

STAR TREK: EXCELSIOR
THE FAR DEPTHS OF PAIN
BY MARTIN FISHER

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior flies by at warp speed.

CORTEZ

Captain's Log, Stardate: 59939.1.
We've intercepted a distress call
from a small escape pod and rescued
two occupants. We're currently
heading at warp speed towards
Cestra Fertil, the home planet of a
usually close minded race known as
the Hag-ai.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

Walking down it is CAPTAIN CORTEZ and MEGLUMI, a
member of the Hagai species.

MEGLUMI

I'm grateful you rescued Delo and
myself when you did. A few hours
more adrift and our life support
systems would have been depleted.

CORTEZ

I'm happy we could help. Although I
am curious how you ended up out
here in the first place. The
Federation have tried many times to
open up diplomatic channels with
your people. And every time that
request has been refused.

MEGLUMI

We have never been a particular
open race..

CORTEZ

That's an understatement.

MEGLUMI

But with good reason.

(beat)

We have welcomed outsiders before

to our world, but when they discovered our capacity for natural regeneration of our bodies, they became hostile and belligerent.

CORTEZ

You mean your people are immortal?

MEGLUMI

Yes, you are correct.

CORTEZ

I can understand the reluctance. What you have would make some people jealous; make them do anything to obtain what they can't have. You've been hurt in past, why should you have to go through that again.

MEGLUMI

Exactly! And as to how we became stranded out here, I don't know. Delo and I woke up to find ourselves here, and alone. I should like some answers when we return.

CORTEZ

As will I.

Cortez and Meglumi stop walking.

MEGLUMI

It has been a trying day captain. And I thank you again for your hospitality and your help. I would like to rest now.

CORTEZ

I understand. Feel free to use the ship's facilities or contact me if you need anything more.

A door open and closes, indicating that Meglumi has entered his quarters. Cortez hits her com badge.

CORTEZ

Cortez to Palmer. Found anything on that escape pod?

PALMER COM VOICE

Nothing yet sir. The examination team is still going over it.

CORTEZ

Let me know the minute you find anything. Cortez out.

INT. MEGLUMI'S QUARTERS

Meglumi and DELO are alone.

MEGLUMI

They suspect nothing. We still have time to get this right before we reach home. As long as they don't find any reasons for further examination, we will be fine. My family, this is all for them. My children's future will be secure.

There is only silence from Delo. Meglumi is annoyed.

MEGLUMI

Delo, have you listened to anything I just said!? Get up from the floor.

DELO

I can feel them... the crew... their memories...

MEGLUMI

Are you having another sensory experience?

DELO

So much despair, anger, regret, loneliness. How can they deal with these experiences?

MEGLUMI

Don't fight the feelings. Focus on them, and then focus on me my friend. We will find the answers you are looking for. And with them, will come a new age for our people.

INT. EXCELSIOR BRIDGE

The turbolift doors open and close as Cortez enters. On the bridge is DOVAN.

DOVAN

Have a lovely conversation with our guests?

CORTEZ

The usual pleasantries. Basic first contact procedures.

(beat)

Did you know that their race has become naturally immortal? The severest wound doesn't even faze them. Their bodies just keep going and going.

DOVAN

I don't suppose they immigrated from the Briar Patch did they?

CORTEZ

Who knows, it's a possibility. Anything on sensors?

DOVAN

Nothing. But you still suspect something?

CORTEZ

They haven't given us any reason not to trust them, and they could be telling the truth. But two members from an anti-gregarious just show up for no reason in the middle of space? Something doesn't quite add up here.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

Melgumi and Delo are walking.

DELO

Where are we going?

MEGLUMI

Somewhere.

We hear the sound of two people bumping into each other. One person falls to the ground and that person is LORHROK.

MEGLUMI

I'm sorry Mr Lorhrok, we weren't looking...

LORHROK

No, it's my fault. I should have been paying more attention. Even though it is impossible to see around a blind corner.

DELO

The fault is mine. Allow me to help you up.

We hear Delo taking one of Lorhrok's hands and help him back to his feet. Then everything changes. This is a flashback sequence. We hear the sounds of an explosion.

SANDEG

Look out!

Wreckage comes crashing to the ground. There are a couple more distant explosions.

SANDEG

Are you ok?

Lorhrok doesn't answer. Talking to him is SANDREG, a female friend of his from the past.

SANDREG

The Dominion is pressing their attack. The cities defences are depleted; it's only a matter of time before they fail.

LORHROK

Sandreg... is that you?

SANDREG

My friend said this is the safest place on the planet, and there are civilians in here who need us. I'm not going to turn him into a liar.
(remembering, softly)

He's anything but that.

LORHROK
No... not this... not again...

There's the sound of another nearby explosion, really loud. Then Jem'Hadar gun fire opens up, and we hear an exchange of fire between the two sides. This carries on for a few seconds.

SANDREG
For the Trill people!!!

A Jem'Hadar laser shot hits Sandreg.

SANDREG
AHH!!!!!!

LORHROK
NOOOO!!!!!!

There's more Jem'Hadar laser fire overlapping into the next voice, ending the flashback.

MEGLUMI
Mr Lorhrok...

LORHROK
Huh... what the...

MEGLUMI
Mr Lorhrok, are you ok? You were very distant there.

LORHROK
(regaining composure)
I'm fine. Perfectly ok. Excuse me.

Lorhrok continues walking the way he was going until he is gone.

DELO
His loss is deep and unforgivable.

MEGLUMI
We must begin.

INT. LORHROKS QUARTERS

The doors open and close indicating that he has entered. He sits down.

LORHROK
What the hell was that?

COM VOICE
Engineering to Lorhrok.

He presses his com badge.

LORHROK
Go ahead.

COM VOICE
Sorry to disturb you sir, but we have the results of the level one diagnostics you requested. Should I hang on to them for now?

LORHROK
No, it's ok. I'll be down shortly.
Lorhrok out.

Lorhrok sighs.

LORHROK
Never a moments rest on this ship.

He gets up and as he does, the power in the room suddenly goes down. He is bewildered.

LORHROK
Computer lights on.

There's no answer.

LORHROK
Computer respond.

Again no answer. He is getting frustrated and hits his com badge.

LORHROK

Lorhrok to Engineering, can anyone hear me?

SANDREG
Yes... I can hear you!

INT. HOUSE

Sandreg is walking around, talking to someone like we would while talking on the phone.

LORHROK
Huh?

SANDREG
Look, when I've made up my mind I'll let you know. Please, stop worrying. I'm a grown woman; I can make my own decisions.
(beat)
Give my love to mom and dad. See you later big brother.

LORHROK
I'm on Trill, back in Sandreg's house. On the last day...

A button is pressed, turning off the signal.

LORHROK
Please... don't put me through this again.

COMPUTER VOICE
Incoming transmission. Identity, Starfleet.

SANDREG
Put it through.

A beep indicates that someone has popped onto a screen. It is Lorhrok, call him LORHROK 2

LORHROK 2
How'd it go?

SANDREG

Families don't get any easier with age. They're staying behind, willing to do whatever it takes to defend the people around them.

LORHROK 2
You know what I think...

SANDREG
That's always guaranteed.

LORHROK 2
What I've seen and heard isn't good. The Dominion will be there soon. They're probably on their way...

SANDREG
I see the news... I hear the rumours.

LORHROK 2
Then why don't you do what's right!?

SANDREG
Because, I don't know what to do!

There's a moment of silence between them.

LORHROK 2
I wish there was something I could do.

SANDREG
I wouldn't suggest going resigning from Starfleet Academy. You've worked to hard to get there. Right cadet?

LORHROK 2
I've known you since you were 5. Somehow, you always did the right thing, even if you went in a roundabout way to get there.

SANDREG
You know me, always the careful

type.

Sandreg starts pushing some buttons.

SANDREG

I'm sending you something. It's a letter. Don't read it just yet, give it a few days. It's for you.

LORHROK 2

Sandreg...

SANDREG

Do it for me. Just this once. If I take your suggestion, you should at least take mine.

LORHROK 2

I... have to tell you something...

SANDREG

Go on...

There's a moment of silence as she waits.

SANDREG

Lorhrok...

LORHROK 2

It's nothing. I'll see you soon. Take care.

Lorhrok 2 signs off the screen. A set of doors open and close, indicating Sandreg has left.

LORHROK

I couldn't tell her... I just couldn't. I thought she would have known, maybe guessed by now...

LORHROK

(shouting out)

WHOEVER'S DOING THIS JUST STOP!
IT'S TOO HARD! I DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS!

There's the sound of an explosion and some rubble falling down from the top of a cave.

SANDREG
They're getting closer.

INT. CAVE

All of the sounds in here echo. Sandreg is there along with SALDIAR, another Trill.

SALDIAR
The city's just being bombarded. They're trying to get as many people out as possible. You must have known, why did you come here?

SANDREG
Because... I thought it was right.

SALDIAR
Here...

Sandreg catches something that is thrown to her.

SALDAIR
I hope you've fired a phaser before. I could do with you being here.

SANDREG
I just want to get out. Why are putting up a fight in here?

SALDAIR
Look in the back.

Noise grows as we hear chatter amongst people. There are quite a few of them in there.

SANDREG
All these people... children...

SALDAIR
And we have to get them out, or die trying. What about your family?

SANDREG
Their back home... fighting...

SALDAIR

I suggest you do the same.

SANDREG

I came here to be safe from the war... not to get involved.

SALDAIR

You're already involved. Those people... my family... need you.

LORHROK

No... you have to get out... while you still can...

SANDREG

I just want to do the right thing.

There's the sound of more laser fire and explosions.

SALDAIR

More civilians coming in!

More people start running into the cave, and as they do there's another explosion and more rubble falls from the ceiling, hitting someone coming in. Sandreg goes over to help.

SANDREG

Are you ok?

Sandreg helps the CIVILIAN to their feet.

CIVILIAN

I think so.

SANDREG

The Dominion is pressing their attack. The cities defences are depleted; it's only a matter of time before they fail.

SANDREG

My friend said this is the safest place on the planet, and there are civilians in here who need us. I'm

not going to turn him into a liar.
(remembering, softly)
He's anything but that.

LORHROK
You have to get the hell out of
here before they come! WHY CAN'T
YOU HEAR ME?!

There's the sound of another nearby explosion,
really loud. Then Jem'Hadar gun fire opens up,
and we hear an exchange of fire between the two
sides. This carries on for a few seconds.

SANDREG
For the Trill people!!!

A Jem'Hadar laser shot hits Sandreg.

SANDREG
AHH!!!!!!

She falls to the ground. There's some more
exchanges of fire that recede into the distance.
Lorkrok walks over to his fallen friend. She is
upset, doesn't want to see this image.

LORHROK
Sandreg... you never knew...

SANDREG
Why did you send me here, instead
of the established haven of Brol?

LORHROK
(losing it)
Because I thought the capital was
safer. I never knew it was going to
be hit? I sent you there, because I
never wanted anything to happen to
you. Because I loved you, more than
my own family.

LORHROK
And then you were gone... and I
couldn't do anything to bring you
back. Or apologise for what I did.
And all along you knew anyway, but
you had to put it in a letter
instead of saying it to my face!!

Lorhrok breaks down and is crying.

LORHROK
I'm sorry... I'm so, so sorry..

INT. LORHROKS QAUTERS

We hear the sound of power being restored into his room. He is still upset.

INT. MEGLUMI'S QUARTERS

DELO
He never said what he wanted to say. It haunts him. He will forever be burdened by it. He may never fully recover.

MEGLUMI
Anything else.

DELO
Yes. I can feel another.

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior flies along at warp.

INT. SICKBAY

YUBARI enters, walking over to the DOCTOR SHARP and almost walking into Lorhrok who is leaving.

LORHROK
Excuse me.

He leaves.

SHARP
Not feeling well Yubari?

YUBARI
Got a headache.

Sharp scans her with a tricorder.

SHARP
It's mild. Nothing serious.

Sharp prepares a hypospray.

SHARP

Strangest thing just happened with Lorhrok. He said he saw images of his past, making him re-live an event. But we found nothing in there. I think the stress of the job is getting...

YUBARI

Sounds interesting. Could I have the hypo please?

Yubari is injected with the hypo.

SHARP

Let me know if it gets any worse.

YUBARI

Thanks.

Yabari leaves.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

Yabari is walking along when she feels a sharp pain in her head that causes her to bump into the wall.

YUBARI

UGH!!!!

Yabari regains her composure.

YUBARI

What did the doc give me?

BEZU

Time for your medicine sis.

Yabari looks and sees BEZU, her bullying brother.

BEZU

The doctor knows what she's talking about.

YUBARI

Bezu???

BEZU

Come on. Give your big brother a friendly hug. I'm only here to protect my little sister.

Yubari pushes Bezu to the floor. She then runs and enters a set of doors that open and then closes.

INT. SICKBAY

Yubari is still, panicking and looking around.

YUBARI

Doctor Sharp! Anyone!

BEZU

It's just us. No mom or dad, or anyone to run too.

YUBARI

What did they do to you on the Legacy? Why are you 12 years old again?

BEZU

Stop running. I'm only trying to help you.

YUBARI

Yeah, that's what you always said.

BEZU

You were never strong. It's all for your own good little girl.

YUBARI

I'm not so little!

BEZU

You are. And you always will be.

Yubari pushes him off again.

BEZU

That's it. Play! No-one else will

play with you.

YUBARI
You wouldn't let them!

BEZU
Not my fault. Ask mom and dad.

YUBARI
How could I, they were too
interested in their work instead of
me! And you wouldn't leave me
alone!

BEZU
I bet you always wanted to hit me.
Come on! Give me your best shot!

Yubari unleashes all of the frustration she has built up inside her and goes for Bezu. She jumps on him, sending him crashing down to the floor. Punches are being thrown, one after another until they stop.

BEZU
That didn't hurt. Did that help?

YUBARI
NO! Because of you, I lost
everything!

Yubari is starting to let the little girl within her speak, the one who suffered at her brother's hands.

YUBARI
I had hopes, dreams, things that
amazed me. I wanted to explore
them. And your reply was a fist, a
kick, a downgrading remark in front
of your friends.

BEZU
I made you the strong person you
are!

YUBARI

I'm not strong! You took my
innocence and bended it into fear.
And no matter how many times I
asked you to stop, you made it
harder and harder.

A moment of silence. Yubari sums it up.

YUBARI

I could have had a family. A
husband and children. I lost my
childhood to you. I'll never know
what it will be like to play. To
have friends... bonds...

BEZU

Yubari...

YUBARI

Go away!

BEZU

Yubari please...

YUBARI

I said leave me alone!

BEZU

Just listen to me for a minute...

YUBARI

Just get the hell away from me!!!

SHARP

Lieutenant... snap out of it!

Yubari takes a beat and releases that her
brother is gone, and she is facing Sharp again.

SHARP

I was asking you for a minute to
calm down. What happened?

Wanted to get out of the room, Yubari runs out,
the doors opening and closing quickly.

SHARP

(hits combadge)
Sickbay to Cortez.

CORTEZ COM VOICE
Go ahead Doctor.

SHARP
I need to talk to you about
something.

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior continues along at warp.

INT. EXCELSIOR BRIDGE

Dovan and Cortez are standing by a station,
looking at a console as it beeps away.

DOVAN
It looks like the crews going over
the escape pod found something to
go with your hunch.

Dovan hits a few buttons and we hear a schematic
beeping away.

DOVAN
It appears that most of the pods
systems have been reconfigured to
emit a low level field, down in the
lower depths of the band widths.
Even life support was channelled
into it.

CORTEZ
Any idea what for?

DOVAN
The guess is that it blocks out
anything above that bandwidth.
Creating a sort of... solitude to
anyone within that field.

CORTEZ

A noise dampener. Or maybe an enhancer. Something like that would fit in with what Doctor Sharp was telling me.

DOVAN

About what?

CORTEZ

She's been getting a few visits recently. Members of the crew seeing people or events from their past. She said she treated Lorhrok for a very vivid memory in his quarters, and Lieutenant Yubari for an incident in sickbay. Sharp was so concerned; she thought she was going to get injured.

DOVAN

And you believe it's our guests?

CORTEZ

Run a scan for the same readings from the pod on the Excelsior. See if it exists here.

Dovan presses some buttons and the scan runs. After a few seconds and it's back with a positive result.

DOVAN

I'll assemble a security team. We'll put a stop to this.

CORTEZ

No Commander. No team.

DOVAN

But if they're a threat to the ship..

CORTEZ

We're assuming they are. All we have are suspicions. And although the same field exists here and coincides with these "visions", I'm afraid that's all it is. Just coincidence.

DOVAN

I don't suggest that we sit here
and do nothing!

CORTEZ

I agree. Go down there, have a talk
with them. See if they'll tell you
anything.

DOVAN

And if something happens to me.

CORTEZ

You wouldn't be my first officer if
you couldn't handle it.

Dovan exits as the doors open and close.

INT. MEGLUMI'S QUATERS

Meglumi and Delo, the same as before.

MEGLUMI

Your gaining confidence, looking
more assured. Remarkable progress.

DELO

I am beginning to choose those who
I can see into. The images do not
come to me at once anymore.

MEGLUMI

If this continues, we will both be
able to...

DELO

Wait! Someone else is approaching
us. He is burdened. Like so many
others. He blames only himself.

INT. EXCELSIOR TURBOLIFT

Dovan is alone as the lift is one the move. He
stops for a moment, and then continues walking
until he stops.

DOVAN

Open the doors on weapons locker 1.
authorisation Davon 1-7-Gamma-
Omega.

The doors open and Dovan removes a phaser and a
holster, putting them on his waist.

DOVAN

Just in case.

He continues walking again and reacts as he
hears the sound of a Borg in the lift with him.
But he sees nothing.

DOVAN

There is nothing there. It's in my
mind.

Dovan hears the Borg noise again but chooses to
ignore it. But his ignorance is interrupted when
he is suddenly grabbed on the shoulder and held
roughly. Struggling, he is in fact facing a
BORG.

BORG VOICE

We will add your distinctiveness to
our own. Resistance is futile.

Dovan and the Borg struggle.

DOVAN

Get off me!

A few sharp blows to the Borg from Dovan send it
down to the floor, we hear the sound of sizzling
circuitry and it hits with a thump! The Borg is
motionless. Dovan breathes a little heavier.

DOVAN

You're a product of my past. Your
not here.

The lift doors open and Dovan exits.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

Dovan is steadying himself. Certain this is all
just to stop him getting to his destination. He

hits his combadge.

DOVAN
Dovan to Cortez.
(no answer)
Captain can you hear me?

There's still no answer. Dovan is certain that he's being toyed with, and he isn't buying it in the slightest.

DOVAN
I know what you're doing. You won't stop me.

Dovan starts walking along.

DOVAN
You and I, we're going to have a little talk. And straighten this thing out. There's no hiding.

DOVAN
One way or another, your going to have to answer for what you've...

Dovan enters a new section of corridor, and before him is a new scene of carnage.

We are taken back to the battle at Wolf 359 from TNG. The power is fluctuating, there are fights, phaser fire and general commotion. Dovan is looking around, can't believe this is all unfolding before him again. His attention is drawn as he hears a single punch being thrown, and he sees himself, a younger version, DOVAN 2, falling to the ground.

DOVAN 2
I'll die before I get assimilated!

DOVAN
That's me... it can't be...

Just as the Borg is about to assimilate him, the sound of phaser fire cuts down the Borg and Dovan 2 is able to get to his feet.

JEFFERS

Ensign Dovan!

Dovan gets to his feet and starts running where he sees JEFFERS, a man he served with during the battle.

DOVAN 2
Thanks for the save.

JEFFERS
Nice of you to join the party.

DOVAN 2
I was fending of some uninvited guests.

JEFFERS
It's happening all right! Listen, we've not got much time. There are fire fights all over the ship. The Borg have already started assimilating the ship.

DOVAN 2
We've got the get to the Bridge..

JEFFERS
And do what!? We've lost contact with the captain. All we can do is delay the Borg's advance.

DOVAN 2
What about the fleet?

JEFFERS
It's a slaughter. We've lost 30 ships so far, even the Klingon's aren't making any difference. We've lost this battle.

DOVAN 2
Not yet we haven't.

Dovan 2 is picking up a phaser and firing it at the Borg. Some of them fall, while others stand still while the fire impacts on their shields.

DOVAN 2
Rotate shield frequencies.

The phasers are altered and fire again, sending down any remaining Borg in the corridor.

DOVAN 2
Ok everyone. This battle isn't yet over! We have a duty to defend life on this vessel. And we will do this until our last breath!

The ship shudders as it is hit.

DOVAN 2
I may be new here, but I know what it means to be an officer on the Endeavour. We're going to storm the Bridge and fight off the Borg. I need as many able bodies as possible. The rest of you, sit tight. Be on your guard.

There's the sound of the crew rallying towards Dovan 2. The older Dovan doesn't really want to hear these words again.

DOVAN
No you idiots! You don't know what you're doing!

DOVAN 2
Let's go!

The officer rush towards Dovan 2, but behind them we hear the sounds of more Borg advancing.

JEFFERS
Stragglers. Their all mine.

Jeffers runs of back the way he can. Dovan 2 sees him.

DOVAN 2
Jeffers, what are you doing?

JEFFERS
Buying you some time. Get going!
The captain needs you!

Jeffers fires his phaser, but the Borg have adapted and it bounces off their shields. He tries changing the frequencies again and fire but the result is the same.

DOVAN 2
You can't do anything to help.

Jeffers is pressing some buttons.

JEFFERS
Watch me.

A couple more buttons presses and a force field comes up between Dovan 2 and Jeffers. Dovan 2 is panicking a little.

DOVAN 2
That section has a fracture. The hull will breach...

JEFFERS
That's the general idea.

Jeffers fires his phaser at the wall, and after a few seconds the hull reaches.

JEFFERS
Bye bye Borg.

Wind swirls and sir gets sucked out into space and the Borg in the corridor go with it. Jeffers does some quick scrambling of his own and climbs into an object, pressing some buttons.

COMPUTER VOICE
Escape pod launch initiated.

The pod shoots away and Dovan 2 knows what the plan was now.

DOVAN 2
Thank you my friend. We'll pick you up soon.

Dovan 2 disappears into a turbolift.

DOVAN
No... you won't.

The scene suddenly distorts around Dovan and he is startled to find himself in

INT. ENDEVAOUR BRIDGE

This place is just the corridor was, a scene of carnage. There are a couple of Borg in here, one of them knocks down a crew member while the other one is struggling with CAPTAIN AMASOV.

DOVAN

The bridge... captain Amasov...

The turbolift doors open and Dovan and the rest of his people emerge.

DOVAN 2

Captain!

A phaser fires but the Borg shields repel it. The same thing happens on another Borg as well. There's another burst of phaser fire, this one hits the ceiling at some of it comes down on top of a Borg, crushing it and putting it out of action.

DOVAN 2

One down!

Various crew members are struggling with the other Borg. Eventually they get Amasov free and throw the Borg elsewhere on the bridge.

DOVAN 2

Set the phaser to overload.

The phaser is altered and stuck onto the Borg.

DOVAN 2

Get down!

Everyone around ducks as the phaser explodes and the Borg is destroyed.

DOVAN 2

Sir... its Dovan...

AMASOV

The sound of... multiple explosions
gave me a clue...

The captain is feeling the pain of the attack.
Dovan 2 wants to comfort him as the ship rocks
from another hit.

DOVAN 2

You've been hurt sir...

AMASOV

(weakly)

We've lost... 35 ships... thrown
everything at them... nothing seems
to work.

Dovan 2 opens up a tricorder and is scanning.

DOVAN 2

You've got broken bones, multiple
fractures... you need urgent medical
attention.

AMASOV

The ship...

DOVAN 2

I'll look after the ship sir...

Dovan 2 sits down at the helm and presses the
controls.

DOVAN 2

Someone give me a damage report!

OFFICER

Ship has sustained 70 percent
damage, shields are gone.
Casualties are mounting... sickbay is
struggling to cope...

DOVAN 2

What about the Borg on the ship?

OFFICER

All of them are inoperable.

DOVAN 2

The warp drive is still working.
What about phasers and torpedoes?

OFFICER

Torpedoes are used up. Phaser banks
at 7 percent. We wouldn't even
scratch them.

OFFICER #2

Dovan, I'm picking up multiple
distress calls. All of them coming
from escape pods within the area.

DOVAN 2

How many survivors?

OFFICER #2

Approximately 350.

BORG VOICE

We are the Borg. We will add your
biological and technological
distinctiveness to our own. Your
culture will adapt to service us.
Resistance is futile.

Dovan 2 dwells on this and is thinking.

DOVAN

I had no choice...

OFFICER #2

Preparing the shuttle for immediate
incoming...

DOVAN 2

No! Belay that order. We're getting
out of here.

OFFICER

What!

OFFICER #2

Dovan, there are still innocent
people out there that need our
help...

DOVAN 2

We can't help them. There isn't time..

OFFICER

If we leave them behind they'll be captured and assimilated by the Borg.

DOVAN 2

My first priority is to this crew. The battle is lost. We've failed.

OFFICER #2

What about Jeffers? He's still out there in one of those pods.

DOVAN 2

Yes... I know...

Dovan 2 hits the controls and the Endeavour goes into warp and away from the battle area. There's a moment of silence.

DOVAN 2

Get the captain to sickbay. Fast.

One of the officers walks over to Dovan 2.

OFFICER

I hope you know what you've done.

DOVAN

I knew. And the reasons why? I thought I was doing the right thing. There were still survivors and I had to get them home.

Dovan walks over to a DEAD PERSON.

DOVAN

I couldn't do anything for the dead.

DEAD PERSON

So me being dead didn't matter anymore? You simply gave up.

DOVAN

You can't bring back the dead!

DEAD PERSON

Not everyone was. What happened with Jeffers?

DOVAN

I kept on picturing him waiting for the inevitable. Thinking about what was waiting for him...

DEAD PERSON

But it never happened! Did it!

DOVAN

No...

DEAD PERSON

You could have saved him!

DOVAN

Yes...

DEAD PERSON

Then why did you run away!?

DOVAN

BECAUSE I WAS SCARED!

With the big reveal there comes a beat as Dovan finally comes out with the truth.

DOVAN

Everywhere I looked I saw dead bodies, and I thought about those people and what they wouldn't do or see again. I wasn't ready to be one of those people who died for nothing!

DOVAN

Stop toying with me! Just get the hell out of my feelings!

Dovan pulls the phaser from its holster and starts firing it randomly. He is losing his grip and doesn't know the reality from the flashback experience.

DOVAN
Just get out! GET OUT!

The phaser firing continues.

INT. EXCELSIOR BRIDGE

A console sounds an alarm and an ENSIGN reacts.

ENISGN
Captain I'm reading phaser fire
outside the guest's quarters.

CORTEZ
(hits combadge)
Cortez to Dovan.
(no reply)
Damn it. Alert a security team on
the double. I'm on my way down
there. Phasers on stun!

Cortez is on the move and exits into the
turbolift.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

The turbrolift doors open and Cortez exits.

CORTEZ
Dovan!

The reply is a phaser beam nearby that hits the
wall.

COM VOICE
Captain he's taken out two security
men. He won't listen.

CORTEZ
Alert sickbay and ease back. I'll
try talking.

Cortez takes a few steps forward, and we hear
some heavy breathing belonging to Dovan,

indicating he is getting closer.

CORTEZ
Dovan, put down the phaser.
Everything's ok.

DOVAN
My head... they won't stop...

CORTEZ
This will stop. But you have to
trust me. I'm your friend.

DOVAN
No...

CORTEZ
You're a Starfleet Commander. And
I'm ordering you to stop.

DOVAN
You're in my head. It's all in my
head!

Dovan fires his phaser but he misses Cortez, but she returns his fire and hits him. He slumps to the floor. She goes over to him, checking him over as more people run towards her.

DOVAN
(weakly)
Stay out... of my head...

CORTEZ
Have Doctor Sharp check him out.
And sealed the section around these
quarters. This has gone far enough.

Cortez is walking again, stopping and then pressing a wall panel.

INT. MEGLUMI'S QUARTERS

The doors open and Cortez enters.

MEGLUMI

Captain, this is an unexpected pleasure, I thought I heard some commotion...

CORTEZ

There is no pleasure. I'm here to stop you.

MEGLUMI

I'm afraid I'm unaware of...

CORTEZ

We know all about the modifications to the escape pod and what you and Delo are doing. Extracting painful memories from members of my crew and forcing them to relive those events. I want to know why.

MEGLUMI

Clearly, you are mistaken.

DELO

No, she isn't. It's time to admit the truth.

There's some silence as Cortez fully enters the room and the doors close. She sits down.

DELO

I am what is known as an Evolver. The first of our kind to start developing the power to read other minds. I have the ability to sense feelings and extract them, allowing them to be experienced again.

MEGLUMI

Delo was feared. He began to recall events from others deep in their past, events that happened thousands of years ago. We were sent out here, so I can try and instruct Delo in controlling his abilities. By volunteering, my family would be given greater status in our society.

DELO

I wanted to experience loss,

because our people with their
immortality seemed to have
forgotten it. I wanted to know,
what it felt like. And how your
people dealt with it.

MEGLUMI

It was unfortunate that you found
us. We had spotted a freighter
drawing close to our position
before you got there first.

CORTEZ

Unfortunate!? Do have any idea of
the suffering you caused them to
re-live?

DELO

I sense in you, the loss of many.
Just like other members of your
crew. It affected you deeply...

CORTEZ

You're not going to probe me.

MEGLUMI

But would it not help to re-live
the pain?

CORTEZ

No...

DELO

Is reflection not good?

CORTEZ

I've got to many burdens in my
life. To many things I've done that
I'm not proud of.

DELO

You could learn something you
didn't know before...

CORTEZ

Which is why humans don't wish to
dwell on what happened before! It

reminds us of what we lost, makes us consider the person we could have been, rather than the one that we are.

DELO

I can't understand why you are afraid.

Cortez gets up from her beat hurriedly and grabs Meglumi roughly. Delo and Meglumi are surprised.

MEGLUMI

Captain...

DELO

What are you doing with the phaser?

CORTEZ

You want to know how we deal with loss? Now you'll get to find out for yourself.

We hear the sound of a phaser being switched on. It is being pointed by Cortez at Meglumi.

MEGLUMI

This is outrageous!

CORTEZ

This is what it was like for me! I led a mission during the Dominion War, behind enemy lines. I had to shutdown a Jem'Hadar breeding facility, at any cost.

(beat)

That cost was my entire unit. And I had to sacrifice some of them, willingly, knowing they would die. So at least I would get out. So someone could go back and tell of their noble deeds. I put them in harms way, deliberately! Because it was demanded of me!

DELO

Please put the weapon down and move away from Meglumi.

MEGLUMI

You won't do it. Your Starfleet regulations won't permit it. Nor will your Vulcan half. This course of action is... illogical.

CORTEZ

I've been known to bend the rules. Even break them. That war cost me a part of my humanity that I'll never get back.

DELO

Captain... this isn't necessary.

CORTEZ

You have to feel loss to learn how to deal with it.

MEGLUMI

You can't do this...

There's a tense moment of silence, the audience should be wondering if Cortez will do it or not.

CORTEZ

I wonder just how immortal you really are.

Another tense moment of wondering for the audience, wondering what will happen next. Some heavy breathing on the part of Meglumi. Suddenly and abruptly, there's the sound of a phaser burst. Has she really done it? Then the sound of something hitting the floor.

DELO

You missed. But... you were serious.

DOVAN COM VOICE

We're entering the Cestra system captain.

CORTEZ

I'm on my way. And you two are coming with me.

The doors to the room open and close as they leave.

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior is dropping out of warp.

INT. EXCELSIOR BRIDGE

Cortez enters along with Meglumi and Delo.

DOVAN

We've approaching Cestra Fertil captain.

CORTEZ

Take us into orbit, half impulse.
How are you?

DOVAN

Much better. No thanks to our "guests". Captain I'm...

CORTEZ

Save the apologies. Any signs of action from the planet?

DOVAN

Sensors are picking up approximately one hundred thousand life forms.

(sensors beep)

And a hundred surface to space barrage units locked on to us.

CORTEZ

Sounds like your kind of people Mr Dovan. Any reply to our hails?

DOVAN

Guess.

CORTEZ

Well, now we're knocking on their door there's no way they can ignore us forever. Open hailing

frequencies.

The hailing channel is opened and Dovan is astonished when a beep sounds, indicating they are getting a reply back.

DOVAN

We're getting a response!

CORTEZ

On screen.

The screen blips on and talking to them now is CATZ, first minister of the planet.

CATZ

This is first minister Catz. You have 2 minutes to leave orbit of our world or we will open fire.

CORTEZ

I'm Captain Rachel Cortez of the Federation starship Excelsior. We've not come to harm you. We merely wanted to drop off two of your people.

CATZ

Impossible! How could you have come into contact with any of our people!?

CORTEZ

Maybe you'd like to ask them yourself.

Meglumi steps forward.

MEGLUMI

First minister. It is a success. We are ready to return home.

There's a beat as Catz thinks.

CATZ

What of the Evolver?

MEGLUMI

His abilities have been diminished.

With my help he has controlled them. He is no longer a threat. There is proof.

DOVAN

I see telling the truth isn't a common trait with your people.

CATZ

You will be silent Bolian, or your ship will be obliterated from orbit!

DOVAN

You just try it...

CORTEZ

Gentlemen please, we're not here to do damage to each other. My crew has already felt enough damage done by your people.

CATZ

What have they done?

CORTEZ

They're preyed on the emotions of my people. Made them feel strong emotion pain, pain they hoped they would never have to feel again. It's been an unpleasant experience for everyone involved, maybe even for Meglumi and Delo.

CATZ

Meglumi, you can assure us the Evolver is safe?

DOVAN

Why is he called an Evolver?

CATZ

Because Delo is the most unique of our people, and the most feared.

DELO

You never had to fear me...

CATZ

We had no choice! You're the first

of our people to gain telepathic abilities. When you began to explore them, you dragged up the worst in us. Made us remember everything we deemed forbidden.

CORTEZ

So you just cast him out without giving him a chance, because you feared that in the future there could be more like him. You blankly rejected him, because some things are to frightening to be faced again.

CATZ

We are immortal, anything that leads us away from that is to be feared. It could mean the end of our way of life. Many of us are hundreds, even thousands of years old. We did many things to get us this far. Made deep sacrifices. It is our right to reject things.

DOVAN

That is the convenience of a coward!

MEGLUMI

We are ready for transport. I can prove that what I say is true.

DELO

I will not be going.

MEGLUMI

But... why?

DELO

Because, you would never have allowed me back, and my place is not on this world. I could never have what you would call a life. To stay would only invite my own misery. Having felt the pain of loss and suffering, I can see that there is nothing to fear by

confronting it. I want to experience it myself, not to be confined without them. If these people can live with the consequences of their actions, so can I.

CATZ

You are forbidden to return Delo. You will be forgotten, never to be a true member of our race.

DELO

Which is why I needed to know about loss.

MEGLUMI

(beat)

Then I am ready for pick-up.

CATZ

Unfortunately Meglumi, you cannot return either.

MEGLUMI

(shocked)

But... we had a deal. In return for my help I would be rewarded...

CATZ

And you have been, condemned to live with the Evolver for all eternity. You know too much, and your knowledge of him would cause chaos to our people. Your life was decided the moment you agreed. Don't worry; your family will remember what you did for them.

MEGLUMI

My family need me!

CATZ

Not anymore. You've done all you can for them.

The screen signs off and Catz disappears. A console starts beeping.

DOVAN
Captain, the ground weapons are charging up.

MEGLUMI
They can't reject me like this!

DOVAN
Projectiles heading our way. Impact in ten seconds.

CORTEZ
Take us out the system, warp 2.

A console beeps and the Excelsior jumps to warp.

MEGLUMI
(whispering)
They can't do this... they just...

DELO
It appears... that this was never for my benefit in the first place.

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior flies by at warp.

CORTEZ
Captains Log, 59939.9. We're heading towards Starbase 14 to drop of Delo and Meglumi. I have a feeling that their lives are about to become very interesting.

INT. EXCELSIOR CORRIDOR

Cortez and Delo and walking.

DELO
I've been contacted by several

Starfleet researchers, keen to learn more about our immortality and our race. I'll tell them everything they need to know, although they must not go near our system.

CORTEZ

I'll back that request up personally.

DELO

Given time, that policy may change. But my people need to learn it for themselves.

CORTEZ

Just as you have.

(beat)

What about Meglumi?

DELO

He is still... struggling with what he has lost. But eventually, he will come to accept what has happened.

DOVAN COM VOICE

Bridge to Cortez. We're approaching starbase 14 captain.

Cortez hits her com badge.

CORTEZ

Take us out of warp and initiate docking procedures. I'll be right there. Cortez out.

DELO

There are still so many questions captain. Will the immortality last outside of our system? What will the future bring us? How much more is there we can find out about?

CORTEZ

After thousands of years of asking, we're still looking for the answers

ourselves.

DELO

But you must be pleased captain.
You've opened up first contact with
people who wished no contact at
all. You've brought two of their
people back with you and you've
learned about their culture. But,
if things were different, would you
have pulled the trigger. And killed
Meglumi?

CORTEZ

(beat)

No comment.

EXT. SPACE

The Excelsior flies by at impulse.

THE END.