

Starship: Excelsior
"The Investigation"
(Season 2, Episode 2)

Transcribed by Peter Stine

SCENE 202-01**LOCATION: EXCELSIOR BRIDGE**

(The crew are working at their computer stations.)

ROL: Commander?

DOVAN: Go ahead, Mister Rol.

ROL: We're approaching the Gateway.

DOVAN: Understood. Ms. Yubari, fire activation codes.

YUBARI: Codes away. Gateway is responding...

(The Gateway startup begins outside the ship.)

YUBARI: Gateway is active, sir.

ROL: Transition to the Alpha Quadrant in three... two... one...

(The Gateway opens, and the *Excelsior* is rocketed through.)

ROL: Now receiving transponder signal from Starbase Nine-One-One.

DOVAN: (satisfied) On screen.

(The viewscreen turns on.)

(Lorhrok steps out of the turbolift.)

LORHROK: She's beautiful.

ROL: She's home.

DOVAN: (wistful) If an explorer can have a home. (pause) Take us in.

(Rol presses the appropriate controls.)

(The *Excelsior* cruises towards the station.)

DOVAN: Lieutenant Yubari, request docking codes.

YUBARI: Starbase Nine-One-One, this is the U.S.S. *Excelsior*, requesting permission to dock.

(Pause.)

STARBASE OPS: *Starship Excelsior, this is Union System Control. You are cleared for docking at Starbase Nine-One-One. Transmit code victor-victor-two-seven-four and hold position at Berth Nine, over.*

YUBARI: Acknowledged, System Control. Estimate final umbilical connection in ten minutes. *Excelsior* out.

LORHROK: Commander, can I have a word with—?

DOVAN: One moment, Mister Lorhrok. Mister Rol, status of the *Sizemore*?

ROL: She's taken pretty heavy damage from the explosion, sir. The *Searcher* and the *Victorious* are bringing her in under tow. They should come through the Gateway before we've finished docking.

DOVAN: Good. Contact the Kass Medical Center on Union Three and get me a report on Captain Cortez's condition.

ROL: Aye, sir.

LORHROK: Captain—

DOVAN: Yes; you wanted a word with me?

LORHROK: Actually, sir, I'd like to speak to the whole senior staff.

DOVAN: (surprised) Really?

(He presses the intercom.)

DOVAN: All senior staff, please report to the Captain's ready room. (to Lorhrok) I hope it's nothing too out of the ordinary, Lieutenant.

SCENE 202-02**LOCATION: EXCELSIOR READY ROOM**

(A padd clatters to the desk.)

DOVAN: (Shocked) Murdered?

LORHROK: Yes, sir.

DOVAN: That's impossible.

YUBARI: With respect, sir. (stepping forward; she is clicking through a padd.) This autopsy report says that Lieutenant Amara had warp plasma in his blood.

DOVAN: But not very much.

LORHROK: Ten cee-cees of liquid warp plasma is thirty million times the lethal level.

(Pause.)

DOVAN: Couldn't he have been exposed by accident?

LORHROK: Just trying to lower the temperature from its normal plasma state to a liquid one would have taken weeks. I can't imagine how an unconscious special operations officer in a stasis field could have come into contact with it.

YUBARI: Unless he was deliberately injected.

LORHROK: (discontentedly) Exactly. And by someone with resources and enormous patience.

YUBARI: So if it hadn't been for the Wasting, Doctor Sharp never would have detected it?

(Silence)

DOVAN: (exhales) Lieutenant Yubari, I'd like you to treat this as a homicide. Start looking at the backgrounds of everyone who's come aboard from the *Sizemore* and —

LORHROK: Sir, there's one other thing.

DOVAN: Yes?

YUBARI: I believe that would be Mr. Amara's time of death, no?

DOVAN: What about it?

(Long pause)

LORHOK: (reluctant) Doctor Sharp's autopsy showed that Lieutenant Amara was injected some time between oh-two-hundred and oh-four-hundred on the twenty-second.

DOVAN: And?

YUBARI: That's two days before we met up with the *Sizemore*. They hadn't even received our distress call yet.

DOVAN: Which means...?

ROL: Which means Leo Amara was murdered before anyone from the *Sizemore* came aboard.

(Pause.)

ROL: (conclusively) Which means that Leo Amara was murdered by someone aboard the *Excelsior*.

(Silence.)

DOVAN: I'm not jumping to conclusions. Lieutenant Yubari, I want a full investigation. Do not make any assumptions about who did this without hard evidence to back it up. Do I make myself clear?

YUBARI: I'll do my best.

DOVAN: There's something else you might want to look into. Mister P'chk'ro'ta noticed something unusual during one of his internal scans. A tiny amount of a compound called... I think he called it "dicosilium." Apparently it's very rare, used mainly in supercomputers. According to the quartermaster, we don't have any on board. But the really interesting thing is that, when Arden re-ran the scan this afternoon, there wasn't any sign of it. Which is odd, because—

LORHROK: (interrupting) Starship waste disposal systems can't recycle dicosilium.

DOVAN: That's what Arden told me.

LORHROK: And it's very durable. It can be detected in a particle state even after someone vaporizes it with a phaser — or drops it in a warp core. We haven't dumped any solid waste since we left Starbase, have we?

DOVAN: No. And there hasn't been any unauthorized airlock use in the last two weeks.

YUBARI: Sorry; what does this have to do with my investigation?

ROL: Maybe everything, Lieutenant. This dicosilium must still be on board, somewhere. And dicosilium isn't standard equipment for any division on this ship. It's not easy to come by.

YUBARI: So it might be tied to the murder. I see.

LORHROK: Captain, if I may. Let me work on this. Lieutenant Yubari has a lot on her plate already, and I'd be grateful for the break from repairs.

DOVAN: Lieutenant?

YUBARI: I've no objection, sir. In fact... (to Lorhrok) I appreciate the help.

DOVAN: Very well, Mister Lorhrok. Find out where that dicosilium is. I'd also like—

(Comm beep.)

PARKER: *Admiral Parker to Commander Dovan.*

(Dovan switches on the comm.)

DOVAN: (gravely) Dovan here. What can I do for you, Admiral?

PARKER: *Join me in my ready room, Commander. I'd like a word.*

(Dovan rises.)

DOVAN: I'm on my way, sir.

PARKER: *Sizemore out.*

DOVAN: Yubari, with me. The rest of you, dismissed.

(He and Yubari exit.)

THEME MUSIC

NARRATOR: *Today's episode: Murder in the Blue Morgue, Part Two: "The Investigation."*

SCENE 202-03**LOCATION: SIZEMORE BRIDGE**

(Dovan and Yubari enter from the rear turbolift.)

(Parker stands up from the big center seat.)

PARKER: Commander.

DOVAN: Admiral.

PARKER: My ready room.

(Dovan and Yubari begin walking.)

DOVAN: Of course.

PARKER: Commander Masterson, if you would?

MASTERSON: (affirmative) Sir.

(Parker and Masterson begin heading for the ready room. Dovan and Yubari have reached it and are entering.)

PARKER: Mister Gar, you have the bridge!

LOCATION: SIZEMORE READY ROOM

(Parker and Masterson enter the ready room. While walking to his desk, Parker begins speaking to Dovan.)

PARKER: I don't recall asking anyone to accompany you, Commander.

DOVAN: This is the *Excelsior's* new chief of security, Admiral. Lieutenant Asuka Yubari.

PARKER: Hm.

(Pause.)

PARKER: Well, she might as well hear this, too.

(He sits down.)

PARKER: Lieutenant Yubari, this is Commander Alix Masterson, my first officer.

MASTERSON: (Trying to be cheerful) A pleasure.

YUBARI: (uninflected; even distracted) Of course.

DOVAN: Sir, we have reason to believe that the explosion aboard the *Sizemore* was a deliberate act of sabotage.

PARKER: (dryly) What tipped you off, Commander?

(Pause.)

PARKER: We already know. (to Masterson) Commander?

MASTERSON: Our forensics team found traces of triphosphorous solinium in the plasma injector Lt. Robins was working on. It caused the malfunction that he was investigating. And then it caused the explosion that killed him.

DOVAN: Triphosphor...?

YUBARI: A high explosive. We used it regularly when I was a marine.

DOVAN: So there's no question it was murder.

PARKER: We've had... other indications before this. But this discovery puts all our doubt to rest.

DOVAN: Then I'd like to offer the *Excelsior's* resources to assist in the investigation.

PARKER: In fact, Commander. (pause) The reason I asked you here is so I can order you not to investigate the Robins murder. You are to dedicate no resources of any kind to the *Sizemore* explosion without my express verbal authorization. Do I make myself clear?

DOVAN: (taken aback) I... Admiral?

PARKER: Do I make myself clear, Commander?

DOVAN: Admiral... With respect, sir, we've just uncovered a murder mystery of our own. It's possible that the two are linked. Lieutenant Yubari has some experience in Intelligence work, and I consider her uniquely qualified to assist any —

PARKER: (to Yubari) Intelligence? What division?

YUBARI: Special Projects. Sir.

PARKER: I see.

(Pause.)

PARKER: (to Dovan) I see your point, Commander. (to Yubari) Welcome to the investigation, Lieutenant. As of this moment, you have full access to our logs, records, and any member of my crew you'd like to interview.

YUBARI: And the crime scene?

PARKER: I'll see to it that it's left intact for you.

YUBARI: Thank you, sir.

DOVAN: (surprised) I admit, I didn't think it'd be that easy to convince you.

PARKER: I believe that Miz Yubari has... impeccable credentials for this particular investigation.

DOVAN: (quietly dubious) Uh-huh.

MASTERSON: (tentatively) ...Sir? May I have a word with you?

PARKER: Certainly, Commander. We're done here in any case. Commander Dovan, Lieutenant Yubari. You're dismissed, with my thanks.

(Dovan and Yubari exit.)

PARKER: (to Masterson) Commander?

MASTERSON: Sir... I thought the man who contacted you... the man who warned you not to investigate the attack... didn't you say he worked for Special Projects?

PARKER: That's what he said, yes.

MASTERSON: But you've just put someone from that division into a lead role on this case. With respect, sir... is that wise?

(Pause.)

PARKER: Commander, this is how I see it: that woman, Yubari, either committed this murder... or she's the only person who can solve it.

(Pause.)

MASTERSON: And what if it's the first one?

PARKER: Then we've shaken things up.

(Pause.)

PARKER: (grinning) And that's always a good idea.

SCENE 202-04**LOCATION: LORHROK'S QUARTERS**

(Lorhrok is working at his desk.)

LORHROK: Alright. That should do it. (clears his throat) Computer: begin an internal scan of the *Excelsior* using new protocol Lorhrok-seven-seven-four. Scan for dicosilium or any of its component elements.

(Computer boops affirmatively.)

COMPUTER: *Beginning scan. Estimated time to completion: five minutes, thirty seconds.*

LORHROK: (to self) ...Just about enough time to run down to Mess and grab some *jumja*...

(The door chime rings.)

LORHROK: Guess not. Come!

(The door opens. Simon Westlake enters.)

SIMON WESTLAKE: Alecz?

LORHROK: (very friendly) Oh, Simon! Come in! Have a seat!

SIMON WESTLAKE: You... What did you want to talk to me about, Alecz?

LORHROK: (Kindly) I appreciate your directness, but it's not actually me I want you to talk to.

SIMON WESTLAKE: What do you mean?

(Lorhrok turns on his computer again.)

LORHROK: Bridge, this is Lieutenant Lorhrok. Do you have Xavier Fleet Yards on subspace?

ROL: *They're waiting for you, Lieutenant.*

LORHROK: Patch me through to the base commander.

ROL: *Aye, sir.*

(The screen activates.)

IAN WESTLAKE: *This is Commodore Westlake. State your business, Lieutenant... Lorhrok? Is that how you say it?*

LORHROK: Yes, sir. I don't know how else to say it, but we — the *Excelsior*, I mean, sir — seem to have found something you lost.

IAN WESTLAKE: (doubtful) I beg your pardon?

LORHROK: Well... here. It's best I just show you.

(Lorhrok swivels the computer screen around.)

IAN WESTLAKE: (with a sharp intake of breath) Simon?

SIMON WESTLAKE: (cautiously) Hi, Dad.

IAN WESTLAKE: *Simon, you're... you're okay! I — (suddenly stern) What in blazes are you doing on the *Excelsior*?*

SIMON WESTLAKE: (meekly) It's... I... It was an accident.

IAN WESTLAKE: *Your mother and I thought you'd been kidnapped by the Tholian delegation on D.S. Six! Do you have any idea how close we came to a major diplomatic incident over this?*

SIMON WESTLAKE: (gradually getting more frustrated.) I'm sorry, Dad, it's just — you never let me do anything. I had to stay locked up in my room all day, just because of this ridiculous syndrome!

IAN WESTLAKE: *Simon, you know why we had —*

LORHROK: (Interrupting) Commodore, I just want to say how amazing your son has been aboard the *Excelsior*. He was one of the last people standing in Engineering during a very... costly battle. He helped keep the ship in one piece. And he definitely saved us all when Doctor Sharp turned his infected blood — his Elarin's Syndrome — into the cure for a fatal disease. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for your son.

IAN WESTLAKE: (astonished) *Really?*

SIMON WESTLAKE: Really, Dad! You should have seen me!

IAN WESTLAKE: *I... Son... I had no idea. (pause) I suppose, if you've saved a whole starship... you must old enough now to make your own decisions about how to spend your life. Even if you are my son. Even if it means we risk aggravating your disease. (Pause) Do you want to come home, Simon?*

SIMON WESTLAKE: No, Dad. I want to be out here. Exploring.

(A long pause.)

IAN WESTLAKE: *Alright.*

SIMON WESTLAKE: (heartfelt) Oh, thanks, Dad! I... thanks a lot!

IAN WESTLAKE: (Starting to smile) *I'm just happy for you, Simon. I'll give Mom your love?*

SIMON WESTLAKE: Oh, definitely! And I'll call every day the *Excelsior* isn't in the Delta Quadrant!

IAN WESTLAKE: (grinning now) *I'll hold you to that, Mister. Dismissed!*

(Simon stands.)

LORHROK: Thank you, Simon. I'd like to talk to your dad alone now for a few minutes.

SIMON WESTLAKE: Okay.

(He exits.)

IAN WESTLAKE: *Lieutenant... is what you said about my son really true?*

LORHROK: Every word. If you wait until the classifications are cleared, I can send you the reports. He was amazing.

IAN WESTLAKE: (a bit disbelieving) *And did I hear him use the word "ridiculous"?*

LORHROK: Yes; that's something I wanted to talk to you about. Ever since we were infected with the Wasting — the disease I was telling you about — Simon's been... a little different, somehow. Doctor Sharp has checked him over, and I'm afraid there's no change in his prognosis, but she *did* notice that Simon's neurotransmitter count has gone up very quickly since last month. He's a little bit more self-confident, a little more self-aware. And he's started picking up bigger words, like "ridiculous."

IAN WESTLAKE: (mostly to himself) *That could be of great interest to everyone in the Neurology Center at Starfleet Medical. (suddenly) Lieutenant. I want your word as a Starfleet officer that you will make sure that no harm comes to my son while he is aboard the Excelsior.*

LORHROK: (solemn) I swear it, sir.

IAN WESTLAKE: *Thank you. You've done my family a great kindness today.*

LORHROK: I'm looking forward to having him around. He has the intuition of an engineer. He's a gifted boy, in his own way.

IAN WESTLAKE: (quietly) Aye. That he is. (pause) Xavier out.

(The connection cuts off.)

LORHROK: (takes a breath) Computer, status of my scan?

COMPUTER: *Scan complete. No evidence of dicosilium was found aboard the Excelsior.*

LORHROK: (Frustrated) How can that be? Computer, run an internal scan of the internal scanner network, same search protocol.

(The computer boops in the affirmative.)

LORHROK: Thirty minutes before my shift... still time for that *jumja* stick —

(The door chime rings again.)

LORHROK: (groans) It's open!

(Dovan enters.)

DOVAN: Lieutenant.

LORHROK: Commander Dovan. What brings you down here, sir?

DOVAN: Oh, this and that. I noticed some unusual damage to the log recorder.

LORHROK: Spast. I'll take a look at it when I get the chance.

DOVAN: I don't mean that it's broken. I mean--here, listen to this. Computer, play back my log entry from tonight.

(The computer boops and begins.)

DOVAN (RECORDING): *Acting Captain's Log, Stardate Five-Nine-Nine-Eight-Zero-Point-Three. Under our own power, we've docked at Starbase Nine-One-One, bringing our three-week journey home to an early end. For most of the crew, I've authorized Christmas leave on the Union Three colony. More importantly—*

(The computer beeps an error message.)

COMPUTER: *Warning: file corrupted. Attempting to restore.*

LORHROK: (with a sigh) Look, Commander, I'll try to take a look at it—

DOVAN: (interrupting) Wait for it, Lieutenant.

(The computer beeps happily.)

COMPUTER: *File restored. Resuming playback.*

CORTEZ: *First Officer's Log, Stardate Five-Nine-Seven-Three-One-Point-One. Mark encrypted and classified, authorization Cortez-sigma-three. I've just come back from a very disturbing meeting. Captain Suresh informed us—*

(Static. The computer terminates.)

LORHROK: Oh.

DOVAN: You see my point.

LORHROK: Stardate Five-Nine-Seven-Three-One... that was before the *Excelsior* was pulled out of mothballs, wasn't it?

DOVAN: It was. And I can tell you for a fact that Captain Sharvah Suresh was never her commanding officer.

LORHROK: I don't know the name.

DOVAN: Probably before your time. Captain Suresh was skipper of the *Akagi*, one of the great War Captains. We used to call him "the Jellico of the Ninth Fleet." Retired a couple a' years ago. I think he died recently. Age of seventy-something. Very young. Very sad.

(Lorhrok checks his console.)

LORHROK: According to the computer... yes. Captain Suresh died of heart failure in his home on Deneva... (ominously) Two weeks before this log entry was recorded.

(A surprised silence.)

DOVAN: Do you think you can restore any more of the file?

LORHROK: You don't have ask me twice, sir.

(Lorhrok works on his console.)

LORHROK: Okay. I've got something. Actually, there's quite a lot in here.

(The screen reactivates.)

CORTEZ: — *not discussed, not proposed, but informed us* — of which specific Starfleet Command directives we would be ignoring in our investigation of the Anbar. I know I was selected for this mission to support Captain Suresh over the objections of this particular crew, but this mission — however noble its aims — is already the riskiest

venture I have ever undertaken. I am worried that undermining the very orders designed to protect us may be...

CORTEZ: *I consider it reckless and irresponsible. (pause) The climate aboard the Excelsior is becoming more uncomfortable by the day. I'm looking forward to—*

COMPUTER: *File ends.*

DOVAN: Do you think you can get any more?

LORHROK: I'd be surprised. I'm having trouble finding these memory addresses.

(Pause.)

DOVAN: Alright. Record what we've gotten, and then I'd like to move on to our next—

(Cortez reappears.)

CORTEZ: —*getting back to the Mercury. In the meantime, I've been doing a bit of reading on the planet we passed a few days ago. It's a fascinating story of failed first contact. I hope that I'm not the woman who has to try it again, but I'm curious what will happen the next time the Federation tries to establish relations with these... Valandrin. When we—*

COMPUTER: *File ends.*

(Long Pause.)

DOVAN: Wow.

LORHROK: I'll see what else I can—

DOVAN: No. I'll look into this. Yubari has the murder case, you have the dicosilium, and now I have something to do.

LORHROK: If you insist, sir. What was the other thing you wanted to talk about?

DOVAN: (Sternly) You.

LORHROK: Me? What about me?

DOVAN: Your performance.

LORHROK: My performance? I—

DOVAN: (interrupting) Your performance has exemplary, Mister Lorchrok, but I'm afraid I can no longer tolerate having a Lieutenant Junior Grade running our engineering. I'm having a full Lieutenant installed later today, and he'll also be serving as my Acting X.O. until Captain Cortez is back.

LORHROK: I— And who is this new Lieutenant?

DOVAN: (Pleased with himself) You. Here.

(He hands Lorchrok a small black box.)

DOVAN: Open the box. And congratulations... Senior Lieutenant Aleczahnder Lorchrok.

(Lorchrok opens the box and stares at the solid pip inside.)

LORHROK: I—

(Long pause. Then Lorchrok suddenly to attention.)

LORHROK: Sir! Thank you, sir!

DOVAN: Don't mention it. This is the best part of my day, Lor. You realize, of course, I'm doing this so I can make you do more work and not feel guilty about it.

LORHROK: Maybe this is the engineer in me, but I think it's well worth the extra work to get another tiny round piece of metal to wear.

(A slightly awkward silence.)

DOVAN: Well, I suppose I'll dismiss myself, then. Good night, Lieutenant. I doubt either of us will be sleeping tonight; I'll keep you informed if we learn anything.

LORHROK: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

(Dovan heads for the door, but stops right before.)

DOVAN: Oh, and, Lieutenant: I expect you to be wearing some red tomorrow.

(He exits.)

LORHROK: (smiling broadly; wry, but in no sense negative) Great. Now I'm a redshirt. (reflectively) How times change. (pause) Computer, how did that second scan go?

COMPUTER: *No anomalies detected.*

LORHROK: Ugh!

COMPUTER: *Note: no data collected on Deck Six, Section Thirteen-A.*

LORHROK: I'm sorry; why is that?

COMPUTER: *Internal sensors in those quarters have been disabled.*

LORHROK: Huh. I thought we'd repaired Deck Six. Which quarters did you say, Computer?

COMPUTER: *Deck Six, Section Thirteen-A contains three adjacent living units. They are occupied by: vacant; vacant; Lieutenant Alex Rol.*

LORHROK: (surprised) I see.

SCENE 202-05**LOCATION: EXCELSIOR SHIP'S LIBRARY**

(Yubari is working at a computer console, scrolling through database files intently.)

(Dovan quietly sits down across from Yubari.)

DOVAN: I admit, I didn't expect to find you in the ship's library.

YUBARI: (not paying him full attention) I did learn a *few* things in Intelligence, sir. For instance, going in with a marine team isn't always the right answer.

DOVAN: True enough. Anything I can do to help?

YUBARI: (still not looking up) You can tell Crewman Harkless to let me use the holo-spectrometer. He won't give it to me without your direct authorization. I threatened to kill him with my bare hand, but he said that the idea of Crewman Adow finding out he'd let me borrow her tools without asking scared him even more. So I guess I need your help.

DOVAN: Admirable restraint, Lieutenant.

YUBARI: (casually; still not looking up) Not really, sir; I just haven't learned how to use this prosthesis well enough to break his neck with it.

DOVAN: Hm. Dovan to Crewman Harkless.

HARKLESS: Harkless here, Commander!

DOVAN: Ten out of ten for protocol, Crewman, but minus several hundred for inconveniencing our Chief of Security. Everything Lieutenant Yubari requests is to be given top priority. And that's an order. Believe me: it's better for your health and mine.

HARKLESS: (thoroughly intimidated) I'll have it to her in ten minutes, sir! Harkless out!

(Pause.)

YUBARI: (still not looking up) Thanks.

DOVAN: Now, then. Any leads so far?

YUBARI: No. Well... (finally looking at Dovan; reluctant) There is one.

DOVAN: Well? Out with it.

YUBAR: Lieutenant Robins, the *Sizemore* engineer killed in the explosion. Before his assignment on the *Sizemore*, he was the chief of research engineering at the Manner Science Station.

DOVAN: So? Lots of people are engineers. Many of them even on science stations.

YUBARI: Lieutenant Robins' team on the Manner designed and installed the high-resolution sensor array I used for my intelligence-gathering mission on the *Excelsior*.

DOVAN: The secret mission you were conducting while the rest of the ship was busy getting ready for Valandria.

YUBARI: (scornful) Is there another one you're familiar with?

DOVAN: Then these murders are somehow... related to your intelligence mission?

YUBARI: I don't know, sir.

DOVAN: What was your mission really about, Yubari?

YUBARI: I... I don't know.

DOVAN: Well, are you sure it was as inconsequential as you told me it was?

YUBARI: (suddenly angry and loud) I don't KNOW, sir!

(Pause.)

DOVAN: Perhaps we'd better get out of the ship's library.

YUBARI: (angrily) Just maybe.

(They exit the library.)

DOVAN: So it is possible that your division of intelligence was somehow involved in these murders.

YUBARI: (angry still) Yes, it's possible. Of course it's possible. But I'll remind you that I'm the only Intelligence officer aboard the *Excelsior*.

DOVAN: Exactly my point, Lieutenant. You realize what this looks like from my point of view.

YUBARI: You... you think I did this? Killed two officers in cold blood?

DOVAN: (dry) I don't think anyone who's met you could accuse you of having cold blood, Yubari. (pause) I trust you, Lieutenant, but I've only known you for a few weeks. My responsibility as your superior officer requires me to share this information with Admiral Parker. No doubt he'll be checking the evidence you provide much more closely. And, frankly, so will I.

YUBARI: That's outrageous!

DOVAN: Possibly. But possibly not. Either way, those are my orders. If you'll excuse me, now: I have an appointment I have to make.

SCENE 202-06**LOCATION: FARWAY PARK, UNION III. NIGHT**

DOVAN: This lake of yours is really beautiful by night, Admiral.

PARKER: As it should be. We put a lot of effort into designing Lake Columbia. Do you see out there where the lake opens up into the river?

DOVAN: Yes?

PARKER: At every equinox, the sun comes up at exactly that point. The light hits a mirror over... over there, and that mirror is aimed at another mirror, which is aimed at another, and another... so, every equinox, the entire lake is lit up with new dawn all around. If there happens to be a light fog that morning, it looks like the lake is on fire. Everyone in Farway comes out to see it.

DOVAN: Wow. You've done some remarkable things with Union Three, Admiral.

PARKER: This is the most important location in the Raeyan Sector; it might as well be a nice place to live. Making that happen... well, it's in my blood.

DOVAN: Which is why they made you an admiral, no doubt. I didn't ask you here just to take a walk in the park.

PARKER: I thought not. Why here instead of your ready room?

DOVAN: Frankly? Because I'm beginning to get a little nervous about the security of my ready room.

PARKER: Then you're probably getting closer to the heart of this than I expected.

DOVAN: Admiral, do you know anything about the *Excelsior* going on a mission in late September of this year, before it was pulled out of mothballs? We think Captain Suresh was in command?

PARKER: (surprised) You think the murders could be related to that? I admit, it hadn't occurred to me. But it should have.

DOVAN: We don't think anything yet. I'd just like to know what you know about that mission. So, there was a mission.

PARKER: Of course, of course.

(short pause)

PARKER: Yes, there was a mission. It was about mid-September. I was on Union, attending a diplomatic conference at the Klingon Embassy for a few days. I got a call from Commander Masterson in the middle of the night...

LOCATION: EMBASSY BEDROOM (FLASHBACK)

(A comm panel is beeping insistently.)

(Parker wakes up, making a slight noise. He then rolls out of bed and steps the short distance to his desk, sitting down and pressing the activation key.)

PARKER: This is Parker.

MASTERSON: *Admiral, sorry to disturb you.*

PARKER: Quite alright, Commander. Report.

MASTERSON: *I have a Commander Rachel Cortez up here requesting permission to undock?*

PARKER: So what's the problem?

MASTERSON: (hesitant) *Well, it's the ship she wants, sir.*

PARKER: If she doesn't have the proper orders, then deny her request and she can take it up with me in the morning.

MASTERSON: (again hesitant) *Well, she does have the proper orders, sir.*

PARKER: Then what's the holdup?

MASTERSON: *It's the Excelsior, sir. She wants to undock the Excelsior.*

(Surprised pause)

PARKER: I'll be right up.

LOCATION: SPACE (FLASHBACK)

(A shuttle arcs upwards from the planet to the Starbase.)

LOCATION: STARBASE 911 BERTH NINE (FLASHBACK)

(Parker approached Masterson and Cortez who are arguing.)

MASTERSON: Commander, I assure you, we are not trying to delay your departure; we're simply giving this request the full scrutiny we feel it merits.

CORTEZ: I still don't understand why you feel a set of valid, fully verified orders from Starfleet Command deserves any additional scrutiny at all.

MASTERSON: You have to admit, Commander, this is extremely irregu — (noticing) Admiral. Welcome back.

PARKER: (nodding to each) Commander. Commander. I take it you're Rachel Cortez?

CORTEZ: I am.

PARKER: (to Masterson) Thank you, Miss Masterson. I'll take it from here.

MASTERSON: Aye, sir.

(Masterson leaves.)

PARKER: (to Cortez) Your orders, please?

CORTEZ: Of course.

PARKER: Your file says you're currently posted to the *Mercury*, as first officer.

CORTEZ: We've been on leave since completing our three-year mission. This is a... special assignment.

PARKER: (casually) Very special. The *Excelsior's* been in mothballs for nearly two years. And you pull her out in the middle of the night, with no warning and a set of orders that's signed by... well, well. Two generals, a fleet admiral, and the President herself.

PARKER: (seriously) Who's going to be the crew, exactly?

CORTEZ: With the exception of me, the entire crew consists of officers from Starfleet Intelligence.

PARKER: And I'm not supposed to be a bit taken aback by that?

CORTEZ: With all due respect, Admiral, the *Excelsior* has every legal right to depart this base. Permission was requested only as a courtesy.

PARKER: And because you need my permission to open the spacedoors. Without that, you're not going anywhere.

CORTEZ: You'd be disobeying a direct order of the President.

PARKER: I'm an Admiral. I can afford a little political heat. Now, if you don't mind, I'd like to talk to whoever's captaining this mission of yours.

(Footsteps approach)

CORTEZ: I'll see if he's available.

(A man emerges from the umbilical.)

SURESH: That won't be necessary, Commander.

PARKER: (pleasantly surprised) Captain Suresh! (wry) How's retirement?

SURESH: Oh, it's treating me very well, Athos. Now if I can just get my old coworkers in Intelligence to stop dragging me back out here every six months, I could really start to enjoy myself. (courteous; friendly) Thank you, Commander Cortez. You're dismissed. I'll see you on board.

CORTEZ: Aye, sir.

(Cortez exits back through the umbilical.)

PARKER: (low voice) Captain... what's this all about?

SURESH: Walk with me, Athos.

PARKER: It's "Admiral" now, Sharvah.

SURESH: So court-martial me.

(They walk.)

SURESH: I wish I could tell you something about what we're up to. All I can say is, it's very important, and it's very dangerous. And I'm afraid you're going to have to take it on the word of an old friend that you need to approve our departure.

PARKER: I—

SURESH: I'm not finished. Once we're gone, you have to delete the records of our departure and seal this docking bay until we're back.

(Pause.)

PARKER: You're putting me in a terrible position, Captain.

SURESH: I know. I'm sorry. Trust me: it's for a good cause.

PARKER: That many Intelligence agents, this much secrecy, orders from the President, all going towards a mission of good will? I need a little more reassurance than that, Sharvah.

SURESH: Intelligence was flatly opposed to this mission, Athos. The powers that be had to shove it through, and Intelligence was only willing to go ahead with it if it was crewed by their people—people who understood the risks.

PARKER: And you?

SURESH: It seems I was the compromise candidate. Intelligence wanted one of their people in command of the mission; Operations and Exploratory wanted someone who didn't oppose it, who understood their objectives. In other words, one of their people. So Command called me. I was popular during the War, I did a lot of intel work before and after, and apparently I have a reputation as something of a humanist. I selected Cortez as the crew's sole representative from the non-Intelligence services. She's got the guts, the loyalty, and the ideals to see this mission through—despite the objections from S.I.

PARKER: So you trust her?

SURESH: A very great deal.

PARKER: And you think this mission is important?

SURESH: Absolutely.

PARKER: (breaths) Alright. You'll be undocked in twenty minutes.

SURESH: Thanks, Athos.

PARKER: Don't mention it. Just be sure to invite me for nashta next time I'm on Deneva.

(Suresh begins walking back to the *Excelsior*)

SURESH: I'll make my best samosa.

LOCATION: FARWAY PARK, UNION III. NIGHT (PRESENT)

PARKER: I never saw him again. I heard a few weeks later he'd died peacefully at his home, so I assume the mission, whatever it was, was a success.

DOVAN: According to Starfleet records, Captain Suresh died two weeks before the incident you just described.

PARKER: That's... I see. Tell me, Commander. Do you trust your Chief of Security?

DOVAN: I do. Why?

PARKER: As long as we're here, far away from prying eyes: the real reason I tried to discourage you from investigating the Robins murder was fairly simple. It's how I knew the attack was coming.

DOVAN: I wondered about that. You received a subspace call at dinner, and came back convinced that something bad was about to happen.

PARKER: The call was a warning... and a threat. The man on the other end told me there was about to be an "incident" ... and then told me that investigating it would put me and my crew at risk. Of course, there was no question that I would use all the resources on the *Sizemore* to find the perpetrator — that's my duty as a Captain, and it's my crew's duty to shoulder the risk. But I wasn't willing to put you and your people in danger for something that was purely our affair.

DOVAN: You should have known better, Admiral. We're just one Starfleet vessel helping another out, after all.

PARKER: What changed my mind was your Lieutenant Yubari's credentials.

DOVAN: Oh?

PARKER: You see, the man who threatened me... he said he worked for Starfleet Intelligence. Special Projects division.

DOVAN: Special... Oh, my.

(Dovan slaps his combadge.)

DOVAN: Dovan to Yubari!

(The commlink fails.)

DOVAN: Yubari!

(Silence.)

(Dovan hits his combadge again.)

DOVAN: Dovan to Lorhrok!

LORHROK: *Lorhrok here, sir.*

DOVAN: Lieutenant, I need to talk to Miz Yubari, but I can't raise her. Can you tell me where she is?

LORHROK: *Hold on one moment, sir. Computer, locate Lieutenant Yubari.*

COMPUTER: *Lieutenant Asuka Yubari is not on board the Excelsior.*

LORHROK: *Sir —*

DOVAN: (deflating) I heard it. I don't... Dovan out.

PARKER: It seems your chief of security just skipped town, Commander.

DOVAN: No. I don't accept that. Someone must have gotten to her. Dovan to *Excelsior*. One to beam up.

PARKER: Good luck, Commander.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF: *Ready, sir.*

DOVAN: Energize.

(Dovan vanishes in a transporter beam.)

SCENE 202-07**LOCATION: EXCELSIOR DECK SIX CORRIDOR**

(Lorhrok stands in front of Alex Rol's door.)

LORHROK: (takes a deep breath)

(He rings the door chime. A couple seconds later, the door hisses open. Rol is standing there.)

ROL: What can I do for you, Lieutenant?

LORHROK: (lying through teeth) Sorry to bother you so late, Lieutenant, but there was a malfunction in the bio-neural gelpacks on this deck, and it seems to be coming from a short-circuit in your quarters.

ROL: Can it wait until morning?

LORHROK: I'm afraid not. It's got to be looked at...

(He squeezes past Rol and heads for the replicator control panel.)

LORHROK: ...right now. It should be a quick fix; no need for you to stay up.

ROL: If you don't mind, I'll wait.

LORHROK: Sure thing.

(Lorhrok sets his toolkit on the ground and unlatches the replicator control cover. We can hear the clicking, humming innards of the replicator system. Lorhrok runs a tricorder over it.)

LORHROK: There we are.

ROL: What are we looking at, Lieutenant?

LORHROK: Hey, Rol: See this extra pip? It means you have to call me "sir" now.

ROL: Oh, congratulations! ...Sir.

LORHROK: Mmm-hm.

ROL: (suspicious) With respect, sir, it doesn't look as if you're scanning the bio-neural relay.

LORHROK: (lying again) I know it's been a few years since you were in Engineering, Rol, but this power interface was repurposed in the last design overhaul. It now supplies electropulse antibodies to the — Hullo! What's this?

(His tricorder starts beeping)

ROL: (feigning ignorance) What? What is it?

(Lorhrok reaches back into the network and pulls out a dense little computer chip. He scans it.)

LORHROK: A computer chip. Pure dicosilium. (pointedly) Now that's very odd, isn't it?

ROL: What information's on it?

(Lorhrok closes the tricorder.)

LORHROK: (sigh) I don't know. It looks like it's been completely erased.

ROL: (feigning disappointment) Oh. That's a shame. We probably could have learned something from it. (with the ghost of a chuckle) Like what it was doing in my quarters.

LORHROK: Well... I think I can restore it.

ROL: (caught off-guard) I... Well, that's great!

LORHROK: I've got my engineering tools here. Why don't we take a look at this? Together.

SCENE 202-08**LOCATION: DOVAN'S QUARTERS**

DOVAN: (shouting at his console screen) Look, if you want to put Federation security at risk, that's your business, I guess. But if you really care about doing your job, then I want to talk to your superior. *Now.*

INTELLIGENCE PERSON: *Look, Mister Dovan —*

DOVAN: That's *Lieutenant Commander* Dovan, Mister, and since you're not wearing a uniform, I'm going to assume you're a civilian. Which gives me a certain amount of authority in this context. Now put me through. That's an order.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER: *I — Fine.*

(He fiddles with some buttons on his end, and the screen blanks.)

DOVAN: (exasperated) Jehosephat. Three hours arguing my way up the Intelligence food chain, and not one of them has admitted to me that they're Intelligence. This is absurd.

(The screen clicks back on. General Brahms, in non-descript attire, is on the other end.)

BRAHMS: *Lieutenant Commander Alcar Dovan. It's a pleasure to meet you. I understand you have some kind of information for me?*

DOVAN: I do. Mister...?

BRAHMS: *Pleasantries are not important when the safety of the Federation is at stake. What's your information, Commander?*

DOVAN: I'm afraid it comes at a small price.

BRAHMS: (surprised) *Need I remind you, Commander, that any information pertinent to Starfleet security must under penalty of law be immediately —*

DOVAN: (interrupting) *It's not about Starfleet security.*

BRAHMS: (an air of impatient amusement) *Oh? Well, then, why am I taking this call?*

DOVAN: *It's about your security. The security of your division.*

BRAHMS: (chuckles) *Oh? I highly doubt that. What exactly is it you want, Mr. Dovan?*

DOVAN: *I want my Chief of Security back.*

BRAHMS: *I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about. Why? Did your chief, whoever he is, commit some sort of crime?*

DOVAN: *Yes. She did.*

BRAHMS: *Then I would assume — though I admit to having no role in matters of crime and justice — that she has been dealt with accordingly.*

DOVAN: *Perhaps. But, then, I think she could easily get immunity if tested in a court of law.*

BRAHMS: *Oh? And since when is murder a crime that qualifies for immunity?*

DOVAN: *I don't believe I mentioned any murder, sir.*

(Pause.)

BRAHMS: *I'm sorry; my mistake is that I so often assume the worst in people. To what were you referring, Commander?*

DOVAN: We have reason to believe that Lieutenant Yubari is guilty of making unauthorized modifications to a Starfleet vessel, use of a computer system to conduct illegal surveillance, abuse of Starfleet privileges, deliberate violation of security classification, endangerment of ship and crew in a combat situation, and that she may be an accessory to murder. We've been tracing the illegal monitoring devices she installed all over the ship. Still not quite sure where they came from, but I wonder what we'll find when we do. I do know there are quite a few reporters out here at Union these days. And I'm pretty sure I dislike you people more than I care about my own career. So let's be honest here. Can I have my chief of security back?

(Pause.)

BRAHMS: *What a fascinating discussion this has been. If I knew anything about your security officer, I'd be in a bit of trouble now, wouldn't I? (forced chuckle) (pure loathing) Perhaps we'll speak again, Commander. It's been... a pleasure.*

DOVAN: (loathing in return) Of course.

(The screen goes dead.)

(Silence.)

DOVAN: Damn it. (talking to himself) At least now they have something to think about over there. At least... No. She was... Has to have been. (pause) Computer, begin new recording. Captain's Log, Supplemental. Mark encrypted and classified. Commander Yubari has —

(He is interrupted.)

CORTEZ: *First Officer's — Commander's — no: Acting Captain's Log, Supplemental. (ragged breath) I just killed Sharvah Suresh.*

COMPUTER: *File ends.*

(Shocked silence.)

DOVAN: Computer, replay that file.

COMPUTER: *Specify.*

DOVAN: The file you just played.

COMPUTER: *Error: no such file.*

DOVAN: What!?

SCENE 202-09

LOCATION: INT. *RENEGADE* BRIG

(Yubari is laying in a security cell, beginning to stir from unconsciousness. Forcefield is of course active.)

YUBARI: unnhh... what? Where am I?

(Brahms enters.)

BRAHMS: Lieutenant Yubari. How nice to have you with us again. I just had a very... *stimulating* conversation with your new commanding officer.

YUBARI: This isn't the *Excelsior*.

BRAHMS: No, I'm afraid it isn't. Welcome to the Starship *Renegade*, Asuka. One of the new *Kindred*-class. I'm quite fond of her.

YUBARI: Release me, General. Now. You have no right to do this.

BRAHMS: I'm afraid I not only have the right, Lieutenant: you've given me no other choice. I only want to know *why* you'd betray your uniform so easily after everything you and I have been through together?

YUBARI: I changed divisions, General. That's hardly treason.

BRAHMS: That depends on when and how and what you do after you've changed divisions, Asuka. I'm afraid you have to accept the consequences of your decisions. You're going to be staying with us for a while.

(Brahms turns around and walks away.)

YUBARI: General! (pause) Brahms! (pause) BRAHMS!

END CREDITS