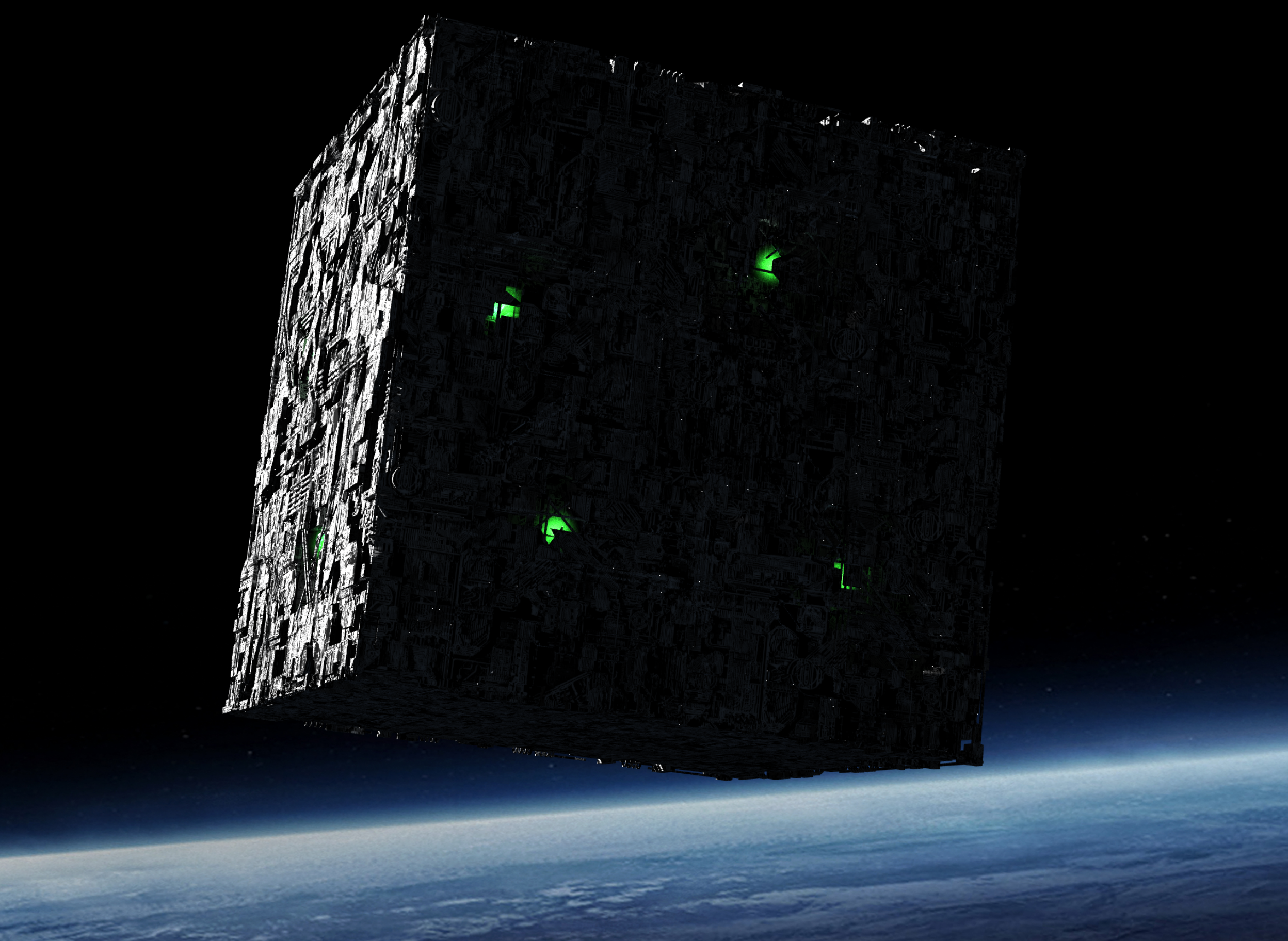


— WE HAVE —
ENGAGED
THE BORG

THE ORAL HISTORY OF
THE BATTLE OF WOLF 359



ANDY POULASTIDES & ERIC V. MUIRHEAD



— WE HAVE —
ENGAGED
THE BORG

**THE ORAL HISTORY OF
THE BATTLE OF WOLF 359**



ANDY POULASTIDES & ERIC V. MUIRHEAD
EDITORIAL WORK BY ANNIE MUIRHEAD

SUPPLEMENTAL WRITINGS
JOHN CONCAGH, CLAUDE BERUBE, & HYE MARDIKIAN

AUTHORS

Andy Poulastides & Eric V. Muirhead

LEAD EDITOR • PROOFREADER

Annie Muirhead

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

John Concagh, Claude Berube, & Hye Mardikian

BOOK DESIGN • PREPRESS TECHNICIAN • ASSISTANT EDITOR

Hye Mardikian

INTERNAL ILLUSTRATIONS & MAPS • WOLF 359 MEMORIAL STATION LOGO

Ste Johnson

COVER RENDER

Graham Gazzard

STARSHIP RENDERS

Keene Sin

First Edition: Summer 2023



First Edition: Summer 2023

wolf359project.com
@Wolf359project

Proudly part of the Tranquility Press Webring

COMING SOON
@TRANQUILITYPRESS

Star Trek and all related marks, logos and characters are solely owned by CBS Studios Inc. This fan production is not endorsed by, sponsored by, nor affiliated with CBS, Paramount Pictures, or any other Star Trek franchise, and is a non-commercial fan-made publication intended for recreational use. No commercial exhibition or distribution is permitted. No alleged independent rights will be asserted against CBS or Paramount Pictures.

TIMELINE

Beginning with New Providence's founding
until the 2396 decommissioning of *USS Hood*

LINEAR COLOR KEY

Galactic Events

USS *Enterprise-D* Events

Borg Incursion

2123

New Providence Colony founded on Jouret IV

PRELUDE

Historical context to Wolf 359

2293

SS Lakul destroyed by energy
ribbon, Starfleet first made
officially aware of 'Borg'

2311

Tomed Incident — Romulans
retreat behind Neutral Zone

2332

Romulans first encounter "Borg"

2343

Galaxy class Development Project launched

2350

"Project Corvidae" authorized
by Starfleet Intelligence

2363

USS Enterprise-D launched

2364

- First encounter with "Q"
- Romulans re-establish contact with
Federation reporting missing colonies

2366

The destruction of New Providence
and the acquisition of Locutus

- Taela Shanathi becomes CINC Starfleet
- Qo-Lan Amitra Sib'xau inaugurated as President

•42761.3

- Q flings 1701-D to J-25, first encounter with Borg
- Admiral Hanson recruits Lt. Cmdr. Shelby to Starfleet Tactical

2365

43997.05

- USS *Lalo* destroyed by Borg
- President briefed about Borg threat

- Crimson Tacit issued, Starfleet recalled to Sol System

- President addresses Federation, "We Must Negotiate" speech

- Hanson and Ross present plan to stop Borg at Wolf 359

- Force of 40 starships assembled and deployed to Wolf 359 system

43975.2

CONTACT LOST WITH NEW PROVIDENCE COLONY

43992.6

- *Enterprise* dispatched to investigate loss of contact with New Providence, Confirm presence of Borg
- USS *Zelensky* joins *Enterprise* over survey of Jouret IV
- *Enterprise* offloads non-essential personnel to Starbase 157

43997.2

- *Enterprise* engages Borg, Picard is hailed directly and ordered to surrender himself
- *Enterprise* flees into Paulson Nebula

43999.8

- *Enterprise* forced to leave Nebula, is engaged by Borg, Picard is taken

44001.4

- *Enterprise* engages Borg ship and attempts to rescue Picard, discovers he has been assimilated
- *Enterprise* fires modified deflector pulse at Borg to no effect, ship is crippled, Borg head towards Earth

44001.6

- USS *Ferrik* diverted to path of Borg cube with information suggesting secret base in Wolf 359, ship is assimilated
- Task force assembles in Wolf 359 System and deploys
- President Amitra and elected officials evacuated to Janus IV

44002.3 • 2367

The Battle of Wolf 359 and Sector 001 Invasion

44002.3

BORG ARRIVE AT WOLF 359

44002.350

- 30 minutes after first contact, all Federation ships are destroyed

Enterprise arrives at Wolf 359 12 hours behind Borg cube

USS Excalibur engages Borg to delay ships arrival to Earth

Enterprise engages Borg for third time, is successful in seizing Locutus, Cube resume course for Earth

- Starfleet orders fleet to disperse into Oort cloud and awaits cube's arrival
- Sol Defense League activated
 - Borg ship arrives in Sector 001, destroys SDL Ships

Enterprise arrives in Sol System, attempts to access Borg collective via Locutus

BORG SHIP IS DESTROYED BY INTERNAL CASCADE FAILURE

44012.3

- *Enterprise* ordered to McKinley Station for repairs

2396

USS *Hood* formally decommissioned
at Wolf 359 Memorial Station

2376

- Wolf 359 Memorial Station officially opened
- Remains of ships previously removed from system for evaluation (including *Ahwahee* and *Kaneda*) are returned

2373-75**DOMINION WAR****50058.9**

- Min Zife inaugurated as President

50893.5

- Second Borg Incursion

2371

Shanthi Returns as
CINC of Starfleet

2370

- USS *Hood* formally returns to service following extensive reconstruction and testing

47538.5

- USS *Defiant* launched from Antares shipyards

48650.1

- USS *Enterprise* declared total loss following Veridian III mission

2369**KLINGON CIVIL WAR****2368**

- Starfleet authorizes deployment of *Straal*-class orbital facility to Wolf 359 to assist with salvage operations
- Shanthi Resigns as C-in-C
- Jaresh-Inyo inaugurated as President

44152.6

- J.L. Picard cleared to return to active service
- *Enterprise* leaves Sol System after six month refit

44038.1

Fleet arrives in Wolf 359 led by USS *Endeavour*

POST-WOLF 359 & ONWARD

Salvage, recovery, and Incursion-related aftermath

98170147 • 557

0887345-359

• 740 287 001 001
258 730 021 001

• 963 554 663 663
7X3 0E0 5A2 A32

159 180 143 143
• 147 987 170 010

873005654

013

001

345

470

489



4091

4346

8845

9932

12122



CHAPTER 7 RECOVERY

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 345 • Interlude | 388 • MedKav, Son of Daa'maq |
| 350 • Jake Sisko | 392 • Zhang Mo |
| 353 • L'Garrey | 398 • Elizabeth Shelby |
| 357 • Alynna Nechayev | 401 • Robert DeSoto |
| 360 • Owen Paris | |
| 363 • Einør Zimanski | |
| 368 • Hugh | |
| 373 • T'yriish | |
| 377 • Marie Picard | |
| 381 • Marco Amasov | |
| 384 • Les Buenamigo | |



INTERLUDE

WOLF 359 MEMORIAL STATION

Stardate 73375.2 – 2396



It's peaceful in the Cenotaph. Not just quiet. It centers you in a way that I find hard to quantify. I'm sure it's intentional: something to do with the subtle lighting, the curve of the viewports, the way the room seems to absorb all sound and leaves you along with your thoughts as you gaze out into the void and the remains of Admiral Hanson's task force.

I walk closer to the nearest viewport. The transparent aluminum towers above me and I stare out at the ships as they hang there in the dark. It has always struck me as strange how still they are – deep down some part of my brain always expects to see them slowly tumbling end over end, but they are perfectly still. They remain in the position they were placed by SCE work crews many years ago, organized in such a way that no ship is obscured and each is clearly visible. I reach out and place my hand on the viewport. The computer projects a discreet information overlay on the ship I am looking at: the *Kyushu*.

I can make out the ship's name and registry number. There are several large impact points on the saucer by the sensor pods and one of the nacelles is missing its forward half – the other looks as though some giant beast had taken a bite out of it. I recall accompanying Ambassador MeDKav to the shrine in Nagasaki and the tale of the sword. I never conducted any interviews with survivors from the *Kyushu*; there were none. Now all that remains is the shell of their ship, and the ghost of their memories.

A few other people have now entered the Cenotaph, each lost in their own private contemplation of this place. It is perhaps archaic to say, but this place feels holy. I step away from the viewport and move to the benches positioned in the center of the walkway. From here you can take in several of the viewports

and catch glimpses of more of the ships. I see people walk in and watch as they catch their first glimpse of the ships beyond.

I see an old Vulcan walk up and place his hand tenderly on the screen between him and the void – perhaps he served on one of those ships? More likely he knew someone who did. Further along, a couple of Andorian Starfleet officers embrace as one of them weeps softly into the shoulder of the other. A third officer comes up to them and places a hand reassuringly on his back, and then embraces them both. They separate and all holding hands walk away, one of them allowing their gaze to linger on the remains of the *Shran*.

Someone sits down next to me and I feel a sudden surge of annoyance that someone would choose to disturb me when there are so many other places for them to sit. I am shocked to find it is Admiral DeSoto, gazing out at the ships.

"You know I haven't been back here since '67." He stares up out of the giant viewports. "I don't think I was actively avoiding it or anything like that, I'd just never had a reason to come back. After *Hood* was returned to service we weren't on the milk runs anymore. We found ourselves further out on the front line, and it never occurred to me to come here just to be here."

After a brief silence, I tentatively ask, "Well, you're here now. What's it like?"

His eyes never leave the vista before him and I wonder if he even heard me. I am about to ask him again when he speaks.

"I'm not foolish enough to believe that *Hood* could have made any sort of difference if we hadn't been swept away by the Borg. If we had remained in the system, then *Hood* would be out there right now; my name would likely be one more listed as KIA on the memorial wall, but you know what? There are times when I wish that was the case."

I'm a little taken aback by this. I have known Robert for close to 30 years now and we have spoken often about the battle and his service in *Hood* during the Dominion War. In all that time it had never occurred to me that he had never come back here – his story is so linked to that of the *Hood* and to Wolf 359. I really don't know what to say, and I can see there are tears welling in his eyes.

"It was a hell of a thing. I know you've been uneasy being invited out and dragged along with us on *Hood*, but this is why I wanted you to be here and to

come along with us: you gave them a voice." He gestures up towards the ships. "Starfleet would have quite happily forgotten about the people and would have tried to just quantify it as numbers and statistics, data points on a PADD. But the work you did for the commission and since has given all of us – the living and the dead – a voice. I wanted to make sure you understood how grateful we all are for what you have done for us.

"I wanted to find you to say thank you. Thank you for telling their stories. It's important. This battle, the Borg, what came after, that's important too, but that's all statistics and facts. These were lives, and when you get down to it we're all stories in the end. It's important we don't lose track of that."

I try to respond, but my mouth flaps uselessly like an Antedian's. I feel my eyes starting to sting and the vision blurs as the tears as he pulls me into an embrace. After a moment we part and he hands me a cloth to wipe my eyes. There are more people now in the Cenotaph, but each is caught up in their own private revelations. No one pays us any mind.

"I'm going to go and say goodbye before we leave. Do you want to come with me?" he asks.

"Say goodbye to who?" I ask, perplexed. I'm confused for a moment and unsure who he means. I was under the impression that everyone who had traveled out with us on *Hood* would be returning to Earth on the *Enterprise*; to the best of my knowledge no one was staying behind.

He smiles his impish grin. "To *Hood* of course."

I return his smile and we leave the Cenotaph to head back towards the dock and say our last goodbye.

JAKE SISK

NEW ORLEANS, EARTH

Stardate 58036.4 - 2381



At first it was exciting: when we launched it was like a roller coaster. I had never been in an escape pod before and I was caught up in the adventure. The explosions looked like fireworks and ships whizzed past when I could catch a glimpse of outside – everyone was trying to catch a glimpse of the outside, but I remember the atmosphere shifting and becoming more and more subdued. I remember seeing some adults crying and a lot of them had cuts and bandages. Suddenly, I really wanted my mom but I couldn't see her anywhere around. I wanted to tell her about the ships I could see. I asked my dad "where's Mommy, I want Mommy" but when he tried to answer his voice broke and he just held me tight. She wasn't there.

I cried a lot. That's what I remember most about the escape pod. I didn't really know what was happening and it was crowded and hot and I wanted my mom. I couldn't understand why she wasn't there, so I would cry for my mom and cling to my dad. He was really quiet and withdrawn. I remember he spent a lot of time just staring out of the viewport at the debris and whenever I tried to look out of the window he would move me away and pass me to Hranok. There was a buzz of excitement at one point and everyone crowded round to stare out the window as we saw a starship enter the system and pass so tantalizingly close. It was the *Enterprise*, but I didn't know that – all I knew was it was a *Galaxy*-class and I wondered if it was the same one I had seen at Earth earlier in the week. But it didn't stop to pick us up. I don't even know if it knew we were there. It warped out of the system and the mood in the pod seemed to crash again. I cried some more.

I don't know how long it was. I think I had cried myself to sleep, but I woke up and could see we had docked with another escape pod. Outside I could see several others close by; my dad and Hranok were talking to some other people who I didn't recognize. I made my way over to where my dad was and could

see this other escape pod was filled with more people. I remember there being shapes on the ground covered in sheets. I didn't know they were bodies, but I remember Hranok picking me up and turning my head away. The man from the other escape pod put his hand on my head and said something to my dad, then he went back inside and came back holding something furry. I was mesmerized – it was a cat! I had always wanted a pet, but Mom had always said no. At least while we were living on the ships. He said that the cat was called Amos and his owner wasn't on this escape pod; would I look after him until they found his owner? The cat was orange and white and did not look happy to be carried. He leapt out of the man's arms and shot into our escape pod. I wriggled free and went off to find the cat, who was hiding under the flight console. It took me a while and no short amount of bribery with some resequenced protein from an emergency ration, but I managed to tempt him out and was able to stroke him while he ate. He had this deep purr that made me smile and it made everything seem okay.

The next day, my dad and the man from the other escape pod spoke about moving us all to one of the ships. It was really crowded in the pod, the air was getting hot and smelled really bad. They decided to try and move to one of the ships that might still have habitable space. I caught sight of the shape as the flotilla was pulled by a couple of shuttles into a large cavernous shuttlebay. It was pretty scary and I held Amos tight; he tried to pull away to go and hide under the flight console, but I held on and kept stroking him – telling him it would be okay. After a while he started to purr and settled down.

They managed to hook up one of the shuttles to the ship's systems and restored power to the shuttlebay so we were able to get out of the escape pods. Dad told me we were on the *Endurance* and we were going to camp out in the shuttlebay for a while until Starfleet could come and get us. He told me that I needed to be brave and to look after Amos, set us up with a sleeping roll by the flight control room, and found a large crate we were able to modify to keep Amos safe and to stop him getting lost.

We were there for a couple of days. More escape pods were brought into the bay and it filled with more and more people all looking weary and dejected. There were a few more kids and we were kept over by the flight control room. Amos would sit on my lap in the control room and eat from the rations while I

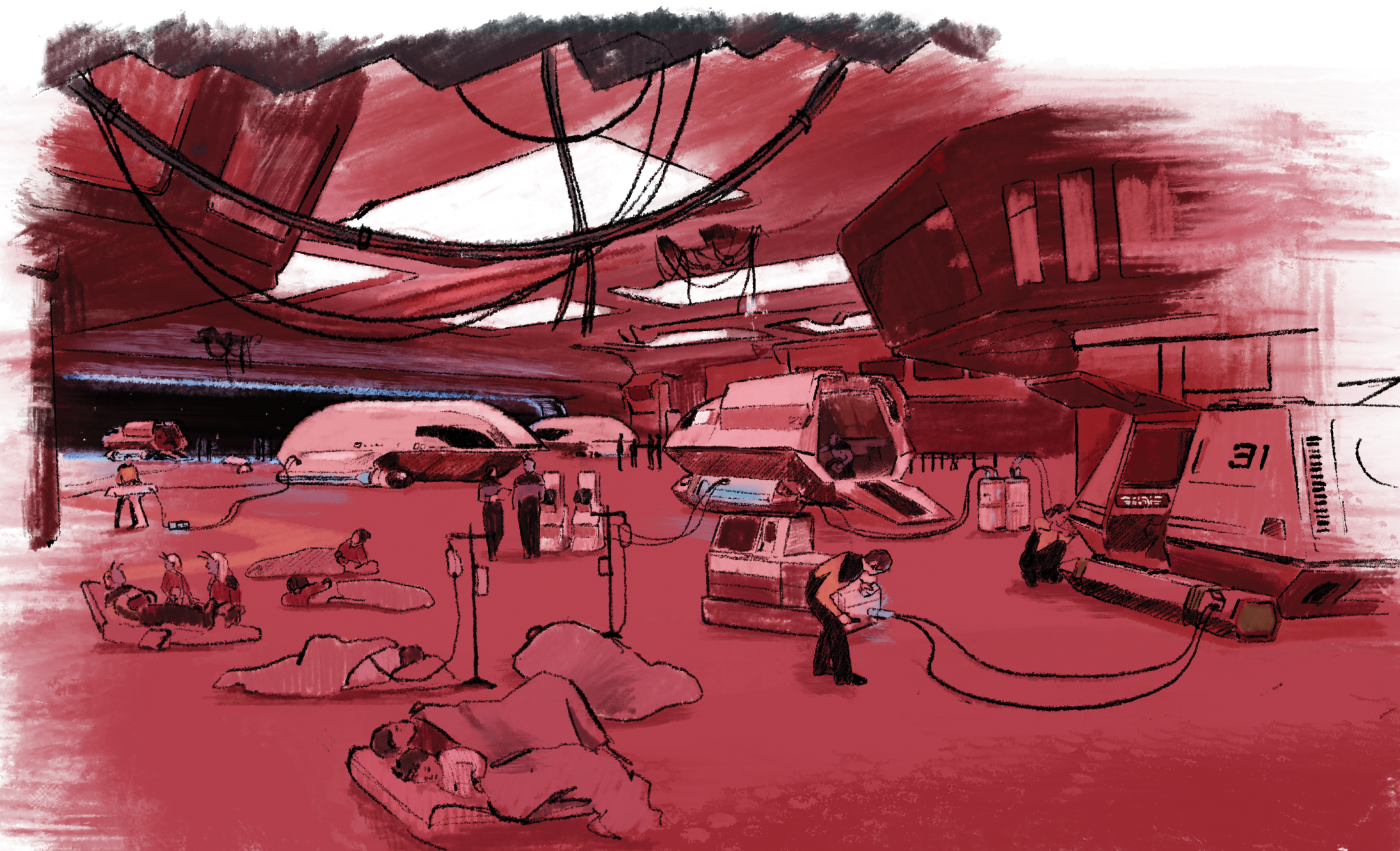
stroked him. I still really missed my mom, but having the furry thing to stroke helped to take my mind off of it.

I was woken up on the third day, and everyone was buzzing and excited. Starfleet had arrived and Dad had taken a shuttle to go and meet them and bring them to us. I was a little conflicted about leaving my camp bed, if you can believe it. We couldn't use the transporter so we were being ferried in shuttles. We were taken to a *Nebula*-class ship and can you believe I was actually disappointed it wasn't a *Galaxy*-class! When we arrived there were doctors and crew with blankets and giving out hot drinks. I was holding Amos close when suddenly someone shouted out "AMOS!" and the cat pulled out of my arms. He trotted up to a woman whose bandaged arm was in a sling. He stopped just short of her and seemed to feign disinterest before rubbing his face up against her leg.

I felt Dad's arm on my shoulder and then he picked me up. He said it was okay. He said we would be okay. That's when I noticed that he was crying. I'd never seen my dad cry before, but he just held me and was crying into my shoulder. I knew that I needed to look after him, the same way I had looked after Amos, so I hugged him close and told him it would be okay – I even patted him on his back. I think that made him cry even harder, but I knew right there and then that as long as we were together we would be okay. He carried me out of the shuttlebay and I caught a last glimpse of Amos sitting on the woman's lap. She was crying but looked so happy. It felt good. I never knew who she was and I never saw Amos again. When we got back to Earth, Dad asked if we wanted to get another cat but I always said no. I needed to look after Dad...and it wouldn't have been the same.

[Suddenly a small furry creature leaps up onto Jake's lap as if on cue. I hadn't noticed the cat previously – it paws at his legs before settling down and staring at me curiously. Jakes smiles as he pets the cat who purrs contentedly.]

This is Kaylee, she sort of came with the house. I was unsure at first, but I guess with Dad being away it makes sense. I've seen enough while living on DS9 to know the Prophets work in mysterious ways, and besides, she's good company when I'm writing.



L'GARREY

CTSU SHIPYARDS, GANYMEDE

Stardate 65053.9 – 2388



Have you ever been expecting some really bad news? You spend some time mentally preparing to receive it – really psyching yourself up because you know you're going to have to deal with this...and then it doesn't arrive? No? Huh.

We were all hunkered down on Janus VI. We had set up in the magnificent set of caverns the Horta had prepared for us, we were in constant communication with Starfleet Command in the G&G back on Earth.

After Wolf 359, the president had become focused on leading the Federation through this crisis. We had seriously misread the mood and the "We Must Negotiate" speech had gone down like a lead balloon, but the president saw this as a defining moment – a chance to show some real leadership and to shape the very future of the Federation, maybe even the entire quadrant. We were already making plans for what the next move would be and had speech writers working to craft a new address to take charge of the narrative and help rally the people of the Federation behind Starfleet against this new threat.

When we got word that the Borg had entered the Sol System, we made our way to the situation room where we had real-time telemetry from the system. We could see the Borg ship as it passed Jupiter Station, utterly dwarfing the facility, and as it approached Mars a series of the new *Shri-Tal* attack craft moved to intercept. They had been designed for use during the Cardassian War, but with the impending peace talks we had delayed their deployment to the border. I remember feeling my spirits lift as we saw them heading towards the Borg; these things were meant to swarm a Cardassian *Galor*-class cruiser so we knew they packed a punch. But the Borg just swatted them away like they were an inconvenience.

As the Borg ship approached Earth orbit, the president leaned over and asked me when I thought the appropriate time for an address would be. I was a little taken aback since the Borg ship was just sitting there and hadn't even

made a move against the planet yet. We were getting strange reports from the surface of Earth: a lot of confusion and anger, but there was no panic. I found that strange – I had expected panic and riots once it became clear that we couldn't evacuate anyone, but no one had realized there was a threat they needed to be evacuated from. I expected the moment the Borg opened fire on the surface or started "assimilating" that would change.

While we were talking I suddenly heard a gasp and someone said "my god." Another person cheered. We whipped around to see on the monitor a growing cloud of debris where the Borg ship had been: it was gone, *destroyed*. I asked Admiral Nechayev to rewind the data feed and as we watched a view from *Enterprise*, the Borg ship was just sitting there when suddenly there was a small eruption of sparks from its surface followed by another. The *Enterprise* moved away at high speed as the Borg ship exploded seemingly spontaneously. We confirmed it with a feed from Spacedock and other monitoring satellites: the Borg ship had been destroyed. Earth was safe. The room erupted into cheers and whoops; we were all overjoyed – all except President Amitra.

She asked to be patched through to Starfleet Command on her private channel and left the room. I went to follow, but she stopped me as she went into one of the adjacent meeting rooms. It was such a strange mix of emotions. I felt elated that the Borg had been destroyed, but also a sense of loss – maybe even disappointment, I guess. We had been focused on preparing to deal with this great emergency and now it was just...over.

The president returned after a short while. She did not look pleased, but remained cool and professional as I had expected from a politician as experienced as she was. We had to make an address, but we didn't have a speech ready. No one had seen fit to prepare a speech for this eventuality so the writers scrambled to get something together. They were told in no uncertain terms that it had to be better than "We Must Negotiate."

The president told us to prepare *Paris One* to return to Earth immediately. Admiral Nechayev advised against returning until Starfleet had given the all clear, but the glare the president gave her would have stopped even the Borg in their tracks. She was not happy and I needed to understand why – this was the best possible outcome. I managed to corral her into a corridor down away from the situation room and asked if there was something I was missing.

She was incensed. I had never seen her so angry and we had to move further down the corridor into an empty room to prevent her voice from carrying. She thought it was all a scam – that Starfleet had played her and taken advantage of the crisis to mount a coup! By getting her to leave Earth in the middle of the crisis, by playing up how the administration had gutted the fleet and was preventing Starfleet from adequately protecting the Federation, they had allowed the Borg to get to the very doorstep of Earth and then destroyed them. She thought the whole affair had been orchestrated and that Starfleet could have stopped the Borg at New Providence if they had wanted to, but they saw the opportunity to humiliate her and the administration.

I was appalled at the insinuation. 42 starships had been destroyed since the Borg had entered Federation space, not to mention the colonies. For all we knew as many as 20,000 dead. For the president to even suggest such a thing – it made my blood boil. I told her in no uncertain terms that I was going to choose to believe it was the stress that had prompted those comments and that if she ever dishonored the memories of the people who had died by spouting such drivel in future I would resign on the spot. She looked suitably chagrined, but I could tell from her eyes that she had believed what she said. We stood in silence for a moment. Then I nodded and said I was going to oversee the preparations to return to Earth.

We didn't speak much on the way back home. The president spent a lot of time with Admiral Nechayev; there was something of a scramble to salvage something of her legacy to make sure she wouldn't be remembered just for the Borg. She doubled down on getting the peace deal signed with the Cardassians, but we knew there was no chance for re-election. She was tainted for leaving Earth, and for her public fight with Starfleet.

Looking back, we shouldn't have pushed to sign the peace treaty with the Cardassians. We hung our people out to dry and we empowered the Cardassians. We showed them that the Federation would do anything to avoid a war and would accept any compromise. Ultimately that thinking led us to the Dominion War.

Ironically, one of the president's last acts was to authorize replacement ships for *Yamato* and *Columbia*. Starfleet could have as many *Galaxy*-class ships as it wanted now, but it knew the galaxy had changed so the focus was on smaller, more "tactically focused" designs.

My relationship with the president never recovered. I stayed on as chief of staff till the end, but Nechayev was her confidant now and the president rewarded her with a seat on the Admiralty Board.

I don't know what we could have done differently – not with the information we had available to us. But the breakdown of trust between the president and Starfleet Command really hurt us. I don't mean the administration – I mean the Federation. If Starfleet had trusted us with the information about the Borg from the beginning, if the president had trusted Starfleet when they said they needed the ships for defense would we have been in a better situation? Maybe, but from everything I know it was pure luck that *Enterprise's* crew was able to stop the Borg how they did. I'm not sure even 400 starships would have been able to stop the Borg at Wolf 359. When it comes down to it, all the starships and all the technology in the world aren't worth a *damn* without the right person in the right place.

ALYNNA NECHAYEV

USS *GORKON*, EN ROUTE TO STARBASE 375

Stardate: 48357.4 – 2371

It is said that the one thing that scares a Starfleet captain more than facing down the Borg is being told that Admiral Nechayev is coming to pay them a visit. Over the past decade, she has cultivated a formidable reputation and is known to take no nonsense from captains who traditionally enjoy a certain autonomy as master of their own vessels.

Nechayev was unique among the senior leadership of Starfleet in being able to cultivate a good working relationship with former president Amitra, although when asked if the president might have considered her a friend the admiral laughs and dismisses the suggestion. However, the admiral worked closely with President Amitra in brokering the Cardassian peace accords and was instrumental in pushing Amitra to get the Cardassians' agreement to leave the Bajor System. Rumor has it that the admiral's promotion to the admiralty in 2368 was at the insistence of the outgoing president.

I conduct my interview with the admiral aboard the USS Gorkon en route to Starbase 375 where the admiral is the sector commander overseeing the Bajor System and Cardassian border. Quite at odds with her reputation, she is warm and friendly and invites me to join her for a cup of tea in her suite.

Oh no, no. The president was extremely grateful for all of Starfleet's efforts during the crisis. While I was working as her liaison we often discussed what more she could do to offer support to allow the fleet to better conduct its mission. I certainly never saw any hint of resentment from her during the flight back from Janus IV. All that being said, once we returned to Earth there were questions that needed answers and it could not be ignored that the man who had led the attack at Wolf 359 was one of our own: Captain Jean-Luc Picard.

I did not know Picard at that time beyond his reputation. He was something of the darling of many within the admiralty, having graduated the academy at around the same time but he had spurred advancement beyond captain. Although I'm not sure how much of that was entirely down to his own choice following the loss of *Stargazer*. Let's just say there was a reason it was over a decade before he was given another command.

The admiralty were of the view that Picard was a singular figure who had come to embody the best of and brightest of what it meant to be in Starfleet. The media had latched onto his rescue and the subsequent destruction of the Borg ship, making him out to be the hero of the whole affair.

He was examined at length by Starfleet Medical, who were able to remove the majority of the Borg implants and confirmed that any remaining hardware was completely inert. He was subjected to just about every scan we had available to ensure no nanobots were active within his body. We also insisted that he visit the M'Benga Clinic for assessment, but this received pushback especially once it was made clear that a number of survivors from Wolf 359 would be sent there for treatment. There was concern that the sight of Captain Picard might prove...*difficult* for them. It was agreed that he could be assessed on board the *Enterprise* instead.

I will be frank with you. While the contents of the assessment are confidential, there were those of us who were not satisfied with how the entire matter was dealt with and sensed more than a hint of cronyism – the old guard closing ranks to protect one of their own. I did report my concerns to the president. However, she had been very clear that she would not intervene in what she viewed as an internal Starfleet matter.

In the end, though, the reality of the situation was both sides were right. Picard was too public a figure to be turned into a scapegoat. Starfleet would have to look itself in the mirror, but Picard was compromised no matter how much we would like to pretend that wasn't the case. Alien technology had permeated his body and we did not fully understand what hold they may still hold over him. It was quite the conundrum.

[She pauses to sip from her tea and stares out of the viewport at the stars warping past.]

We knew that Picard would not accept promotion or reassignment and we were very clear that we did not want to be seen as trying to force him out. However, if he chose to resign of his own accord, that would be different. We made some discreet inquiries to projects that we felt might entice him away from Starfleet if he wished to take on a fresh challenge: some archeological digs on Vulcan, the New Atlantis Project. We even approached his brother should he wish to return to the family business. But I think we always knew that in the end the allure of space and the center seat on the *Enterprise* would be too

strong of a call to resist. I can hardly blame him, but that still did not address our concerns. So, we had to make accommodations.

♦ **Are you able to elaborate?**

No, no, I'm afraid I cannot – it's not my place. I will say that we made sure there was someone to keep a close eye and ensure that the captain suffered no adverse effects from his time with the Borg. And that the Borg would not be able to enact any influence over him. Thus far, in the few instances when the captain has been in close proximity, it would appear that has not been the case. Although I do still have my doubts following the Argolis Incident. That being said, I have found myself working with the captain and the *Enterprise* on a number of missions in the years following and while we do not always see eye to eye, he has always been professional and courteous. Even if at times his personal views might not align with the orders presented from Starfleet, he was able to see the mission was completed and served the best interests of the Federation.

OWEN PARIS

"PROJECT PATHFINDER," EARTH

Stardate: 53425.9 – 2376



There was utter disbelief in the G&G: we could not believe our eyes or our luck – if you want to call it that. We soon got confirmation that the Borg ship had been destroyed, seemingly from some internal forces. Our fleet was still positioned in the Oort cloud and had not yet moved to engage. One moment the Borg had been engaging the *Enterprise* and the next it stopped and then just *exploded*.

There is a saying in Starfleet that dates all the way back to Jonathan Archer and the NX-01: "fate protects fools, little children, and ships named *Enterprise*." That certainly rang true. With the immediate threat seemingly gone the focus was "what now?". We had been anticipating some mass panic and possibly riots from the population once it became clear that there was no possibility of evacuating the planet, but by and large people seemed totally oblivious to the danger. We had not disclosed the extent of the failure at Wolf 359, so I suppose in the mind of the public there was nothing to worry about. The president's speech had also gone some way to reassure the public – although not in the way I imagine she had hoped.

Our immediate concern was to isolate the debris from the Borg ship. There was no telling if the Borg technology could still be dangerous and we did not want anything of that making planetfall. We retasked a dozen or so ships to police the area and to move as much debris to the L2 Lagrange point. *Enterprise* was in need of immediate dockyard time and there was the question of Jean-Luc Picard.

Once *Enterprise* had made it to McKinley Station, myself and Thomas Henry, Head of Starfleet Security, beamed to the ship where we were greeted by Captain Riker. We congratulated him on a job well done and thanked him for the hard work of the crew under difficult circumstances – if the reports were accurate they had literally saved the planet. But we needed to address the "Picard Question," as it became known.

Captain Riker escorted us to the bridge and into the ready room. We were shocked to find Jean-Luc there seemingly going over duty rosters. The only visible sign of his ordeal were some surgical regen pads. We were not expecting to see him up and about so soon – indeed Riker later told us it was at the captain's insistence and that the ship's counselor Deanna Troi had concurred that putting Picard into a familiar setting as soon as possible would be best for his recovery. Therefore Captain Picard had resumed limited duties, although Riker remained in command of the *Enterprise* for the duration.

We spoke for some time. I think it is fair to say we were walking on eggshells. Picard certainly presented himself as being none the worse for what had happened, but it was very apparent to myself and Admiral Henry that you cannot go through what he had without it leaving a mark on you. Picard came from an era of captains before counselors were routinely assigned to monitor the wellbeing of ships' crews. From the reports we had there was a definite impression that while he valued Troi as a senior member of the crew and replied upon her to give him insight into how the crew was performing, he did not avail himself of her services.

There was also the question of security. The Borg had kidnapped and tortured Picard, and seemingly had access to his mind and all the knowledge and experience therein. Could we trust such a man to return to duty, especially the captain of the flagship? And as the facts of what happened started to come to light a lot of people would blame Picard for the deaths at Wolf 359. This was going to be Gorkon all over again.

Enterprise was given orders to head to McKinley Station for refit and repair and Captain Picard and Riker were ordered to report to Starfleet Command for debriefing. In the case of the former, he was also ordered to attend Starfleet Medical for a full medical review.

When we returned to Earth, I turned to Henry as we headed back to the G&G and asked him for his take. He gave a bit of a shrug before answering. Ever since he had been promoted to captain of the *Stargazer*, Starfleet had made a conscious effort to hold Jean-Luc Picard up as our ideal: well-educated, curious, eloquent and even-tempered, willing to listen the options when presented to him but able to be decisive, and above all fully committed to Starfleet and its ideals. We had used Picard to try and move away from the more – shall we say

gung-ho? – image of captains from the 23rd century and we had invested a lot into the idea of Jean-Luc Picard. To lose that now would be a huge blow for both him and for Starfleet.

I nodded in agreement – of all the people this could have happened to. I collected my effects from the G&G and was able to return home for the first time in what felt like months. It was good to be able to take a sonic shower in my own house and sleep in my own bed – to see Julia. I was able to speak to my son Tom who had been assigned to Jupiter Outpost 92. I was gratified to learn that he had not been able to launch with the SDL forces.

Before too long, I was back to work overseeing the day to day running of Starfleet. I attended a meeting of the Admiralty Board – there was a lot to do including mounting rescue and salvage operations in Wolf 359. We had dispatched a dozen ships from the task force we had maintained in system, but there was a shortage of medical and engineering specialized ships so we had to send what we had. It was already three days since the massacre and ships from Andoria had arrived, but the reports were that it was a challenging environment and the chances of finding many survivors was slim.

The discussion had moved back to the Picard Question when Ellen Hayes once again dropped a photon grenade into the room. Although to her credit, she had told us right away this time. It happened that within the debris from the Borg ship which SI was guarding jealously, they had found Borg drones – well, given the reports from the *Enterprise's* away teams that wasn't too surprising. But we didn't understand yet.

As the recovery ships had moved in to start collecting the debris to transport it to a secure site, they had started to pick up locator pings from Starfleet communicators. Following the trail had led them to some larger debris which seemed to have remained largely intact. Upon entering the structure they found a number of drones – all seemingly inert and to initial scans “dead” – but a number of them identifiable as Starfleet officers from the locator pings and verified by DNA scans. Again, this sounded tragic, but we were unsure as to the significance before she finally cut to the chase.

One of them had woken up.

EIVØR ZIMANSKI

8063RD S*M*A*S*H HEADQUARTERS, OHNIKA III

Stardate 56190.8 – 2379

With the destruction of the Borg cube so close to Earth, Starfleet was faced with the new problem of thousands of tons of potentially hazardous debris falling to the planet's surface. In addition to the logistical challenges, there were massive security concerns. It was essential for the wreckage to be removed for study to help develop better defenses to potential future encounters with the Borg.

Eivør Zimanski was tasked with overseeing this operation which would have been the largest and most complex salvage and recovery effort in Federation history were it not completely overshadowed by the mission at Wolf 359. I meet with Eivør at the Starfleet Mobile Army Surgical Hospital on Ohniaka III after the events of Operation House Call, where they and their fellow doctors have been working since 2378 to aid in the rehabilitation of the xBs reawakened from Starfleet cold storage.

We pulled a dozen or so starships from the Oort cloud and retasked them to plot every vector we could model from where the cube had been destroyed. We knew the Borg used nanotechnology quite extensively, so there was a real concern about what could happen if any part of the cube made it to Earth. It was imperative that *not one atom* infect the planet. Anything we could tractor was pulled to a Lagrange point. We ordered ships to vaporize anything else potentially Borg in origin if it got close to the kármán line.

This delayed the salvage efforts from deploying to Wolf 359, but at this point the last thing we wanted was some small piece of Borg tech to make it down the well to the surface and start infecting our systems. We had already gotten a small taste of the adaptive and regenerative abilities of their tech, so that was the word from upon high – nothing could be left to chance.

Once the bulk of the debris was secured and we established satellite systems to monitor and destroy any potential hazardous material, we were able to release the ships to assist at 359. We could turn our attention to assessing just what we had – there was certainly a lot of excitement at the prospect of analyzing this technology up close. We hoped to help develop defenses against any future Borg attack, but we also saw the potential for some technological breakthrough or paradigm shift. There were about 12,000,000 metric tons of

debris, representing around 17 percent of the Borg ship's estimated mass based on scans of the cube before its destruction. As you can imagine, that was a lot of material that needed to be examined, but also moved to a secure location. It was going to be very difficult to conduct any meaningful analysis – not to mention the navigation hazard – while the debris remained at the L1 point. Naturally, SI took the lead in overseeing the operations, but we needed the support of the SCE to handle the transportation of the debris. Again, it was extremely important that we did not allow any of the remains to come into direct contact with any unshielded technology so it was slow going. We elected to use engineers in EV suits to go in first to assess the debris before it was loaded into the transports.

That was when we made the discovery.

Reports from the teams conducting relief operations at Wolf 359 contained accounts of individuals taken by the Borg – and at least four ships were currently unaccounted for – but that didn't prepare us for the reality. As the crews began to examine a mass designated BCR-238 they picked up a communicator location ping indicating a Starfleet officer in distress. They followed protocol and moved in to investigate the signal. On the *Svalbard*, we saw the team's heart rates spike as they approached the signal's origin. BCR-238 seemed like just another large tangled mass of duranium and ship conduits, indistinct from any of the others in the debris field. They reported no sign of Starfleet officers, but had located several dozen Borg drones locked into alcoves. They refused to venture any further into the wreckage until a security team examined the Borg.

When the security detail conducted their assessment, they found the locator ping's source. It came from one of the Borg. DNA results proved inconclusive, but facial recognition and cellular analysis gave us a 85 percent probability match to a T'yrish Ellis who had been aboard the USS *Kaneda* at Wolf 359.

This was very unsettling for all of us. We knew that Picard had been assimilated, but this was the first face-to-face reality with what the Borg had done to our people. There were no life signs detected in any of the Borg present, so it was decided to remove them to secure storage for assessment by Starfleet Medical. As we moved through the rest of the debris field we encountered several other clusters of drones; some were perfectly intact and appeared to have died from exposure to vacuum, others had suffered significant trauma as a result of the cube's violent end. In all I think around 800 Borg were recovered, with two dozen identified as Starfleet crewmembers lost at Wolf 359.

We moved the debris to a secure location on Charon and began the work of sorting through and attempting to identify what might be useful technology and what was just scrap. The Borg were also brought to Charon pending a decision on what to do with them. Command was still unsure on how exactly to return the bodies to their families. Certainly, they didn't want them to be filled with potentially dangerous technology, not to mention how distressing it might be for them to see their loved ones looking like this. Starfleet Medical had successfully removed most of the Borg implants from Jean-Luc Picard so it was decided that we would attempt to do the same with any Borg we were able to positively identify in order to return them to their families. Families would not be told that their loved ones had been assimilated, but instead that they had been killed at Wolf 359. With recovery operations ongoing at 359, it should have been straightforward to arrange for incoming transports to collect the bodies and to take them to Earth.

We elected to start with T'yriish. She'd become quite the object of fascination since her discovery and I had made the mistake of looking up her personnel file. She was half-Vulcan but raised as Human, was married and lived in London. She was assigned to the *Kaneda* just a few days before the ship was deployed to Wolf 359. I'd looked at the photos in her file and read about her achievements. There were several letters from her wife logged in the communications buffer. I resisted the urge to view them, but I felt a huge amount of sorrow for her loss given how clearly very much in love they were. I thought we were going to be doing something noble in returning the bodies to the family.

We had T'yriish in the science lab ready to begin removing the Borg implants; the carapace was relatively straightforward and it was distressing to find the remains of her Starfleet uniform still there underneath. Removing the prosthetic arm was also relatively easy as was the ocular implant, but there was a large processing node affixed to the back of her skull. As we started using the molecular saw to remove it her organic eye suddenly shot open and she screamed. We all recoiled – the saw almost took off the technician's arm.

She was *alive*! But how?! She had been "dead" as far as we could tell for almost two weeks. Security burst into the lab with phaser rifles drawn and were about to shoot her, but I moved in front of them to stop them firing. T'yriish had crawled from the biobed into the corner of the lab and was clearly terrified. She sat there naked with tears running down her face as she stared at us and at the

stump where the Borg prosthesis had been. I moved towards her with my hands held out to show I meant her no harm, but she was so utterly traumatized I'm not sure she could understand me. She just cried and started rocking back and forth asking for Gemma, her wife. This complicated things.

I was called to Earth for an emergency meeting with the admiralty. They wanted to know exactly what happened and why we hadn't guess that there might be survivors. After what seemed like an eternity of questioning, I was finally able to ask what would happen with T'yriish and the other Borg at the base.

Paris and Hayes shared an uneasy look. They said that while they were sympathetic, they could not allow T'yriish to return to Earth at this time – not until we had a better understanding of the Borg assimilation process and could be sure they would not present an ongoing threat to the Federation. They were also still unsure about how much to disclose to the public. If it became common knowledge that loved ones might have been turned into Borg and then used to kill others it could lead to...“complications” as Leyton put it. It broke my heart, but I knew he was right. Already FNN was running opinion pieces asking if Jean-Luc Picard should be tried for war crimes for the actions of Locutus or if he was a victim and should be presented with a medal for his heroism.

There was the question of what should be done with the other Borg. Could they be revived? And if so, *should* they be? Over half of the Borg recovered were from species we didn't even have in our databases, and there were literally dozens of Romulans. It was a hot potato that Starfleet just didn't want to deal with and just wasn't equipped to deal with. But what was clear was that Charon would not be a suitable site for T'yriish and the other Borg.

When I returned to the site, I headed straight to the room we had provided for T'yriish. At first we had not been sure of where to put her. We didn't have a brig and besides that seemed unfair – she hadn't done anything. She was a *victim* here. But, at the same time the site just wasn't equipped to house someone with her needs. I arranged to have a cargo bay reconfigured and made as comfortable as possible. It was...challenging. The Borg assimilation had changed her and the subsequent surgery had removed a number of systems the Borg used to ensure their drones could live with their new augmentations. We were still learning and writing the book as we went – all this to say nothing of the psychological scars. Starfleet refused my request for a counselor to work with her, and most of the base's staff viewed her at best as a scientific curiosity, at worst a monster.

I sat with her and tried to explain that she couldn't go home just yet; she couldn't go and see Gemma. There were moments when it seemed like she would understand, I would catch glimpses in her eyes, but I can't say for certain. I knew she was in there somewhere but it was beyond my ability to reach her at the time. I sat with her on the edge of the bunk and just held her remaining hand and stroked it. She would just stare at my hand as I did it. She laid her head down on my lap and I took out the hypospray and gently pressed it against her neck. It seemed the most humane thing was to let her sleep until we were equipped to give her and the other Borg the care and support they needed.

We continued the work on the remains of the Borg. Once they recovered the *Hood*, they brought us more parts that the Borg had partially assimilated, along with a large number of Borg that had been caught in some sort of plasma flood. Every organic component of these Borg had been melted away by the superheated plasma leaving just the cybernetic components. At least we didn't have to worry about those Borg waking up.

HUGH

USS KETER, OHNIKA III ORBIT Stardate 55606.7 – 2378

Hugh returns from a short recess outside our interview room. Considering his distress before our break, I did not want to intrude on his privacy as he conferred with a much taller xB named Croxis. However, it is clear from their behavior that the two are quite close. I notice them share a long embrace and they kiss each others' hands before separating so Hugh may rejoin me.

It is...an addiction. To someone like you, who has never been part of the collective, that is the closest analogy I can think of. I was, in effect, born into the Borg: it was the only kind of existence I'd ever known. When the young are submerged the collective – before a sense of identity is established in any way – they are far more malleable. It requires less mental artificing for the “new unit” to integrate with the collective and become one with the Borg. My friends and I have a name for this: “Nameless.” Drones who were either created by the collective, or have no memories of their past lives. But the stronger the individual's sense of self is, the greater the level of...*stimulation* is required.

It takes a moment for the newly-growing cortical node to fully sync with a new Borg unit. But as the connection grows *stronger*, the collective is able to sense their thoughts and feelings. They begin to become Borg. Now, how *intensely* those thoughts and feelings are felt by the collective and all its parts vary wildly by a number of different factors. There are things such as central plexus proximity to consider, whether or not a drone unit is deployed from their alcove, overall computational investment from the collective a certain assimilation site...all these aspects affect the process – whether the Borg are focusing on a single, sought-after assimilation such as Picard's, or are processing 10,000 routine assimilations in 10 minutes.

At first, they are almost always afraid – but it is followed by a sense of euphoria, and then a numbness. A feeling of being *content*. Partly due to the

artificial dopamine and endorphin increase. As the individual self retreats and the collective disbursts itself throughout the new drone, they feel...detached. Without a care in the world. The neural links become more established, more and more optical feeds from other Borg become accessible, and they might even be able to see themselves – their own body – from the perspective of the others. An “out of body” experience.

[Hugh pauses and smiles faintly, holding his chin in one hand and drumming our table with the other hand's metal-tipped fingers.]

It is peaceful in the collective. We were never lonely, and we had a sense of harmony. I suppose it's somewhat easy to feel like that, considering how vast we were. The collective allowed us all to think as one: to let a multitude share information instantaneously across a network that spanned the stars. Other units were simply extensions of us. Over time...the assimilated would care less and less about their individual selves. As a result, their nervous systems' memory-related neurons degrade the longer their bodies are within the hive. In a very real sense, they would cease to be Human or Kremin or Karemma...and would become *Borg*.

We could regenerate through our shared neuroelectric fields – ensuring that every Borg contributed to the well-being of the others, and extended their unit's existence long beyond their species' typical lifespans. At the point of a drone unit's death, its assimilated memories are stored within the collective and remain accessible to the whole. Each Borg is, functionally, *immortal*. Even now, Third of Five still exists somewhere deep within the collective.

♦ But weren't you and your ship were disconnected from the collective?

When the *Enterprise* decided to bring me aboard and treated me as an individual...that was unique in the recorded history of the Borg. My new identity, “Hugh,” was built on top of the identification “Third of Five,” outside the collective's firewalls and failsafes. My own crash-landing injuries aside, I would have died if not for their care. If I was a blank slate, then the kindness of Geordi, Beverly, and all those who showed me compassion and mercy on the *Enterprise* was the chisel made out of tritanium.

Once I was returned to the collective, my memories and new individuality were dispersed throughout the collective, though Cube 5219's central plexus

handled most of the direct processing. There was no small amount of effort extended to retrieve me, after all, so the hive deemed it necessary to pore over and log what had happened. Due to this and...perhaps the sudden, still-stinging absence of Locutus, it began a cascade effect.

Our unified sense of self was disrupted as other Borg suddenly started to consider themselves separate from the whole. This was different from their latent personalities emerging. Instead, there was a new identity being laid on top of the collective, and in some instances was like a schizophrenia. The collective moved very quickly to disconnect the ship from the rest of the Borg and ordered us to self-destruct, though with the level of discord and chaos that had erupted on the ship, the order was argued over and ignored. We suddenly found ourselves alone...adrift, unable to function, and, soon, falling into Ohniaka III's gravitational pull. But that was a unique circumstance, and that is a story for another day.

[He pauses before taking a long drink from his mug.]

When other drones are disconnected, their previous identities are able to re-establish themselves. Without the collective, memories begin to resurface – though, like any drug, it varies in how well they may be able to “recover” from the collective. With cases like mine, when a Nameless drone unit has no prior identity and is disconnected from the hive, they simply die from medical complications – if not from self-destruction. Not to mention anyone who might find a Nameless would most certainly abandon – or worse – destroy them. *Thoroughly. Efficiently.*

Usually, when the link to the collective is severed and shutdown or self-destruct protocols haven't been executed, the cortical node will continue to suppress the individual and drones will carry out whatever the last instruction was that it received. After said task has been completed, the drone will typically attempt to enter an alcove and go into a regeneration cycle until the link to the collective can be restored. However, the cortical node can't maintain the endorphin and dopamine levels necessary to ignore the drone unit's resurfacing organic components and memory-related neural pathways. If the drone is operational and unable to regenerate, the sense of self will emerge over time. This can be, ah...*extremely unpleasant.*

♦ *Can you elaborate?*

Of course. Without the neural electric fields, neurotransmitters, and hormones released by the cortical array, a drone suddenly finds itself suffering from severe withdrawal. It is...I lack the words to describe it. Like waking from a nightmare. They have their own personal experiences, but also those of the collective as a whole. Try to imagine – a reduction like that! Being reduced into a single, frail body after existing as an immovable, unstoppable force. Never being lonely, never without harmony, into...[pinches fingers] *this*. Physical pain from the sudden lack of endorphins, the massive chemical imbalances...I've heard the intestines can feel frozen and aflame all at once.

"Normal" bodily functions begin to return as excess nanoprobes die and are expunged from the body, but are accompanied by sweats, vomiting, and scarification if lesions or abscesses form. A former drone requires outside assistance to help restore systems that haven't needed to work in years...decades...possibly even *centuries*. Not to mention other possible ways the body starts to reject specific Borg implants. Again, without urgent medical intervention, most drones will die painfully once removed from the collective. I apologize for such gruesome details, but I hope you understand the importance of what we could offer to those affected by the Borg.

The psychological experience can be even more traumatic. For those who are not Nameless, the original self has borne witness to their actions as Borg. They might be far from home, if home even still exists. Worse, they may have helped in the destruction of their homes, as well as the assimilation of their loved ones. The guilt for that...it can be overwhelming.

In addition to this...we bear the stigma of being once Borg. I've watched the way Starfleet officers have looked at us. I've read how former Federation citizens are viewed with distrust and suspicion. The stories of people like Seven of Nine and Icheb...it is a cruel truth we've had to acknowledge, that some people see us as "monsters." I will do *everything* in my power to reject that hatred. They loathe us for enduring past a nightmare? Hate seeing us flourish beyond "victimhood" – having resisted that which is supposedly futile? I hope it's clear how this societal pressure puts more mental strain on a recovering psyche, and how that makes it all the more difficult for xBs to heal. And unfortunately, I predict it'll be a constant difficulty we're forced to endure for some time to come.

Most civilizations fear the Borg. They are right to do so. The collective is a fearsome, great, and terrible entity that you – you, who are *untouched* by the

Borg – will never fully understand. And I assure you: it's alright that you don't. **[he points at me]** But let me tell you something: that *lack* of understanding should not deny us the right to exist as we are. It should not *vilify* us for trying to live and thrive against the challenges we already face. I have seen and heard others shun and vilify xBs, even within the supposedly "accepting" Federation. You cannot let yourselves give way to such awful failures that weaken your community. Failures like fear, prejudice, hatred...how inefficient. Just because you're incapable of understanding something you can't comprehend or haven't experienced, doesn't mean you have the right to deny my friends and I *peace*.

xBs will exist so long as the Borg do. Perhaps even beyond that. The infinite variables of individual life mean that each xB will acclimate to this new form of existence against many hurdles. But despite those hurdles – despite the heartache and hardship that might come with those struggles – we will do our best to live. We will, hopefully, become something *more*, despite it.

♦ **And what's that?**

Ourselves.

T'YRISH

TSIOLKOVSKIY CITY, LUNA

Stardate: 59138.7 – 2382

T'yrish is one of the 138 known Starfleet officers assimilated by the Borg during their first incursion. While many were sent to the Delta Quadrant, she remained on the Borg cube after the Battle of Wolf 359 and traveled back to Earth. She was pulled from the wreckage by the USS Svalbard in suspended animation that first appeared to be death. She was the first xB recovered to regain consciousness. After four years of "rehabilitation" at a closed facility on Ohniaka III, she was no longer deemed a threat to herself or others, discharged from Starfleet, and released on her own cognition.

I arrive at the apartment in Tsiolkovskiy City. The far side of Luna is currently in one of its two week cycles of night. It is pitch black except for the dim illumination provided by the streetlamps outside of her building which sadly appears to have seen better days. Her one bedroom flat is located on the third floor behind an old-fashioned metal door on hinges. She welcomes me into her sparsely furnished living room. The carpet seems to have not been replaced since the 23rd century. The walls are off-white and completely bare.

There is a small kitchen off to the left and a partially closed door reveals a single bedroom. We take a seat at the dining room table. A sideboard next to us holds five plastic heads, each with a different wig. Tish sits down across from me dressed in blue denim coveralls. She only has about half an hour to speak before she must clock in at work. After seeing me notice the wigs, she points to her bald head and forces an awkward chuckle.

They said it would grow back when my "follicles were properly stimulated." It never did. Can I offer you a cup of tea?

♦ No, thank you.

[She wanders over to the kitchen and drops a tea bag into a ceramic mug before filling it with boiling water from an old-fashioned electric kettle. She returns to her seat.]

The replicator's been broken for six months. Landlord still hasn't come to fix it, and quite frankly, I don't mind. Every time he walks in here, his face asks uncomfortable questions that I really don't want to answer.

Speaking of uncomfortable questions, you're wondering why I still have scars around my artificial eye in an age of dermal regenerators, aren't you? Stare away. 24th century medicine is amazing but it's still not a miracle. Half my

skull is duranium and the ligaments around this eye are all polymer composite. Not enough blood vessels are left to keep healthy skin alive. I'm lucky to have anything here at all. Deformed face, bald head, artificial eye, biosynthetic arm...

[She holds up one hand and wiggles the fingers.]

Seven years and it still doesn't feel like my own. I couldn't pilot a ship now even if I wanted to. I tell strangers that they're wounds I got while "in the service." Technically that's true. If you get crippled during a warp core breach or fighting a Cardassian, you're a hero. Get crippled because you spent eight weeks as a Borg drone...well, then you're a freak. You're dangerous. People aren't sure if you can be trusted. People don't want you near parks or schools. When you apply to get an apartment in the town you grew up in, the entire neighborhood signs a petition to get you kicked off-world because they are afraid of nanoprobes getting in their drinking water.

[She pauses and takes a sip of tea.]

I grew up in Pennsylvania, a small town near Crest Forrest. I used to get teased a bit about the pointed ears at school – got called Romulan a lot – but other than that, a pretty normal childhood. Left school, went to the academy, met a girl, fell in love. It was a *good* life.

I used to love flying; there was nothing quite as liberating as piloting a starship. I was doing a tour at the ETPS **[Experimental Test Pilot School]**. We would take new starship designs and run them through their paces, work out the optimal flight envelopes for the spaceframe and then we would find out just how far beyond we could push it. You know how captains are, always wanting that little bit *extra* in a crunch. It was a ton of fun. When I was sat there at the helm, nothing before me but the stars – I felt so alive.

I was on leave when the call came in; Gemma used to love spending Christmas together. I was called up with the rest of ETPS. They wanted to take the *Kaneda* out. It had been with the school for a number of years – a great bird to fly – but didn't fit into any particular niche for Starfleet so we kept her at the school mostly to remind us what a good starship should fly like.

She did us proud at 359, but we got our asses handed to us. After we were boarded, I was chosen for an exciting new career as a Four of Four, Secondary Subjunctive of Unimatrix 8208.

[She is silent for a long moment.]

If you want to know more about that you can read the files from Ohniaka III.

I remember the first time Gemma came to visit, when they finally told her I was still alive. I was so nervous – hell, I was more terrified than I had been at 359. When she was led into the room and she saw me for the first time since...she did her best to cover it up, to try and hide the pain and the horror at what she saw when she looked at me. But I knew her well enough. I'd seen her reaction. She saw that it had broken my heart despite my attempts to hide that.

I just want to make it clear that I don't blame Gemma at all for filing for divorce. We tried, but we were different people after I was released from Ohniaka – in my case, quite literally. She still had a chance at a normal life. I didn't...

I suppose I'm lucky to be allowed back in the Sol System at all. A lot of very powerful people wanted us kept locked up forever. This place isn't much, but it's *mine*. My job isn't much, but it's *mine*.

I get up like a normal person. I take a sonic shower. I work the night shift at an automated warehouse serving the Luna cargo docks. I sit at my console and monitor the autocranes loading crates onto anti-grav pallets for eight hours. I sign my reports, and then I come home and go to bed. Sometimes, I can go a full two weeks without seeing another sapient being. It's very safe for me.

♦ That sounds very lonely.

Lonely is safe for an xB. Tolerance in the high and mighty Federation doesn't last very long when people are told to be afraid of you. You wonder why so many want the hive mind back so badly? You're never judged in the collective. You're never shunned in the collective. You're never scared or frightened of rejection in the collective. You just do what you're told and your implants reward you with euphoric immortality.

I'm not going to be a poster child for an xB pride march. I don't want people to read this interview and say "oh, she is so brave!" or, god forbid, to pity me. I just want to be able to live what life I have left. I want to be able to take the metro and not have mothers pull their children away from me. To be able to eat in a restaurant and not have the hostess lie to my face and say, "so sorry, we're full tonight." To walk down the street, and not hear the gasps and muffled whispers from people who don't think I notice.

41 Starfleet xB survivors were pulled from that cube after Wolf 359. Five of them committed suicide. 18 will require round the clock in-patient care for the rest of their lives. Three left the Federation and no one knows what happened to them. 14 live like me. One is the captain of the Federation flagship and has a vineyard in France. The universe might consider that balanced, but tell me, do you think that's right?

MARIE PICARD

LA BARRE, EARTH

Stardate 49827.5 – 2372



We had been following the events ever since Starfleet told us Jean-Luc had been taken. Robert was glued to the squawk box they had provided and had an earpiece so he could listen in while he was working out in the fields. Starfleet sent a counselor, an Aurelian named Migleemo, to be on hand to answer any questions we may have, but Robert was not interested in talking about his feelings – a trait that runs through the Picard men, I'm afraid. I made a conscious effort to encourage René to be more open about his feelings. It was a lot easier while he was attending school in England; he would normally come home for the weekends, but we asked the school to keep him there for the duration.

I felt very conflicted about what I was hearing. They spoke of starships being disabled and destroyed and the Borg ship leaving unharmed. I felt strangely relieved that Jean-Luc hadn't been killed, despite the death and destruction that the Borg had used him to inflict on the fleet.

One night, shortly after I had spoken to René on the comm before he went to bed, Robert burst into the house proclaiming that they had gotten him! It seemed that the *Enterprise* had mounted a rescue and had brought Jean-Luc home. I thought that was wonderful news, but then Captain Keough arrived at the house.

He explained that while they had been successful in retrieving Jean-Luc he was still in grave peril and still controlled by these Borg. I'm not sure how much of this Robert took in – he was very dismissive and convinced that now they had rescued Jean-Luc that would soon be the end of it. He took himself away to bed. I spoke with Captain Keogh and Dr. Migleemo for some time, but there was not much they were able to tell me other than to reassure me that they were going to do everything in their power to bring Jean-Luc home.

The next day was strange. We knew that the Borg were now approaching the Sol System and might even reach Earth soon, but Robert still woke up at dawn and went to tend to the grapes. The workers arrived to help – it is a critical time in January to make sure the vines survive the cold and the wines in the casks need to be tended, too. I tried to follow his example and carry on as best I could, arranging for collections and deliveries of the year's harvest. But I kept looking up towards the sky.

We ate dinner in silence that night, barely interrupted by the squawk box. Captain Keogh had explained earlier that Starfleet would be encrypting transmissions for security reasons and so the box would not work. Robert would occasionally glance over to it but said nothing.

There was a knock at the door and once again it was Captain Keogh. He was smiling and told us that the Borg had been stopped and that Jean-Luc had been freed from their influence. I felt ecstatic and turned to hug Robert, but he stood from the table, muttered that it was good news and then that he had an early start. He went to bed. Captain Keogh was taken aback by Robert's reaction, but I assured him that he just needed time to process it and thanked him profusely. I also said if there was anything we could do for Jean-Luc to let us know.

The next day we continued much as we had done before. René was back from school and it was delightful to have him back in the house, Robert was off with his grapes, and no one mentioned Jean-Luc or the Borg. It was as if those few days had been a fever dream.

We received a visit around a month later from a woman in a Starfleet uniform. She introduced herself as Deanna Troi and said that she was working with Jean-Luc on his recovery. I welcomed her in and she asked if Robert was home. I sent René to bring him up from the cellar and then asked René to run some errands in the town so we could speak.

Deanna explained that Jean-Luc had gone through a traumatic experience and that while his body had healed his mind could not until he was able to accept that it needed to. Robert seemed rather dismissive at first, asking what good was asking us for help and that Jean-Luc had never had much interest in what he had had to say in the past. But the counselor explained that Jean-Luc would not be allowed to return to active duty until he could start to process what he had gone through and he was extremely reluctant to engage in more traditional

methods of therapy. She remarked that he was an extremely private individual. Despite them serving together for four years, it was only in the last month she had learned of the existence of his brother.

She said that Jean-Luc had needed to reconnect with his own Humanity and that he was not going to be able to do that on board the *Enterprise* so she was approaching us to see if we could offer any insight to help him.

Robert listened intently then said that we shouldn't worry. Jean-Luc would find his way home and Robert would put him straight. When the counselor asked how he just smiled and said in the way that only brothers would understand.

Sure enough, about a month later I received a message from Jean-Luc asking if it would be possible for him to visit. Actually speaking to him felt surreal; he had been such a large part of our lives without us ever speaking directly. Robert insisted that he come and stay with us – it's his house after all. I was so excited for his arrival and when the day finally came I was all set to head to the town to meet him, but Robert insisted that it was not necessary and then left to go and tend to the grapes. René met with Jean-Luc and brought him home. Jean-Luc was quite striking, he seemed far younger than Robert but years of working under the sun had taken something of a toll on Robert. I was shocked at how distant they were. I knew that they had a fractious history but had thought after the events of the past year Robert had mellowed and was ready to bury the hatchet. The tension was so thick you could have cut it with a knife. When I spoke to Robert he said that he was helping Jean-Luc remember who he was.

I came home from the market one day to find them sitting in the house absolutely covered from head to toe in mud. Clearly they had been fighting but now they were sitting together singing and drinking wine. I never asked Robert exactly what had happened since it was not my place, but true to his word he had helped Jean-Luc remember who he was.

When it came time for Jean-Luc to leave, there he was standing in his uniform. René was besotted with his famous uncle and would have run away to the stars right then if we would allow it.

Jean-Luc and Robert spoke frequently after that and he would send messages to myself and René. Whenever the *Enterprise* was home he would come, stay at the house, and regale René with tales of his adventures. He gave

him a model of the *Enterprise* and took Robert and René for a tour in the summer of '69. Robert was suitably unimpressed but it just solidified René's desire to follow his uncle into the stars.

That was the last time they saw each other.

MARCO AMASOV

USS ENDEAVOUR, ARCTURUS ORBITAL

Stardate 46918.3 – 2369



Have you ever been to Gettysburg? Or Pearl Harbor? What about the Tannhauser Gate? The thing about battlefields on planets is that they're *static*. Once the battle is over the bodies remain where they fell, the ships where they sank. Space isn't like that. When a ship is disabled or destroyed in space it continues traveling along its course at the speed it was traveling until something else acts on it.

When we arrived in Wolf 359 it had been close to three days since the battle and the remains of the fleet were scattered throughout the system. To further complicate matters, the graviton burst had made a mess of subspace. Our sensors were barely functioning and incapable of reliably picking up lifesigns and transporter function was inhibited.

We set up the *Endeavour* as the command point and dispatched every shuttle and support craft out into the expanse to look for survivors. At the same time I put in an urgent request for tugs and engineering ships to help to tractor the debris to more stable orbits in order to reduce the search time.

It was a grim business. We were able to pick up some signals at shorter ranges and tap into communicator frequencies. People would tell us the ship they were on but in some instances there was nothing left to readily identify which ship was which. We were flying blind and had to try and triangulate signals. We found some people trapped deep inside the *Melbourne* – a sister ship to the *Endeavour* – but we were very aware that the longer it took for us to find people the less chance there was for their survival. What resources I had from command I stretched as thin as I dared to try and find anyone still alive.

There was a brief bright spot when we encountered a shuttlepod from the *Saratoga*. It told us that a large number of survivors had taken shelter on board the remains of the *Endurance*, an old Essex-class expeditionary cruiser.

We immediately dispatched shuttles to the location. They were able to ferry the survivors to the *Endeavour* and then get them the medical support they needed. There were a few other moments like that where we found groups of survivors clustered together deep within ships. Far too few. More frequently we discovered empty hulks or rooms with bodies where people had hunkered down hoping for rescue that would never come while the heat bled out of compartments and air became unbreathable as power systems failed.

When we found what was left of the *Columbia*, that was a hard task. Those *Galaxy*-class ships were massive and without reliable sensors and no transporters we had to move deck by deck in the search for survivors. We were not equipped to deal with this sort of a scenario – not technologically, not logistically, not emotionally. I was constantly on the horn to command begging for medical ships and more specialized teams to deal with this sort of recovery, but in truth there wasn't anyone in the Federation equipped to deal in this sort of work so it fell to us.

As the days stretched on, the chances of finding survivors diminished and our task transitioned to recovery. It was such a mess. We didn't even know that some of the ships were missing. It was only when the *Ganci* stumbled across the *Hood* out near the Bolian Sector that we were able to determine that there was no trace of at least three starships.

Starfleet finally dispatched medical ships to help us with the survivors and to help to process the remains, but it was slow going having to work through the ships effectively by hand. There was a process where we would identify a wreck and try to marshal large pieces of debris together in a holding area, at which point shuttles would move in for a close range scan. It was too hazardous for anything much larger than a runabout to enter the debris field. The shuttles would try to ping any communicators and remote access any active computer systems, but success was very rare. The Borg had been extremely efficient in rendering these ships non-operational.

As the days dragged on it started to take an increasing toll on the crew. We were working around the clock along with the crews of the *Merrimac*, *Trieste*, and *Ajax* as well as the SCE with their *Antares*-class ships, but the strain was starting to show. My counselor advised me that more and more people were reaching. Likely, even more needed support but were refusing to seek it out.

It came to a head when we lost three people in *Columbia* when a plasma manifold erupted while they were trying to get deeper into the engineering hull. We couldn't continue to work like this and – for once – command agreed. They authorized the transportation of a Spacedock, which was to be transferred from the Deneb System to Wolf 359 to act as a safe space where the ships could be searched and remains could be recovered before being identified and sent to their families.

By then, though, it was clear that there were no more survivors to be found at Wolf 359. Starfleet started to redeploy the ships. There was a desire to show that despite the losses at 359 Starfleet still had plenty of ships. We were sent on something of a tour to reassure worlds that we were still out there and to remind the Cardassians, Tzenkethi, Romulans and any others who might have wanted to take advantage of the situation to think again. I thought that the crew would be grateful to leave and to get away from that place, but I had a lot of transfer requests to assignments on the new Spacedock from crewmembers who wanted to remain and help with the recovery operations: including my first officer, Zhang Mo.

When I asked her why, she said that there was still work to be done, and she didn't think it was right to leave until they had brought home as many of the dead as possible. I respected her decision and that of the others...but for me – I wanted to get as far away from Wolf 359 as possible. When I looked out my ready room window at those hulks sitting out there all I saw were the failures of command. I knew that if I stayed any longer I would've had to leave Starfleet.

LES BUENAMIGO

DOUGLAS STATION, RIBOS

Stardate 47949.8 – 2370

After arriving at Douglas Station, I am met by a tall hispanic man with a finely groomed mustache. He greets me warmly and offers a tour of the facility. Lieutenant Commander Buenamigo is something of a rising star in Starfleet Corp of Engineers having made his name during the salvage operations at Wolf 359 and the deployment of robotic systems to aid with the recovery efforts.

Throughout its history, Starfleet and the Federation has had a fractious relationship with robotic systems and AIs. Proponents will point out that there are many hazardous environments where it makes sense for robots or automated systems to operate, while detractors argue that robotic systems cannot adapt to the unexpected unless the system is a true AI which brings with it ethical concerns that the Federation continues to grapple with to this day and will likely continue into the future.

We arrive in his office, filled with mementos of his native Texas and a large decommissioned DOT standing sentinel to one side.

We always knew we were going to be sent there sooner or later. I was second officer on the *Rutan* and we were moved to the Andoria System along with the *Brunel* and *Scott* to wait for the outcome of the battle. The plan as we could figure it out was that Starfleet wanted us to swoop in after the battle and start to sweep away the remains of that Borg ship – get it somewhere secure away from prying eyes and sticky fingers.

When we got word that the battle had not gone well, at first we thought there had been some sort of issue with logistics. Maybe the ships had missed the Borg? It never occurred to us that the Borg would have utterly annihilated the fleet. I mean, we're not naive – we know that space is hard and space is dangerous – but usually when we have salvage ops it's because a ship suffered some sort of mechanical failure or encountered some natural phenomenon. When they go, they go *big*.

We had been on the *Horatio* cleanup after it was destroyed in '64 and there wasn't anything larger than a turbolift, and when the *Yamato* was destroyed in '65 the remains were destroyed to make sure it didn't fall into Romulan hands. Those were probably the two biggest salvage ops that we had been involved

with prior to 359. My point is it never got *personal*. Like, you didn't see ships let alone people – all we saw was debris or components. When we arrived at 359, it was very different.

When we arrived in system it was no longer a rescue operation and the attention was turning to salvage and recovery. The *Endeavour* was in command, but they were already overwhelmed with survivors and had taken to just tagging the location of bodies and identifying ships where they could. Something had made a mess of subspace. Sensors and transporters weren't reliable so we had to do it old school, dividing the system up into a grid and working methodically piece by piece.

The procedure was we would move into our grid and identify the debris and assign it to the relevant ship, then use tractor beams to stop its movement. We would try scans but they always came back inconclusive, so we would board the wreckage and then move deck by deck, compartment by compartment, to check for survivors. By that time it would be a miracle, but some species can survive in low oxygen environments – especially if they have a hibernation response – so it couldn't be taken for granted.

This meant that we had to be thorough with every ship, or at least every piece of ship. The last thing we wanted was to find we had just missed someone. We took to hammering on bulkheads as we went to see if there was any response from the sound carrying through the hulks, but that never happened.

Everything stopped when we found bodies or remains. We would holorecord everything in the location where they were found and if at all possible try and identify them by their combadge. When that wasn't possible, we would take a DNA sample and then prepare them for transport back to the *Rutan*. They would be placed into a body bag and we would escort them through the hulk to the shuttle. At first we would send the shuttle for each body we found, but when we got to the larger ships like *Columbia* or *Yamaguchi* there were so many we would wait until there were a dozen or so and then send one shuttle back while another returned.

Conditions were *rough*. Then there was an accident with some crew from the *Endeavour*, I think, and a plasma manifold ruptured, killing three of them. We found some larger debris from the *Republic*, an old *Constitution*-class ship

they used for training at the academy, and as we were pushing through the engineering hull we came across something which at first made me jump out of my skin! It fell out of a bulkhead from a cradle where it had been docked: this large dome with a pair of black lenses that looked like eyes. Once my heart had finished racing and we realized it wasn't some poor sapient's head we started wondering just what the hell was it? Shining our lights up we could see what looked like half a dozen of these things clamped in place.

When we got back to the *Rutan* the COB [Chief of the Boat, the most senior non-commissioned officer] asked where the hell had we found a DOT? He explained that back in the mid-23rd century starships, especially the long-range ones, would be fitted with these robots (the "DOT-7s") to carry out repairs and maintenance considered too hazardous for the crew. We were all intrigued by this little robot. Why weren't they in use anymore? We all knew about the android they had on the *Enterprise*, but he wasn't some sort of robot but a fully realized life-form. Why didn't we have some of these for carrying out hazardous operations? Back in the 23rd, Starfleet was a lot more willing to explore the use of computerized and robotic systems until an incident in 2268. A multitronic unit malfunctioned during a training exercise, crippling and destroying a number of starships. Apparently, it was the final straw after a number of AI related incidents so Starfleet moved away from using robots on ships, which just seemed utterly absurd to me! For one thing, they would be *much* more efficient in moving through the hulks to locate and identify bodies.

With the captain's permission, we brought the remaining DOTs to the *Rutan* and tried to reactivate them. Based on the logs, they hadn't been operational since the 2290s and were pretty much forgotten. We were able to get two of the units operational by cannibalizing parts from the others and set them to work.

The first hulk we tackled was the *Bellerophon*. We programmed the DOTs to map out the ships to identify safe routes throughout and to mark any hazards, to identify and record the location of any organic material they encountered. They worked *flawlessly*: we were able to clear the *Bellerophon* faster than any wreck hulk we had come across to date.

The DOTs worked so well that we were able to upgrade their maneuvering systems and outfit them with more modern sensor packages. We sent them out on an autonomous sweep to search for anything we might have missed in our existing grids. That was when we had the miracle: they found the runabout *Rhine*

largely intact, but it was several AUs away from the rest of the fleet. We headed there right away and we found Admiral Ross *alive*! He had been trapped in the runabout with no power, no comms, living off MREs and a bottle of Lagavulin for two weeks! He was in pretty poor shape – it's lucky we found him when we did, but it was all thanks to the DOTs!

It was clear by then that the salvage work was taking a huge toll on the recovery team. I don't just mean physically, but mentally. It was long hours in uncomfortable EVA suits in zero-g and, well, what we were finding was pretty grim. I remember one instance finding a group of five young officers in some quarters on the *Ibn Sina*. We found markings which suggested they had survived for maybe a week after the battle, but there was no way for them to contact anyone. We found a PADD with messages they had left for their families. That was tough, those moments, but we had to get it done, you know? I focused on trying to optimize the DOTs for the work we were doing, maybe even try and get another unit functioning.

Finally Starfleet brought in the Ossuary and the mission profile changed. The remaining hulks would be towed into the dock one by one and then searched. The remains could then be recovered and repatriated with much reduced risk to salvage teams. Most of the ships in the relief effort were going to be redeployed, but I wanted to stay and continue working with the DOTs. I saw great potential in this technology. I can understand why Starfleet moved away following the M5 incident, but that was a century ago. With the advancements in isolinear and positronic computing that have taken place, I really think we have a duty to explore the possibilities. Not just from a maintenance and hazardous environment perspective, but look at Wolf 359 itself: Would a fleet of remotely operated or autonomous ships been better deployed against the Borg? The end result might have been the same, but think of all the lives that would have been saved. A computer can learn and adapt exponentially faster than an organic mind – it's one of the reasons the Borg were able to beat us in the first place!

I am currently working on a project to demonstrate the potential from an updated DOT type robot and maybe something larger. Obviously, we aren't talking about AI in a real sense, but it's *long* past time for Starfleet to get over its phobia of the artificial. I'm hoping that at least some good can come from the tragedy at 359, from all that death, and in time we won't have to risk lives on the more mundane aspects of space.

MEDKAV, SON OF DAA'MAQ

NAGASAKI, EARTH



Stardate: 53277.3 – 2376

We leave MeDKav's residence and walk through the streets of Nagasaki. Soon, we find ourselves surrounded by trees and the sounds of the city fade away. The ambassador changed from his leisure clothes into formal armor. It is obvious that he holds this here-to-unknown "survivor" of the USS Kyushu in very high regard. The only sounds besides the chirping of birds and drone of cicadas are the grinding of MeDKav's boots on the stone path.

Suddenly, we turn a corner and are confronted with a tall wooden arch standing alone in the trees. Its bright red paint pops out in stark contrast to the lush greenness surrounding it. A long straw rope hangs across the center beam of the structure and folded streamers of white paper woven through its strands flutter in the gentle breeze. The scent of sakaki leaves hangs heavy in the air.

MeDKav bows deeply at his waist and growls at me to do the same. Once respects are properly paid, we pass through and continue down the stone path through the woods.

Most of your Federation has forgotten shame. You see it merely as a remnant of an oppressive past rather as the essential component of motivation.

♦ *I thought honor was what motivated Klingons?*

How can you have honor without shame? They are two sides of the same *darsek*.

When we finally departed the empire for Wolf 359, we thought we would find nothing but honor and glory. Instead, we found only shame: the realization we let our allies die without us at their side. It was unspeakable, unthinkable. But it did motivate us to begin to find our honor again.

Though most of our fleet was summoned back to Qo'noS, I remained on my flagship, the *Sho'Va*, with a few escorts to perform *ak'voh*.

◇ What?

[he sighs] *ak'voh* is the vigil for the recently fallen. In the ancient days, warriors would watch over their fallen comrades on the battlefield to ensure their bodies would not fall victim to predators and scavengers before their souls could leave their mortal shells and travel to *Sto-Vo-Kor*. Just because we had missed the fight, did not mean we would let Orion pirates and Ferengi scrap salesmen descend on Wolf 359 like jackals to dishonor the sacrifice made by your comrades. We swore a blood oath that Klingons would not leave that place until the last piece of debris left the Wolf System.

◇ And you are still there...

And we are still there.

Captain Amasov and the *Endeavour* were immediately overwhelmed with the official salvage effort. I offered my ship's assistance and he accepted. The first vessel my men boarded was the *Kyushu*, named after the island on which we now stand...

[We come to the end of the stone path and find a wooden structure made of Japanese cypress wood standing alone among the trees. It appears to be a *Shinto* shrine. A small fountain of water with two ladles sits next to the path. I watch in awe as MeDKav adeptly uses one of the ladles to rinse both his hands and his mouth. I'm surprised by this, as Klingons usually avoid water like Earth housecats. Still, it is obvious that he has done this ritual for years. After he is finished, I rinse my hands and mouth as well, doing my best to match his motions.]

It is traditional in Japanese culture to forge a sword to commemorate an auspicious occasion. It is one of the few facets of human culture that we truly understand. When the *Kyushu* was launched, Starfleet commissioned Japanese master swordsmith Yoshihara Yoshimasa to craft a katana that would sail with the ship for all its days. He came from an ancient line of master smiths renowned for their ability to create a tempering pattern in the steel that appeared to be clouds in the sky. Starfleet felt that it was an appropriate design for a ship that sailed in the heavens.

◇ How do you know this?

I learned. Something I wish some in your Federation would do more of when it comes to Klingons.

[The sliding door of the shrine opens and a priest dressed in a white robe and black head covering appears. Neither he nor MeDKav say a word to each other, but each bow simultaneously. The priest beckons us to follow him into the shrine's sanctuary. As we approach the entrance, we remove our shoes and pass through the threshold behind him.]

When my men entered the *Kyushu*, we thought all aboard were dead. The only things we found were floating corpses, breached bulkheads, and burst conduits. Then, when we entered the captain's ready room, we discovered the only survivor on the ship. A piece of flying debris from one of the EPS regulators had blown across the room, shattered its glass case, and broken it into three pieces. Soon after, the gravitational field aboard also failed. It was floating alone in the quiet darkness...

[The priest stops in front of the shrine's altar, picks up a cluster of sakaki branches, and waves them over an object as he utters a prayer. Then, he steps aside to let MeDKav pass. The giant Klingon steps forward, kneels, and removes a small flask of bloodwine from his armor. He respectfully pours a fresh drink into a small ceramic cup placed in front of the altar. It is then I notice the sword: a katana of unparalleled beauty. However, it has been pieced back together using a much darker steel that I don't recognize. Though one would think the dark welds on the blade would diminish its beauty, somehow, they enhance its imposing and stunning appearance.]

♦ The sword? Is that the last “*survivor*” of the *Kyushu*?

[The priest flashes me an annoyed glance. MeDKav ignores my breach of decorum.]

Among Klingons – and even among some *humans*, as I have come to learn – there is belief that a blade carries a spirit of its own. It is called the *yinqa’*. Kahless taught us that saving the life of another and helping them return home is one of the highest acts of virtue a warrior can hope to attain. We rescued the sword and offered to return it to the crew of the *Endeavour*. However, they said it would be “a waste of their time to worry about a butter knife right now.”

[A look of disgust crosses his face.]

I thought I understood Humans until that moment.

We kept the pieces of the katana on board the *Sho’Va* until we were relieved and returned to Qo’noS. Then, with permission from K’mpec, I took it to K’vel’kar, the blade foundry at the foot of Mount Kri’stak where the Unforgettable forged

the first *bat'leth* over a thousand years ago.

Though the smiths there had never worked on a human blade before, they understood the importance of what we were trying to accomplish. With great effort, they were able to repair it with *baakonite*. It took years, but I was finally able to bring another survivor of Wolf 359 home. This shrine agreed to help care for it and give its *yinqa'* a place to rest. With this act, a small part of my honor has been returned.

You see, this katana is the opposite of the Borg. While they take life and turn it into death, this sword takes death and turns it into life. Steel from both Mother Earth and Mother Qo'noS exist harmoniously side by side in this blade, permanently merging our planets together, and creating a new spirit that is of both places. It is the best of *both* worlds...

ZHANG MO

THE OSSUARY, WOLF 359

Stardate 48364.4 – 2371

"Ossuary" is a word taken from ancient Earth meaning a container or room where the bones of the dead are placed. It is doubly apt for the station now located in the Wolf 359 System: a place where the bones of dead starships now rest and where the remains of their fallen crews were recovered and cared for before being sent home.

The station commander, Zheng Mo, takes her role as the custodian of this site very seriously. There is a sense of reverence as she talks about the work done in the years since the battle. As we walk through the empty high bay, we pass through into dock two where I am left momentarily dumbstruck by what I see: the broken and skeletal remains of the USS Columbia, barely recognizable as the majestic Galaxy-class starship that led the charge against the Borg. Commander Zheng gives me a moment as I take in the scene before gesturing for me to follow her through to her office. She asks if I would be more comfortable with the viewports opaque but I decline. She explains that she finds that the view reminds her of the importance of their work here.

The primary mission was to rescue any survivors trapped inside the remains of the fleet and to retrieve the bodies of those who had died. It took a while for us to get a solid number but we estimated somewhere in the region of 15,000 souls unaccounted for. The challenges that we faced were immense: the number of ships lost and the relative state of the hulks, the after effects of the graviton burst which rendered traditional search and rescue tactics moot, and how relatively isolated the Wolf 359 System was in the first place. There was almost no Starfleet infrastructure in system – certainly nothing that we could use to coordinate search and rescue.

After the initial weeks of rescue operations – and once it became clear that there would be no more survivors – the mission moved to retrieving remains and trying to learn why the Borg had been able to defeat the fleet so easily. We knew the Borg were technologically superior, and some of the ships deployed had been shall we say past their prime, but we had lost a number of the *Nebula* and *Ambassador*-class ships which made up the bulk of Starfleet's exploration and defense forces, not to mention the *Columbia*

[She gestures to the windows.]

Starfleet had a lot of questions about what had happened and it needed the answers so it could put those lessons into the next generation of starships. There had been a sense of growing unease across the quadrant for at least a few years prior to 359, but this cemented in the minds of many that the galaxy was entering a period of instability. Starfleet would need to adapt and be ready to face that.

The Ossuary started life as most other starbases: the core components are assembled at shipyards and then these are taken under warp-tow to systems to be assembled. This station was going to be deployed to Beta Aquelie to replace the old V-type station there, but Starfleet decided to repurpose the station and brought it here to allow safer and easier access for the recovery teams. Once the main parts of the dock assembly were established and we got the reactors online we were able to start bringing in ships. The SCE teams had done a fine job of marshaling the remains to the Lagrange point and we were ready to bring in the first ship to be examined: it was the *USS Kyushu*, a *New Orleans*-class ship. It was relatively intact and had already been declared cleared by the SCE teams. We felt it a good candidate to test the dock and our procedures. It was pretty nerve-wracking as the tugs pulled the ship in towards the doors.

Once *Kyushu* was inside the dock and settled on the tractor cradle, we caught our first look at the ship under the lights of the high bay. It was otherworldly to see the ship just sitting there; its surface postmarked with scars and deep gouges, decks open to space, warp coils exposed. The ship was moved into the low bay where we had set up the clean room with atmosphere and we could get to work. We had a high level of confidence that there were no remains to be found, but we still treated the ship as if that were a possibility. We were also developing procedures for when we brought in ships which were less structurally sound and would not have been fully cleared.

As we made the way through the ships, we also had engineering teams who would try to access the ships' computer cores to download the flight data recorder and the logs stored there. That was extremely important to command for the investigation, but I guess I don't have to tell you that.

We carried out comprehensive sensor scans of the ships to map out all the

damage each ship had received and ran metallurgy to see the effect the Borg's weapons had had on the ships, which we had been unable to do while the ships were out in space. Apart from that, we were told not to interfere with the ships. Once the assessment had been completed and any hazardous materials and weapons had been removed, we would then take the ship back to the high bay and then return it to the debris field and move onto the next ship.

Some ships were in, shall we say, less materially sound condition than others. The *Saratoga* was particularly bad. In that instance we would move it into one of the lower auxiliary bays where we could gather as much of the ship as we could positively identify and attempt to reconstruct computer cores. That was very challenging given how little remained of the ship and how many parts lacked identifiable markings. We often had to resort to molecular analysis to identify what yard the metallurgy came from and to go from there.

The biggest challenge, as you might imagine, was *Columbia*. The *Galaxy*-class ships are far larger than any other ship in the fleet and Starfleet was very keen to analyze everything to identify if there was any inherent flaw with the ship's design. That and its position as Admiral Hanson's flagship made recovering the data from the ship a priority.

Analysis suggested *Columbia* had suffered extensive damage from the Borg before succumbing to a warp core breach; it appeared that they had managed to eject the core but it had detonated just below the ship. The debris had been scattered, spread across at least eight major sections, then brought into dock two where we reconstructed the ship as best we could. It took us almost a month just to get the pieces into the dock and positioned.

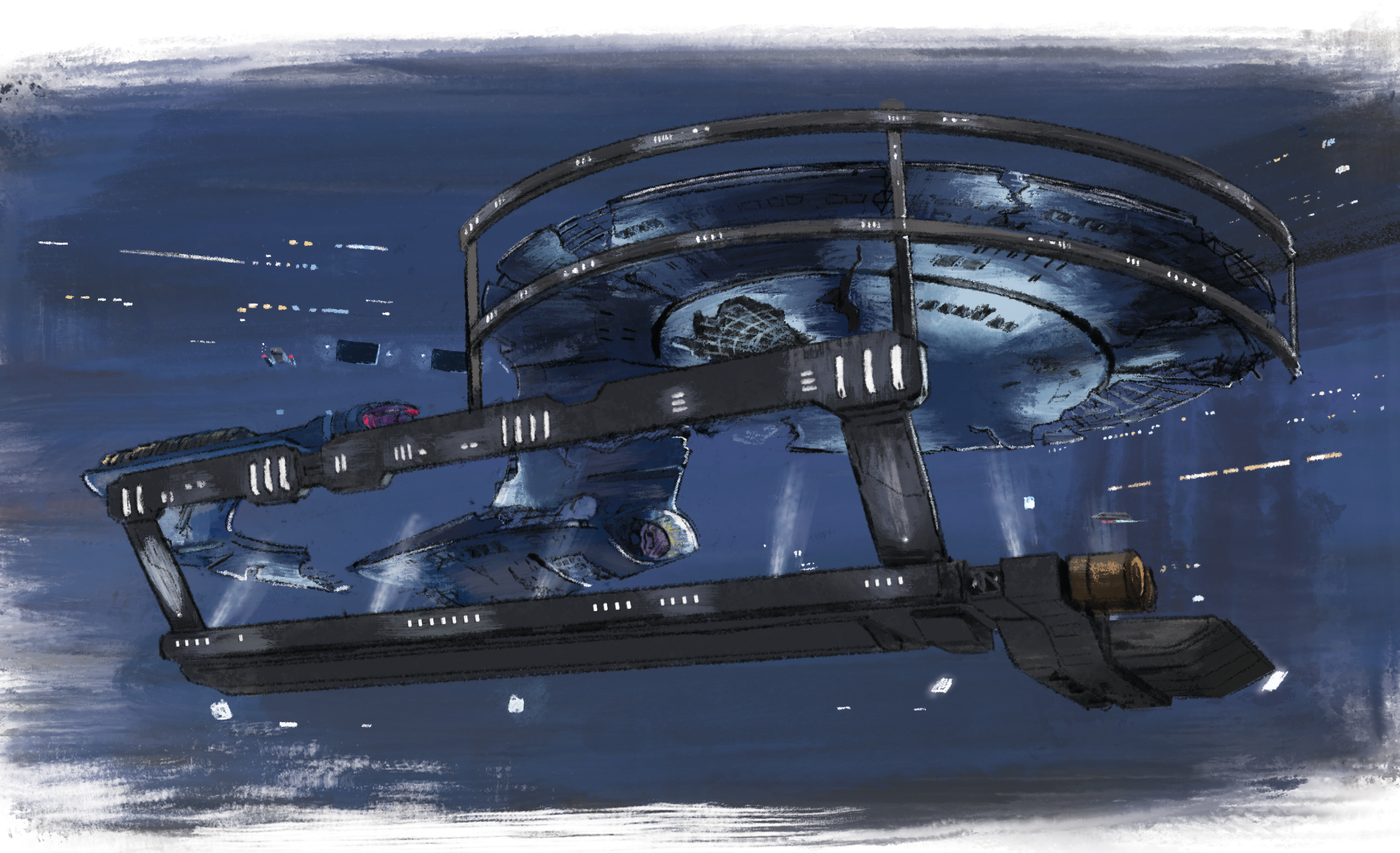
The result was a pretty ghastly sight. There is something clean about the lines of those *Galaxy*-class ships – I remember when *Galaxy* was launched seeing it on the news looking so sleek and futuristic. What sits in dock two is more a collection of bones than anything else. We knew once it was in the dock *Columbia* would not be moved out again, Starfleet wanted an extremely thorough examination conducted over every inch of the ship. There was a team from Utopia Planitia dispatched to help conduct the investigation after we had recovered the bodies and computer cores. I remember when we finally got into the flag bridge, we found Hanson still sitting there in his command chair. That was surreal.

There was, of course, the mission to recover remains – to make sure they were identified and returned home. While the ships had been in freezing vacuum these had been preserved, but once the ships were brought into the Ossuary and we established atmosphere we were against the clock to find the bodies and to get them to the morgue to be processed before there could be any further deterioration. Again, fortunately once inside the low bay it was possible to use the interior sensors to scan for communicators and organic material. The bodies would be collected and taken with all reverence to the mortuary where they were placed in stasis until formal identification could be made.

For all the devastation that was visible out there and on the ships, when it came to the people there was very little visible trauma on most of those we recovered. You hear stories from during the Klingon War of the types of wounds they would face but here most of the time they seemed peaceful, like they were just sleeping. There was an incident where we found a young ensign in the *Gage* and one of the recovery team broke down and started shaking her shoulders trying to get her to wake up. It was tough.

It takes a very particular type of person to work in the Ossuary. We had a dozen counselors assigned to the station following the lessons learned from the *Endeavour* and the initial recovery efforts. We would take the remains to the mortuary and they would be placed in stasis. We would replicate a new uniform for them and make sure their bodies were treated in accordance to their wishes as listed in their service record or according to the custom of their home worlds.

I'm not sure what the future holds for the Ossuary going forward. Even now, some three years later, we are still finding debris from the battle further out in the system. There was a concern about pirates and opportunists trying to steal technology and high quality duranium necessitating a constant patrol of the system, but more recently we've had ships approaching the "battle site" area carrying family members and people who want to come and pay their respects. We ask them to maintain a respectful distance but I imagine Starfleet will have to look into some sort of permanent station to look over the ships



ELIZABETH SHELBY

USS *ILLINOIS*, EN ROUTE TO ZAKDORN

Stardate 47626.9 – 2370



I didn't believe it at first. I had made my peace and was waiting for Captain Riker to issue the order to ram the Borg ship, then they just...stopped. I remember hearing Commander Data reporting that he had "put the Borg to sleep" in such a nonchalant manner – it was very much in keeping with my experiences of working with him. There was an innocence to the commander I found quite endearing.

Captain Riker requested I lead an away mission to confirm the status of the Borg and we beamed over – myself and a small security detail led by Lieutenant Worf. I know it sounds strange but as soon as we rematerialized on the ship it felt wrong. I don't know if I could quantify it to someone who hadn't been there but when I had been on the Borg ship previously there was an oppressive air all around and a sound, just at the edge of consciousness – like servos maybe? But it was dead quiet now aside from the irregular thrum coming from the power manifold. We quickly established that the Borg ship's power systems were in a runaway cascade. Fortunately, Captain Riker was inclined to let it destroy itself. A part of me wanted to go and find a way to stop it but looking back now...no, it was certainly for the best that the ship was destroyed.

In the immediate aftermath of the cube's destruction we were all in a bit of a daze. In truth, I don't think *anyone* expected to come out of this alive. Signal traffic was haphazard and orders were being issued and rescinded, there was a sudden dash to get recovery crews out to Wolf 359 to help rescue any survivors. The Borg debris needed to be collected and removed from Earth orbit and only now were the people of Earth realizing just how close they had come to oblivion. At Captain Riker's request I remained on *Enterprise* as his XO while Captain Picard was being tended by Dr. Crusher and Starfleet Medical. Riker ran the gauntlet of admirals who now wanted a piece of him, a chance to ask a question that would obfuscate the fiasco that had been Starfleet's

response and deflect the blame away from the admiralty and president.

As I suspected, Admiral Hanson's command of the task force made him the focus of Starfleet's targeting scanners and his death left him unable to defend himself. Investigators began to weave the narrative that he was overly emotional in his decision to attack. I very much opposed that viewpoint and made my thoughts on the matter clear when it was my time to enter the gauntlet.

I remained on *Enterprise* while Captain Picard underwent his initial rehabilitation, medical assessments, and the surgery to remove the Borg components that had been implanted in his body. Starfleet had a difficult decision to make regarding Captain Picard. Captain Riker and the whole crew were fiercely loyal to him and I can not help but admire anyone who can endear such loyalty in their subordinates. I heard a rumor that Starfleet insisted that if Picard was to remain as captain of the *Enterprise* then it was only on the condition that Riker remain as his XO to ensure there were no lingering side effects of the Borg, but I don't put too much stock in that personally. Captain Riker, I'm sorry *Commander* Riker, is a damn fine officer and any ship would be lucky to have him as captain. I hope the admiralty will find a ship for him, because we need officers like him leading.

As for myself, I'm not ashamed to say I was suddenly in high demand. I was offered several very impressive positions and even received a message from Captain Keogh, who was selecting his crew for the *Odyssey*, the next *Galaxy*-class ship that was due to enter service. He offered me the position as his XO based in no small part he told me on a personal recommendation from Captain Picard. I was extremely tempted and it was absolutely what I had hoped to achieve when I first accepted the posting to Starfleet Tactical, but everything had changed. With the death of Admiral Hanson and with all I knew about the Borg I knew I couldn't focus just on myself anymore.

Starfleet Tactical was officially defunct following Wolf 359. Starfleet finally accepted that it had to put the defense of the Federation on equal footing with its diplomatic and exploration missions so they established Strategic Operations under Admiral Hayes. Once I left *Enterprise* at McKinley Station and reported to him, we were faced with the monumental challenge of not only rebuilding the task force, but completely redefining what a starship had to be going into the 25th century and, more importantly, how we trained officers at the academy.

I spent many months analyzing the sensor logs and the recordings from the battle and I have been asked by Admiral Holland to compile the official report into the effectiveness of the tactics that were employed in Wolf 359. It was *hard* going through the flight data recorders – seeing people I knew go through their final moments employing tactics that I had helped devise and realizing how wrong we were. I tried to remember what Admiral Hanson had told me: we have five years to save the Federation. The Borg had jumped the gun, but we survived, and I was damned if I was going to ignore the gift of the extra time we now had.

We started working on new ship designs that looked unlike anything we had seen before. I'd never seen such a variety of designs – you would be hard pressed to recognize some of them as Starfleet ships. Some of the designs like the *Defiant* and *Intrepid*-classes worked, others like the *Yeagers* not as much. We also expanded the role of support ships, building more *California*-class to work as supply and logistic vessels to support a main task force. It was very much a case of throwing tribbles at the wall and seeing what stuck. We have some exciting developments coming, too – still classified, I'm afraid, but we're in a much better position now than we were in '66 and a good thing, too. With the discovery of the wormhole in the Bajor Sector, the galaxy just keeps getting smaller. I shudder to think what might be lurking out in the Gamma Quadrant just waiting for us.

ROBERT DESOTO

JOSEPH M'BENGA MEDICAL CENTER, EARTH

Stardate 45904.2 – 2368



I came to maybe 36 hours later? It was all a haze of voices and shouting. When I finally did wake up I was in so much pain all I wanted was to pass back out! There was a crewman, maybe Nurse Lally, who came over and shone a light in my eyes. My attempts to sit up were quickly dissuaded by the wave of nausea that hit me everytime I moved from the horizontal, so I made the command decision that it would be best to wait for the doc to come and give me a report.

A little while later, Doc Hughes and Commander Murakami moved into my line of sight. I'd already been able to gather that things were bad: for one thing, I wasn't in sickbay. I think I was in the wardroom along with others, and they were using portable generators to provide light and power to the monitoring equipment. Hughes repeated the examination, blinding me with a light and asking a load of questions about how I felt and what I could remember. I said the last thing I recalled was Aly talking about having an idea to stop the Borg from taking the vessel. I assumed that since I wasn't currently modeling a fetching little black number she had been successful. I assumed that she was off trying to run repairs to the ship.

After a while Doc Hughes gave me an injection and helped me to sit up. I was right, we were in the wardroom and there were a dozen cots laid out with crew in them...and four where sheets had been pulled up over their heads.

"Captain, you need to listen to me," he said. "You suffered a serious blow to the head and the trauma caused a cerebral edema; there was swelling of the brain. Normally, I'd just get you on a biobed and we could relieve the pressure via cortical stimulation and subdermal ventriculostomy, but that wasn't an option."

I looked between the doc and Hiroshi. I didn't realize how long I'd been out nor how bad things were. "Why wasn't that an option?" I asked.

"I'll let Commander Murakami explain the details. The point is, I have been able to repair the damage to the meningeal artery and the swelling has reduced, but I don't have the resources or the staff to try and keep you here. So, I'm releasing you to Commander Murakami." He fitted a monitor to my arm to allow him to monitor my vitals via his tricorder and then without another word he was away. I'd never seen the doc run so ragged.

Hiroshi helped me up off the cot – I was still pretty unsteady on my feet – and led us to a nearby Damage Control Station on deck three. It was acting as the "bridge." We stepped aside into what was nominally a storage locker but was apparently now the ready room. We perched on some crates and I saw the strain of the past day had taken on him. He looked like he was carrying the weight of the entire ship on his shoulders. I placed a hand on his shoulder and said to just breathe and tell me what we were looking at.

He started by explaining that Aly had managed to perform a computer reboot to the ship's original firmware – we're talking pre LCARS, what it left the yard with. She had been able to enact some sort of security protocol that was a holdover from the 2290s. It had stopped the Borg but had effectively destroyed engineering and the computer core had gone offline and erased itself as part of the protocol. In short, we were dead in the water.

I had to take it slow; sudden movements would make my head swim and I got tired easily, but I felt it was important for the crew to see myself and Hiroshi. I think it's safe to say we were all in shock.

We tried to piece together exactly what had happened, which was proving difficult without the main computer or access to the ship's sensors. Hiroshi had asked everyone to record their recollections onto PADDs or any systems that were not linked into the ship. Seems that after the Borg had boarded the ship they had performed some modifications to the deflector and impulse engines which had allowed the ship to enter some other form of FTL. From a star fix we had managed to take it appeared we had traveled from Wolf 359 to near the Bolius Sector in a couple of hours. On any other day that sort of a discovery would have been game changing: it would revolutionize travel across the Federation and open up the Delta and Gamma Quadrants for exploration, but all of that was for naught if we couldn't tell anyone.

The shuttlebay had taken a hit during the battle destroying the shuttles

although we had been able to salvage some of the fusion reactors to provide some power on the *Hood*.

Doc Hughes had been coordinating medical teams to find the wounded... and the dead.

[He takes a deep breath then stands and walks around the room for a moment before getting another drink from the replicator. This time it is just water. He returns to the couch and sits back down.]

We'd lost a lot. There was a roll call and only about a third of the crew were accounted for – there wasn't anyone from below deck eight to be found. Hiroshi had led an engineering detail down to check the status of main engineering but when I asked he just shook his head and said it wasn't pretty, which was something of an understatement. Of those still alive around two dozen were in critical condition, around another 50 were walking wounded. Food and water were starting to become a concern. Of course we had MREs and rationpacks throughout the ship but we'd lost access to everything in the engineering section so we were raiding the escape pod supplies. We had maybe a two weeks' supply of food and after that – well after two weeks of MREs I expect we would have welcomed starvation. [he smiles ruefully]

Fortunately, it didn't come to that. We were in the "bridge" when an ensign came running in shouting that there was a starship outside. We ran for the nearest viewport and, true enough, the USS *Ganci*, a fleet tender and supply ship, was sitting out there presumably trying to hail us and wondering what the hell an *Excelsior*-class ship was doing drifting out here. They patched into our comm network and we were able to communicate our situation. They came right to our rescue. She was a small ship, only room for a dozen or so, but they were able to hook an umbilical to *Hood* and let us get some secondary systems online. Within hours, there were more ships arriving to take our wounded and to try and figure out what to do with us.

I think I've already mentioned that *Hood* was an old ship even before Wolf 359, and after everything that she'd been through there wasn't too much left of her. They towed her to yards at Inbhir Ghòrdain and I thought that was that: they would remove any Borg technology they could get their hands on. I knew they were especially interested in whatever modifications had been made to the deflector for this new propulsion system, but I figured that was probably it

for *Hood*. Like too many of her forebears she would suffer an ignominious end.

It was probably that realization that brought me here. There's a lot of pressure when you take the center seat to be able to just absorb everything and to keep going. For some people that works, that's how they can cope with it. I know that's what Jean-Luc has done – get right back in the saddle – but I needed some time. Besides, it sounded like my lady was “retiring” to the farm upstate.

I was visited by Admirals Paris and Ross shortly after. I thought that it was nice that they would come here just to check in on me, but they wanted me to hear it first before it was out on the news. They knew the toll the battle had taken on us. Not just the ship, but on all of Starfleet and even the Federation. It had seriously dented our self image of being able to take on anything the galaxy throws at us.

Ross had been there and I could see that it had affected him, too: he seemed quieter, more reflective than I had remembered. They started talking about the importance of symbols and about redefining the conversation.

I was having a hard time following so asked them to just cut to the chase, what did they come here to tell me?

Ross stated “We lost 40 starships at Wolf 359. That is a tragedy, however you slice it. But if we lost 39 starships and one *survived* – that changes the narrative.”

I was still none the wiser. It's all well and good wishing we hadn't lost 40 starships, but that just wasn't the reality of the situation. They clearly were expecting me to grasp what they were saying sooner but in my defense, I was on a lot of medication at the time.

It was Paris who finally said it. “We're going to repair the *Hood*.”

It made absolutely no sense, *Excelsiors* are literally 10 a penny and there was nothing special about *Hood*. Ross disagreed.

“Of all the ships lost at 359, you never gave up the ship, and when they tried to take it you denied them their prize. I'll be honest with you, Robert, Starfleet is hurting after this and we need a good news story. Being able to say that one ship despite everything was able to defy the odds and return to service? We need to do that and we need you, too.”

And so they have. They brought her back to the Clydebank yards for a complete overhaul: everything from the keel up was refurbished and repaired, new warp core, new computer systems, new weapons. She should be able to go toe to toe with a *Galor*-class now. Hiroshi has been overseeing the refit, but she'll be in effect a brand new ship. Starfleet incorporated a lot of new technology into her to see about the feasibility of retrofitting a lot of the older ship classes to more modern standards. She should be good for another 30 years at least.

Not sure I can say the same about me, but I feel more like myself again and I think I'm ready to get back on the horse.



THE OFFICE OF STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE AND THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS HAVE APPROVED THE PARTIAL DECLASSIFICATION OF THE "HOLLAND REPORT ON THE BORG INCURSION OF 2366" AFTER 25 EARTH STANDARD YEARS IN ACCORDANCE WITH BOTH THE JONES-XERATHI ACT CONCERNING THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OF 2359 AND UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS EXECUTIVE ORDER 329784. CERTAIN SEGMENTS HAVE BEEN DEEMED STILL SENSITIVE TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND HAVE BEEN REDACTED AND CLASSIFIED UNDER STARFLEET ORDER 212019 AS PERTINENT TO ARTICLE 14, SECTION 31 OF THE FEDERATION CHARTER.

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL INQUIRIES IN WRITING TO EITHER THE DEPARTMENT OF THE STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, EARTH, OR THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS, LONDON, EARTH.

