

## From The Past

Commander Justan sat in his office in Main Engineering. He was going over several repair reports from his officers.

"Warning, port shield covering the warp core is failing." The computer said.

Justan picked up an engineering device and went over to the warpcore. He pressed a few buttons on the device causing a blue energy beam to emanate from it. He watched as the shield started to stabilize. "That should do it." He said, "Computer, current status of the port shield?"

"The shield is within normal parameters."

Justan nodded and started to pick up several tools on the ground. Over the past few days, he hadn't been able to keep the engine room up to the usual cleanliness as he wanted.

"Burke to Justan." The captain's voice came through the communications line.

Justan jumped, the internal communications array had been down for over two days. He tapped his commbadge, "Yes sir?"

"This thing's working again. What is the status of the warp core?"

Justan walked over to a station and read the readout. "We're running about eighty-five percent efficient." He said, "It could be close to a hundred by the end of the day."

"Good." Burke said, "We're still in the nebula, and all of the other major systems have been repaired. Hopefully they won't attack us again."

Justan nodded, "That would be ideal sir." He paused, "Did you ever find out what the Romulans wanted?"

"Negative. I know we haven't been able to hold a staff meeting for the past few days to catch everyone up." Burke said appologizing to his officer, "We haven't heard from them in over a day, so either they left or are waiting for us to exit the nebula."

Justan felt the hairs on his neck stand up. He didn't like the situation they were in. Didn't like the fact that the enemy hadn't shown themselves in over a day. "They're still mad about our last encounter I suppose."

"I would assume so." Burke said, "Get that core back to specs, and inform me when you're finished. Burke out."

Justan nodded and went back to work.

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A day later, the senior officers were in the Conference Room. Each of them were ready to report on their various departments, which wouldn't be too difficult since the Fresno wasn't too large of a ship with a crew compliment of only eighty officers.

"Where do we stand on weapons." Burke asked.

Commander Dobson looked up from a padd, "Our aft phaser bank needs to be rebuilt from scratch, but the other three banks are at ninety-five percent." He tabbed through a few screens of information, "The photon torpedo launchers are operating at specifications."

"How many torpedoes do we have?" Burke asked.

Again, Dobson tabbed through information, "Ten, sir."

R'Jor made notes on a PADD. "Where do we stand on warp power?"

Justan smiled, "We're ready to go sir." He said, "I managed to upgrade the deuterium injection tank, it's operating at better than specifications, now."

Burke nodded, "Good work." He looked to Taylor, "Doctor, where do we stand on medical supplies?"

Taylor shook her head, "Almost depleted sir." She said, "Apparently the Romulans managed to beam off several medical storage tanks from the cargo bay without our knowledge." She handed Burke a PADD, "Here is our current inventory."

Burke looked through the information. "Why would they want medical supplies?"

Tompson looked around the room, she didn't have anything to report and felt rather useless at the moment, but had an idea. "Sir?" She said, "What if they wanted to prevent us from helping our own people?"

Burke looked to the ensign, "Maybe." He said, but paused. He turned his attention to the operations officer. "Commander Dobson, you were in charge of moving the medical supplies into Cargobay three last week?"

Dobson nodded, "Yes sir." He said "We needed the extra space."

"What was in Cargobay three before you put the medical supplies there?" Burke asked.

"Not much" Dobson said, "Spare parts mostly."

R'Jor folded her arms, "What would they want with spare parts?"

Burke shook his head, "I'm not sure." He paused, "There must be something else." He said, "Are you sure there wasn't anything else in the cargobay?"

Justan looked out the window, the nebula was on the other side pink as ever. He had been in the cargobay a few days before the Romulans attacked the Fresno. As he thought, the other voices in the room became distant.

"Commander Justan?" R'Jor asked waking the commander from his day dream.

Justan turned to face the officers, "What?" He said, "I'm sorry, I must of drifted off."

Burke nodded, he could understand the fatigue the man must be feeling. Not having sleep for the past two days would make one tired. "Are you okay?"

Justan looked to him for a second trying to re-focus on the situation at hand. "Yes." He said. A few more seconds passed and he finally remembered what he had seen. "That's it."

"What?" Tompson asked.

"There were extra parts for our torpedo guidance system." Justan said, "That's what they must have been after."

Burke clasped his hands together. "Where are those components now?"

"Cargobay two." Dobson replied, "It has a higher level of security than three does."

Burke nodded, "Good thinking." He said, "We need to get back to Base Delta to complete our repairs." He said, "I need to know if that Romulan vessel is still out there."

"We could send out a probe." Dougless suggested.

"Yeah." Tompson added, "If they blow it up we'll know they're still around."

Dougless looked to the ensign and smiled, "Exactly."

Burke nodded, "Do it."

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Captain's Log, Stardate 53461.2

We are en route to Base Delta. The Romulan vessel didn't follow us out of the Neutral Zone. It is uncertain if they left the area or if they just lost interest. Once we are finished with our repairs, we will head back to the Neutral Zone to complete our mission. End Log.

On the bridge, Burke watched as a small asteroid came into view on the screen. "Drop to quarter impulse."

"Aye sir, quarter impulse."

"Open a channel." Burke said. "This is the Starship Fresno requesting permission to dock."

The dockmaster didn't respond. Burke looked to his operations officer "Is our comm down again?"

Dougless checked his computer "Aye. Give me a second." After a moment he nodded "Give it a try now."

Burke stood from his chair "I repeat, this is Captain Burke of the Fresno requesting to dock."

That time around the dockmaster received the message allowing the Fresno entrance. On the station, many watched as the newest class of starship entered the large docking bay. She was a magnificent vessel that had a reputation to build and legends to be made.

On the bridge, Burke watched as his helm officer completed the docking procedure. "Thank you ensign" he said, and then to the rest of the bridge crew "I'll be going to the station alone, for the time being, you are dismissed from your duties." He exited the bridge.

Commander Dobson looked to the first officer "We don't get to go?" He sounded irritated. It had been a while since any of them had any kind of shore leave.

R'Jor nodded "He's the captain." She stood from her chair and exited the bridge as well, giving no further answer.

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John Burke materialized in a small conference lounge. Before him was a medium sized table. Two officers sat behind the table. As Burke approached them, he placed a PADD on the table.

"These are the repair estimates for my ship. If your crew has any questions, my chief engineer is available."

One of the men nodded "Does your crew require shore leave?"

Burke shook his head "No sir, we're pretty anxious to continue our mission."

"I see" said the man, "If you should change your mind, our facilities are at your disposal."

"Thank you." Burke said as he left the room.

As he exited, Burke couldn't help but look out a large window down the corridor where the Fresno was docked. He walked closer to visually inspect the damage done by the Romulans. They sure had a field day with her, he thought.

"And they will pay."

Burke turned to see who had interrupted his thoughts. A woman in engineering garb smiled.

"I appologize for listening in" she said.

Burke nodded "You Betazoids are all alike." He had more than one run in with his operations officer, something he was slowly becoming use to. "What can I do for your crewman?"

The woman held out a hand "The name's Terry."

Burke didn't shake her hand. "State your business."

She hesitated "Your vessel will be ready in two days or so. You really should let your crew enjoy the station."

Burke's chest tightened. "Why so long a wait?"

Terry shrugged "Let's just say a starship that's more important than your own just put in for repairs." She dropped her hand down to her side giving up on trying to get a handshake.

Burke looked back out the window to see what ship she was talking about but the Fresno was blocking the rest of the base. "What's more important than my vessel?"

Terry ignored the question. "I insist you let your crew get some R and R while they're here. I promise you won't regret it." She turned and walked away.

Burke thought about her offer for a moment, she had a point. "Burke to Fresno."

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In Main Engineering, Commander Justan was monitoring the warp propulsion systems. He was making a complete record of the engine status before handing her over to the starbase engineering detail. Commander Dougless was assisting him in the process.

"I hear they have a great springball court here, and their other recreational facilities are the best in the sector!" Dougless said.

Justan smiled "Considering it's the only Section 31 starbase in this sector." He pressed a few controls on a console "The intermix chamber doesn't seem right." Standing from the console, he walked towards the dilithium chamber and took a few readings with a tricorder. "Hand me a type six stablizer."

Dougless handed him a device. "Why are we messing with this? Isn't that what the station's engineering crew's for?"

"I don't want them messing up my engine room."

Dougless took hold of Justan's arm, "Come on. Work time's over." He dragged the engineer towards a turbolift.

"Where are we going?" Justan asked.

"The station."

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The repair work went accordingly and after two days, the Fresno was headed back to the Romulan Neutral Zone.

In the conference lounge, Burke was listening to his senior officers report on their rest and relaxation.

"Aside from fixing a few bones" Taylor said glaring at Commander Justan "I was able to catch up on the latest medical technologies the Federation's investigating."

Ensign Julie Tompson smiled "Couldn't keep away from the springball court myself. Hope I didn't hurt you too bad commander."

Justan shook his head. "Only my pride ensign." He looked to Dougless "You could have warned me she was a pro."

Dougless shrugged his shoulders. "Don't look at me, I didn't know about it."

Burke chuckled "Don't worry commander, you're not the only one she's beaten." He turned his attention to his Tactical Officer "What about you Dobson?"

Commander Dobson slid a PADD across the table. "I received this information from one of the station's engineers. I'm not sure on what to make of it."

Burke looked the information over "This engineer, did she have long red hair?"

"Down to her shoulders, yes sir."

Burke nodded "She spoke to me as well." He thumbed through a few more pages of information before setting the PADD back down on the table. "It's none of our concern at the moment." Looking to Justan, he changed topics. "What's the status of the warp core?"

"They sure did a fine job fixing her sir." The engineer replied "Couldn't have done a better job myself. All systems are fully operational."

Burke nodded his approval. "What about the torpedo guidance system?"

Dobson nodded "I agree, the station did a fine job, but I would like to test it out on something before going into combat sir."

"No time like the present." Burke said "Ensign Tompson, take us to a good place for some target practice. Dismissed."

A half hour later the Fresno dropped out of warp near a dense area full of ship debris.

On the Bridge, Burke's senior offices prepared for the drill. "Shields up." Burke said, "Fire when ready."

Dobson activated a few controls on his console. "Detaching safeties on torpedo's one and two. Firing."

The torpedoes did exactly what they were programmed to do. Exiting the Fresno, they colided with the hull of a broken down vessel. Dobson continued the drill with two more torpedos at which point he was satisfied. With that completed, the Fresno cloaked and continued on its way towards the Neutral Zone.

Burke was sitting in his Ready Room reviewing various reports. He rubbed his head as he looked at the amount of new information that he and his crew needed to know. He picked up the PADD that Dobson had given him and reviewed the report again.

He didn't really know what to make of the information. Most of it was encoded to be released at a future date. He didn't know why the engineer had given Dobson the papers on the NX Class Starship in the first place. That type of vessel hadn't been used in a long time. He was curious about the encrypted information and what it might hold.

On the bridge, Ensign Tompson was seated at her duty station reviewing some upgrades to the helm design and trying to become ue to them. As in the past, she opted not to read the technical manual until it was absolutely necessary. She turned in her chair to the operations officer sitting on her left, "You know, I get use to a helm configuration and they go and change it on me."

Commander Dougless nodded and smiled "Yeah, tell me about it." He too was going through modification shock on the ops console.

"Why do they need these improvements anyway?"

Dougless shrugged his shoulders, "I think they're to help in the Neutral Zone. At least that's what Commander Justan said."

"Ensign, is there a problem?" R'Jor asked from behind.

Julie turned in her chair to face the First Officer, "No ma'am, sorry." Her panel made a beeping noise calling her attention. As Tompson turned to see what it was that alerted her, she noticed the captain exiting his ready room.

"All stop ensign." Burke said. He took the center seat and tapped his hand on his arm rest. "Commander Dougless what alerted the sensors?"

Dougless activated the sensor protocols. After a moment or two he nodded, "Sir, there is a long range communications array about twenty-five feet to port." He continued to make a few more scans, "From the looks of it, it's been there for over two-hundred years."

Burke shook his head, "Is that all." His voice was lower than usual, almost depressed. "Very well. Helm..."

"Captain." The tactical officer said.

Burke looked towards Dobson, "Yes Commander?"

The Bolian continued "The array is hailing us. It's an automated general hail."

Burke nodded, "On screen."

The view screen flickered as the comm array attempted the transfer. After it locked onto the correct frequency, the message played. A man wearing a uniform from the early years of Starfleet spoke. "This is Captain Allen of the United Space Ship San Francisco. If you are seeing this message, my crew did not complete their mission and we are dead."

R'Jor stood from her chair and took a few steps forward. Her mouth dropped open.

Burke noticed her out of the corner of his eye, "R'Jor, you OK?"

She barely allowed a nod. "I'm not sure, give me a minute."

The message continued. "You should be receiving our vessels' location. I request that you try and find our vessel. On behalf of my crew, please take our bodies back to Earth for a proper burial. Captain Allen out."

The captain's image was replaced with an older style image that said END TRANSMISSION.

Burke watched his officers give each other confused looks. "I'll be right back." John walked exited the Bridge into this Ready Room and came back a few seconds later carrying the same PADD he was looking over earlier. As he came back onto the Bridge he looked to Ensign Tompson. "Did we receive the coordinates as the message said?"

Julie nodded. "Yes sir."

"Captain" R'Jor said, "Permission to go to Sickbay, I'm not feeling well."

"Of course." Burke replied, he turned his attention back to Julie. "Set a course and engage at warp six."

"Captain, I must object to this course of action." Dobson said, "Another vessel can track down the San Francisco. We have a mission to complete."

"Your objection is noted." Burke said, "I doubt the Neutral Zone will be going anywhere. We have the time." He looked over the PADD, that engineer knew something and he didn't take the time to listen.

"Aye sir." Dobson said. The matter was closed and he wasn't about to object again.

An hour later, Burke was in Sickbay. He was called there by the Chief Medical Officer.

"What are you saying doctor?"

Burke was seated across from Doctor Tayler in her office. Doctor Taylor was telling the captain of some startling information she had just found out. "I'm saying that the R'Jor Symbiont is acting abnormally, the readings are almost off the scale."

Burke looked at her with disbelief. "What can you do for her?"

"I have the commander sedated for now." Taylor said. She stood and they walked out into the main surgical bay. "The computer's replicating an agent to counter act the symptoms. I should be able to administer it within the hour."

Burke nodded "What caused it?"

Taylor shrugged her shoulders, "It could have been a number of things. Too much stress is the most possible answer." She folded her arms, "We have been out in space for a while." She said, "To your knowledge, has she ever had these problems before?"

Burke shook his head, "Never."

Taylor nodded "I didn't think so. There's nothing abnormal in her medical history, except for the fact that she has had flashbacks from the Symbiont that have confused her from time to time. But we already knew about that."

"What can I do for her doctor?"

Taylor rested a hand on the captain's shoulder trying to comfort him. "Nothing for the moment. I'll call you if her situation changes."

"Alright, I'll be on the bridge." He turned and walked out the door into the hallway. "Come on Kim, get through this." Burke said under his breath. The ship shuddered for a few seconds. Burke could tell they were dropping out of warp.

"Captain Burke to the bridge please." A voice on his commbadge said.

Burke tapped the badge, "I'm on my way."

As Captain Burke entered the bridge he noticed the view screen. On it was, what he assumed to be, the San Francisco. "Report."

Commander Dougless stood from the captain's chair and sat back down at the Operations Console. "She's an NX class vessel in what appears to be perfect condition."

Burke checked a few readouts himself. "What are the power readings?"

"She's completely powered down. After this many years, I'd be shocked if she had any power left in her at all."

"Yeah." Burke said. He had never seen a vessel of that class up close before. It was exciting and mysterious at the same time. "Burke to Justan, you up for an away mission?"

"Name the transporter room." Justan's voice came through the commline.

"Number three, I'll be there with an away team shortly." Burke said.

"Right, Justan out."

Burke looked around the bridge, "Dougless come with me. Commander Dobson, you have the bridge."

The lift ride was a quiet one. Burke had half of his mind worrying about Kim and the other half was wondering about the San Francisco.

Captain's Log, Supplemental

We are beaming over to the starship that basically called out to us from the dead. I can only wonder what awaits us over there. What is she still doing out here after all these years, why hasn't anyone else picked up her signal, not to mention the communications relay we ran into. These are only a few questions that I want answered. I don't even know if there will be answers for those questions. Dead crews don't usually have the ability to tell you what happened to them. End Log.

Burke, Justan, and Dougless re-materialized on the San Franciscos' Main Bridge. It was dark and silent. Because of the fact that there was no oxygen in the ship, they wore space suits. Burke looked to Justan, "Get some power in these consoles and the lights up."

Justan nodded, "Aye." He opened an engineering kit and went to work.

Burke made his way towards the captains' chair, which was still occupied by the commanding officer. Because of no oxygen, the bodies on the bridge were in the same condition as when the crew died. "What a way to go." Burke said, "Suffocation?"

Dougless nodded in agreement. He took out a tricorder and ran a scan on the armory officer, "Yes sir." Then he added, "They died at their posts."

Burke looked around the bridge, because of his palm beacon he had a limited field of vision. After a moment, the lights came on and the consoles activated. "Got it." Justan said with pride.

Beep Beep Beep. A cycling beeping sound filled the bridge.

"What is that?" Burke asked.

Dougless made his way over to the communications station. He carefully moved the body of a young man out of the way so he could access the controls. "It appears to be a distress signal captain."

"Can you shut it down?"

Dougless nodded, "I think so." He worked the controls as best he could, not use to pressing buttons, pulling levers, and turning dials. Touch screens were something he took for granted. The bridge went silent as the distress call was terminated.

Commander Justan walked over to the Science Station. Accessing the controls, he turned to Burke. "Getting the power up was almost too easy sir." He said.

Burke nodded, "What about life support?"



Dougless checked a few more controls, "I'm not reading anything. I'll run a level one diagnostic on ship systems." As he ran the scan he became more accustomed to the vessels systems. "Sir the San Francisco's systems, except for life support, are running at almost one hundred percent."

"How can that be?" Justan asked. "She's been adrift for over two hundred years." He walked towards the turbolift. "I'd like to check out engineering. They only had a top speed of warp five, it would be interesting to examine their Matter Anti-Matter Reaction Chamber."

Burke held up a hand, "Negative commander. We need to get this ship back to a Section 31 Base, they can figure out the rest of the mystery and return the bodies back to Earth."

Justan nodded and walked away from the door, "Aye sir."

"Is she capable of warp tow?" Burke asked.

Dougless checked the diagnostic readouts again. "If we set the hull polarization to fifty percent, she should be able to handle the tractor beam."

"Get it done."

A half hour later, the Fresno and the San Francisco were in warp heading back to Base Delta. The senior officers were gathered in the conference lounge.

"They all died at their posts." Burke was telling the rest of his senior officers what they found over on the San Francisco.

Tompson shivered for a second. "Yikes."

"Captain," Justan began, "Not to be rude sir, but why didn't you want to investigate the situation further? This is probably the only NX Class vessel you'll ever run into and you didn't want to check it out."

Burke nodded, "Commander R'Jor fell ill because of that ship. Doctor Taylor still hasn't been able to figure out why the Symbiont is reacting the way it is. I didn't want to put your lives in danger as well." He rested his hand on the table. "Doctor, how is Kim doing?"

Taylor sat forward in her chair, "As well as can be expected sir. Base Delta might be able to figure out what happened." She passed a PADD down the table, "In case you were wondering, I was able to identify most of the San Francisco's crew. The computer is still working on the remaining six officers."

Burke read over the information, "Where are the bodies?"

"I placed them in the holodecks." She shrugged her shoulders, "I figured a simulation of a morgue would be most appropriate for them."

"Good. We should be arriving within three hours." Burke said, "I'm not sure when we'll leave the dock, I need to have some questions answered. Another vessel will be dispatched to clear up the problems in the Neutral Zone." He paused, "Commander Jutan, I have been given permission to allow you to check that vessel out. You will assist the engineering team with their work."

"Thank you sir." Justan said, "I appreciate it."

Burke nodded, "Dismissed."

The hours passed rather quickly. And Burke found himself back in the hallway where he had met Terry. As he walked down the hall, he found her standing by a window. The PADD with the information she had given Dougless was in his hand yet again.

"So, you found it huh?" The Betazoid asked.

Burke nodded, "Yes. Not to mention the questions that have risen because of it." He held out the PADD for Terry to see, "What's in the encrypted portion?"

Terry looked at the PADD and then back to Burke, "If you brought that ship back without knowing, you're too late."

Burke shook his head, "I followed procedure to the letter." He said.

"Are you sure?" She asked, "You didn't have your questions answered, you had to come all the way back to the starbase to ask me."

"My curiosity wasn't important."

Terry looked out the window at the NX Class Starship. "You've changed John."

Burke took a step back, something was familiar about how she said his first name. "Are you sure we haven't met before?"

She smiled, "Yeah earlier today."

"No, before that." Burke said.

Terry didn't reply, she just smiled.

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In Sickbay aboard the Fresno, Doctor Taylor continued to make scans of Commander R'Jor. R'Jor was awake laying on the main bio bed. "What happened exactly?"

Taylor looked up from her Tricorder. "I'm not sure."

R'Jor sat up allowing her legs to dangle off the edge of the bed. "I have to go." She started to stand up.

Taylor held up a hand, "No commander, I need to run a few more tests."

R'Jor shook her head, "No, I have to go." She formed a fist and hit Taylor across the face. She went down to the deck unconscious. Kim exited Sickbay and headed down the hallway towards a turbolift. Once inside, she gave the computer a destination. "Transporter Room Two."

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On the station, Burke continued to try and get the information from Terry, but she wouldn't budge. "Come on, I know I've seen you somewhere before."

He turned to face the window and saw the San Francisco starting to leave the spacedock. "Burke to Justan, what's going on?"

"I'm not sure sir, the ship just activated her impulse engines. I'm on my way to the bridge to check it out." Justan's voice said over a static filled commline.

The ship continued its way through the spacedock doors and went into warp. "Burke to Fresno, lay in a pursuit coarse and beam me aboard." He vanished as a transporter beam took him away.

Once Burke was aboard the Fresno, he basically ran towards the turbolift that would take him to the bridge. What on earth is going on here? He thought. When the lift arrived at the bridge, he immediately went to his command chair. "Report!"

Dougless sat down at his console, "We are in pursuit of the San Francisco as ordered sir. We should reach up to her within five minutes."

Burke nodded, "Ready a tractor beam, and get me Commander Justan on the line."

Dobson's fingers danced across the tactical console. "Some kind of dampening field is interfering with our communications sir. I can't get raise the San Francisco."

Burke slammed his fist against the arm of his chair, Come on Mark, talk to me. "Keep trying."

Aboard the San Francisco, Commander Justan arrived to the bridge. As he entered, he saw Commander R'Jor at the helm. The engineering staff of Base Delta were on the deck. Apparently the commander overpowered them. He approached the helm, "Commander?"

Commander R'Jor turned slightly in her chair, "What are you doing here?" In her hand was a phaser which she had trained on him.

Justan looked at the phaser and then back to R'Jor, "I might ask you the same question."

R'Jor didn't answer, she kept one hand working the controls with the other hand ready to fire if approached.

Justan walked over to the communications station and looked at the controls. He tapped his commbadge, "Justan to Fresno." There was no answer. Justan started to operate the controls trying to raise his ship, but had little luck.

R'Jor looked to Justan, "That won't work commander, I've disabled all communications. Even you can't bring them back on-line."

Justan sat down in a chair. He needed to figure out what exactly was going on. "Commander, what are you up to? Why did you comendeer this vessel?"

R'Jor didn't answer.

Justan ran his fingers through his hair. "Come on, there must be a reason."

Beep Beep.

Justan stood from his chair and walked to the station that was adjacent to it. He checked the readout to find out what was going on. "The Fresno." Mark said under his breath.

R'Jor looked to Justan, "No, I won't allow them."

The ship rocked slightly as the Fresno attempted a tractor beam lock. R'Jor changed course to avoid them from completing the task. "Let's see if you can handle this." She walked towards the armory station and brought the main Pulse Cannons on-line. Justan started to walk towards the helm. "Not there." R'Jor said, "The captain's chair." She pointed the phaser in his direction yet again. Justan took a few steps back and sat down in the command chair as ordered.

On the bridge of the Fresno the red alert klaxon sounded. "Incoming fire sir." Dobson said as the ship rocked from side to side. "Forward shields down to ninety-eight percent. Shall I return fire?"

Burke didn't want to, but knew it was necessary. "Target their aft Pulse Cannon. Fire."

The viewscreen lit up as the phasers found their target. "Direct hit sir." Dobson reported, "The cannon is off-line."

"Sir, the San Francisco is dropping out of warp." Dougless said.

Burke nodded, "Helm, drop to impulse. Tactical ready phasers." John stood from the command chair. "Burke to Transporter Room Two, can you get a lock on Commander Justan?"

"No sir. There is a dampening field in place. It will take a while to punch through it."

Burke sighed, "Understood."

"Sickbay to Captain Burke." Doctor Taylor's voice came through the commline.

"Go ahead."

"Captain, Commander R'Jor attacked me, I just came to. The computer says she's not on board."

"What?" Burke asked, "Understood. You might have incoming wounded in an hour or so."

"I'll be ready, Taylor out."

Burke looked to the ceiling. "Computer, what was the last known location of Commander R'Jor?"

"Commander R'Jors' last known location was Transporter Room Two."

"Where did she beam to?" Burke asked.

"The San Francisco."

Burke looked to Dougless, "Get me a transporter lock, I don't care how you do it get me a lock."

Dougless nodded, "Aye sir."

The San Francisco turned about and headed towards the Fresno. Deploying her forward cannons, she attacked the Fresno with an all out assault. Burke fell to the deck, "Report!"

Dobson's fingers again flew over the console, "Forward shields down to eighty percent, the port warp nacelle is off-line. Shall I return fire sir?"

Burke hesitated, he didn't want to destroy the vessel or harm his wife. But she needed to be stopped. "Aye. Fire at will, avoid the warp core."

Dobson nodded, "Aye sir."

The Fresno let several volley of phaser fire go disabling the San Francisco; soon the battle was over. The San Francisco's dampening field was destroyed allowing R'Jor, Justan and the engineering crew to be beamed safely aboard.

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#### Captain's Log Supplemental

After two days, our warp engines are back up and running. We have retrieved our crewmembers and are taking the San Francisco back towards Base Delta again. There is no explanation of why Commander R'Jor took the vessel or where she was headed. I've ordered her to Sickbay so Doctor Taylor can run a complete scan on both her and the R'Jor Symbiont, hopefully she will have some answers to my questions. End Log.

In Sickbay Burke was standing next to a bio bed where his wife was laying. "What's her condition doctor?" He asked.

Doctor Taylor shook her head. "I'm finding no trace of whatever was wrong with her two days ago sir. It's most puzzling." She ran a Tricorder scan of the commander, "She appears to be in perfect health."

Burke nodded, "Can you revive her?"

Taylor picked up a hypospray. "Computer, activate the restraining field."

"Field Activated."

She placed the hypo next to R'Jors' neck and activated the device.

R'Jor woke up startled. "What? What happened?" She looked up to Burke.

Burke looked to his wife. "Maybe you could tell us."

R'Jor closed her eyes, trying to figure out the scrambled mess that was going through her head. "Last thing I remember was being on the bridge of the San Francisco. What prompted me to steal that ship in the first place?" She continued to think and then opened her eyes after finding the answer. "That's it. When I saw the recording that Allen made I recognized him, and I knew that I needed to keep that vessel in space."

Burke was confused, "What do you mean? You were controlled by some kind of alien force?"

R'Jor shook her head. "No sir. That vessel was never meant to be returned to Starfleet. A previous host of mine was aboard that ship undercover from the Trill homeworld. Some kind of accident happened trapping that ship. It's what killed the crew. I can't explain it very well, the Symbiont's memories of the incident aren't very clear. The host somehow made it away from the ship and never returned."

"So you acted willingly?"

R'Jor nodded, "Aye sir. I expect I'll be reduced in rank because of this."

Burke didn't care about that at the moment. "Why wasn't that ship suppose to be returned home?"

R'Jor shook her head, "I'm not sure, I just know that she wasn't suppose to be returned to Starfleet. Or Section 31, it's dangerous."

"How so?" Taylor asked.

R'Jor continued to shake her head, "I'm not sure."

"Since you don't have any concrete evidence, I'll have to tow the vessel back to Base Delta. They can take care of it there. I'll give you a warning for now, but don't act upon previous host's actions again. Okay."

R'Jor hesitated, "But sir..."

"No commander." Burke said cutting her off. He turned to Taylor, "Is she fit for duty?"

Taylor nodded, "As long as she comes in for a physical tomorrow morning. She can go back to her duties."

Burke nodded, "Very well." He took Commander R'Jor by the hand and they exited Sickbay.

On the Bridge Captain Burke was ready to get under way. "Helm, set course for Base Delta once again." He paused, hopefully this will be the last time we see that starbase for a while. "Activate a tractor beam onto the San Francisco and Engage at warp five."

The viewscreen lit up as an explosion erupted destroying the San Francisco.

Dobson checked his readings "We have just launched two torpedoes at the vessel, she's gone sir."

"Dobson!" Burke yelled.

R'Jor stood from her chair, "It wasn't him sir. I authorized the launch."

Burke looked to his wife, "Why?"

"I told you, that ship is dangerous." Kim stood her ground.

Burke motioned towards his Ready Room. "Let's talk." They exited the bridge.

Tompson turned to Dougless "She's in trouble."

Dougless looked to the ensign, "As you were ensign."

In Burke's Ready Room, he stood face to face with his officer. "You disobeyed my orders commander."

R'Jor nodded, "Yes sir."

"If you can't follow orders, maybe you should step down and allow someone who will." Burke said.

R'Jor stood at attention. "I am prepared to accept whatever punishment you see fit sir."

Burke reached up and took off one of the commander's rank pips. "Commander Kim R'Jor, you are reduced in rank to Lt. Commander. After a period of time in the brig, you will remain in your quarters during your off duty hours." He tapped his commbadge. "Burke to Dobson report to my Ready Room."

A moment later, Commander Dobson entered the Ready Room. "Yes sir?"

Burke looked to R'Jor and then to Dobson. "Please escort Commander R'Jor to the brig."

Dobson nodded, "Aye sir. How long will she be in there sir?"

Burke sighed. "Until I tell you to let her out."

Dobson nodded, "Aye sir." He looked to R'Jor, "If you'll come with me."

R'Jor turned and exited the Ready Room with Dobson not too far behind. Burke looked towards the window, outside were the remains of the San Francisco. At least they were able to evacuate the dead officers who had died in the line of duty. There were still too many questions to be answered, and because of recent events he decided not to pursue those answers. He tapped his comm badge. "Burke to Bridge."

"Dougless here sir."

"Set a course for Base Delta and engage at warp five." Burke said.

As the Fresno went into warp, Burke felt helpless. He was angry that his wife would do such a thing. That she would violate his orders like that. It would have been easier if she had been under some kind of alien control, but it wasn't that way. She had done it by her own free will. He could not dismiss her actions or forget them.

The End