

*Starship: Excelsior*  
**"Relief Operation DIV-1096"**  
(Season 5, Episode 2)  
by James Heaney

Transcribed by Peter Stine

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

**SCENE 5A-01****LOCATION: FIGHTER CRAFT PATROCLUS – COCKPIT**

SYLVESTE: Descending to five hundred meters.

(The shuttle shifts and descends)

SYLVESTE: Penetrating lower cloud cover in three, two...

(Sharp quietly whines.)

SYLVESTE: You alright, Doctor?

SHARP: I really wish the transporters were working.

SYLVESTE: Commander Neeva will be right behind you. And you've trained on this a hundred times.

SHARP: I know that. But in the simulator, I didn't get squished if I pulled at the wrong time.

SYLVESTE: We're passing over the payload now. Speed is... five kmh higher than expected. And accelerating.

SHARP: But you just adjust for that, right?

SYLVESTE: Aye, sir.

SHARP: It's funny. It doesn't look as bad from up here. Almost like a regular desert.

SYLVESTE: Yeah, if it weren't for the burnt-out buildings, you could almost forget this part of Divitia was jungle and farmland a few days ago. It'll take... decades to fix this.

SHARP: A lot of it won't ever be fixed. Two days in the medical tents and I'll never forget that.

SYLVESTE: Divitia is the capital of the Perenthalorias Union. What does a natural disaster on this scale do to the whole region?

SHARP: Let's worry about the people and let the politicians worry about the politics.

SYLVESTE: Five hundred meters altitude. I have eyeballs on the river.

SHARP: What the ion wave must have done to these people... (pause) Jon, you've been down here in no-man's-land. You'd have my thanks if you could tell me that the bodies were just... vaporized.

(Pause.)

SYLVESTE: You should double-check your equipment one more time before the D.Z., ma'am.

(Pause)

(Sensor alert. Sylveste opens comms)

SYLVESTE: This is fighter *Patroclus* to operational squadron, coming up on the go/no-go.

YUBARI: *Excelsior here. This is the squadron for op... nine-nine-four?*

SYLVESTE: One-zero-nine-six, ma'am.



LOCATION: SKY OVER DIVITIA

(Wind rushes past as Sharp enters free fall (still screaming)! The fighter she was on streaks away, and, barely a moment later, so do three more fighters that had been behind her. Then her parachute catches, and things stabilize. Sharp stops screaming.)

SHARP: (deep breath) The parachute worked. (deep breath) I'm okay. The parachute worked. Now I'm just going to land on the ground...

(Sharp's feet gently touch the cracked, stony, sandy ground. The parachute gently crumples to the ground behind her.)

LOCATION: DEVASTATED STERILE LANDSCAPE

SHARP: ...and I'm all... just... fine.

(Behind Sharp, Neeva lands. She quickly retracts her chutes into a cool Starfleet backpack that does that, because this is the future, and then approaches Sharp. Also, a dune buggy lands gently a few meters back.)

NEEVA: Melissa! Are you alright?

SHARP: (exhales) Yep! One hundred percent parts intact!

(She presses a key on her wrist that makes her parachute retract. She starts walking toward Neeva and the dune buggy as well.)

NEEVA: You have my gear?

SHARP: Should still be attached to the suitpack. You have my dune buggy?

NEEVA: What's it look like? Mount up!

(They both get aboard the dune buggy.)

NEEVA: I still can't figure out why Starfleet invented these.

SHARP: You know, Kestra was on the engineering team that designed them.

NEEVA: So what is the point of them?

SHARP: She hasn't the faintest idea. Just be thankful it's radiation-resistant and start the engines.

NEEVA: Works for me.

(She starts the engine, and the dune buggy springs to life.)

NEEVA: The river is due west. I'll set up as soon we get there. Our sensors showed the payload picking up speed faster than we thought.

SHARP: Do we have to keep saying "the payload"? It's not like we're taking the reward the Divitians are offering for this op.

NEEVA: Not like the Divitian reward for this op is even worth taking. Look. Computer, display holo-projection of Divitian relief bounty number one-zed-nine-six. Skip the payload description. Just give me the reward.

(A hologram shimmers into existence on the dashboard.)

DIVITIAN: For your efforts on behalf of our recovery, we invite you take advantage of fifteen credits for priority use of the Divitian Global Computation Net. Good luck, and, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

(The hologram shimmers away.)

SHARP: Fifteen credits? That's...what, like one minutes of compute?

NEEVA: Even less at scale. The government wants payloads that get electrical power running and roads cleared, and pays bounties accordingly. Which is why the *Excelsior* keeps taking the jobs without bounties. Some of them really matter, and we're the only ones who bother.

SHARP: So, the Divitians are callous and short-sighted.

NEEVA: And desperately in need of our help.

SHARP: The boat's still accelerating. Better step on it.

NEEVA: Fair point.

(She accelerates.)

SHARP: And should we call the Major for an update on his end?

NEEVA: He'll be in the middle of his drop right now.

SHARP: Still?

NEEVA: He had to jump with a thruster suit from much higher to get the landing precisely right.

SHARP: I guess that explains why the marines picked him for this.

NEEVA: How so?

SHARP: Oh, the Major loves orbital skydiving. It's how he met his wife.

(Pause.)

NEEVA: Wait, his wife?

SHARP: Yeah, Nicole. Slow down before you drive us into the drink.

(Neeva slows the dune buggy down. We hear a very wide river.)

(Sensor alert.)

NEEVA: And the boat's almost here already. C'mon. We have to hurry, or it's going over the waterfall with the Major and the payload on board.

(They both get out.)

(Sharp reaches back detaches a bulky gizmo from her parachute backpack.)

SHARP: Your gizmo, madam.

NEEVA: I thought of it more as a doohickey. Can you hold this level? I need to zero it.



(She starts pressing buttons.)

SHARP: Sure, if you explain what you're doing.

NEEVA: This is a graviton-inverting [zonal molecular orbiter, or GIZMO for short.]

SHARP: --in small words.

NEEVA: Oh. Uh, it's a tractor beam. The boat is coming down the river. We can't go in the river.

SHARP: Because the radiation would cook our insides. I understand that part.

NEEVA: So we need to slow the boat down and drag it over to shore while The Major retrieves the payload.

THE MAJOR: *Major to shore team!*

(We can hear, in the background that the Major is walking forcefully through knee-deep, rushing water.)

SHARP: Speak of the devil...

(Neeva is slaps her combadge.)

NEEVA: Neeva here, Major! What's your status!

THE MAJOR: *Landing was perfect, ma'am, and I'm aboard the boat. Everyone on the top deck was dead, as expected. I'm now on the lower deck searching for the payload!*

SHARP: Ryan, what am I hearing in the background there?

THE MAJOR: *The reason the boat's speeding up, ma'am. It's a Divitian pleasure boat, not much in the way of armor, and it's been rammed by a larger derelict with bigger engines.*

SHARP: So, the sound...?

THE MAJOR: *The crash opened a hull breach. My boat's sinking fast, ma'am.*

NEEVA: Do you have the payload?

THE MAJOR: *Negative, ma'am!*

SHARP: How deep is the water currently?

THE MAJOR: *Knee-high, ma'am.*

NEEVA: Is that...?

SHARP: Not great, but that's why I brought hyronalin injections.

THE MAJOR: *Thigh-high now, ma'ams.*

SHARP: What?

NEEVA: Major, at that pace, you'll be submerged before you get out of there.

THE MAJOR: *Now entering rear compartment. Rest of the deck is clear. Payload has to be in here. You have my tractor beam ready, ma'am?*

NEEVA: Will be when you get here.

THE MAJOR: *Water now waist-high and still rising. No sign of the payload! May already be submerged.*

NEEVA: Then you're too late. Get out of there, Major!

THE MAJOR: *Negative, ma'am!*

SHARP: What?

NEEVA: Major, that was not a suggestion! Abort!

THE MAJOR: *That's a negative on extraction, ma'am! Payload may be afloat in one of the closets!*

NEEVA: Major, I am not offering extraction! I am giving you a direct order to haul your marine butt to the nearest egress and make [a swift exit topside!]

THE MAJOR: *Water now at chest! Ma'am, you're breaking up! I'm [losing your signal!]*

(The commline suddenly going dead.)

SHARP: He cut you off!

NEEVA: Probably, but he knows I'd never press charges and couldn't prove it if he did. Assuming he lives.

SHARP: Leave that to me. Is that our boat coming toward us downstream?

NEEVA: Yeah, I see it.

SHARP: Wow, it is moving fast.

NEEVA: And we get one shot at it before it goes over the waterfall six kilometers from here. Activating beam... wait for it... (Pause) NOW!

(Just as a large boat whooshes and sloshes into earshot, moving fast, and pulls in front of us, a tractor beam engages. The boat groans from the inertial stress. "Our" boat pulls against the larger ship behind it that rammed it earlier. "Our" boat breaks free... which of course lets more water in.)

SHARP: My God, she's sinking faster than my Academy combat scores.

NEEVA: Probably doesn't help that tractoring it just made the hull breach twice as big.

THE MAJOR: *Hey! Hey!*

SHARP: Look, up top! It's him! He's alive!

NEEVA: And it looks like he got the payload.

SHARP: Thank God. So just reel this boat in, Neeva. Nice and gentle and then we have an eeeeasy buggy ride to our shuttle.

(Neeva presses a few keys on her gizmo.)

NEEVA: Increasing power to one-twenty-five percent.

T(he tractor beam gets louder.)

(Sharp hits her combadge.)

SHARP: Sharp to Major.

(The combadge makes a denial sound.)

SHARP: Sharp to Major.

THE MAJOR: *I can't hear you! Comm dead! Water on the top deck!*

SHARP: What?

NEEVA: I think he said there's water on the main deck.

SHARP: That boat's breaking up. He's not gonna make it at this rate.

(Neeva keys in another command.)

NEEVA: One-forty percent.

(The tractor dutifully powers up.)

(We hear a crack and a whoosh of water.)

SHARP: You're pulling her apart!

NEEVA: I don't have a choice!

**THE MAJOR:** *I'm going in! Use repulsor mode!*

**SHARP:** He can't mean that. He can't go in the water. His radiation exposure is already [way too high.]

**THE MAJOR:** *GERONIMOOOOOOOOOOH!*

**(SPLASH! He's in the water.)**

**NEEVA:** Spast.

**(She presses some buttons. The tractor beam deactivates for a moment, then PULSES for about half a second, then deactivates again.)**

**SHARP:** What's that?

**NEEVA:** Repulsor mode. I need to (she presses a button and the beam pulses again) keep all the huge deadly debris in this river from hitting the Major and taking him down to (she repeats her action) Cap'n Vex's forecastle while he swims to shore. (she does it again) He's getting close.

**(The Major is getting closer.)**

**(Neeva does the repulsor pulse again.)**

**SHARP:** Yeah, and he's slowing down. I don't see how he can finish this swim with that much radiation damage.

**NEEVA:** At least he's keeping the payload above water.

SHARP: He's distressed.

(Pause.)

(Sharp begins to take off her medical jacket.)

SHARP: Hyronalin's actually really simple. You just keep injecting it every ninety seconds until the patient either stops dying or dies.

(The Major starts coughing and struggling to stay above water.)

NEEVA: ...oookay. Why are you taking off your jacket, Melissa?

SHARP: Because even though you keep calling him a "payload," he really is the future of Divitia. And even if they are a bunch of callous, corrupt, short-sighted money-mongers... the next generation might not be.

(Sharp runs to the shoreline and jumps into the water with a splash!)

NEEVA: Doctor!

SHARP: You need to run the repulsor, Neeva! Keep us in one piece!

NEEVA: Spaaaaaaaast.

(As Sharp swims out to grab the Major, who has by now completely faltered in his own swim. Neeva fires the repulsor several more times.)

NEEVA: Spast spast spast.

(Sharp manages to pull the Major and the payload to the shore.)

NEEVA: Melissa! Major!

(With one more REPULSE, Neeva throws her gizmo on the ground and runs over to the shoreline to drag Melissa and the Major up.)

THE MAJOR: We... we made it.

SHARP: Hyronalin for the payload. NOW. He'll... He'll... (runs out of breath)

(Neeva takes a hypo from her belt, keys a command into the hypospray, and injects it into the "payload's" neck.)

(The payload coughs, regaining consciousness, then starts to cry. It's a newborn baby.)

NEEVA: Hey there, little fella. You've got a nana and gramps who love you back in Kadamitas City just waiting to see you.

SHARP: (coughing) That was worth it just to hear you do that voice. Now, if the future of Divitia is safe, how about some hyronalin for me and the major 'fore our last organs fail?

NEEVA: Right.

(She keys up some more hyronalin in her hypospray and injects it, but calls the ship as she does.)

NEEVA: Neeva to *Excelsior*. Operation one-zero-nine-six completed successfully.



**YUBARI:** *Good work. The moment you're extracted, I need you to take that shuttle and rendezvous with teams from the Thanatoksin and Judoat relief ships.*

**NEEVA:** What for, ma'am?

**YUBARI:** *Operation one-one-four-seven commences in thirty-three minutes.*