

*Starship: Excelsior*

**"The Fire In Which We Burn"**

(Season 6, Episode 7)

By James Heaney

Story by Leanna Keyes

Transcribed by Peter Stine

---

Note: Lines in brackets were recorded but interrupted. The complete line is left here for fuller context:

## RECAP

NARRATOR: Previously, on Starship *Excelsior*...

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR BRIEFING ROOM (FROM 6F-01)

NEEVA: Okay, so *when* did we end up? Are we talking days, months?

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR BRIEFING ROOM (FROM 6F-03)

ELBRUN: This whole star system will die when that sun goes supernova... a billion years before *any* of our species evolve out of the mud.

LOCATION: AGENT ISAAC'S CONTROL ROOM (FROM 6F-02)

ISAAC: They are not dead. We would not still be looking for them if they were dead.

PSUEDO: And how long will you have us searching? We'll die of old age before we search a fraction of one percent of this sector's history.

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR BRIEFING ROOM (FROM 6F-03)

J'NAYA: The *Excelsior* has enough deuterium fuel left in her tanks to keep emergency power for... eighteen months. The more effort we put into repairs, the faster it drains. And when the tank runs dry, the *Excelsior* will burn up in the atmosphere.

NEEVA: So... we have to choose.

YUBARI: Between what and what, exactly?

NEEVA: She's saying this ship can only support a skeleton crew.

J'NAYA: Maybe half. Everyone else has to evacuate. Immediately.

SYLVESTE: To *where?*

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR (FROM 6F-12)

LORHROK: Out of danger. Not into it. A slingshot, Mister Ovdan? Even if you could, without exploding, one slingshot won't bring you home -- a hundred slingshots, a million, and you'd have hardly begun.

OVDAN: Subspace is still forming this far back. One jump. Lieutenant Elbrun thinks we can make it work right here.

LORHROK: What are you doing here?

OVDAN: Your job.

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR ENGINEERING (FROM 6F-09)

YUBARI: ...as of eighteen-thirty hours, I am the commanding officer of this starship.

LORHROK: You committed *mutiny?!*

YUBARI: You've been duly relieved. By the book.

LORHROK: Here's what I propose: how about any major decisions -- decisions that affect both sides -- we'll take those together? Otherwise, things stand as they are, and we keep sending each other what we need.

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR DELTA LOUNGE (FROM 6F-03)

YUBARI: Mister Ovdan, I have had it about up to here with your antics. First you convince us to relieve half the senior staff--

OVDAN: I only reminded you of Regulation One Oh Four.

ADOW: Uh-huh. "Reminded" us with a stack of legal briefs.

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR (FROM 6F-10)

THE MAJOR: Well, here it is, sir. The Chief Engineer's office, just as Commander J'naya left it.

LORHROK: Why don't you step inside for a moment, Major? I want to show you something.

LOCATION: EXCELSIOR BRIEFING ROOM (FROM 6F-03)

ELBRUN: My science team can finally start testing our theories about ancient subspace.

ADOW: ...Even with a core, we're still deep in a gravity well.

OVDAN: So let's get out of the gravity well.

YUBARI: I gave him my word. Prepare for departure tomorrow at fourteen hundred. I'll be beaming down to First Light at oh-nine-hundred. Dismissed.

**SCENE 6F-13**

LOCATION: FOREST CLEARING - THE NEEVA HOUSE-IN-PROGRESS

NARRATOR: *The next morning.*

(Neeva is exerting herself, moving heavy bricks)

(A transporter materializes)

NEEVA: What the--? Oh, it's you. (pause) Commander. Or can I just call you "Asuka" now that you've "relieved" me?

YUBARI: Good morning, Neeva. I'm looking for Alecz.

NEEVA: Oh, the President's picking up groceries.

YUBARI: President?

NEEVA: Now that you're up there making treaties instead of working *with* us, we decided he needed a title, too. A promotion from the job you kicked him out of. He should be back in a little while.

YUBARI: So, are you... good?

(Neeva turns back to her shovel.)

NEEVA: (with exertion) I'm laying down foundations. Honest work. So yeah, I'm great. This is where I'm needed.

YUBARI: I need you.

NEEVA: (amused scoff) You just relieved me of duty.

YUBARI: I've needed you since the day you left. You're the best damn ops chief in the fleet. With you back as X.O., we'd have full systems up in a week.

NEEVA: I'm not coming back as your X.O., pal. I'm your superior officer.

YUBARI: Not anymore.

NEEVA: Spast, this is so petty, Asuka! When Alecz put you back down to second officer last year -- which had nothing to do with you, by the way -- did you take a blood oath against him or something? Feeding false hope to a few malcontents up top isn't hurting him or me -- but it'll hurt them, in the end.

YUBARI: (angrily) I was glad to be second officer, Neeva! If I'd wanted revenge, you'd both know it. It would be exquisite, and it wouldn't involve a single innocent bystander. Which is more than I can say for this love nest you're building him.

NEEVA: Love nest?! You think this is fun for us, Yubari? You think I wanted to be marooned?

YUBARI: I'm just saying, it worked out awfully well for the two of you, didn't it? Alecz gets to build the colony he always wanted, nothing in the way of your romance anymore, all you had to do was leave us on the ship doing our duty while the two of you playacted Laura Ingalls Wilder.

(Silence)

NEEVA: That is the most -- You don't -- Do you remember the day you forced me to be your friend?

YUBARI: We agreed to be frie[nds!]

NEEVA: Oh, no, Yubs, it was all you. I was just trying to get out of that hallway where you'd cornered me. You called me an "intransigent young hothead who doesn't know the difference between rightness and outrage." That was seven years ago. Have you learned the differences yet? I did.

YUBARI: I wanted to ask you as a friend, but I guess we actually never were friends, so I'll make it an order: in the name of your Starfleet Oath, get back to your post, Commander!

NEEVA: Oh, grow up, Yubari! Alecz will humor you and your so-called command and your so-called treaty -- right up until this place stops giving us the luxury of choices, and not a day longer, so you have until then to learn how to be a grown-up. In the meantime, get off my land.

YUBARI: Gladly. (Pause) Tell Alecz I'll send him a letter. He might not want to wait a week to read this one. Yubari to *Excelsior*, one to beam up. Energize.

(Yubari beams out.)

(Neeva resumes work)

(Lorhork pulls up in the Fuji-San dune buggy. He dismounts, shutting the buggy down, and approaches Neeva)

LORHROK: Hey, Neevs! Was that Asuka? What'd she need?

**NEEVA: Same thing she needed last time you saw her: a swift kick in the pants.**



**OPENING TITLES**

**SCENE 6F-14****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR ENGINEERING**

ADOW: Course laid in!

YUBARI: Mister Elbrun? Everyone buckled up?

ELBRUN: All decks report ready for impulse, ma'am. Manual inertial compensators are deployed.

ADOW: Please stop calling them that. Inertial compensators are the giant coils near the sweet spot that aren't working right. We just gave the crew seatbelts.

ELBRUN: As I said all decks report the manual inertial compensators are deployed in "secure" mode.

ADOW: Ugh!

(She stalks away toward a different console)

YUBARI: Engage one percent impulse.

ADOW: One percent impulse, engaged.

(The buttons press, the engines hum)

(Sparks fly and the power flickers a bit, then the engines engage)

YUBARI: Well, well. You certainly feel the acceleration like this.

ELBRUN: It'll take us about twenty minutes to get up to target speed. Sickbay is monitoring g-forces and will alert us if anyone's in distress.

YUBARI: Very good. Carry on.

(The Major enters)

THE MAJOR: Excuse me, ma'am?

YUBARI: Major! Yes, what can I do for you?

THE MAJOR: I understand we're moving the ship, ma'am?

YUBARI: I would think that pretty obvious, Major.

THE MAJOR: And Captain Lorhrok agreed to this, ma'am?

YUBARI: The high-orbit subspace tests are a mission-critical need, Major, not that it's any of your business. What are you doing onboard anyway?

THE MAJOR: I'm sorry, ma'am, but that's not a satisfactory answer. I'm very sorry. Computer, activate encryption module Lorhrok-Tango-Four-Four.

COMPUTER: *Command lockout engaged. All systems to standby mode. All command codes disabled.*

(We hear the ship power down)

ADOW: Engines going to all stop, ma'am!

(Some sparks pop from a console)

ELBRUN: Ooof, Uh, yeah... yeah, our stomachs can all feel that, Kinash.

YUBARI: Major! What have you done?

THE MAJOR: As I said, ma'am, I'm very sorry. But Captain Lorhrok asked me to enforce the terms of your agreement with him -- by lockdown if necessary.

(Adow continues frantically pressing buttons)

ADOW: Desokkedpatch! This is all command-level encryption!

YUBARI: How? He wasn't in command!

ADOW: Transferring the command codes to you, with the ship in this state, was a patch job at best, and our former "captain" must have guessed that.

YUBARI: Mister Elbrun! Please escort The Major to the brig.

ELBRUN: Um, captain? I'm a science officer.

THE MAJOR: Don't worry, Lieutenant. I'll come quietly.

YUBARI: And then, Lieutenant, meet me in the Transporter Room. We have another arrest to make.

ELBRUN: Absolutely!

(Elbrun and the Major walk out of Engineering.)

ADOW: Captain, if it's all the same to you, I'd like to see you wipe the smile off that smu[g *ptahk*'s face for myself].

YUBARI: No, I need you up here. Break this code. The *Excelsior* is depending on it.

ADOW: Fine...

(Yubari leaves engineering and Adow starts working.)

**SCENE 6F-15****LOCATION: TOWN HALL**

(A few city councilors sit at a wooden table up in front of the small wooden building)

LORHROK: ...Well, I think that takes care of old business.

KESTRA: Agreed! Next on the city council agenda, labor detail for road cons[truction out past the farmland].

(The wooden double doors both swing open and slam into the walls)

YUBARI: LORHROK!

LORHROK: Come in, please.

YUBARI: You know why Mister Elbrun and I are here, yes?

(A tea kettle begins to whistle)

LORHROK: I know what you've come to do, and I know how it's going to end. Would you like some tea? Mister Hodges here has found a local herb that grinds up wonderfully.

YUBARI: Pass. Alecz Lorhrok, you are hereby placed under arrest.

J'NAYA: Just... let's hold on a minute, Cap. I'm chairing a meeting here, and this in't on the agenda.

ELBRUN: Seriously?

LORHROK: Let's recess for fifteen minutes, and clear the room, please? Except you, Kestra. Please stay.

(The other city councilors rise from their wooden chairs, which scrape across the floor, and begin to file out the back door)

RANDOM COLONIST #6F-03 ("HODGES"): If that's what Madam Mayor wants.

J'NAYA: Thanks, guys. See you in fifteen. I'm not the mayor.

(The door closes behind them)

ELBRUN: So I take it from that little performance that you want to avoid a perp walk?

LORHROK: Just didn't want you humiliated. That wouldn't be good for the colony.

YUBARI: Can you remove the lockouts?

LORHROK: Yes, but I'm not going to. We had an agreement, you and I.

YUBARI: Sabotaging my ship wasn't part of it.

LORHROK: Neither was taking our ship into high orbit on your own. That was all the lockout was: insurance, in case you double-crossed me. I didn't want it used. Frankly, I didn't expect it to be used. You gave me your word of honor, Commander.

YUBARI: Moving to a higher orbit didn't hurt the colony. We could have talked about it yesterday, if your girlfriend hadn't driven me off. My word of honor is pristine. Yours, though... you broke the agreement, what, ten minutes after we made it?

ELBRUN: No wonder you took off the uniform.

J'NAYA: Elbrun. Not helpful. I think it's fair to say that the spirit of the agreement was... overlooked... by both sides. So what now?

ELBRUN: No. We're not going to let the colony "both-sides" this. We didn't program a phaser sequence to burn your crops if you did something that we didn't [like.]

YUBARI: Number One. Stop. (pause) Blame aside, Alecz, you realize I have no choice but to arrest you.

LORHROK: That is one of your options, yes. I won't fight you -- I would never. But the colony still respects me like a kind of... captain emeritus. I hadn't realized how quickly that had changed up top, but there it is. Arrest me, and the colony stops talking to you. You stop talking to them. Supplies on both sides go to zero in three weeks, and then everything goes to hell. I don't know who ends up in the center seat when the dust settles, but I know it'll be a pyrrhic victory.

YUBARI: I don't like threats.

LORHROK: Not a threat, just how it would happen, and neither of us could stop it. But there's also option two.

YUBARI: Which is?

LORHROK: We move on. You're angry, I'm angry -- and, don't let my tone fool you, I'm furious -- but we realize no one was harmed. As a gesture of good faith, I give you the codes to release all the lockouts except weapons and engines. You give us The Major and you can keep doing whatever you think you're doing on *Excelsior*.



ELBRUN: We can't do the warp tests without engines!

J'NAYA: Yes, you can. Shuttles have warp cores.

YUBARI: The shuttles we have are nearly full time running supplies down here.

J'NAYA: Key word there: "nearly."

LORHROK: It's like one of the command training exercises I used to run you through: Figure it out! Winter will be here in thirty days. We can have peace, or we can squander the few resources we have in a power struggle we'll all lose. Your call.

ELBRUN: It's not going to work.

YUBARI: You've put me in a difficult position, Alecz. Many on the *Excelsior* want your head on a pike. They're right. When I don't give it to them... I'm only agreeing to this to protect the crew, not you.

ELBRUN: Captain!

LORHROK: Shake on it?

YUBARI: No. The next time we meet like this, Alecz, it won't go so well for you.

(She spins on her heel and heads for a closer side door, Elbrun in tow.)

J'NAYA: ...for any of us.

(Yubari slams the door shut)

(Pause)

LORHROK: Kestra, is this... all this... my fault?

J'NAYA: I don't see how. I just don't understand what's happening to us.

LORHROK: When it all comes apart like this? I don't think anyone ever does.

**SCENE 6F-16****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - MAIN ENGINEERING**

**NARRATOR:** *Several hours later.*

**(Elbrun enters, stomping)**

**ELBRUN:** Chief!

**ADOW:** I've been an ensign for years.

**ELBRUN:** I meant as in "Chief Engineer." The captain got an idea from the ex-captain. Warp tests using the shuttles. Here.

**(He hands her a PADD; she starts scrolling it, then tosses it to the ground)**

**ELBRUN:** She wants you to look it over and give her your opinion.

**(Adow returns to work at the console)**

**ADOW:** Done. Easy. Dumb idea. Factor in transit and we'd have an hour a day for warp tests, and the tests wouldn't work anyway. We'll be a month behind schedule by the end of the week -- and our fuel supply ain't gettin' bigger.

**ELBRUN:** Between you and me, I couldn't agree more, but those are our orders. We need the shuttle *Muztag* prepped for testing and I'd like you to make extra-sure we're not vulnerable to any more lockout bombs.

ADOW: Already checked three times today, sir. Feel free to check the circuits yourself. And go do something with this-- (she kicks the padd over to Elbrun's feet) --try waste reclamation.

ELBRUN: Can you keep a question between the two of us?

ADOW: When we're surrounded by half a dozen engineers? No.

ELBRUN: (quietly) Unofficially, then. We still don't have weapons. If we had to, could we put leverage on the colony? Like Lorhrok's lockout bomb?

ADOW: Are you a science officer or not? You know what the deflector dish can do.

ELBRUN: Not in its current condition.

ADOW: (quietly) My reputation is for honesty, not stupidity. I'm not gonna be the first one to say "The deflector dish can boil water and melt flesh" out loud.

ELBRUN: (quietly) It's the first officer's responsibility to prepare for every contingency.

ADOW: Including an attack on the colony?

ELBRUN: Hey, I never said anything Uh...

(A door opens)

ELBRUN: (quietly) about an attack! (normally) This was a hypothetical.

ADOW: Ooo, a hypothetical! So you thought to yourself, "Self, I need to waste five minutes of Chief Adow's time today! How can I best do that?" Get out.

**ELBRUN: Thanks for your input.**

**ADOW: Out!**

**(He leaves.)**

**SCENE 6F-17****LOCATION: PLANET - WHEAT FIELD**

(A shuttle is landing. Sylveste waits nearby with an antigrav unit audibly hovering with him.)

SYLVESTE: Landing pad is right here!

(The shuttle settles, the door descends, and Elbrun appears, with an antigrav of his own.)

SYLVESTE: Hi, Jordyn.

ELBRUN: Mister Sylveste. Let's get this shuttle unloaded.

SYLVESTE: Uh.. I, uh, yeah, let's do it.

(They silently start loading boxes)

ELBRUN: So, I think you're right about Twelfth Night. The Tempest is a little dark. Uh, do you have anyone in mind to play Viola?

SYLVESTE: I mean... do you think this is the right time for a play?

ELBRUN: (sigh) I don't know.

SYLVESTE: Once we're all together in the... well, you know.

ELBRUN: Yeah.

SYLVESTE: Hey, where's the rest of the fertilizer?

ELBRUN: You can thank "President" Lorhrok for that. Chief Adow has had to cut down on load times so we have room for warp tests.

SYLVESTE: So... when do we get our fertilizer?

ELBRUN: As soon as we can get to it.

SYLVESTE: 'dyn, we really depend on those supplies. Cutting them down to make a point is no[t going to go over well!]

ELBRUN: Hey, we're doing our best with an impossible situation! It wasn't our choice. (sigh) Sly, I've got nothing against you. Neither does the crew.

SYLVESTE: We're the crew, too!

ELBRUN: Well, I mean... you're not exactly wearing the uniform, are you, Lieutenant? I haven't been giving orders down here because you wouldn't follow them, and I don't want to put anyone -- especially you, Jon -- in that position.

(Silence)

SYLVESTE: I think you'd better get out of here, Jordyn.

ELBRUN: We're not done loading the sh[uttle].

SYLVESTE: I'm not authorized to release these goods without full reciprocation. I have to talk to the Mayor.

(Pause)

**ELBRUN: Okay, Jon. You do what you have to do. I have to get back for the tests anyway.**



**SCENE 6F-18****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - MAIN ENGINEERING**

**NARRATOR:** *Four days later.*

**(The Red Alert klaxon is sounding)**

**YUBARI:** Engage warp one.

**(Adow presses some buttons)**

**ADOW:** Going to warp one.

**ELBRUN:** Warp field active and stable.

**LRAAC OVDAN:** Laying in a time-travel course for the sun.

**(An alert goes off)**

**ELBRUN:** Hold that; the subspace tensors aren't resolving.

**ADOW:** Again?

**YUBARI:** Do we need to abort?

**ELBRUN:** No, let's see if I can figure it out live.

**OVDAN:** Still at warp. Still approaching the... (Another alert sounds) wait, what?

YUBARI: Report, pilot.

OVDAN: (sigh) My instruments show we just jumped to Warp Ninety-Four. We're in the Gamma Quadrant.

ELBRUN: No, we went straight through the sun. We were vaporized before we could blink. All dead.

YUBARI: (deep sigh) End simulation. Green alert.

(Green alert sounds)

(Yubari walks over to Elbrun)

YUBARI: Alright, Jordyn, how long until you're ready with Test Number Forty-Eight?

ELBRUN: I don't know, ma'am. The problem is that the test data we're getting from the shuttles is just too incomplete, too inconsistent with how our warp engines actually work. Feed it into the computer, and it spits out nonsense -- like suddenly flying through the sun.

YUBARI: Kestra said that some of this stuff might be real. You said yourself subspace is weird in this time.

ELBRUN: Yeah, and I can't tell what's real and what's just bad data. (an alert sounds) I don't know how we can make this work, ma'am.

OVDAN: Getting a message from the surface. It's Kestra, ma'am.

YUBARI: I'll take it in my... ..well, I'll take it in the corner over there. Lieutenant, you have what passes for the conn.

ELBRUN: I have what passes for the conn.

(Yubari walks over to a quieter corner of engineering and taps her combadge.)

YUBARI: Captain Yubari here. What's up, Kestra?

J'NAYA: Captain, we need to talk about this blockade. The whole city is furious. They want to do it back to you. I was able to stave them off, but I honestly do[n't know how long that will hold.]

YUBARI: Slow down! What are you talking about, blockade?

J'NAYA: The supply shortages. (pause) The last three shuttles were about 40-50% short on our requisitions?

(Pause)

YUBARI: Kestra, this isn't a good time.

J'NAYA: When, then? We need to work this out before the next shuttle.

YUBARI: I'll call you in three hours.

J'NAYA: That's right in the middle of a council me[eting.]

YUBARI: *Excelsior* out.

(She strides back out of her "corner" to the main area of Engineering.)

YUBARI: The hell was that?

OVDAN: The hell was what, ma'am?

YUBARI: Kestra says we aren't sending full shuttles. (grunt of disbelief) I don't recall giving that order.

ELBRUN: Chief Adow and I discussed it. We don't have enough time to both test the warp field and send full supply runs. They're still getting what they need.

YUBARI: Are they? They're calling it a blockade, and you just made me look like an idiot. Fix it. Now.

ELBRUN: We'll have to cut back even further on testing time.

YUBARI: Do what you need to do.

ELBRUN: We'll never get home like this.

YUBARI: We'll never get home if the colonists turn against us, either.

ADOW: Then we need to bring them in line. They don't want a blockade? Fine: we don't want a lockout.

OVDAN: Oh, come on, Kinash, can you hear yourself?

ADOW: This crew has already removed three command staffers who were obstructing its mission. We can remove more, if they aren't willing to take necessary measures.

YUBARI: Is that a [threat?]

OVDAN: Kinash, for once in your life, open your eyelids. Nobody wearing that uniform can move against Lorhrok without starting a war. Captain, permission to leave Engineering? I have other duties to attend to.

YUBARI: Permission granted, but save a seat for us at the bar. We're gonna need it. Shift dismissed. Elbrun, call us when you're ready for the next test.

(Ovdan walks over to Adow.)

OVDAN: (quietly) Chief.

ADOW: What do you want?

OVDAN: (quietly) Purge it when you have the chance.

ADOW: What?

OVDAN: (sigh) See ya.

(Ovdan leaves.)

**SCENE 6F-19****LOCATION: TOWN CENTER**

(Bustling day in town, as usual.)

**SYLVESTE:** It's unacceptable! We need to show them that we can bend the rules, too!

**LORTH:** Embargo now!

**J'NAYA:** Embargo?! Might I remind all of you that we need the ship to make this colony possible? Hell, Elbrun may be a saber-rattling twit too big for his britches, but not six weeks ago he was the reason we were able to domesticate the local equines. They're. Our. Family.

**RANDOM COLONIST #6F-01 ("REEVES"):** Families don't start blockades!

**J'NAYA:** It's a misunderstanding! I'm talking to Captain Yubari in a couple of hours!

**LORTH:** She's not MY captain!

**RANDOM COLONIST #6F-02:** Hear hear!

(Lorhrok arrives.)

**LORHROK:** No, she's not. But I was. And Mayor J'Naya is. Unless you're planning the same kind of coup that started this mess, Marel? (pause) Marel Lorth?

**LORTH:** ...no, boss.

**LORHROK:** Call me Alecz. Peace isn't easy, folks, but it's the only thing worth [trying.]

OVDAN: *Lraac Ovdan calling Alecz Lorhrok.*

J'NAYA: Oh, frack me backwards.

LORHROK: Lorhrok here.

OVDAN: *You designed this colony, right? Colony design was what you studied in engineering school?*

LORHROK: I've been a technical advisor to the elected government, yes.

OVDAN: *May I make a suggestion? I think you forgot an important feature.*

LORHROK: And what would that be, Mister Ovdan?

OVDAN: *Transport inhibitors.*

(Suddenly, Lorhrok is beamed out of the town square!)

**SCENE 6F-20****LOCATION: FLYER MUZTAG - COCKPIT**

(Lorhrok materializes in the cabin.)

LORHROK: Mister Ovdan! Mister Ovdan, this is not the way forward.

OVDAN: Hold a moment, Mister President. I'll be right with you.

LORHROK: Mister Ovdan, did Yubari even consider the consequences of -- ow!

(Lorhrok strikes a forcefield.)

OVDAN: Watch the forcefield. It'll sting. Captain Yubari has nothing to do with our vacation, Alecz. That would defeat the purpose.



**SCENE 6F-21****LOCATION: TOWN CENTER**

(Neeva running toward Kestra.)

NEEVA: Kestra?! Where's Alecz?!

LORTH: He was beamed out!

J'NAYA: It's true, Neeva. We're going to get some answers, though, okay? (She opens a tricorder) Do you want to call up top?

NEEVA: Yeah. Yeah. (deep breath) Neeva to *Excelsior!*

YUBARI: *Neeva! Are you responsible for this attack?!*

NEEVA: Me responsible?! Your shuttlecraft just raided the colony!

YUBARI: *I don't have any shuttlecraft! The Muztag just blasted its way out of shuttlebay four -- where is it going?!*

NEEVA: How should I know?! He's your barkeep!

YUBARI: Who's my barkeep?

NEEVA: Lraac Ovdan was flying that shuttle. You had nothing to do with that?

YUBARI: Of course not!

**NEEVA:** Prepare for transport. Kestra and I are coming up there.

**YUBARI:** That... might be a good idea.

**SCENE 6F-22****LOCATION: FLYER MUZTAG - COCKPIT**

OVDAN: You see, Alecz, you've been right all year. The whole crew needed to work together toward a common goal.

LORHROK: Yes, building up the colony!

OVDAN: Sorry, I misspoke: they needed a common goal that wasn't completely stupid. So I gave them one.

LORHROK: Kidnapping me?

OVDAN: No, rescuing you. (pause) Well, trying, anyway. Not actually my plan to get caught. You're too dangerous.

LORHROK: I'm too dangerous!?

OVDAN: I don't even think you realized it, but uh (an alert sounds) -- oh, there they go. Intercept course. Didn't expect a sensor lock that fast. Good job, Elbrun.

**SCENE 6F-23****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - MAIN ENGINEERING**

(Buttons are being pressed)

ELBRUN: Target now changing course. Heading for the fifth planet.

YUBARI: The one with the weird rings?

ELBRUN: That's the one, ma'am.

YUBARI: Kestra, Neeva.

J'NAYA: Yes, we've just got Alecz's codes entered. You should have full control now.

NEEVA: Including impulse engines. Now catch that shuttle!

SYLVESTE: Would you like me to take the helm, Ensign?

ADOW: It's "Chief" now, Sly, and, yeah, I can't exactly keep the engines in one piece and fly through those rings, can I?

SYLVESTE: Okay, geeze. Didn't miss that. (he sits down at the conn and starts tapping controls) Did kinda miss this part, though. (pause) Helm answring one-quarter impulse!

(We hear the engines giving thrust)

NEEVA: Go to full.

YUBARI: Belay that! Half-impulse, Lieutenant.

NEEVA: But they're getting [away!]

YUBARI: No, those fusion plants need a minute to warm up. We learned that the hard way. Don't worry; we'll catch them in the ring system. We have weapons?

ADOW: I dunno, maybe, in a few minutes, if we're lucky.

J'NAYA: We gave you back full weapons control.

ADOW: Yeah, and how high do you think "test-firing the phasers" was on my priority list this morning? Or the past two hundred mornings?

**SCENE 6F-24****LOCATION: FLYER MUZTAG - COCKPIT**

OVDAN: There's neutronium in that asteroid. They'll try to stop us getting there, so they don't lose us when we swing around into the rings.

LORHROK: To disrupt their sensors, even damaged, we would have to get way too close to that meteor. Like, centimeters. It's not safe.

OVDAN: You think kidnappings are safe? Better take a seat and connect the manual inertial damper.

LORHROK: Mister Ovdan, perhaps I didn't make myself clear. It's too close. The *Muztag* isn't specced for that kind of turn. We'll both die.

OVDAN: Dying is not in the plan.

(The Muztag accelerates)

**SCENE 6F-25****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

SYLVESTE: He's heading for that small moon.

NEEVA: That's no moon. That's an asteroid, moving fast. Good way to pulverize themselves if they aren't careful.

J'NAYA: Speaking of, maybe, before we enter the ring, should we raise shields? Do you need our codes again?

ADOW: Ha! I purged your damn virus from my computers as soon as you unlocked them. That's not the problem.

YUBARI: Shields aren't even on the repair schedule, Kestra.

ELBRUN: He's setting up for a quick gravity assist, trying to get a little speed on us.

(Sylveste is checking his instruments.)

SYLVESTE: 'dyn's right, ma'am's. He's trying for gravity. But his course is off by point zero-three degrees. Probably bad instrumentation on the *Muztag*. I don't think he can see it.

NEEVA: So he's not going to get the speed he needs?

SYLVESTE: No, because he's going to crash and die.

(Pause)

YUBARI: Can we signal them?

ELBRUN: L's not answering calls.

YUBARI: Force us up on their screens then.

ELBRUN: Those protocols aren't on the repair schedule, either.

YUBARI: Are we seriously getting outrun by a shuttle?

ADOW: That shuttlecraft is the least damaged part of this ship.

NEEVA: Elbrun, you're the barkeep's friend. Isn't there some way to get his attention?

YUBARI: Adow, increase speed! One hundred twenty percent impulse!

(An alert sounds)

SYLVESTE: Too late!

J'NAYA: What?!

SYLVESTE: Impact!

(There is an explosion on the viewscreen)

NEEVA: Survivors.

SYLVESTE: Ma'am...



NEEVA: Jon. Survivors.

J'NAYA: The *Muztag* hit the surface going a large fraction of the speed of light and ruptured its antimatter pod. (pause) Alecz and Ovdan are... are dead.

ADOW: What the hell did that imbecile think he was doing?

NEEVA: Only what you put him up to.

ADOW: Me?!

NEEVA: You and this so-called "crew." This is on you. Asuka, this is your fault.

YUBARI: I... can take you back to the colony.

J'NAYA: Thank you, Captain. And I know this isn't a good moment, but we urgently need those suppli[es we've been discussing.]

YUBARI: The blockade is over. Captain's orders. You'll get your full supply, with interest, and anyone who has a problem with that can step out an airlock. Is that clear?

ELBRUN: Yes, ma'am.

YUBARI: Adow, is that clear?

ADOW: ...yeah. Yeah, clear.

**SCENE 6F-26****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - BURNED OUT SECTION**

(A forcefield hums)

OVDAN: Alecz?

(He taps the forcefield)

OVDAN: Still with us?

LORHROK: What? Where...?

OVDAN: We're on the *Excelsior*, in what used to be the marine galley back when Marine Country was still habitable. I beamed us off the shuttle at the last second. I set up this forcefield for you before I left, (he taps the forcefield) Oh and there's enough food over there behind the counter. Hated to lose the *Muztag*, she's been good to us from the start, but I didn't want anyone looking for us. I think it's time you and I had a talk, Alecz Lorhrok.

LORHROK: Lorhrok, Alecz! Captain! Service number S-C-1-naught-8-P-dash-3-5-4-dash-4-3-1!

OVDAN: Oh, come on, it's not like... Well I'm... I am holding you prisoner, but only so we can talk.

LORHROK: Lorhrok, Alecz! Captain! Service number S-C-1-naught-8-P-dash-3-5-4-dash-4-3-1!

OVDAN: Okay. That's fine. We've got time.

**SCENE 6F-27****LOCATION: NEEVA'S CABIN**

NEEVA: I don't... I don't know anymore.

J'NAYA: Hey, Neeva. It's okay. Whatever you're feeling [it's okay.]

NEEVA: Kestra, (sniff) if you tell me that dumb story about your aunt again...

J'NAYA: Don't worry.

NEEVA: (sniff) It's just... for the first time since we got here... I was starting to feel something that felt... a little bit like hope?

**SCENE 6F-28****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

**ADOW:** Core breach! We're dead.

**YUBARI:** End simulation seventy-four. What happened this time, Jordyn?

**ELBRUN:** We're making real progress this time, ma'am. I can feel it.

**SCENE 6F-29**

**LOCATION: *EXCELSIOR* - BURNED OUT SECTION**

**OVDAN: Today's ration pack: roast teracaq!**

**(he opens the package)**

**LORHROK: Lorhrok - Alec - Captain. Service number (sigh) S-C-1-naught[-8-P-]**

**OVDAN: Eh, I'm good. Ready to talk when you are.**

**SCENE 6F-30****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

YUBARI: Simulation one-two-six. You realize we'll be out of fuel in a few weeks.

ELBRUN: Sorry, captain.

**SCENE 6F-31****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - BURNED OUT SECTION**

OVDAN: Today's ration pack: barbed terratins! (sarcastic) Sounds delightful...

(He opens the package)

LORHROK: Lorhrok, Alecz.

OVDAN: Captain, serial S-C-1-naught- Yeah, I know. Eat your terratins.

**SCENE 6F-32****LOCATION: SYLVESTE'S CABIN**

(We hear night sounds.)

ROSIE: Hey, Jonny? Remember when I said I was going to... well... bear you all those strong boys?

SYLVESTE: Heh. I don't think we'll ever live that down, Rosie. I'm sorry I told Jordyn.

ROSIE: Well, um... How would you feel about a nice strong girl to start?

SYLVESTE: Huh?

ROSIE: Cuz that's... that's what the doctor says.

SYLVESTE: WHAT?! Rosie!

ROSIE: You're not upset?

SYLVESTE: Rosie Sylveste, I'm in LOVE with you!

(Rose giggles and they kiss)



**SCENE 6F-33****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

(An alert is sounding)

YUBARI: Simulation two-oh-eight. Failed.

**SCENE 6F-34****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - BURNED OUT SECTION**

OVDAN: Today's ration pack: (he opens it) ...I dunno. I can't read this one. Let's discover it together!

LORHROK: Lorhrok, Alecz. Former captain, U.S.S. *Excelsior*.

OVDAN: So you admit it!

(Pause)

LORHROK: ...which was rendered a total loss on passage through the SD-One Impossibility.  
Service number S-C-P-naught-8[-P-dash]

OVDAN: Ah, forget it.

**SCENE 6F-35****LOCATION: TOWN CENTER**

(A group is following J'Naya)

LORTH: What if they try again?

J'NAYA: They aren't going to leave without us, Marel. Alright? Trust your mayor. We'll cross that bridge if they ever get past these "warp tests."

SYLVESTE: They've already moved to the L2 Lagrange! I'm raising a family here on First Light, Mayor!

(The Major approaches)

THE MAJOR: He's right, madam mayor.

NEEVA: People! Leave the mayor alone!

J'NAYA: No, it's [alright, I want to hear from everyone.]

NEEVA: Alecz Lorhrok always believed in peace and they killed him for it. We are not going to let that happen to anyone else down here.

J'NAYA: Neeva--

NEEVA: Do you hear me? Whatever it takes!

**SCENE 6F-36****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

YUBARI: Simulation three-two-five...

ELBRUN: Captain? You'd better take a look at this.

YUBARI: What?

ADOW: Warp bubble achieved. Test successful. (pause) Toldja.

**SCENE 6F-37****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - BURNED OUT SECTION**

OVDAN: Today's ration pack is something called Taco Tuesday. I don't trust it, but you gotta eat, so they say.

LORHROK: I don't get it. You would have died for this crew, Alcar, and not that long ago.

(Ovdan opens the package)

OVDAN: I'm sorry, you're confused. I'm Lraac Ovdan, [barkeep's assistant.]

LORHROK: No. It's really good surgery. But...

OVDAN: Look, if this is because of what I said when I stubbed my toe the other day, "Jehosephat's" a very common [expletive among Bolians.]

LORHROK: No it's not. And that wasn't what did it. You locked me in here for how many days with nothing to do but think.

OVDAN: Hey, I tried giving you stuff to read, but you just rattled off your service number!

LORHROK: You were good. I looked up to you. I mean, I wouldn't say we were friends, but I wa[s happy to see you every day.]

OVDAN: Oh.... Oh.... I thought we were friends.

LORHROK: ...Work friends, I guess?

OVDAN: Oh.

LORHROK: What exactly do you want with me, "Captain"?

OVDAN: Well, if we're dropping the pretense, Alec, then: I want to know where I went wrong with you.

LORHROK: Wrong with me? I didn't kidnap anyone!

OVDAN: You had to come off the game board. Like I said, I was the only one who could do it. Sorry.

LORHROK: Sorry?

OVDAN: Not really. You kinda already completely had it coming.

LORHROK: There it is. The seething anger. You hide it pretty well, "Ovdan," but I've watched you. It's always there, isn't it, like magma, just waiting for an excuse to erupt.

OVDAN: I just thought I'd done a better job training my officers to not abandon their posts!

LORHROK: My post was destroyed!

OVDAN: The chief engineer of the *Starship Excelsior* disagrees! We can still get home!

LORHROK: Ensign Adow is a good engineer but her judgment is [compromised!]

OVDAN: She's the best engineer we've ever had on this ship and you know it!

LORHROK: This ship is the closest thing she's ever had to a friend! Her judgment is wrong, Alcar!

OVDAN: So I should trust yours instead, huh?

LORHROK: It's not like your stupid sport! It's not fielder's choice! I am the captain of this starship! Your job is to trust me!

OVDAN: Funny, I thought the captain of the *Excelsior* possessed a certain pocketwatch.

LORHROK: Fo[r]... can you hear yourself? "Magic clock" isn't a defense in mutiny court-martials. But I guess you'd know something about losing court-martials, huh?

OVDAN: No mutiny. You were relieved. By the book. I made sure of that. Up 'til then, I forgave you. The heart wants what it wants.

LORHROK: And what the spast does that mean?

OVDAN: Don't insult my intelligence. This planet might have been custom-built for you. A chance to build the colony you always wanted, the weight of command off your young, young shoulders, absolution for the disaster at SD-One... and, now that you're stranded, now that you can't use your command as an excuse again, everybody's noticed you making eyes at Neeva. But then you did what I thought you incapable of doing: you betrayed this crew and sabotaged this ship!

LORHROK: Don't talk to me about the heart, Dovan! You put on a big heroic show on your last day, but your heart never left my chair. Out there, you're Alcar Dovan, avenger of the Sword of Damocles, friends in high places! Down on that planet? You're Lraac Ovdan -- you'll till the fields, grow old, and die -- your greatest fear since the day you were born!

OVDAN: Ah! But did you spot the difference between you and me?

LORHROK: What!?

OVDAN: I didn't get what I wanted. Because I put this ship, this crew, ahead of all that. So here we are.

(Ovdan approaches Lorhrok slowly)

OVDAN: You know why I'm angry, Alecz? Because it's my fault! I pushed you, too hard, too fast. I didn't let myself see that you weren't ready, that you still loved yourself too much.

LORHROK: There's that magma looking for an escape -- no matter how delusional.

OVDAN: For a deluded guy, I sure called all this correctly. Day one, remember? Day one I told you that splitting the crew was the first step to civil war. If I hadn't removed you, Adow probably would have already fired the first shots.

LORHROK: And who was there, every step on the way, nudging things along? L, you didn't predict this. You caused it!

OVDAN: No, you can't pin this disaster on me, Alecz! I did everything in my power to contain it!

LORHROK: Do you really believe that?



OVDAN: Do you really believe there's no way home? If you had just remembered what ship this was, what crew you had... nothing can stop us, in any galaxy, in any century, because no matter where we go -- There. We. Are. The captain of this ship is the one who knows that.

(Lorhrok grunts)

OVDAN: What?

LORHROK: Just... you reminded me of something I told Neeva six months ago.  
How long have you kept me here, anyway?

OVDAN: Let me check my uh-- Wait, where is it? Where's the pocketwatch?

**SCENE 6F-38****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

YUBARI: Report.

ADOW: Still ready.

ELBRUN: We had a lot more crew returning from the surface than we expected, and the last shuttle just docked.

ADOW: Once we had an actual way home, they lost settler fever right quick.

YUBARI: How many left down below?

ELBRUN: Eh, only about a hundred fifty.

YUBARI: Open a channel.

(Elbrun does so.)

SYLVESTE: *This is speaker for the colony Jonathan Sylveste.*

YUBARI: Where's Kestra?

SYLVESTE: *She shuttled up an hour ago.*

YUBARI: I didn't realize she still had that kind of faith in us.

SYLVESTE: *Not faith. The reckless one. Hope. Are you calling to say good-bye?*

YUBARI: I'm calling to say "see you later." Once we're home, we'll send a rescue. You just keep that kid of yours safe until we do.

SYLVESTE: *Please... captain, if that's how you see yourself... captain, please don't do this. Without the Excelsior, things here are going to be... really hard.*

YUBARI: There's still time for you to come aboard. You and anyone else.

SYLVESTE: *No... no thank you.*

YUBARI: The one thing I have always been certain of these past seven years, ever since that idiot pulled an L-4 on my first day: we may fail the *Excelsior*, but she will never fail us. We'll see you soon.

SYLVESTE: *...Sure. ...Is 'dyn there?*

YUBARI: Mister Elbrun?

ELBRUN: Yeah, I'm here, Jon.

SYLVESTE: *I just wanted to say, I guess... Good luck, Jordyn the Science Giant.*

ELBRUN: Good luck to you, too, Sly Guy.

SYLVESTE: *First Light, over and out.*

YUBARI: Without further ado, gentlemen? Hit it.

ADOW: Initiating slingshot trajectory. Watch that warp field, Elbrun.

ELBRUN: Four hundred twenty sims and you think I won't watch the warp field? Breaking orbit of First Light, ma'am.

(Neeva enters, with the Major, some marines, and some settlers in tow.)

NEEVA: Not so fast, Asuka.

(She raises and powers a phaser)

RANDOM COLONIST #6F-02: Stop 'em, Neeva!

YUBARI: Neeva.

NEEVA: Major, take the conn.

YUBARI: Neeva, two-thirds of the colony came on today's shuttles. We welcomed you home, no questions asked. But did you really think we didn't have any? Officer La Saia.

RANDOM CREW #6F-04: Recalled as ordered!

YUBARI: Deploy and detain.

RANDOM CREW #6F-04: (taps her combadge) *All teams, GO!*

(Several engineering side doors open up and a full security team enters on both levels, charging up their phaser rifles as they tromp in.)

ELBRUN: Uh, Ma'am, this is... not safe.

**YUBARI: Why do you think we ran four hundred sims, Lieutenant?**

**ADOW: Anyone who still cares? We have warp one.**

**NEEVA: No! Stop them! Major, take the conn!**

**THE MAJOR: Ma'am, yes, ma'am!**

**YUBARI: Fire!**

**(Red Alert sounds)**

**(A full-blown Engineering melee breaks out. There is a lot of shouting and other noise as phasers are fired and people move around the room)**

**ADOW: Warp nine! Entering solar well! Locking out command functions!**

**ELBRUN: Inertial dampeners on projection: weak but holding -- AGH!**

**(He's been stunned by a phaser burst and slumps to the floor.)**

**YUBARI: Elbrun!**

**ADOW: For the love of SPACE ITSELF can you people try not to shoot the warp core?!**

**THE MAJOR: Ensign Adow, you are hereby relieved -- UHN!**

**(He's stunned by Yubari's phaser, crumples.)**

YUBARI: Heh. Just like Leino laser tag.

ADOW: Warp thirteen!

NEEVA: What?! There's no warp above factor ten!

YUBARI: Old-timey subspace is weird! We had to recalibrate the whole warp scale!

NEEVA: That doesn't make sense!

YUBARI: If you hadn't shot Elbrun he could have explained better! You can't stop us anymore, Neeva, we're too close to the sun! Stand down!

RANDOM COLONIST #6F-01 ("REEVES"): Neeva?

NEEVA: She's right. She's right! Stand down!

(Everyone stops fighting except for one guy)

RANDOM COLONIST #6F-02: NOOO!

NEEVA: I said stand DOWN!

(She stuns him.)

YUBARI: Thank you.

NEEVA: Don't. When we all die I just want it to be one hundred percent your fault.

YUBARI: Ensign Adow?

ADOW: Warp eighteen and we are transiting the photosphere. Anyone not in a manual inertial dampener better sit down.

NEEVA: The photosphere? You got the metaphasic shields back online?

YUBARI: Not really. A bit. But it's a quick transit.

NEEVA: A quick transit?!

(A new alarm goes off on Adow's console)

ADOW: Shut up, we've got real problems now! You idiots apparently did shoot the warp core! The dilithium articulation frame is off by a micron!

NEEVA: That's well within tolerance!

ADOW: Not for this run, babe! We can't make our trajectory! Diverting!

NEEVA: You can't recalculate a slingshot live!

ADOW: Nope! But it is my best guess or we burn up!

YUBARI: Proceed, Ensign. Best guess. She won't fail us. Neeva, take Elbrun's station. Seems only fair since you shot him.

(Neeva does so, strapping herself into the chair.)

ADOW: We're breaking away! Warp Thirty-Five!

(The ship starts to really shake.)

NEEVA: We've entered time warp. Velocity... wow... ten thousand years per second? And climbing?

YUBARI: Old-timey subspace is weird, Neevs.

ADOW: It's working! Couldn't stop now if we tried. Decel in fifteen minutes subjective.

NEEVA: We appear to be on course for... for...

ADOW: Just say it, Neeva! Admit it! We're going home! Home to Utopia [Planitia!]

(There's a sound like an explosion of something failing)

NEEVA: Number ten inertial damper just failed.

YUBARI: At this speed?

NEEVA: Was anyone on the Bridge?

YUBARI: Not in months.

NEEVA: Good. Deck One just got crunched like a tin can.

(Then a nearly identical noise happens again.)



NEEVA: Now number eighteen damper! Deck Fifteen, Section Ten destroyed!

(Sparks fly from a console)

YUBARI: Adow!

ADOW: I don't... what? Inertial stresses are way above simulations!

(A ODN relay blows behind them)

NEEVA: Subspace is evolving a million years per second and rising. No one could simulate that perfectly!

YUBARI: Options!

NEEVA: Abandon ship.

ADOW: You always say that!

YUBARI: Then give me another option, Ensign!

ADOW: We could... spool up the fusion cores, dump power into the dampers!

NEEVA: If the surge didn't blow up the cores, it'd blow up the damper, and you know it.

ADOW: It might work! If we reconfigured EPS seven for ionized transport operat[ions.]

(Another damper fails, with the same sickening sound. A console here in Engineering explodes.)

NEEVA: Do the math, Kinash!

ADOW: I just need time! Twenty minutes! Ten!

YUBARI: Thank you, Ensign Adow, you've done commendable work.

(she taps the intercom)

YUBARI: All hands! Abandon ship!

(The abandon ship alert sounds)

YUBARI: You heard the order, Reeves! You and these marines, get to the escape pods, and take the stunned crew with you!

YUBARI: Adow, what do I have to do to keep the ship together?

ADOW: She... she just has to stay on her axis. But without more power...

YUBARI: Doesn't have to last forever, Kinash. Just until those pods are clear. I'll take the conn. Now go!

ADOW: I never... I never thought...

YUBARI: We don't have time, Chief! GO!

ADOW: FINE!

(She runs.)

**NEEVA:** Rerouting helm control to my station.

**YUBARI:** Neeva, are you not hearing me?!

**NEEVA:** You're not even a pilot, much less the best damn ops chief in the fleet!

**YUBARI:** You know this is a one-way [ticket!]

**(Another failure explosion)**

**NEEVA:** Yes, I recall the Starfleet Oath! Now buckle up!

**SCENE 6F-39****LOCATION: BURNED OUT SECTION**

OVDAN: Is that...?

LORHROK: Yep. There it is. The abandon ship. Exactly how a civil war was always going to end: everybody dies.

OVDAN: The fact you're using this moment to gloat, Alec Lorhrok, is more damning than anything I could say. We need to find an escape pod.

LORHROK: Down here? Have you seen the state of Marine Country?

OVDAN: Did you forget? I'm the world champion of getting off starships when they get blown up by someone else's mistake.

**SCENE 6F-40****LOCATION: EXCELSIOR - ENGINEERING**

(Still on fire, still clanging the abandon ship.)

COMPUTER: (klaxon sounds) *Warp core breach in progress. Abandon ship. This is not a drill. All hands, abandon ship. Warp core [breach in progress.]*

NEEVA: Computer, silence alerts!

(The computer pings an acknowledgement)

YUBARI: Wave three is clearing the warp field! Neeva, where are these pods going to end up? Or when?

NEEVA: Thousands of years apart, maybe millions, in deep space.

YUBARI: No one looking for them, no warp drive...

NEEVA: Their odds aren't good.

(Another failure explosion)

YUBARI: Still better odds than here. (an alert pings) Final wave has cleared. Ship's empty. Your turn. There's a pod in Section Two. I'll keep the axis steady while you [launch and clear.]

NEEVA: Wait.

YUBARI: Neeva, it's not your job to go down with [the ship.]

NEEVA: No, listen! The warp core breach -- we can use it!

YUBARI: For what?

(Neeva starts running between consoles, hitting controls)

NEEVA: We could -- I think -- we could turn it into a beacon. Someone watching within, say, a hundred million years uptime would see it like a lighthouse. It wouldn't be Starfleet, we're not nearly close enough, but [the theory should work!]

YUBARI: But that someone could come rescue the crew?

NEEVA: Asuka, if I could generate some chronitons--

YUBARI: Shut up!; I trust you, Neeva! What do I need to do?

NEEVA: You might still have a shot at an escape pod if you r[un for one right now.]

YUBARI: Shut up, Neeva! You need me to make you a goddamn friendship bracelet to know why I'm not leaving?! Tell me how I can help!

NEEVA: (deep, tense breath) Thanks, Yubs. Take the mate's console over there. There should be a big flashing red button?

YUBARI: I see it!

NEEVA: I'm about to violate, well, every safety protocol, ten and a half regulations, and two criminal laws. When I say "go", you start pressing that button, fast as you can, so the computer doesn't lock me out! Got it?

YUBARI: Got it!

NEEVA: Go!

(Yubari starts jabbing that button, while Neeva enters commands that set off a bunch more alerts at her console)

(Consoles spark and more alerts go off)

(Another failure explosion)

YUBARI: (through coughing, rapidly getting worse) Coolant leak! (cough) We have a coolant leak in here!

COMPUTER: *Toxic leak. Emergency bulkheads descending.*

NEEVA: Asuka!

YUBARI: (still coughing) Neeva, go! Go! Uhhnn...

(She passes out, crumples to the floor)

(An emergency bulkhead slams down in front of her)

NEEVA: Computer, override bulkhead! I need to get Asuka!

COMPUTER: *Access denied. Toxin levels too high. Evacuate to a safe area of the ship.*

NEEVA: Override, (cough) authorization... gah!

(Neeva now simply shoots the bulkhead's control pad. The bulkhead rolls up a little.)

NEEVA: A little warp coolant? Pah. Call me when it's Veridium-Nine. Captain Yubari! There!  
(coughing) Got... gotcha. Come... come on!

(She drags Yubari out under the door.)

COMPUTER: *Warp core breach in sixty seconds.*

NEEVA: (through heavy coughing) The beacon! Did the beacon work?

COMPUTER: *Insufficient data. Warp core breach in progress.*

NEEVA: (still heavy coughing) Asuka, you've got to... we need... the pod..... uhn...

(She falls over, unconscious.)

COMPUTER: *Alert. Medical emergency, main engineering. All personnel unconscious. Warp core breach in progress.*

(We hear the computer echo through Sickbay, the Battle Bridge, and the Shuttle Bay)

COMPUTER: *Alert. Alert. Life signs failing, main engineering. Warp core breach in progress.*

(We hear some old school booping and the sound of a portal opening.)

(Agent Isaac and Janath jump through and land on the *Excelsior* engineering deck.)



ISAAC: Hello, *Excelsior*! We've been searching for months, uptime and downtime, but your beacon -- Oh my. What happened?

(Janath has already moved to a console and taps through the relevant data.)

JANATH: Isaac, we have a warp core breach in progress. Escape pods launched.

ISAAC: Then whose lifesigns did we pick up?

JANATH: See that coolant leak?

ISAAC: Yes?

JANATH: They're in there!

ISAAC: Janath, no! It's too dangerous!

(She presses some controls to open the door)

JANATH: Our bluegills can filter enough of the toxins! And you heard the computer -- we're the only chance they've got! Come on!

ISAAC: (sigh) Alright.

(Isaac runs after her)

(Janath gets to Neeva first and hoists her up.)

JANATH: Come on, friend, let's get you out of here.  
(coughs heavily) I've got the green one!

COMPUTER: *Warp core breach in  
twenty seconds.*

ISAAC: I have... I think her name is Yubari.

(Pause)

(A panel explodes)

ISAAC: (through coughing) We can't make it back to  
our entrance portal! Try this one!

COMPUTER: *Warp core breach in  
ten seconds*

(He does something with his servo that generates a portal behind a different, much closer  
door.)

JANATH: Run!

(They do, and they jump through the portal, returning to...)

**SCENE 6F-41****LOCATION: AGENT ISAAC'S CONTROL ROOM**

LORHROK: Neeva! You found her!

ISAAC: Mister Lorhrok. Beta Five must have rescued you from an escape pod?

BETA FIVE: Affirmative.

ISAAC: Well done, old girl. Start rescuing the other escape pods -- check a few millennia downtime -- and transfer Miz Yubari and Neeva to the hospital ward.

BETA FIVE: Affirmative.

OVDAN: What about the *Excelsior*? Is she alright?!

ISAAC: Beta Five, put the *Excelsior* on screen. There may still be time.

BETA FIVE: Working.

(Over the comm, we can see Engineering, just as we left it.)

COMPUTER: *Warp core breach, imminent.*

OVDAN: That's barely any time! We have to move!

ISAAC: Not time to save her, my friend. Time to pay her one last salute.

COMPUTER: *Antimatter containment failure. Ab[andon ship.]*

OVDAN: No!

(Her voice is swallowed in an explosion -- no, a cascade of explosions -- as the *U.S.S. Excelsior, NCC-2000-C*, is torn apart, simultaneously shattered by an antimatter mini-supernova, ripped to molecules by the abrupt collapse of the warp field, and spread across several million years of history as the time travel collapses. The *Excelsior* is no more.)

(The viewscreen goes to static)

(Janeth deactivates the viewscreen)

JANATH: The *Starship Excelsior* has been destroyed.

ISAAC: A good ship.

OVDAN: But... this... whatever this machine of yours is... clearly, you can travel in time. Just wind us [back a few minutes!]

LORHRO:

Stop, L. Just stop. He can't do that.

OVDAN: Why not?!

LORHROK: Because Brahm only found us by following the beacon of that explosion. Undo the explosion and we undo the rescue. You're lucky he was looking for us at all. He's the solitary reason you only got some of my crew killed, not all of it.

OVDAN: We almost made it! If you'd helped us, instead of sabota[ging us, we could have done it!]

LORHROK: Then you wouldn't have had anyone else to blame for the worst decision you ever made. A maverick whose good intentions justify a bent rule or an ignored order, that's how you see yourself, isn't it? I always admired that about you! Well, here's where it ended!

OVDAN: It ended with us going home, not condemned to die marooned, so if you're looking for an apology, t[hat's not going to happen.]

LORHROK: I don't want an apology. I don't want anything from someone with this much hate inside him. Just... stay away.

OVDAN: That won't be a problem.

JANATH: Um, Captain Lorhrok? We'll drop you on Earth, but rescue ops may take a little while first. May I show you to quarters?

LORHROK: Your hospital, please. I've lost my ship, but I still have a crew to look out for.

OVDAN: May I accompany you?

JANATH: Not a word from you, L.

(Janath and Lorhrok walk away together.)

**SCENE 6F-42**

**LOCATION: PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM, STARFLEET MEDICAL, EARTH**

**NARRATOR: *Several weeks later, Starfleet Medical.***

**J'NAYA: (Muffled) I know it's silly, I know he loves me for who I am, but... I can't do it. I can't let Jack see me. Am I terrible?**

**NEEVA: No, you're wonderful. I don't know if this is what you want to hear right now, Kestra, but... it's not that bad. Honestly.**

**J'NAYA: How can you say that? I look like an Antedean on fish market day!**

**NEEVA: The swelling will go down.**

**J'NAYA: The scarring won't!**

**NEEVA: You don't even know what the scars look like yet, not under all those bandages. I promise they'll be smaller.**

**J'NAYA: How do you know?**

**NEEVA: Because the least violent person in my life growing up was a Klingon teenager. (pause) I'm so sorry, Kestra. You were trying to make everything work for everyone, and you're the one who ended up caught in the crossfire.**

**J'NAYA: No, I... I'm fine.**

**NEEVA: You're not, and that's okay.**

(Pause)

J'NAYA: Latest casualty report. Chief Lorth is dead.

NEEVA: Marel Lorth? Our transporter guy? But he's been with us since...

J'NAYA: Before either of us came aboard.

NEEVA: He hated that job.

J'NAYA: Always made you feel bad for trying to beam anywhere. Couldn't figure out why he stayed in Starfleet. And now...

NEEVA: You heard about Jalin Tigan?

J'NAYA: Yeah. See? I really am fine.

NEEVA: Kestra, you can't moralize your feelings. If I have to tell you that story about your Aunt Aislyn...

J'NAYA: (rueful chuckle) Yeah, I would really deserve that. I'll talk to you later, Neeva. Glad your lungs are starting to feel better.

NEEVA: Call Jack.

J'NAYA: I'll... try.

(J'Naya exits.)

NEEVA: Computer, check again on the status of patient Yubari, Asuka.

COMPUTER: *Information not available. Please try again later.*

NEEVA: Computer, no. I looked it up after last time. You say "unregistered" if they're still missing and "deceased" if they've been found. So where is Yubari Asuka?

COMPUTER: *Information not available. Please try again later.*

NEEVA: Oh, I will -- until someone gives me a straight answer.



**SCENE 6F-423****LOCATION: NARRATIVE VOID**

*VOICE: Each minute bursts in the burning room,  
The great globe reels in the solar fire,  
Spinning the trivial and unique away.  
(How all things flash! How all things flare!)  
What am I now that I was then?  
May memory restore again and again  
The smallest color of the smallest day:  
Time is the school in which we learn,  
Time is the fire in which we burn.*

*-Delmore Schwartz*