

Starship: Excelsior

"Safeties Off"

(Season 3, Episode B)

by James Heaney

Transcribed by Peter Stine

(Author's Note: at the start of the audio file, there's a little note that says that, for the first time ever, all the cast members were in the same room. What it doesn't mention — and which I'm going to note specially for you transcript readers — is that I was taking a nationwide road trip to meet and travel with people involved in the Excelsior RPG and audio drama. We didn't realize until quite late in the process that Larry Phelan had one of the Blue Snowball mics we all very much envied at the time, and that this was our one and only chance to record on one. And by "quite late" I mean "the morning of." I was operating on about five hours of uncomfortable sleep on a floor in Ohio (thanks, Tanner and Tanner's mom!), driving somewhere between Columbus, Ohio and upstate New York, when my "crew" sent me to the trunk of the minivan with an Eee PC netbook and got me to write this thing, which had to be done before we got to Syracuse. Caitlin Heaney (Yubari) was driving while Tanner Evans (the RPG player behind Sylveste and a lot of the Scion mythos) was shotgun, with Edison Potter (Sharp) in the back seat making sure I got my script done. I think they were listening to a final draft of "Sunset" while I worked, but I could be wrong; I was pretty punchy. Anyway, I think this was the fastest script I ever wrote, even counting the last-minute rewrite of "Tomorrow's Excelsior" and that time I did "The Committee Archives" in a day. It shows! I basically just ripped Leanna Keyes's "friends and jokes and snowball fights" thing off the website and made a script around it! But it was also just SO much fun to have the actors record in each other's presence, and to get to actually WATCH them and DIRECT them while they did it. You don't know what it's like recording into a microphone without another actor to play off of! Because we were all hanging out, becoming pals in real time, the performances here are some of the most organic from the early seasons, and it was all worth it. Despite the brusing from being in the trunk. Also, Larry was a wonderful host, and we had a great day and a bit there before sleeping on his floor as well. Bonus fun fact! Before starting the road trip, I was already working on ep306 "The Man From Syracuse," and, for the Brahms yard scenes, I had gotten on Google Maps and picked out the house Isaac Brahms grew up in. As it turned out, it was only a few blocks from Larry's place at the time, so we all went over and took a sidewalk tour of the Isaac Brahms Family Home. Okay, now back to the vignette.)

LOCATION: SPACE — EXCELSIOR FLYBY

DOVAN: *Captain's Log, Supplemental: It's been a week since the Battle of New Victoria, still another week until we reach the Anbar, and you can only do so many battle drills. Lieutenant Lorhrok's organized a little after-hours event to help the crew unwind. Normally, I wouldn't attend, because the admirals frown on captains who get too "familiar" with their crews, and — (rather facetious) as you know, computer — I have a sterling reputation as a decorous gentleman and a first-rate bootlicker. No more, no less. But I've decided to attend Mister Lorhrok's event. I believe the admiralty will agree that the captain should supervise all battle drills, and this event certainly qualifies.*

LOCATION: SNOWY MOUNTAINSIDE

DOVAN: Marines! I need you on that ridge now! If we can't take the high ground we might as well surrender our flank to-- (the enemy!)

(Psuedo-Sharp, aka Sharp, under parasite control, starts coming up behind Dovan.)

PSEUDO-SHARP: Captain, get down!

(She tackles Dovan into the snow.)

DOVAN: Whoa!

(Two snowballs whistle overhead and shatter harmlessly on a couple of nearby trees.)

PSEUDO-SHARP: Two of my nurses have that high ground. They saw you and fired all snowball batteries.

DOVAN: Point taken, Melissa. That was close.

PSEUDO-SHARP: Call me "Doctor," Cap. And don't worry about it. I'm not lettin' anybody kill you but me.

DOVAN: I thought you were wrapped up in Sickbay, Melissa. Doing research on the Wasting, right?

PSEUDO-SHARP: I'm not gonna miss a snowball fight on the holodeck. Otherwise I'll never find your weak points.

DOVAN: Find any?

PSEUDO-SHARP: Solar plexus. You're out of breath as soon as you hit the ground.

DOVAN: (rolling over) No I'm not!

(Sharp punches Dovan.)

DOVAN: Oh! (groan)

PSEUDO-SHARP: Oh, you're right. You weren't out of breath.

DOVAN: (rasping, without breath) Very funny!

PSEUDO-SHARP: I think I'll head for the front line before you recover.

DOVAN: (still rasping) Good idea. (gasps down air) (now in normal voice) I'll lay down covering fire. Go!

(Sharp runs off, fading into the distance. Meanwhile, Dovan makes a new snowball in the snow and hurls it.)

DOVAN: (Grunts) Dang. Missed her.

(Holodeck doors open.)

(Feet trudging through the snow. More snowballs smack into trees and the ground nearby.)

YUBARI: Captain.

(Someone screams in the distance.)

DOVAN: Ha! That's for your quarterly performance rating, Ensign!

YUBARI: Captain.

DOVAN: That's what the Dominion War taught us, Yubari: marksmanship. Marksmanship... and awareness. Our two great lessons were marksmanship, awareness, and a strong sense of honorable —

(Another iceball whistles in from considerable distance and slams Dovan in the solar plexus.)

DOVAN: Oooof! Solar plexus again? What are the odds?

YUBARI: If you stand around bragging about your aim, captain? Pretty high.

DOVAN: (still raspy) I don't see you hiding in a snow fort, Yubari. (takes a deep breath)

YUBARI: I turned up my holodeck safety protocols. Any snowballs that get too close? They bounce off.

DOVAN: Off you into me, I bet.

YUBARI: You were the one who begged Lorhrok to let you come to this... rumble.

DOVAN: Look, Yubari, are you here for a reason?

YUBARI: I have the video you wanted.

DOVAN: What? How did you even know about that? And where did you get an advance copy of *Captain Proton and the Cybernauts*?

YUBARI: I... was talking about the surveillance tapes. The tapes we took of Doctor Sharp.

DOVAN: Oh.

YUBARI: You're a... Captain Proton fan? (contempt!)

DOVAN: I didn't say that! What's on the tapes?

YUBARI: More instances of the strange behaviour we've discussed.

DOVAN: Strange behaviour can be explained in a lot of ways. We've discussed that, too. What you need now is evidence. Is there any?

YUBARI: I need more time.

(Several more snowballs whizz by.)

DOVAN: Look, Lieutenant, would you mind getting down behind this barricade? You're drawing a lot of fire.

YUBARI: Is any of it hitting you?

DOVAN: Not yet, but it's only a matter of time.

YUBARI: I'll wait.

DOVAN: Hm.

(He suddenly throws three snowballs in rapid succession.)

DOVAN: Back off, Sylveste! Bratwurst! A hit!

SYLVESTE: Ow! I'm retreating, I'm retreating!

DOVAN: Do that! But you still have to call me "sir"! (pause) You've had two weeks, Yubari. Did you see her neck?

YUBARI: ... Yes. I saw Doctor Sharp's neck.

DOVAN: And?

YUBARI: And... nothing. We have a clear shot of her neck from engineering last Thursday. There's no bluegill. At least, no bluegill at that time.

DOVAN: Grasping at straws, Commander. You were wrong. There's no shame in that. Now give it up, get on your knees, and peg that marine in the face. (He throws several more snowballs.) Get back to Marine Country, Major!

YUBARI: I prefer to stand.

DOVAN: I see. (pause) Computer, shut down Yubari's safety protocols, authorization Dovan-quattuor-septem.

YUBARI: No! No, I'm not a--!

(Almost instantly, three or four snowballs hit Yubari.)

YUBARI: Augggh! (She drops to her knees and starts building a very tough snowball.) Alright, Dovan, I'll play.

DOVAN: Good!

YUBARI: But not on your team. Solar plexus shot!

(She hurls it at him. It hits him in the solar plexus.)

DOVAN: (groan) Jehosephat.