tellus is a Starfleet
and Federation affair.

GUILLORY
In Earth orbit. We may not see eye
to eye on some issues, but we can
both agree that the President
should be aware of all angles.

OFF Val, looking at the President's limousine, considering.

INT. DAYSTROM CAR - DAY

Daystrom pulls out from his luxurious car's mini-bar a bottle
and two glasses.

He pours the drinks, raises a glass, Kendrick follows.

DAYSTROM
To Drazel.

KENDRICK
To Drazel.

They drink.

DAYSTROM
(pouring another one)
How are you holding up?

KENDRICK
I'm drinking instead of governing.
What does it look like?

DAYSTROM
I'm not talking about that.

Kendrick glances at the President's BRUISED KNUCKLES.

KENDRICK
Trust me. I'm fine.

DAYSTROM
Val mentioned you weren't "there".

Kendrick shakes his head. Unbelievable.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)
She's only looking out for you.

KENDRICK
She's looking out for the
President.
(sneer)
The man with the weight of a
hundred worlds.

DAYSTROM
Am I going to have to call a
counselor?

KENDRICK
I don't even know what happened up
there. One minute I'm with her--

DAYSTROM
What matters is not what happened
to you, it's how you react to it.

KENDRICK
Mottos only work until you put them
to use.

DAYSTROM
I'll tell you how Drazel would
react. She'd make a speech about
your Presidential heritage.

A smile. Then:

KENDRICK

How about you come back to work?

Daystrom can feel the weight in his voice.

DAYSTROM

As much as I'd love to join you,
you know Ad Tech would kill me.

KENDRICK

Leaving me with Val's stoic glare.
That's cold, even for you.

DAYSTROM

Sometimes, someone glaring at you
is exactly what you need.

A KNOCK on the car window. Val.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIME MINISTERIAL HOME - NIGHT

A car drops Prime Minister Guillory off.

As she approaches her home, she notices President Kendrick,
sitting on her porch.

KENDRICK

Val told me you were trying to
arrange a "sitdown". Thought I'd
spare both of us some scheduling.

Guillory carefully side-steps the President. Unlocks her
front door. Enters.

VAL

Come on in, David.

INT. PRIME MINISTERIAL HOME - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Kendrick walks in after her. Door closes.

The President starts to walk around. Taking in the place.

KENDRICK

Where's Kylli?

GUILLORY

Still at FNN.

KENDRICK

Working late.

Guillory doesn't blink. Pulls the red PADD from Starfleet.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)
There's even a little Starfleet
logo on it. Cute.

Not amused, she hands it. He swipes through the device.
Skeptical at the content.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)
Why would Starfleet Intelligence
come to you with this?

GUILLORY
I came to them. Seeing as
Intelligence sugar-coats things.

KENDRICK
What am I supposed to make of this?

GUILLORY
"This" is a cargo manifest heavily
hinting at explosives on board your
ship. I wanted you to be aware of
the truth. If not first hand, then--

KENDRICK
From you.

GUILLORY
Just the messenger here. I'm sure
Drazel--

KENDRICK
Ah, the relationship card in, what,
under a minute? A personal best.

GUILLORY
Whether you're too blind to see it
or not, your administration
shelters you from what's outside.

KENDRICK
I sense bitterness.

GUILLORY
Reality. I look at the Tellus as a
wake-up call from below. You may
still be in dream world, but people
on Earth realize that the
Federation is only ideals.

KENDRICK

You're always happy to pat yourself for all Terran achievements, but you sure as hell never want to give credit to the Federation.

GUILLORY

I'm trying to work for the people, not despite them.

KENDRICK

We bring worlds together. We unite species!

GUILLORY

You go out to the stars, blend whoever you find, and mold whatever comes out the other end. Have you ever visited the people you represent?

No rebuttal. She's hit a nerve. And doubles down.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

I'm not talking about making some noble speech in a school somewhere. I mean actually interacting with your citizens.

KENDRICK

How often you forget that you were on the Federation council yourself.

GUILLORY

"When an ant sees a crumb, it knows when to take it."

Kendrick tenses at the quote. Guillory grabs the PADD back.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

I just gave you proof that 58 people were murdered on your own ship. Maybe the President of the goddamn United Federation should start thinking about reasons why.

And OFF Guillory showing the door to the President...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. PRIME MINISTERIAL HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING**

Journalist Kylli Moon (from the wallscreen conference) is lying in bed. Staring at the ceiling. Wide awake.

BZZZ-- The ALARM goes off, waking up the woman next to her--

PRIME MINISTER GUILLORY.

Guillory silences the alarm, grabs her COMMUNICATOR and puts her WEDDING RING back on.

Guillory rolls over to face her wife. But Killy's eyes are now CLOSED. "Asleep".

INT. ARDANAN EMBASSY - VESTIBULE - DAY - LATER

Minister Guillory enters the embassy.

Clean and abstract, almost disquietingly so.

Despite the Tellus disaster, the few Ardanans around are all calm and methodical in the way they move or interact.

Among them, we find the new de-facto executive leader of the Ardanan government, HIGH ADVISOR VILTRI (40s) talking to his young assistant.

Prime Minister Guillory goes straight for Viltri. Informal.

VILTRI
(taken aback)
Prime Minister Guillory, what a
surprise. Please, let us sit down.

She follows his lead. They both move into--

INT. ARDANAN EMBASSY - EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Prime Minister and High Advisor are sitting face to face around a coffee table with a teapot and cups.

GUILLORY
Mr. Viltri, I wanted to give you my
deepest--

VILTRI
(correcting her)
High Advisor.

GUILLORY
High Advisor Viltri, of course. The
entire United Earth government
extends its sympathies.

VILTRI

We appreciate your words. Would you like some tea, perhaps?

GUILLORY

No, thank you.

Viltri pours himself a cup.

VILTRI

If you don't mind me asking, why is it that you came to visit us at such a time?

GUILLORY

With everything going on, I would like you and I make a televised appearance. We need to reassure both our populations, as well as the rest of the Federation. Side by side. The people will want to hear from us.

Viltri listens while drinking his tea. Stoical.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

Delivering a message to show our mutual strength, and officialize your membership, is a key process--

VILTRI

Officialize membership?

GUILLORY

People are going to question your legitimacy. Clearly, an official statement will downplay any doubt to your claim as Federation members. If we are now allies, we--

VILTRI

(stoic)

Prime Minister, you are in my embassy, so I offer you seating and tea. That is the way we do things. But do not mistake my diplomatic gestures for mutual fondness.

He puts down his cup.

VILTRI (CONT'D)

In fact, the more you speak, the more I realize your lack of knowledge when it comes to our culture.

(MORE)

VILTRI (CONT'D)

We bury, we memorialize, and we mourn our dead before we express any public sentiment. Especially in times of tragedy.

His tone has gone from cordial to cutting.

VILTRI (CONT'D)

Let me put it in words you will understand. Only when we have memorialized the twelve Ardanans that have died this morning will I publicize my grief, and my outrage about what happened. And when I do, I will be standing next to the President of the Federation. Our Federation. Not a minister from a foreign world.

He stands up. His composure and facade back on. Smiles.

VILTRI (CONT'D)

(gesturing out)
If you would mind.

OFF Guillory, completely mortified.

INT. UFP EXECUTIVE BUILDING - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Chief of Staff Val is sitting alone in the office, waiting for President Kendrick.

Her eye catches something on the President's desk-- the ORIGAMI HORSE from earlier, brought over from Paris.

She suddenly stands up as Kendrick enters.

He dashes over to his desk, with the Starfleet PADD. On edge.

KENDRICK

Push back the Council meeting until next week.

VAL

We need to make the new appointments as soon as--

KENDRICK

(sharp)
Push it back.

VAL

Yes, Sir.

KENDRICK

What would you say if I told you
I'm not making tomorrow's speech?

Val reacts as a Vulcan.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

I knew I'd get an eyebrow raise.

VAL

It is my understanding that Drazel
would have, and I quote, "stabbed
you with the blades of a thousand
Nausicaan swords" if you did not
perform the speech according to her
wishes. I assume that also includes
not giving it in the first place.

KENDRICK

It was only a thought. Triggered by
this thing.

(handing her the red PADD)

Results of my meeting with Zora.
The Tellus didn't just suffer a
"technical failure" according to
her, and based on this.

VAL

(scanning through)

Do you believe it?

KENDRICK

It's no proof, but I can't believe
what happened was an accident.

VAL

Who else is aware?

KENDRICK

Supposedly just her and a couple
Intelligence people. They won't be
the only ones.

VAL

I will move tomorrow's one-on-one
with Kylli to next week.

KENDRICK

No, leave it for tomorrow.

VAL

She will ask about the Tellus.

KENDRICK

Exactly. And I'll answer.

VAL

Regardless of the evidence, if this was indeed a terrorist act, our legitimacy could be severely impacted.

KENDRICK

Which is why we should be the first ones mentioning this officially.

VAL

The only course of action is to limit any comments on the subject. At least until we know more.

KENDRICK

I thought Vulcans couldn't lie.

VAL

This is not about lying. We need to frame the discussion away from anything that could harm diplomatic relations. An accident.

KENDRICK

I have noted your point. The interview stays.

VAL (CONT'D)

You will be negating all your efforts at bringing the Ardanans into the Federation. The need of--

Kendrick SLAMS his desk. Val almost flinches.

KENDRICK

The hell with the "need of the many"! Lying by omission is still lying. 58 people, 58 of my own citizens, died on that ship. And you want me to just sit there, and answer pointless questions like nothing happened? These people were murdered. Drazel was murdered.

VAL

Perhaps, but I want you to consider the only logical option you have.

INT. STARFLEET ACADEMY - DORMITORY - EVENING

Cadet Ellis comes back to his empty bedroom. It's dark. The lights are off. They don't appear to work.

As he is about to exit the room, he notices something small sitting on his pillow. It's reflecting the moonshine.

His eyes go wide, picking it up, as he realizes it's a PIN, bright red with the number 47 inscribed. He grins.

INT. PRIME MINISTERIAL HOME - FOYER - EVENING

Prime Minister Guillory is enjoying dinner with her wife.

GUILLORY

It's ridiculous. They pull all these restrictions on civilians, and then they give some 20-year-old his own starship!

Kylli is at the other end of the dining table. Indifferent.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

It's frightening is what it is. Inexperienced captains commanding our fleet. You should really just do an exposé on that.

Guillory finally notices her wife isn't touching her plate.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

Is the food not good?

In response, Kylli mechanically starts eating.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

Everything all right? I'm sorry if I've been running around this week, but with the Tellus--

No answer. Still barely working the fork in the food.

Guillory moves next to Kylli. Comforting.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

It'll be fine, honey. You'll do great tomorrow.

She lays her hands over hers.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

Hey. Don't go out in the stars.

Kylli mulls over what she's about to say.

KYLLI

I missed the call.

GUILLORY

What call? At the museum opening?

KYLLI

No.

She wells up.

KYLLI (CONT'D)

FNN couldn't guarantee me a seat on the Tellus since they already had someone there. They told me they would call me in the morning to confirm. I missed the call.

GUILLORY

What did you say to me after the election?

KYLLI

(mocking)

Either stare back or move forward.

GUILLORY

You cannot blame yourself for this. You cannot stay in the past. It happened. We move on.

(facing Kylli)

All right?

Kylli nods, swallowing her tears.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

You tell me. What is forward?

KYLLI

The hundredth.

GUILLORY

And then?

KYLLI

Presidential interview.

GUILLORY

First one-on-one. And they picked you for it. Think about that.

A bit of a smile from Kylli.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)

We will move forward. Say it.

KYLLI

We will move forward.

GUILLORY

Now say it, and believe it.

A breath.

KYLLI

(convinced)

We will move forward.

INT. UFP EXECUTIVE BUILDING - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The President is working a late night behind his desk.

KNOCK on the door: a SECURITY OFFICER.

SECURITY OFFICER
Sir, the Andorian ambassador would
like to see you.

KENDRICK
Sure.

The officer lets in the alien visitor: THELOS, the one-
antennad Andorian from the diner. Still in all-black outfit.

The door closes behind him.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)
(focused on work)
I thought you were still on a
retreat?

THELOS
Ambassador Brani is.

Not recognizing the voice, Kendrick looks up.

THELOS (CONT'D)
In fact, I think she's playing
racket-ball right now with her two
nephews.

The President moves his hand under the desk, to the SILENT
ALARM BUTTON. About to push it.

THELOS (CONT'D)
(re: alarm)
Not so fast, Mr. President. Please.
I just need a moment of your time.

KENDRICK
Who the hell are you?

He stays on the trigger.

THELOS
A concerned citizen.

KENDRICK
Am I supposed to be impressed?

THELOS
I usually go for intrigue.

KENDRICK

Cut the mystery crap and tell me a reason why I shouldn't call security right now.

THELOS

I'll give you two. One, you learned yesterday the U.S.S. Tellus was bombed. I know who and what. Two, and that one is more of a general comment, we both share the same goal: to keep this Federation alive. And by "we", I am including people other than you and myself.

Thelos starts to pace, defiant.

THELOS (CONT'D)

We know everything about you. I don't just mean that cherimoya is your favorite fruit or your secret hate for underwater pool tiles.

KENDRICK

You come all the way here to walk around my office and, what? Threaten me?

THELOS

Our knowledge is not a threat. It is more a bridge towards mutual understanding.

KENDRICK

Or leverage.

THELOS

This is not blackmail. In fact, we don't like our interventions in state affairs to be so blatant. But, given the timeframe, we felt it was necessary tonight to violate our own...

(thinking of the word)

Prime Directive.

Thelos goes over to the couch, takes off his jacket, sits down. Makes himself comfortable.

THELOS (CONT'D)

However, if you really want to know who I am-- I was born and raised on Andoria.

(MORE)

THELOS (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're already familiar with all the off-worlders miners that used to roam into towns, desecrating villages, ransacking homes.

KENDRICK

Charulhans.

THELOS

Yes. My mother at the time had this ferocious beast, a small Zachur. To protect us. Like your watch dogs, except more ravenous. Fed twice, if not thrice a day with fresh meat. But one night, my mother forgot to satiate the beast. It slithered into our home. Into my bedroom.

Thelos snaps his fingers.

THELOS (CONT'D)

And my antenna was gone. So, my mother did the only thing she thought right: she killed the beast. The following night, the off-worlders came to our home, pillaged it, burnt it to a crisp.

KENDRICK

Was there a point to this story?

THELOS

Point is my mother was wrong. She was a fool because she did not understand the rules of her world. I don't repeat mistakes.

KENDRICK

Maybe the moral is you should have kept a tighter leash on your dog.

THELOS

When you look up at night, what do you see? Hope? I see Klingons. Romulans. Threats. Lurking. Whether the Tellus was an accident or not is irrelevant. We have to use this opportunity to help our future. Bring our species, our worlds together. One Federation united.

KENDRICK

You talk about the murder of 58 people as an opportunity.

(MORE)

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Here's my pompous speech-- I believe you blew up the Tellus. You tried to pull some black flag operation for whatever reason, and it exploded in your face. Tomorrow, that lie ends.

THELOS

You can believe whatever you want, Mr. President. All that matters now is what you do. The Federation needs its President during these tragic times.

KENDRICK

Why would you expect me to do what is right for your interests?

THELOS

Right, wrong. Truths, lies. Only dictatorships deal in absolute. We deal in contingencies.

The Andorian grabs his jacket, about to walk away, when--

KENDRICK

Your right antenna was bitten off when you were a child?

THELOS

So it was.

KENDRICK

And here I believed Andorian antennas only took a week to completely grow back.

THELOS

Good night, Mr. President.

Thelos takes off, as an uneasy President Kendrick finally relaxes off the alarm trigger.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**EXT. STARFLEET OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE - DAY**

A CHILDREN'S CHOIR sings the STARFLEET ANTHEM. The choir, about fifty young students, is located in the MIDDLE of a stadium-like GIGANTIC STAGE surrounded by TIERED SEATING.

STARFLEET and FEDERATION FLAGS are displayed in the back. Also on stage are various REPRESENTATIVES, including President Kendrick.

APPLAUSE rings out as the anthem concludes. A SEA OF PEOPLE surrounds the stage. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, most in their formal Starfleet uniform.

Prime Minister Guillory takes over the dais.

GUILLORY

It is with the greatest of honors
that I introduce to you a dear
friend of mine. Ladies and
Gentlemen: the President of this
United Federation of Planets, David
Kendrick.

A huge STANDING OVATION from the mass as the President walks over to deliver his speech.

KENDRICK

Prime Minister, Admirals, officers,
cadets, dignitaries, distinguished
guests and all other beings: A
century ago, one of the greatest
institutions known to sentienity
was created. But today, we are not
here to celebrate this occasion. We
are not here to pat ourselves on
the back. We are here to observe,
to reflect, to comment on a century
of progress.

Val enthusiastically nods.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Today, we look back at our triumphs
and our losses. We recognize our
victories and our defeats. We
remember the past and glimpse into
the future. We look at what--or who
made all of these accomplishments
possible. Humans, like Dr. Richard
Daystrom, who designed eighteen
years ago the duotronic computer
system, changing the way we
interact with machines to this day.

As Kendrick continues, we go through the crowd to see familiar Starfleet faces in the amphitheatre: Admiral Barros, the Deltan, and cadets like Ellis and Warren.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Andorians, like Captain Thani, who last year sacrificed her life to save fifty-two of her crew during the Nova mission. Vulcans, like Val, my own Chief of Staff, who at the age of six sent a letter to Starfleet Academy, asking them to create a course on cultural etiquette that would later revolutionize interspecies interactions. Tellarites, like Yor, who paved the way for the discovery of pergium in the Janus system. One hundred years of History and hundreds of species working as one. We look at these people because our greatest fortitude is also our greatest weakness: ourselves. It is our ceiling, but also our ladder. We reach for ideals not because it is what we want, but because it is what we believe in. We go boldly, not because of what is out there, but because of what is in here.

He points to his heart.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Space may be the final frontier, but who we are is the first. To explore new worlds. To seek out new life. To discover new civilizations. To boldly go. That is what Starfleet has represented for these past one-hundred years, and that is what Starfleet will continue to represent for hundreds of years to come. Because that is who we are. Thank you.

THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE as the President waves to the crowd.

CUT TO:

INT. UFP EXECUTIVE BUILDING - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The President is sitting down in his office with Kylli Moon for the interview. It's fairly light.

KENDRICK

I actually did talk with your wife,
Prime Minister Guillory, about
these very issues. We need to have
great minds working on this.

Val is studying the interview behind video monitors.

She calls someone on her communicator.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

A homely two-bedroom apartment in the middle of Paris.

Press Secretary Lauren is in her open kitchen, working on an
ancient food synthesizer. Stonewalled.

LAUREN

(pressing a button)
Root beer.

Nothing.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

(again)
Root beer!

Still nothing.

CHIRP CHIRP-- Her COMMUNICATOR starts ringing in the living
room. She dashes over to pick it up.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Yes?

VAL

This is Val.

LAUREN

What's new?

VAL

The President is sitting down with
Kylli Moon right now. Are you sure
about her?

While talking, Lauren is still fidgeting with the machine.

LAUREN

Best thing on FNN. Why? Second
thoughts?

VAL

Only about the Ardanans.

LAUREN

We're not really mentioning the Tellus. We're moving away from the disaster into more upbeat governmental things, right?

Val is half-listening, observing the interview.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Everything okay?

VAL

Just wanted to make sure everything was covered.

Val hangs up, going back to the President's interview.

KYLLI

Now, Mr. President, I would be remiss if I did not at least mention the U.S.S. Tellus.

The tone has shifted.

KYLLI (CONT'D)

Despite Ardanan customs, there is a large number of Federations citizens growing concerned over the lack of output from their government. Rumors are even swirling about explosives triggered on the ship. Would you care to comment?

KENDRICK

Absolutely, Kylli. In fact, I would like to address these rumors head on. There has been a lot of talk recently...

The President continues responding, mouthing words as his voice slowly FADES AWAY until being COMPLETELY MUTED to us.

Over him, all we begin to hear is--

PRE-LAP: CHAMBER MUSIC

INT. STARFLEET BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The melody is coming from a group of CLASSICAL MUSICIANS. They are playing in the middle of the prestigious hall, decorated for the GALA of Starfleet's hundredth anniversary.

Starfleet service members are in their FORMAL STARFLEET UNIFORMS. Invited guests are in TUXEDOS and EVENING GOWNS. All are dancing, talking, enjoying themselves.

MAIN DANCE FLOOR

Kylli and Guillory, an amorous couple slow-dancing.

GUILLORY
Isn't this nice?

Kylli, her head resting on Guillory's shoulder, just lets out a sound of content.

GUILLORY (CONT'D)
How was the interview?

KYLLI
How about we stop thinking about presidents, politics, governments, abandon all our responsibilities and just go somewhere else?

GUILLORY
That does sound enticing, but one of us has a planet to take care of.

KYLLI
You should arrange a weekend off. Just us two. I hear Risa is pretty nice. Tropical resorts, pristine beaches, intimate rites.

GUILLORY
Snaring me with paradise. I hate you so much.

And with a smile, they kiss.

As the couple continues slow-dancing, we MOVE OVER to the

BAR

The Starfleet Deltan is about to order a drink at the counter. Cadet Ellis appears next to her, proudly wearing his newly minted red 47 pin.

DELTAN
You clean up nicely.

ELLIS
(re: her gown; awkward)
Not too shabby yourself.

She chuckles.

DELTAN
Since we're here, let me introduce.

The Deltan addresses the man casually hanging next to her--

DELTAN (CONT'D)
Sir, this is Damien Ellis.

The Andorian THELOS, now wearing a STARFLEET UNIFORM, turns.

THELOS
Ah. You must be our new recruit.
Welcome to 47.

Thelos offers his hand. Ellis proudly shakes it, noticing his red uniform --

ELLIS
I'm looking forward to working
under your command, Sir.

THELOS
First we have your trial phase. I'm
sure my Lieutenant here will be
impressed with your achievements.

DELTAN
I have no doubt.

THELOS
Speaking of. May I borrow you for a
moment?

DELTAN
Sure thing.
(to Ellis)
Go on, cadet. Have fun. That's an
order.

He scampers off, as Thelos leads the Deltan to the

ALCOVE

It's just the two of them.

THELOS
How's our scruffy speciest friend?

DELTAN
Not an issue anymore. I also gave
Barros and the Prime Minister the
cargo manifest.

THELOS
Excellent.

DELTAN
I'm still not sure why that was
necessary.

THELOS

If there's one lesson you should
take away on our hundredth, it's to
always be sure you're the one still
controlling the flame.

And all smiles, as he extends his arm to her, we-- CUT TO:

INT. UFP EXECUTIVE BUILDING - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The President, in his tuxedo, is sitting by himself, having a
drink. He's already a bit tipsy.

Val enters, in a FORMAL VULCAN GOWN.

VAL

Sir, are you not coming?

KENDRICK

(gesturing with glass)
Come on, join. Mingling can wait!

She sits down next to him.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

What we're gonna do is pre-game.

He serves her a glass and a fresh one for himself.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

No need to understand what that
means. Drink up.

CLINK! He drinks. She does not.

VAL

There is alcohol at the ball.

KENDRICK

But peace is up here.
(then)
Kind of ironic that the interview
came on the day of the speech.
Well, ironic isn't quite right.
(thinks about it)
Fortuitous. Yes, that's it.

He leans back on the couch. Continues meandering.

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

Did you see that moment with Kylli
staring at me? Point-blank: "Do you
think the Tellus was bombed?" And
the only thing that pops in my head
is that line from Drazel's speech.

(MORE)

KENDRICK (CONT'D)

The one about how "we" are the first frontier. That we have to overcome what we want before achieving what is needed.

(matter-of-fact)

I said it was an accident. I lied.

VAL

You withheld. It is my belief that you made the right decision.

KENDRICK

No, Val. I made the logical one.

KNOCK. KNOCK. They are interrupted by an AIDE.

AIDE

Sorry to disturb, Mr. President, but I think you should see this.

Kendrick puts down his drink. They all walk out into--

INT. UFP EXECUTIVE BUILDING - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A dozen STAFFERS gathered around a large SCREEN on the wall. They part ways to let the President and Val closer to it. A VIDEO is being aired on the Federation News Network.

ON THE SCREEN

A MASKED MAN sitting in an UNMARKED ROOM addressing the camera. Addressing us.

MASKED HUMAN

--have ruled it as a mishap. But this Federation and its president continue to spread their insidious lies. Victims of this tragedy have been robbed of one simple truth--

Val tenses, bracing for what is about to be publicly said.

MASKED HUMAN (CONT'D)

The U.S.S. Tellus was bombed. The Federation sees and hears everything, but they are blind to our needs, and deaf to our cries. We will make this Federation cease. For our people. For our planets. For our worlds.

And OFF KENDRICK fathoming the new reality of this threat...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT