

JOURNEY HOME
By
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TEASER

1. EXT. SPACE - N/A 1.

The ENTERPRISE can be seen moving through space at warp speed. Over the picture we can hear Captain Picard's voice.

PICARD
(voice over)
Captain's Log Stardate 42356.9. The ENTERPRISE has received a distress call from a privately owned freighter, the HERMES. Very little is know about the nature of the emergency as all communication with the freighter has been lost. All that is known is that life support systems are failing.

2. INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - DAY 2.

Here in the Transporter room an AWAY team prepares to beam over to the HERMES. On the AWAY team is RIKER, GEORDI, TASHA, DATA, and DR. CRUSHER. Riker turns to the AWAY team as they wait in the transporter room.

RIKER
We still have not been able to raise the HERMES again, so be prepared for anything people.

The communicator on the transporter beeps. Riker moves over to the console and punches the button.

KAHCHOR RIKER
Riker here.

WORF
(filtered)
Worf, sir. We are now able to scan the HERMES.

RIKER
Is life support functional?

WORF
Yes sir, but many of the compartments are
open to vacuum.

RIKER
What life readings are you getting?

WORF
Very low, sir. Perhaps one or two
lifeforms aboard.

RIKER
Thank you, Worf.

Riker turns and nods to the rest of the AWAY team. They
and he step onto the transporter platform.

RIKER
Energize

They beam out.

3. INT. HERMES CORRIDOR - DAY 3.

The AWAY team materializes in a heavily damaged
corridor. The corridor is burnt, and wreckage lies about.

RIKER
Tasha, Geordi, head aft and check
engineering. We'll check the bridge.

TASHA
Yes, sir.

Tasha and Geordi head aft, while Riker, Data, and Dr.
Crusher head forward.

4. INT. HERMES BRIDGE - DAY 4.

The doors to the bridge are forced open by Data. Data Riker, and Dr. Crusher enter the bridge. The bridge is even more damaged than the corridor they were just in. Dr. Crusher holds up her tricorder and scans the bridge.

DR. CRUSHER

We have a survivor here!

Dr. Crusher and Riker move quickly over to the person indicated by the tricorder. Data completes a scan of the bridge.

DATA

He is the only survivor, commander.

5. INT. HERMES CORRIDOR - DAY 5.

Tasha and Geordi have reached the hatch for engineering. A large thick door blocks their way.

TASHA

The pressure doors have sealed.

Geordi has now moved over to a small console next to the door. He operates the controls for a moment.

GERODI

Uh hu. The compartment is open to vacuum.

Tasha activates her communicator.

TASHA

Commander?

RIKER

(filtered)

Go ahead Tasha.

TASHA

Engineering is open to vacuum, sir. There are no survivors here.

RIKER

(filtered)
Very well, you and Geordi report up here.

TASHA
Yes, sir.

6. INT. HERMES BRIDGE - DAY 6.

Dr. Crusher is still working on the one survivor.
Riker moves over to Data, who is now working with the
bridge computer.

RIKER
Do you have anything for me Data?

DATA
The only fact I have been able to discern sir,
is that the ship was damaged in battle,
not malfunction or accident. I do have
an observation sir.

RIKER
Yes?

DATA
The crew, sir. Only two of them are wearing
work coveralls. The rest are dressed in rags.
I would infer, that the ones dressed in
rags, are not part of the ship's normal crew.

Geordi enters the bridge. Tasha is not with him.

GEORDI
Tasha will be here shortly. She's
making a check of the crew's compartment.

RIKER
Thank you Geordi. Data, record the ship's logs
and bring them with us.

Riker moves over to Dr. Crusher and kneels next to her and
her patient.

RIKER
Is he going to live, doctor?

DR. CRUSHER

I don't know. We have to get him back to the ENTERPRISE right away, commander.

Tasha enters the bridge.

TASHA

The crew's compartment is clear..

Tasha stops and gasps in mid-sentence. Her eyes are transfixed on Dr. Crushers' patient. She moves forward quickly and kneels next to the patient.

TASHA

Yuri?

She is looking at the patient only. Riker and Dr. Crusher exchange quick glances with each other.

RIKER

Lieutenant, you know this man?

TASHA

Yes sir, Yuri is from my homeworld.

ACT_ONE

7. (SAME AS 1.)

7.

PICARD

(voice over)

Captain's log, supplemental. After answering the distress call of the private freighter HERMES, the ENTERPRISE has rescued the sole survivor from that ship. Most surprising is that the one survivor, whom we know only as Yuri, is in fact from Lieutenant Yar's homeworld. How he came to be on that ship is still a mystery. Yuri is unconscious and quite badly injured.

8. INT. SICKBAY - DAY

8.

Dr. Crusher is working on Yuri on her operating table. Tasha and Riker are also in the room.

PICARD

(voice over)

Dr. Crusher is working, as I speak, to save Yuri's life, but she has informed me that the man is in critical condition.

RIKER

(softly to Tasha)

How do you think he got on the HERMES?

TASHA

I really don't know, sir. Freighters sometimes make stops there. I stowed away on one when I was fifteen. Yuri could have done the same.

Dr. Crusher lifts the lit eye piece from her eyes and stands erect. She moves away from Yuri. Tasha moves to Yuri's side. Dr. Crusher looks at her and then to Riker.

DR. CRUSHER

May I have a word with you, commander?

Riker and Dr. Crusher leave the room.

9. INT. SICKBAY OFFICE - DAY

9.

Dr. Crusher and Riker step into the room. Dr. Crusher waits until the door is fully closed.

DR. CRUSHER

I'm afraid that Yuri is not going to live.

RIKER

Is this certain?

DR. CRUSHER

Yes. He's breathed certain cooling gasses. They are destroying his tissue faster than I can rebuild it. I've given him something for the pain, but there is nothing more I can do.

10. INT. SICKBAY - DAY

10.

Tasha is now holding Yuri's hand as she stands beside him. She has her head bowed down. The lights are dim and she has her eyes closed when Yuri opens his eyes.

YURI

Tasha? Is that you?

TASHA

Yes, Yuri. It's me.

YURI

Strange to be having a nice dream for a change.

TASHA

It's no dream Yuri.

YURI

You're really here? I can't believe it.

TASHA

It is real. Yuri, what happened? How

did you get on that ship?

YURI

The monsters, they're taking everyone. They killed the people from the ship, and tried to kill us when we helped them. It doesn't matter now. You're here.

(he pauses a long moment)

I have to sleep, Tasha. I am too tired to talk right now.

Dr. Crusher and Riker enter the sickbay again as Yuri closes his eyes. Then, slowly, his life signs drop off to nothing. No one moves for a moment. Then Dr. Crusher steps up to Tasha.

DR. CRUSHER

I'm sorry, Tasha, there was nothing I could do.

Tasha doesn't say anything. She simply turns and walks slowly out of the room.

11. INT. CAPTAINS' READYROOM - DAY

11.

Captain Picard is working at his desk when the chimes on his door sound.

PICARD

Come!

Data enters the readyroom. He walks to the front of the captain's desk and stops, at attention.

DATA

Captain, I have a report on the log entries from the HERMES, sir.

Picard sits back in his chair.

PICARD

Proceed, Mr. Data.

DATA

The log entries report, captain, that

the HERMES made planetfall on KAHCHOR after receiving rumors that large profits could be made there. Upon landing, the crew of the HERMES were attacked after disembarking from their craft. Their attackers were Ferengi.

Picard sits up in his chair.

PICARD

Is this confirmed, Data?

DATA

Yes, sir. Scanner recordings retrieved from the HERMES do confirm this report.

PICARD

Proceed.

DATA

Several of the crew were killed in the attack. The rest, sir, were unable to return to their vessel. The crew were able to find shelter with a group of inhabitants of the planet. While they hid, the inhabitants told the crew the ferengi were stealing people for slaves. The crew, correctly, deduced that the ferengi would take any action necessary to insure that the Federation would not be alerted to their actions. With the help of the inhabitants, the crew returned to their ship, but several more were killed. Then, dangerously undermanned, the HERMES lifted ship, and attempted escape at warp speed. The ferengi pursued the HERMES, and attacked. After critically damaging the HERMES, the ferengi stopped attacking and left the area.

PICARD

Why didn't the ferengi destroy the HERMES?

DATA

Unknown at this time, sir. The ferengi made no attempt to communicate with the HERMES, and

ignored the crew's attempt to surrender.

PICARD
Anything else Data?

DATA
Only an observation, sir. The last entry in the
the HERMES log is dated thirty-six hours, ten
minutes, and twenty seconds ago, sir.

PICARD
Thank you, Data.

Data turns and leaves the readyroom. Picard thinks for a
moment, then he activates the intercom.

PICARD
Engineering, prepare for high warp speed.

12. INT BRIDGE - DAY

12.

Data has now returned to the Ops station. Geordi is on
Conn. Worf is at the weapons console. Picard enters
the bridge from his readyroom.

PICARD
Mr. La Forge set a course for KAHCHOR,
warp eight.

GEORDI
Aye, sir.

Riker enters the bridge from the turbolift. He proceeds
straight to Picard.

RIKER
Yuri has died, sir. Dr. Crusher says that there
wasn't anything anyone could have done.

PICARD
I see. How is Lieutenant Yar?

RIKER

This seems to be hitting her pretty hard,
sir.

PICARD

Excuse her from her duties until she feels
able to return.

GEORDI

(turning from Conn)

Course set and ready captain. We can be at
KAHCHOR in eighteen hours.

RIKER

KAHCHOR, captain?

PICARD

Yes, Number one. It seems the HERMES was
destroyed by the Ferengi. Ferengi who are
engaging in slave trading in Federation
space.

(to Conn)

Engage.

13. SAME AS ONE.

13

14. INT. TASHA'S CABIN - NIGHT

14.

Tasha is sitting alone in her cabin. The lights have
been turned down low. Her door chime sound, but she
does not answer. The door chimes again.

TASHA

Enter.

The door opens and Wesley comes in. Tasha looks up and
an apologetic expression comes over his face.

TASHA

I'm sorry, Wesley, I forgot. I really
don't feel like low-gee sling ball
today anyway.

Wesley moves over and sits across from Tasha.

WESLEY

Forget the sling ball. How are you feeling?

TASHA

I'm fine.

WESLEY

No, you're not. I know what you're going through. I remember when my father died. I hardly remembered him, I was so little, but it still felt like my heart had been ripped out. He died on some alien world half way across the galaxy, but that didn't make it hurt any less. I cried for days.

Tasha stands and turns away from Wesley.

TASHA

That's not how I feel.

(she pauses a moment)

No, that is how I feel, but I feel so many other ways too. So...

WESLEY

So...what?

Tasha does not answer Wesley. She simply stands there, looking at the wall.

WESLEY

Tasha, I thought I was your friend.

Tasha turns around and looks at Wesley, her face betraying her shock at what he has said.

TASHA

Of course your my friend! You are one of my dearest friends!

Tasha is silent for several moments. The she sits back down again.

TASHA

I should have never left there.

WESLEY

WHAT? That's crazy. What were you supposed to do?

TASHA

I should have stayed. I shouldn't have run out on my comrades.

(she is silent for a beat)

Maybe, if I did, Yuri wouldn't be dead.

WESLEY

You can't say that. It may have been you instead of Yuri that would be dead. You can't worry about what might have been.

TASHA

I ran out on them. I left without even saying good-bye.

WESLEY

Who?

TASHA

The gang. NO one survives in a place like that alone, Wesley. Not when there are gangs of people looking for something the you have. Food, weapons, or

WESLEY

So you were in a gang too?

TASHA

When I was nine years old they found me. I was running from a rape gang. Nine years old...

WESLEY

Tasha, I'm sorry I

TASHA

It's okay Wesley.

(she pauses a moment)

I was cornered. I had stupidly run into a dead end alley and gotten myself trapped. They were only a few moments behind me. I was starting to panic. That's when Nikita showed up. She

must have been fifteen or sixteen. They saved me, Nikita, Yuri, Alexi. They took me in and I wasn't alone anymore.

Both Tasha and Wesley are silent for a moment.

TASHA

I stayed with them, of course. At first because it was safer, and then because I started to like them, and the crazy things they talked about.

WESLEY

Crazy things?

TASHA

Nikita had taught herself to read. She used to go through buildings looking for things to read, and then she would tell the rest of us what she had read. She would start talking about how one day she was going to rebuild things, and make it safe so there wouldn't be rape gangs anymore. We loved to dream about that.

(she pauses again)

I was fifteen when I ran out on them.

WESLEY

Ran out? You didn't run out you were rescued.

TASHA

Rescued! I stowed away on a freighter that had landed to make repairs. We had been in space three days before they knew I was on board.

TASHA

(continued)

(she pauses again)

I didn't even say goodbye.

WESLEY

Tasha, you were fifteen! Younger than I am now!

TASHA

Nikita was fifteen when she saved me. I was fifteen when I ran out on her. Ironic, isn't it?

WESLEY

What would have staying achieved? A lifetime of fighting? Never know anything else?

Tasha doesn't answer Wesley, she just sits there looking at the floor. Wesley gets up and moves toward the door. The door opens and Wesley steps half way through. He turns and looks back at Tasha.

WESLEY

Tasha, would you have expected any of them not to leave if they could?

Tasha again doesn't answer, and Wesley leaves.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

15. EXT. ORBITING KAHCHOR - DAY 15.

The ENTERPRISE moves gracefully into orbit about KAHCHOR

16. INT. BRIDGE - DAY 16.

Everyone is at their stations. There is tension on their faces that betrays the situation.

GEORDI
Standard orbit, Captain.

PICARD
Thank you, Mr. La Forge. Lt Yar, please make a scan for any vessels in the area or on the planet.

Tasha works at her station for a few moments.

TASHA
I can find no trace of any vessels, sir.

PICARD
Thank you, lieutenant. Number one?

RIKER
It is possible that the Ferengi have already left sir.

PICARD
Yes, it is also possible they are shielded on the planet.

RIKER
Then let me take down an AWAY team sir. Take a close look around.

PICARD

My thoughts exactly number one. Assemble
your team and report to my ready room.

17. EXT. PLANETS SURFACE - DAY 17.

In a large clearing on the planet a Ferengi vessel is
at rest.

18. INT. FERENGI VESSEL - DAY 18.

The Ferengi bridge is a small, dark, and cramped little
space. Several ferengi are here working at their stations.
Suddenly a beeping sound pierces the low din of the bridge.
A ferengi sensor officer works quickly at his station as
the Daimon moves towards his station.

FERENGI SENSOR OFF.

A Federation galaxy class, my Daimon.

DAIMON KERAK

That accursed freighter! It must have gotten
a distress call away. I should never have
saved it for salvage.(to the sensor off)
Has the Federation sensed us yet?

FERENGI SENSOR OFF.

No, my Daimon.

DAIMON KERAK

Excellent, engage the sensor screen.

FERENGI SENSOR OFF.

Yes, my Daimon. Daimon Kerak, the sensor
screen will not prevent any form of
visual detection.

DAIMON KERAK

I am aware of that, but the humans like
to rely on their sensors and machines to
do their work. They will scan and orbit
for awhile, then they will grow bored
and leave us to our business.

19. INT. CAPTAIN'S READYROOM - DAY

19.

Captain Piccard and Troi are in the readyroom. The doors open and Riker, Tasha, Worf, and Data enter the room.

PICARD

Aren't you taking Mr. La Forge, number one?

RIKER

No sir, I felt both Worf and Geordi are very hard to keep undetected. I felt we could keep one or the other unnoticed, but both would be impossible.

PICARD

Excellent forethought Number one.

Piccard stands and begins to walk around the readyroom.

PICARD

I don't need to tell you what we are facing here. The Ferengi have once again proved that they embrace the worse aspects of capitalism. Our reports have indicated that the Ferengi are stealing the people from this planet. We need proof. If the Ferengi are here and dealing in slaves, I want you to find it! One other point, even though this planet is in a state of anarchy, the prime directive is still in effect. Any local government has full jurisdiction and their laws must be obeyed. Please don't end up in some war-lords' dungeon.

WORF

I assume that the prime directive does not extend to the Ferengi, here.

PICARD

That is correct. Our primary duty is to protect this planet from outside interference.

RIKER
Yes, sir. We'll need to have appropriate dress for the planet, sir.

PICARD
Make it so.

Riker and the AWAY team leaves the readyroom

Troi steps to the forefront.

TROI
Captain, I am worried about Tasha.

PICARD
Yes counselor?

TROI
This has caused her a lot of emotional stress. I fear that she may not make clear judgments in her current state.

PICARD
I understand. Unfortunately we need her expertise in this area.

TROI
Yes, sir. I just hope she comes back from this AWAY team mission.

20. INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - DAY

20.

Riker, Tasha, Data and Worf enter the transporter room. All four of them are dressed in rags for clothing, Worf is wearing a large cloak with a hood pulled up hiding most of his Klingon features. Riker steps on foot onto the transporter pad and pulls his phaser.

RIKER
Set your phasers for stun, and make sure your insignia is hidden under your "clothing"

Everyone insures that their phasers are set properly and that the communicator/insignias are well hidden.

RIKER

Tasha, you want to set the co-ordinates?

Tasha moves over to the transporter console and set the landing co-ordinates. Tasha then joins the AWAY team on the transporter pad. Tasha takes a deep breath as she takes her place on the transporter.

RIKER

Are you ok?

TASHA

I'm fine sir.

The AWAY team de-materializes.

21. INT. BRIDGE - DAY

21.

Piccard and Troi are at their stations in the center of the bridge, Gerodi and Wesley are at conn and ops respectively.

WESLEY

The AWAY team has arrived safely at the planet sir.

PICARD

Thank you, Mr. Crusher.

(he turns to Troi)

Counselor, can you help us in locating the Ferengi?

TROI

No sir, They are a total blank to me. They seem to have the ability to screen their presence.

PICARD

Thank you. Mr. Crusher, I want an intense scan of the orbital space above the planet, also a detailed scan of the planet in the area where the AWAY team is investigating.

WESLEY

You think the Ferengi vessel is on the planet sir?

PICARD
It is a possibility, Mr. Crusher.

WESLEY
Then why not scan the entire planet, sir?

PICARD
If there are planetside, it is for cargo loading. That is the area where the people are being abducted from, hence...

Picard pauses waiting for Wesley to finish for him.

WESLEY
If the vessel is on the planet, it will have to be there.

PICARD
Very good Ensign. Make it so.

WESLEY
Yes, sir!

22. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY

22.

In a lightly wooded area of the planet the AWAY team materializes. After a moment of looking around Tasha points off to one direction.

TASHA
There is a "settlement" a few kilometers in this direction sir.

RIKER
Lead on Lieutenant, This is your neighborhood.

Tasha starts moving in the direction she pointed, the rest of the AWAY team follows her.

TASHA
Please sir, this is not what one calls home.

DATA
Lieutenant, I have not read any of the history of your world, could you please tell me what has

happened here?

There is a moment of silence as Data's question impact hits Tasha.

RIKER

Data, I don't think that's really needed right now.

TASHA

No commander, its alright. I think I need to talk about it.

(she inhales a deep breath)

In Earths' early years of colonization, this planet was used as a dumping ground for criminals and undesirables. Rather than be left entirely on their own, the colonial powers decided that the "population" could be used to produce resources of low cost. This went on for several generations, the planet changed hands several times, being sold like a business that was doing poorly. Eventually there was a revolt of the descendants on the planet. It turned into quite a war from what the history tapes say. There was even limited use of nuclear weapons. After many years of fighting, the colonial powers gave up and left the planet on its own. Unfortunately, the society here had been destroyed in the war. The whole planet fell into a state of anarchy. Which the people are still living in.

DATA

I see. Did not the war cost much more, in resources and labor, than simply freeing the planet?

TASHA

(sadly)

Yes, it certainly did.

DATA

(slightly confused)

There are still so many things I do not understand.

The Ferengi continue to work at their tasks on the bridge diligently. Again the sensor alarm sounds. The Sensor officer works quickly at his station as Daimon Kerak approaches.

DAIMON KERAK
What has happened?

SENSOR OFFICER
(still working quickly)
Several things my Daimon, The Federation vessel has intensified its sensor scan of the area, and they have transported personnel to the planet.

DAIMON KERAK
Has the Federation detected our presence?

SENSOR OFFICER
No my Daimon! The screen is mimicking their scan perfectly.

The Daimon paces a few feet away from the Sensor officer and drops his head in thought. The Sensor officer watches his Daimon's every moves.

DAIMON KERAK
You are certain they have not scanned this vessel?

SENSOR OFFICER
Yes my Daimon, they scan the area, but repeatedly sweep past our vessel.

DAIMON KERAK
Then the human Daimon is grasping at straws trying to locate our presence. Insure that the humans continue to miss this vessel, or you will have no need for your shares.

SENSOR OFFICER
Yes my Daimon.

Daimon Kerak turns and starts to leave the bridge.

SENSOR OFFICER
Daimon Kerak.

DAIMON KERAK
Yes?

SENSOR OFFICER
What about the humans on the planet?

DAIMON KERAK
We will let Pheron handle them.

Daimon Kerak exits.

24. INT FERENGI DINNING HALL - DAY 24.

Daimon Kerak enters the room and sits at his table. He has hardly settled in when the door opens again and another Ferengi enters the room.

THANIN
Daimon, is it true the humans are here?

Kerak calmly looks at THANIN for a few moments.

DAIMON KERAK
Yes, there is a human ship in orbit here.

THANIN
Then why are we still here? Are you waiting for them to bring their full might down upon this ship?

DAIMON KERAK
You may be the financial officer, Thanin, but I am Daimon, and my word is profit!

THANIN
You are Daimon, but you reach for too much. Our holds are nearly full, there is no need to wait for one more load!

DAIMON KERAK
And how much does that one load represent?

THANIN
(he cocks his head back for a second)

Given operating cost and crew share the load would bring ... 10,000 on Ferius, less than twenty percent of our total profits.

DAIMON KERAK
And how much Zenite, will 10,000 buy on Ferius?

THANIN
(Again he cocks his head back)
Two tons with a resale value of 30,000.

DAIMON KERAK
Excellent, you see we risk one day here for 30,000, that is a worth venture in my opinion.

THANIN
You risk the entire cargo and ship on this load!
It is unwise investment!

DAIMON KERAK
Your objections have been noted Thanin.

THANIN
Very well, ignore me if you wish, but I will not be held responsible for any loss engaged in this venture!

DAIMON KERAK
Care to risk your share in that statement?

THANIN
(he takes a deep breath)
Yes, only a fool shares a loss.

DAIMON KERAK
I will enjoy spending your money.

Thanin leaves the room quickly.

25. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY

25.

The AWAY team is continuing the move towards the settlement that Tasha told them of. Soon they come to a halt and Tasha calls all their attention.

TASHA

We will be there very soon now. What it really

is, is a bombed out city. No one moves in the day everyone waits until dark and then they begin searching for food and weapons. We should be fairly safe until sundown, then we will need a place of shelter.

RIKER

Ok, we'll do a major part of our search in the day, and if we need to stay, then we'll find shelter. If not, we'll beam back to the ENTERPRISE.

The AWAY team starts moving again with Tasha in the lead and Worf at here side.

WORF

Sounds very much like the period after the Klingon civil war.

TASHA

It is in many ways. It is total anarchy. There is nothing like culture or civilization here. Just gangs of people fighting over the ruins of those who fought before them.

The AWAY teams turns around a bend and the ruined city lies before them. It is very active and very alive. People are moving about. Going about the daily tasks of living. There are no armed gangs in sight, everyone seem to be at peace and living together.

DATA

Then again, the situation could have changed.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

26. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY

26.

The AWAY team is walking in the ruins of the city. All around them, people go about life, working, living, and playing, children are in the streets, women walking about unmolested, almost no one armed in any way.

TASHA
(shocked)
Sir, This is nothing like when I left!

RIKER
(looking around)
How long ago was that Tasha? Twelve, thirteen years? Even here things move on and grow.

TASHA
It is so unlike what it was! I can't believe it!

DATA
Indeed, everyone seems to be at peace here.

WORF
But perhaps it is not as peaceful as it looks.

RIKER
Why do you say that Worf?

WORF
Have you noticed the armed men on several corners that we have passed? In addition the "police" force I have seen several armed men who attempted to appear unarmed.

The AWAY team looks around them. On a street corner not far away Tasha spots a man armed with a rifle. Data spots another further away.

WORF

The man in that doorway. Do not look at him directly. He is armed with a compact weapon under his coat. He is watching everyone's movement.

RIKER

(concerned)

Ours?

WORF

Yes, but he has paid us no more attention than anyone else on the street, yet.

Riker looks around quickly and thinks for a moment, his chin in his hand.

RIKER

We need a place to discuss this unobserved.

TASHA

I think I might know of a place commander.

RIKER

Ok Tasha, lead us there.

The AWAY team is once again on the move, following Tasha's lead. As the walk Data watches everything with a very intent expression.

DATA

Commander.

RIKER

Yes Data?

DATA

The rifles that the armed men are carrying could not have been produced on the planet.

RIKER

Are you certain of that Data?

DATA

Yes commander. Those rifles were produced off world. Either of Orion or Rigelian manufacture.

RIKER
So someone is selling arms here.

DATA
Speculation: The Ferengi? It would be most like them from what we know.

RIKER
It certainly sounds like them, Data.

They continue to move on following Tasha's lead.

27. INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE - DAY

27.

Captain Piccard is getting tea from the food dispenser on the bridge. Troi is at her station. Wesley is at Ops and Geordi is at conn. Piccard moves back to the command chair with his coffee. He sips the tea, then he puts it down.

PICCARD
Its too hot.

TROI
You're very concerned about the AWAY team.

PICCARD
OF course I'm concerned about the AWAY team, but I am worried about Tasha. Who knows what she's really feeling down there? If she really feels that she failed Yuri, who knows what being back here will do? She takes failure VERY personally.

TROI
True, but she also takes duty very personally. She has a very strong personality, captain. It is best she face this head on.

PICCARD
You're right, but it was easier when I lead the AWAY teams and left my captain to worry.

TROI
(smiling)
Rank hath its duties also.

Piccard smiles and picks up his coffee and starts drinking it.
Wesley begins working more intently at the ops station. After
a few moments of working at the station he sits up.

WESLEY
(softly)
Geordi, didn't you do sensor maintenance
last week?

GEORDI
Sure did Wes, why?

WESLEY
The sensor wave-form is distorted, but I
can't seem to correct for it.

GEORDI
Distorted?
(moving over to ops)
What's the magnitude?

WESLEY
Its only .32 microseconds, but I can't
seem to find the cause.

GEORDI
(working the sensor controls)
hmmmm. That's not our sensor scan Wes. See
right there? That's our scan, this other one
is masking it. See if you can eliminate it
now.

Geordi stand straight and leave Wesley to his station.
He moves over to the command center of the bridge.

GEORDI
We may have found something Captain.

PICCARD
Go on Mr. La Forge.

GEORDI

Wesley found another sensor scan being overlaid onto ours with almost the exact same parameters. Wesley is current trying to isolate the sensor.

PICCARD

Do you think someone may be scanning us with our own scan?

GEORDI

No sir, I think what is happening in that they are sending a false scan back into our systems, giving us false data. When we isolate the false signal, we'll see what that are hiding.

PICCARD

Very good, keep me informed.

28. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY

28.

The AWAY team is now moving through a more devastated part of the city. Here the building are in a state of even more disrepair. People can no longer be seen on the streets, even the armed guards seem to have vanished. Tasha picks her way through he rubble deeper into the destroyed part of the city.

TASHA

The part of the city was always the roughest. The debris made running very difficult, and so the people who knew it best ruled it very solidly.

DATA

You seem to know the area well It.

TASHA

I was one of those who helped, rule, this place. Here a small group could hold out over a much larger group for some time.

Tasha continues to lead them deeper and deeper into the

ruins of the city. Soon she is standing in front of a large ruined building.

TASHA

I knew it would still be standing. From inside we can talk and call the ship unobserved.

Tasha and the AWAY team starts toward the building, but stop quickly when the sound of guns being cocked is heard. Slowly atop the building, gunmen pop up. Pointng rifles at the AWAY team.

Then from the entrance to the building a person comes walking out, towards the AWAY team. The person is NIKITA a tall, strongly built woman. She stops a few feet from the AWAY team. Allowing plenty of distance for her sharpshooters.

NIKITA

What have we here? You are either very brave or very foolish.

WORF

What do you mean by that?

NIKITA

We want nothing to do with Pherons' New Order. Not with him, or with you!

Tasha has been standing silent. She has been looking at this woman with a slightly puzzled look on her face.

TASHA

Nikita?

Nikita walks over and looks Tasha in the face with a cold determined look on her face.

NIKITA

Yeah? What's it to you?

Nikita stops. The cold look melts from her face. She takes a closer look at Tasha.

NIKITA
Tasha? Little Natasha is that you?

TASHA
Yes it is! Nikita, I

NIKITA
(to the sharpshooters)
Relax! These are friends!

The sharpshooter moves back from the roof top, lowering their rifles.

NIKITA
Come inside, its safe here. We can talk.

Nikita moves back towards the building bidding the AWAY team to enter. Riker casts a quick look at Tasha who nods her approval, then the AWAY follows Nikita into the building.

29. INT. BUILDING - DAY

29.

A door opens into a small room. Nikita and the AWAY team enters the room. Tasha and Worf give the room a quick once over and see that there is only one way in or out. After the AWAY team is inside several other people enter the room as well.

NIKITA
Tasha, I never expected to see you again. After the freighter lifted and you couldn't be found. We figured you would never be back.

TASHA
I didn't expect to come back either. You wouldn't believe what is out there Nikita. It is so much more than we ever dreamed.

NIKITA
I'm sure. So why did you come back?

TASHA
We found Yuri.

There is a murmur through the room as she says this. Tasha waits a moment then continues.

TASHA

He's dead. We found him on a freighter that had been pretty badly shot up. Nikita, what's happening here?

NIKITA

(bitterly)

What's happening? I'll tell you what's happening, We're being killed off! Everyone is running out on each other and so we all are being pressed into a meat grinder!

TASHA

Nikita, that's not fair. I was..

NIKITA

You were gone! That's what you were, and now you come skipping back in here like the last thirteen years had never happened! HA! We didn't ask you to come back!

Nikita turns away from Tasha and the AWAY team violently. She turns her back full to Tasha. Another woman moves over and starts to comfort Nikita. ALEXI, a large man, moves over towards Tasha and the AWAY team.

ALEXI

Tasha, Nikita is very upset. You see, Yuri and her had been quite close recently.

TASHA

I see Alexi. I'm sorry.

There is a moment of uncomfortable silence.

RIKER

Alexi, can you tell me what's going on here?

ALEXI

Sure,...

Alexi stumbles as he realizes he knows no ones name save Tasha's.

TASHA

I'm sorry Alexi. This is Commander Riker, Lt. Commander Data, and Lt. Worf. They are from the ship I serve on and they are my friends.

ALEXI

I'm Alexi, that's Nikita our leader. What been going on is a war. Strange little monsters, ferengi have been making deals with Pheron. He has been giving them people in exchange for weapons.

DATA

That would explain the off world weapons we saw commander.

RIKER

Who is Pheron?

ALEXI

Pheron, the Lord of this city and the man we are sworn to destroy! He is worse than the Ferengi.

DATA

If the local government is dealing with the Ferengi, that could complicate our mission commander.

WORF

What do you mean Data?

DATA

If the Ferengi are dealing with the local government and not taking prisoners by force, then the federation will have no jurisdiction in the affairs.

TASHA

You mean we're going to have to let him sell people? To the Ferengi?

DATA

If the government is engaged in slavery,
that is their right, by the prime directive.

TASHA

Well, the prime directive is wrong!

RIKER

(stepping between Data and Tasha)
Lets table this until we know all the facts.

Suddenly from outside gunshots can be heard. Nikita
turns suddenly.

NIKITA

Alexi, Nicholas investigate!

Alexi and Nicholas quickly grab their weapons and start
to leave the basement. Tasha looks over at Riker.

TASHA

Shall I send Worf as well?

Riker nods. Tasha turns and nods to Worf who leaves with
Nicholas and Alexi.

NIKITA

It's most likely nothing to worry about,
looters or such.

DATA

(to Riker)

Commander, if this is a revolutionary cell.
Then our presence here could be interpreted
as a violation of the prime directive.

RIKER

I understand Data.

30. EXT. RUINED CITY - DAY _____

30

Worf, Nicholas, and Alexi are moving through the rubble
of the city.

ALEXI
We'll circle a parameter of a few blocks,
then return. Our rooftop guards will alert
us of anyones approach.

Worf nods his approval and the three of them move on.

31. SAME AS 29

31.

In the basement the AWAY team are talking among themselves.
Suddenly the door is kicked open and several men with
rifles storm in.

LEAD MAN
Don't even breath!

The woman who was comforting Nikita continues her dive for
her gun. The lead man shoots her through the torso. Nikita
starts to move towards her, but another gun is trained on
her.

LEAD MAN
Go ahead. I want to see you move.

Nikita locks eyes with the man, then looks away.

LEAD MAN
Lord Pheron is going to be real happy
with this haul!

FADE OUT:

ACT FOUR

32. EXT ORBIT - DAY 32

The ENTERPRISE continues to orbit the planet.

PICARD
(voice over)

Captains Log, supplemental. The AWAY team I have sent down to KAHCHOR has now been taken prisoner by the local war lord. Unfortunately, it seems that the AWAY team had made contact with a local resistance cell and is in violation of local rule.

33. INT. BRIDGE - DAY 33.

Picard is sitting at his command chair, Troi in next to him. He is still making the log entry.

PICARD
I trust to Commander Riker to handle the situation, but if forced to I will beam the AWAY back to the ENTERPRISE to prevent their execution.

Picard touches the panel to end the log entry. There is a moment of silence.

PICARD
Mr. Crusher raise Lt Worf for me.

Wesley operates his controls at Ops and soon

WORF
(filtered)
Worf here.

34. EXT. RUINED CITY - DAY 34.

Worf, Alexi, and Nicholas are crouched behind rubble which

blocks the streets of this ruined city. From their position they can view the building in which the AWAY team has been captured.

PICARD
(filtered)

Lieutenant, you are to follow and report to me what happens with the AWAY team, but you are not to engage local forces without my expressed approval.

WORF
I understand sir. Worf out.

ALEXI
They're coming out!

Worf moves quickly over to where Alexi and Nicholas are keeping guard. He peers over the rubble at the building. Exiting from the building are the guards who burst in, Nikita and her people, and the AWAY team. They are all in chains being lead away.

NICHOLAS

We've got to hit'em now!

Nicholas and Alexi start to bring their guns to a ready position. Worf places his hands on their weapons and pushes them down.

ALEXI
What are you doing?! They're going to get away!

WORF
Do you want a firefight here and now? When our people are in chains and in the way? Lets save them and not get them killed in the crossfire!

NICHOLAS
And what do you suggest?

WORF

Follow, and await a situation that befits us more than it does our enemies. Now do we do it right or do we kill our companions?

There is a tense moment, and then Alexi and Nicholas lower their weapons.

35. INT BRIDGE - DAY

35.

Troi, Picard, Geordi, and Wesley are all on the bridge. Wesley and Geordi are working together on the sensor scan problem. Troi and Picard are at their stations in the center of the bridge.

TROI

Captain, the newest developments could be very important.

PICARD

Agreed Counselor. IF this Pheron is selling his people to the Ferengi, it will much more difficult for the ENTERPRISE to become involved. We are actually going to have to catch the Ferengi with a human cargo.

TROI

I wasn't thinking of that Captain. I was thinking of Tasha.

PICARD

Explain.

TROI

As long as it were just the Ferengi who were at fault here, I was only slightly concerned over Tasha. Her anger and her duty would be directed outward, but now with this. She is going to feel very strongly about removing Pheron I fear.

PICARD

I see. Do you think I should pull her off the mission? Assuming I get the chance.

Troi thinks for a moment. Then looks back at Picard.

TROI

No sir. If you do she may feel a large amount of guilt, even more than she feels now. I still think its' best if she faces this now. But I really can't say how she will handle it.

PICARD

Thank you Counselor.

Wesley and Gerodi are working at the Ops. They whisper back and forth discussing the sensor problem.

GEORDI

I think that's' it Wes. Give it a try.

Wesley operates the controls at the Ops station.

WESLEY

Yes that did it Gerodi. I'm starting to get a clear scan now.

Geordi turns towards Captain Picard.

GEORDI

Captain, we've cleared out that interference.

PICARD

(standing up)

Excellent Geordi. Put it on the main viewer.

Wesley again operates the controls at his station. On the main viewer the image switches to a view of a forest on the planet. At first nothing can be seen in the clearing, the image begins to flickers and slowly it becomes another image. It is still the forest and the clearing that was seen before, but now a fernegi ship can be clearly seen in the clearing.

GEORDI

Bingo! We got'em!

PICARD

Very good. Keep that ship under surveillance and let me know if anything happens.

GEORDI

Yes, sir. Just one thing.

PICARD

Yes?

GEORDI

The field effect its still there and we can't be very precise with our scan. Also if the AWAY teams goes in there we will lose contact with them.

PICARD

How about ship to ship communications?

GERODI

That won't be affected. We have more than enough power to burn through, sir.

PICARD

Good, keep me informed.

Picard returns to his command seat.

TROI

Are you going to open a channel to the ferengi, sir?

PICARD

No. There's no need to let them know we have spotted them yet.

36. INT. PHERON'S PALACE - DAY

36.

The main hall in Lord Pheron's palace is not at all like the rest of the city. The room is in full repair and well decorated. Though it would not compare to the palaces on earth, it is but this planets' standards, very lavish.

Sitting at the head of the room is Lord PHERON. Above

him is a large portrait of himself. He smiles as the doors to the hall open and Nikita and the AWAY team are brought in.

PHERON

What have we here? The champions of the people?

The captive are brought to the foot of the throne upon which Pheron sits. After a moment of silence Pheron stands from his throne and moves closer to the captives.

PHERON

What's the matter Nikita? Ferengi got your tongue?

(he pauses a moment)

If they don't now, they soon will.

(he pauses another moment)

Oh come Nikita, this is a historic moment. Today, here, now your resistance dies.

NIKITA

My death will not matter. Others will rise up and destroy you.

PHERON

You know, if I were to take you out and crucify you, you might be right. Mytardom is so nice. BUT I am not going to help you like that. No, your days will end as they should. As a routine meal on some ferengi vessel.

There is again a moment of silence. Then the lead guard comes forward.

GUARD

Milord, some of the prisoner were armed with these.

The guard produces the AWAY teams phasers and insignias.

PHERON

Very good! These must have come from the ship that was here several days ago. I'm

most glad to get these out of the hand of your resistance.

Pheron begins walking down the line of prisoners. He looks carefully at each one as he speaks.

PHERON

Oh your "leader" is not going to the ferengi, stew pot alone. I assure you. Each of you for your part in this pathetic resistance, will share her fate.

RIKER

You dispense justice so fairly.

PHERON

(moving over to Riker)

Oh you dislike my justice? Here lets test yours.

Pheron moves over to Nikita. He takes out a pistol from a hip holster. He carefully loads the firearm and operates the slide.

PHERON

Nikita, if I were to give you this, what would you do with it?

NIKITA

I'd kill you.

PHERON

(to Riker)

There. Our justice is the same. The only difference is I am the one who won.

Pheron continues his walk down the line of prisoners. He stops at Tasha. A smile comes to his lips as he looks at her.

PHERON

Not all of you have to end up as the main course. You are too pretty to end your days so soon. Perhaps you would rather stay here with me, then go into the pot with them?

Tasha looks cold and hard at Pheron.

TASHA
I have one answer for you.

Tasha very suddenly and quickly kicks upward and lands a powerful blow on Pheron chest. Pheron is knocked to the floor. The breath taken from him. Tasha starts to close, but before she can a guard knocks her unconscious with the butt of his rifle.

FADE TO BLACK:

37. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY 37.

The captives are being lead through the outside the ruins of the city. They are all chained to one another. Surrounding them all are Pherons' guards.

DATA
(softly to Riker)
Commander, these chains are old and rusted. I could quite easily break them.

RIKER
(softly also)
I know Data, but we are still unarmed as are Nikita's people. To many could get killed needlessly if we try a break now.

TASHA
(softly)
He's right Data, anyway do you know a better way of learning the ferengi location on this planet? And we still have Worf on our side.

DATA
(softly)
I have not seen Lieutenant Worf since our capture.

TASHA
(softly)
Do not look around, you will give away
his position, but he has been following
us for sometime now.

RIKER
(softly & smiling)
I knew I could count on Worf! Remind me
to fix him a plate of Hoqra' when we
get out of this.

38. EXT. PLANETS' SURFACE - DAY 38.

Worf, Alexi and Nicholas are following the captives.
They follow the captives from a large, safe distance.
Worf is in the lead, followed by Nicholas with Alexi

bringing up the rear. After several moments of
following the captives Worf holds his hand up to
signal the other to stop. Worf peers over the
undergrowth. Ahead of them he can clearly see the captives,
he can also see the ferengi vessel. A large cargo door
at the rear of the ferengi vessel lowers and the captives
are lead inside the vessel. Worf moves back into the
undergrowth. He brings out his insignia.

WORF
Worf to ENTERPRISE.

There is no answer to Worf's call. Only static on the
circuit. He puts the insignia away while muttering
a curse in Klingoneese. He moves back to Alexi and
Nicholas.

WORF
They have been taken inside the ferengi
ship. We're going to have to move back
until I can contact my ship and bring
down some reinforcements.

Alexi starts to open his mouth to say something to
Worf but before he can three ferengi charge out of
the brush. All three fire the whips. Worf rolls out
the way of the shot that was aimed at him. Nicholas is

missed, but Alexi is hit directly. Worf comes up with his phaser in hand and disintegrates a ferengi at once. Another ferengi charges Worf while his attention is distracted. Worf is too good for the

ferengi to catch him unawares. He grabs the ferengi as he charges and throws him into a tree, knocking him unconscious.

Nicholas breaks and tries to run for the deeper woods. The last ferengi spins and fires his whip and hits Nicholas directly in the back. Worf fires and another ferengi is disintegrated.

Worf moves quickly over to Alexi where he lies on the ground. He feels for a pulse.

WORF

Dead.

He looks around and then moves quickly to the ferengi he had tossed into the tree. He picks the ferengi up and shakes him awake. The ferengi starts to fight, but Worf shoves his phaser into his face and the ferengi stops struggling.

WORF

Better. Now I've heard the ferengi are traders. I want to make a trade. Your life for the information on how to get into the slaves hold.

FERENGI

You're federation! You will not kill me.

WORF

I am a Klingon, and I don't see any superior officers around. Do you?

FERENGI

You're bluffing.

WORF

Perhaps. Then again I don't really need you. I could call down the troops I need and take the cargo hold. So unless you have something to say, I think its time to indulge in some old Klingon past times.

Worf smiles and looks coldly at the ferengi.

FERENGI

Ok, I tell you what you want.

FADE OUT:

ACT FIVE

39. INT. FERNEGI SLAVE HOLD - DAY

39.

The captives are now in the Ferengi slave hold. It is a dark place, filled with captives from this planet. There is not much room for the people placed in here, barely enough to walk. The AWAY team and Nikita are grouped together.

RIKER

Well I think we have enough information to act now. Mr. Data would you like to open that hatch for us.

Riker points over to a door set in the bulkhead.

DATA

Of course Commander.

The AWAY team and Nikita moves over to the hatch. Data sets his hands firmly and pulls at the hatch. It does not move. He sets again and tried once more to move the hatch. It still does not move.

DATA

It would seem, commander, that this hold was constructed to contain more than just humans.

NIKITA

So we are trapped.

RIKER

Only for the moment. An opportunity will occur, we simply will have to be ready to take advantage of it.

NIKITA

What do we do until then?

TASHA

You could tell us how this all happened.

Nikita settles down and looks at the three of them.

NIKITA

In the beginning things were going so well.

(to Tasha)

We had really beaten down most of the gangs.

(to the others)

We started farming the land and growing food, instead of scavenging it. Some people were having families, not just children born by accident or rape. Oh things weren't easy, not by a long shot, but they were better. There was a hope for the future.

DATA

How did Pheron become lord here?

NIKITA

Pheron. He came with a small army and very good weapons. Rifles and ammo for them. All we had were what we had found in the city, when it worked. Ammo was even harder to come by. At first we fought, but soon many decided that Pheron was better than going back to the Anarchy we had left behind.

RIKER

You didn't see it that way?

NIKITA

At first I did. It didn't seem that big of a price we had paid. Then the ferengi came for the first time. Some of us found out what was happening to those who questioned "lord" Pheron. Everyone in this resistance has lost someone to Pheron's trading with the ferengi. Now each season the ferengi come, and more

people disappear. The worst are the children.

TASHA
Children?!

NIKITA
Yes. Our spies in Pheron guard tell us about that. Pheron gets a special deal for the more children he brings them.

DATA
What reason would the Ferengi have for wanting children?

NIKITA
Delicacies. They find our children to be very tasty.

TASHA
Oh my God!

Before anyone else can say anything, that hatch opens and three ferengi come through. Two armed with and using stun whips to keep the captives a safe distance from the hatch and the ferengi. The third is carrying a large bucket, much larger than it would appear he could carry. They move into the hold, place the bucket or gruel down and then leave again through the hatch. After the ferengi leave, no one moves towards the bucket of gruel. Riker looks around to be sure there are no ferengi in the hold, but there is none and still no one is moving towards the gruel. All of the captives ignore it as though it will go away. Riker taps one of the captives.

RIKER
Why isn't anyone eating?

CAPTIVE
Why? Because they feed us the same stuff they eat!

DATA
Humans.

40. INT. BRIDGE - DAY

40.

Wesley is working hard at the Ops station.

WESLEY

I've located Lieutenant Worf.

PICARD

(rising from his chair)

Excellent, can you raise him?

WESLEY

No sir, he's inside the ferengi sensor screen. Also, captain, the ferengi vessel is powering up her main engines.

PICARD

E.T.A. until it lifts?

WESLEY

It's hard to say sir, we know so little about Ferengi design, but I'd say they'll lift in about thirty minutes.

PICARD

Can we get a transporter lock on lieutenant Worf?

WESLEY

No sir, there is too much interference from the sensor screen.

PICARD

Damn.

41. INT. FERENGI DINNING HALL - DAY

41.

Daimon Kerak is here, as is Pheron, who is seated at the table. Also added to the room is now a cage of children. There is also an attendant awaiting Kerak's selection. The children are alive and very frightened by Daimon Kerak. Kerak reaches in and pinches of the children on

the forearm.

DAIMON KERAK
Too much fat.

Pheron tries not to look as Daimon Kerak circles the cage eyeing all the children.

PHERON
You were saying Daimon Kerak?

Daimon Kerak points to one of the children.

DAIMON KERAK
(to attendant)
That one will do.

PHERON
Daimon Kerak.

DAIMON KERAK
Now, Pheron. I was saying that this has been most profitable for both of us.

PHERON
Very.

DAIMON KERAK
Now the entire venture is in danger. A stellar nation, the federation, is endangering our agreement. If they discover what we Ferengi are doing here they may very well force us to stop.

PHERON
I'm concerned of course, but I don't see what I can do. Space is after all your domain, not mine

DAIMON KERAK
True, but the federation is here at your world now. Already they have landed officers looking for this vessel. They must not find it.

PHERON

If you know that they have agents here, why don't you take care of them? You certainly can do it easier than I.

DAIMON KERAK

If we were to kill federation officers, there would be, complications, but by their own laws, they could not act against you for doing so. If these officers are not killed, then it is almost certain that I could not return with weapons and ammunition for you.

PHERON

Then I will find these officers and deal with them.

DAIMON KERAK

Good, then let us discuss our next trade.

42. INT. FERENGI SLAVE HOLD - DAY

42.

The captives are now seated on the hold. An air of despair hangs over them.

DATA

Commander, do you feel that vibration?

RIKER

I do data.

NIKITA

What does it mean?

TASHA

It means that the ship will be leaving soon.

NIKITA

We're not going to get out of this are we?

TASHA

Don't give up. Worf is still free.

NIKITA

What can your one friend do?

RIKER

My friend, a determined Klingon can move mountains!

At that moment, a loud sound is heard from the aft portion of the hold. The large loading doors begin lowering. The captives for the most part back away from the doors, fearing the ferengi and their whips. The AWAY team prepares for a charge for freedom. When doors fully open, there are no ferengi standing there, but instead there is Worf holding a phaser in one hand and a whip in the other

WORF

Commander!

RIKER

Over here Worf!

The captives, seeing that there are no ferengi to block them, rush towards the loading ramp and freedom. Worf looking over their heads spots the AWAY team, he also sees the hatch starting to open. Worf tosses the phaser to Tasha and fires with the whip.

Tasha spins and fires at the hatch. Another ferengi drops to the deck.

TASHA

Let's get these people out of here! I'll cover our escape.

NIKITA

Not alone you won't.

Nikita rushes through the crowd to the fallen ferengi and retrieves the dropped whip. As she does another ferengi guard appears at the hatch, but he ducks back for cover as both Tasha and Worf fire. Nikita returns to Tasha's side.

Data and Riker move to the loading ramp and over see that everyone is getting off the ship. Worf is outside guarding

their escape.

NIKITA
Just like old times huh Tasha?

TASHA
It certainly is.

Tasha cuts up a section of the deck and her and Nikita raise it for cover from ferengi fire. The fire fight goes back and forth until everyone is out of the hold.

RIKER
That's it Tasha! Let's get out of here!

Hearing Riker's call, Tasha and Nikita break for the loading ramp themselves. Continuing to fire at the hatch as they escape. Soon everyone is outside and running for the wood.

43. EXT. PLANETS SURFACE - TWILIGHT 43.

The AWAY team and Nikita stop in a small glen in the wood.

WORF
There is a field that has cut communication with the ship. We should be free of it in another hundred meters.

RIKER
Right, lets get over there and beam up.

Nikita stops as the others start to leave the glen.

NIKITA
Tasha!

Tasha stops and looks at Nikita.

NIKITA
We need you Tasha.

Tasha looks at Nikita and then looks at Riker.

TASHA
I'll be here in a minute sir.

RIKER
Will you Tasha?

TASHA
If I'm not, then I won't be there at all.

RIKER
Tasha...

TASHA
If I want to resign my commission, I have that
right commander.

RIKER
Of course, Tasha. We'll be waiting for word
from you.

Riker, Data and Worf leave. There is a moment of silence
after the rest of the AWAY team has left.

NIKITA
Tasha, please stay. We need you here.

TASHA
Nikita, I can't. It's not just me you want.
It's what I know and what I have you want just
as badly.

NIKITA
What I want Tasha is to get rid of Pheron!
I want a place to live where there are no
rape gangs, "legal" or otherwise.

TASHA
If I were to stay, with this,
(she holds the phaser in hand)
then I would be violating the prime
directive.

NIKITA
Damn the prime directive! This is real! Not
some rule made by people on some far away
star. This is not some planet you'll
see once and forget, this is people you

know, being killed and eaten! If you turn your back on this you'll be as bad as Pheron!

TASHA

You have no right to say that! You have no idea what I am going through. Damn you! I know what's going on here, I know if I walk away it might get worse, but that's something I'll have to live..

NIKITA

(interrupting)

NO! We'll have to live with it! You'll fly off into the sunset, or wherever you space people fly.

TASHA

And if I stay. With this phaser, I could make a big difference, but would that make it right? Is that the way it would work, he who has the phaser rules?

NIKITA

Don't talk to me about right! It's not your children who are being eaten.

TASHA

That's the ferengi, and we'll take care of that problem, Pheron is your own and he's your problem.

NIKITA

You know what your problem is Tasha? You don't have any compassion, you don't know how to care.

Tasha clenches her fist and raises it as though to backhand Nikita. Then she slowly puts her hand back at her side.

TASHA

I have been, for the last thirteen years, trying to learn how to care. Trying to be a real person and not just a fighting machine.

That means fighting for more than just yourself, it means fighting for ideals. That's what the Federation is all about. If we come in here and take of Pheron for you, you'll just be pressed into a common mold.

NIKITA

The only thing we'll be pressed into is a ferengi meat grinder!

TASHA

No, we'll take care of them, but I am not staying. I have to do what is right.

NIKITA

(holding up whip)

This is what makes things right!

Tasha looks at Nikita and the whip.

TASHA

I know, I used to think so too.

Tasha turns her back on Nikita and walks out of the clearing.

44. EXT. PLANETS SURFACE - TWILIGHT

44.

Tasha walk into the clearing where Riker, Data and Worf are waiting. Riker looks right at Tasha.

RIKER

What happened?

TASHA

(a thoughtful pause)

I changed.

RIKER

(to worf)

If you would.

WORF
(using his insignia)
Four to beam up.

They beam up.

45. INT. FERENGI DINNING HALL - TWILIGHT 45.

Daimon Kerak is here, as is Pheron and Thanin. Thanin
is standing before Kerak with a board in his hands.

THANIN
Loss of cargo.....55,000
Personnel killed...40,000
Damages to ship....30,000
Weapons delivered..10,000
Next loss for this trip, with the information
I have at this time, 135,000.

Thanin stands there smugly smiling at Daimon Kerak.

DAIMON KERAK
(growling)
That will be all Thanin!

Thanin leaves. As he does the comm beeps.

DAIMON KERAK
Daimon! What is it?!

FERNEGI
(filtered)
A call for you my Daimon. From the human
vessel.

DAIMON KERAK
(sighs)
Put the human on.

PICARD
(filtered)
Daimon, This is Jean-Luc Picard of the
USS ENTERPRISE.

DAIMON KERAK

Go ahead human.

PICARD
(filtered)

Daimon, you have five minutes to be off planet and on your way into deep space. That is without a human cargo aboard. IF you do not comply, then we will have to assume that your posture is hostile.

Daimon Kerak simply sits there.

PICARD
(filtered)
Do you read Daimon?

DAIMON KERAK
I read you.

PICARD
(filtered)
Will you comply?

DAIMON KERAK
I will, human.

PICARD
(filtered)
Very good see that you do.

There is a silence then Pheron speaks.

PHERON
Could you get me off before you leave?

DAIMON KERAK
Oh please, you must stay for dinner.

46. INT. BRIDGE - TWILIGHT

46.

Picard is standing on the bridge watching the ferengi vessel leave the planet and head for deep space. As he does so the AWAY returns to the bridge, in their uniforms.

PICARD
Did you have an interesting trip home
lieutenant?

TASHA
No sir, this is home.

PICARD
Excellent Tasha! Mr. La Forge if you will.

Geordi operates his controls at the Conn position.

47. EXT SPACE - N/A _____ 47.

The ENTERPRISE leaves orbits and warps away.

FADE OUT:

THE END