STAR TREK
UNCHARTED

Mission:
• To explore the Andromeda Galaxy.
• Seek out new life and new civilizations.
• Establish first contact.
• Form alliances and diplomatic relations.
• Joint mission between Starfleet and civilian scientists

Setting:
• The future, after Kirk & original Enterprise
• New technology developed – a Spacefold Gate constructed to warp jump to Andromeda.
• Enterprise is the first ship assigned to the new galaxy.
• Other ships will follow after first season.
• Starbase being built, will be complete at end of first season and two more ships will arrive.
• Enterprise will occasionally return to Milky Way for staffing changes, refits, extended leave.
**Crew**

**Expedition Leader (Civilian)**
**Cole Weston**
Male, Mid-30’s  
Terran (Caucasian)

Born on a frontier planet.

Adventure-seeking explorer with a case of wanderlust.

Well-respected among Starfleet, was considered to have a promising future, but resigned his commission to explore the galaxy.

**Captain**
**Solon Vega**
Male, Age Unknown  
Pythian/Terran (Asian)

Half-Human, half-Pythian. Born and raised on Elysia IV, a secretive culture that believes they can sense their own future. Cole’s Academy classmate, former shipmate and his oldest friend and confidante.

**Sciences Director (Civilian)**
**Lexia**
Female, Early 30’s  
Deltan

The foremost Xenobiologist in the Federation. An accomplished academic, but has never served on a starship before. Has an insatiable curiosity.

As a Deltan, has enhanced senses, is an empath (able to sense and transmit feelings) and is very active and open sexually.
Head of Health and Wellness (Civilian)
Firela Zan Joli
Female, Mid-40’s
Suvani

Extensive background in infectious diseases and xenoviruses. Believes strongly in non-Interference.

All Suvani are female, reproduce through parthenogenesis seeded by tactile genetic exchange. Suvani are extremely potent touch telepaths.

Tech/Ops Chief (Lt. Cmdr.)
Marcus Daystrom
Male, Mid-50’s
Terran (African)

A transhumanist, enhances his mental capabilities with neural implants. Networked directly into the ship’s systems. Creator of the ship’s AI, NOMI and of the holographic crewman ASH.

Great-grandfather was Richard Daystrom (invented duotronics, faulty M-5 that caused the deaths of hundreds of Starfleet personnel).

Security Chief (Lt. Cmdr.)
Qora
Transgender, Late 20’s
Orion

Orions have superior strength and agility and a special few have amazing regenerative abilities.

An exile from Orion society for refusing to breed. 10% of Orion are born like her, “Avunari” (the “third kind”) – of male gender but with female secondary sex characteristics. Her kind are required to propagate the species and are kept hidden and repressed.

Is adept with hand to hand combat, melee weapon combat and energy weapons.
Chief Engineer (Civilian)  
**Tyl’san Kopec**  
Male, 60’s  
Andorian

Experienced engineer and one of the designers and builders of both the new *Enterprise* and the Spacefold Gate.

Andorians have repudiated their warlike ways of the past, but Kopec still enjoys a good argument and is an avid sports fan – the more violent the sport, the better.

Helmsman/Navigator (Ensign)  
**Viin**  
Female, Early-20’s  
Romulan

Keen ability for spatial math and an expert helmsman. Like all Vulcanoid races, has very strong emotions and has a tendency to let them get the better of her, being still young and untrained in mental discipline.

Comes from a tribe of lighter-complexioned Romulans who have abandoned their old, Imperial ways and have embraced change after the destruction of Romulus. They believe in peace and exploration and have rededicated themselves to discovery and hypermathematics.

Xenolinguist/CryptoLogist (Lt.)  
**Kyle Becker**  
Male, Late-20’s  
Terran (Caucasian)

Brilliant linguist and cryptology savant. He finds any problem or puzzle irresistible, can decode most ciphers after just a cursory glance.

A low-level analyst for Starfleet Intelligence for several years, essentially drafted into serving on the Enterprise.

A genius at seeing patterns and understanding complex systems, sometimes his solutions appear, to the rest of the crew, to come out of nowhere.
STAR TREK UNCHARTED

PILOT
"Rendezvous with Destiny"

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EXT. FRONTIER PLANET - NIGHT

The planet's surface is a broad, open plain with sparse vegetation. There are two close-in size moons and a smaller third one in the sky.

A single structure stands on the vast plain, a 25th century ranch house. Various pieces of equipment and alien ranch animals are arrayed around the house.

A closer look at a second story window reveals a mother looking into a bedroom, turning on the light and seeing it empty. She goes to the open window and looks out.

Out in the field, YOUNG COLE, a 10 year old boy, sits on a blanket with a pillow, looking up at the night sky. His father, COLE'S FATHER comes walking up behind him. The father is slim and tall and has a heavily wrinkled face that conveys a lot of character and experience for his relatively modest years. The father looks down at the boy, then up at the sky.

In the sky, along with the three moons, is an awesome view of the Milky Way Galaxy from the very outskirts. The planet is in a system at the edge of the Galaxy, looking back down on it.

The father looks down at the boy, unsure of whether to yell at his son or hug him. Instead, he sits down next to him.

    COLE'S FATHER
    Can't sleep?

    YOUNG COLE
    I just like it out here.

The father smiles, gets it. He looks up into the night sky for a bit, then pats YOUNG COLE on the head.

    COLE'S FATHER
    Come on, I want to show you something.
The two get up and start walking.

YOUNG COLE
Where are we going?

COLE'S FATHER
You'll see.

They walk for a bit under the stars without talking.

The father stops walking and stops YOUNG COLE, turning him to face him.

COLE'S FATHER (CONT'D)
Someday, son, you're going to leave home.

YOUNG COLE
Do I have to?

COLE'S FATHER
No, of course not. But you... you don't belong down here. You belong up there.

The father points up at the stars and YOUNG COLE looks up.

YOUNG COLE smiles at the stars in awe, wide-eyed.

COLE'S FATHER (CONT'D)
(holds him in front of him)
You'll be your own man, and you'll choose your own path.

The father then points out at something in front of them. YOUNG COLE looks in that direction.

There is a huge lake about 10 feet below a cliff they're just a few feet from. Reflected perfectly in the still lake is the night sky, creating the illusion that they're standing on the precipice of space, itself.

YOUNG COLE
(softly)
Whoa...
YOUNG COLE walks up to the edge and looks down into the stars. His father walks up beside him and YOUNG COLE sees the reflection of his father looking over his shoulder.

    COLE’S FATHER
    Someday, Cole, you're going to get a chance to go further than anyone ever before.
    (pause)
    And when you do... I want you to jump.

YOUNG COLE looks down over the cliff. He's awed, but apprehensive.

    YOUNG COLE
    (hesitant)
    Is it dangerous?

    COLE’S FATHER
    There’s danger in living. That’s what makes it living.

YOUNG COLE looks deep into the starfield in the lake. It's reflected in his eyes.

    COLE’S FATHER (CONT'D)
    (gently)
    Jump, Cole.
    (inspirationally)
    Jump.

YOUNG COLE dives head first into the lake, the stars rush at him and he smiles in pure joy. Reflected in his eyes we can see the stars rushing at him.
EXT. SPACE

Continuing from previous shot. The stars are passing by.

A medium-size Starfleet science vessel, the USS MESSIER, comes from behind and moves forward into the streaking stars. It slows and the stars come to a halt.

The Messier approaches an orangish, desolate-looking planet.

TITLE OVER:
   Acheron Omega III
   "Kopec's Planet"

EXT. KOPEC'S PLANET - SURFACE

An open orange dusty plain at the base of an outcropping of rocks. There is sparse green-brown vegetation.

Four figures materialize.

Two are obviously scientists: DR. FERRIS, a younger pale human with reddish hair. He seems eager and nearly giddy at their arrival. PROFESSOR ULIO, an older blue-skinned Bolian who appears excited as well, but focused.

The third person is NELSA, a female humanoid with olive skin, short, curly dark hair and dark eyes. She appears to be more of a brooding type. She looks as though she's constantly on guard and ready for action. Definitely not a scientist.

They are accompanied by a serious-looking junior security officer, LT. DRAKE, who is well-built and has a short blonde crewcut.

Dr. Ferris looks around. He looks at the top of the rock formation and points.

The landing party looks up, Kopec's ranch can be seen at the top.
The four proceed up the rocks.

INT. KOPEC'S RANCH

Through a window, we see the four figures ascending the rocks. A figure's hand lets go of the curtain and picks up a device of some sort.

EXT. KOPEC'S PLANET - SURFACE

As the landing party reaches the top of the rocks, they come to a small plateau.

Lt. Drake spots a sign that says:
WARNING: TRESPASSERS WILL BE DISINTEGRATED!

His eyes widen in alarm. He looks around and puts his hand on his phaser, gripping it anxiously.

They see Kopec's Ranch, or, rather, a somewhat humble looking shack.

NELSA
Someone lives in that thing?

PROFESSOR ULIO
I should hope so, Ms. Nelsa, if your people got your information right.

NELSA
We always get out information right, Professor.

DR. FERRIS
I guess we should... knock?

They step forward and are suddenly surrounded by a forcefield.

PROFESSOR ULIO
What in the-

Nelsa and Drake both take out phasers. Drake seems a bit surprised that Nelsa was armed. They both try to shoot the force field, but meet with no success.

Nelsa and Drake realize it's pointless and give up.

KOPEC (O.S.)
I was not expecting company... explain yourselves.

Dr. Ferris looks around for the source of the voice.

DR. FERRIS
Dr. Kopec?
(doesn't see anyone)
Dr. Kopec, we're from the Starfleet Corps of Engineers, we've come with a message!

KOPEC (O.S.)
I'm going to assume you've heard of subspace communications, but you did say you were from Starfleet, so I won't make any assumptions about your intelligence.

Ferris and Ulio exchange glances.

DR. FERRIS
Uh, well, we'd kind of like to speak to you in person...

KOPEC (O.S.)
You know, I haven't gotten to disintegrate someone in a long time.

PROFESSOR ULIO
Dr. Kopec, please, listen: it's of the utmost importance that we speak to you in person! We've come with... with information of an incredible nature...

DR. FERRIS
We've traveled three months to see you-

KOPEC
(scoffs)
You could have done it in three days if Starfleet would have listened to me the last time they sent a couple of so-called "engineers" to evaluate my theories.

All four turn and see KOPEC, who has materialized out of thin air behind them. He is an older Andorian, looking a bit ragged and weatherworn. But he is still quite spry and mentally sharp. Alert brown eyes peer out from his squinting, wary expression. His thin, tight-lipped mouth is always in some degree of a frown.

NELSA
(under her breath, to Ferris)
That's Kopec? Doesn't look like a genius.

PROFESSOR ULIO
Dr. Kopec, it's those exact theories that have brought us here... Starfleet thinks it's time to give them a try.
KOPEC
Well... really. Why didn't you just say so in the first place?

Kopec lowers the force field and walks to his house. As he walks by Drake and Nelsa he presses a button on his device and comments:

KOPEC (CONT'D)
(with derision)
Your "toys" seem to be broken, kids.

Drake and Nelsa look at their phasers - totally dead. They look at each other and put away their phasers.

The landing party follows Kopec into his house.

INT. KOPEC'S RANCH

Kopec, Ulio and Ferris are sitting around a table. Various PADDs and other display data are splayed across the table and the two scientists are presenting it all to Kopec, who is holding a cup of tea. Nelsa stands nearby but is studying Kopec, not the data. Drake is standing further away, in the doorway.

DR. FERRIS
As you can see, Dr. Kopec, we've studied the data several times, cross-checked it repeatedly. We can come to only one conclusion.

KOPEC
And that is?

DR. FERRIS
Well, this is a-

Professor Ulio stops him.

PROFESSOR ULIO
We'd like it... if you told us...

Kopec looks at the two, appearing somewhat annoyed. He leans forward, takes a quick, bored glance at the data and leans back.

KOPEC
I have no idea.

NELSA
(scoffs)
Hmmph.

Nelsa shakes her head.

KOPEC
Dry throat? Ms... Nelsa was it?
NELSA
(mockingly)
"No idea"... you knew exactly what this data indicates the moment they laid it on the table.

KOPEC
Well, fancy parlor trick, Ms. Nelsa. But I've known a few Betazoids in my time, so don't color me impressed just yet.
(pauses)
Tell you what, gentlemen: why don't you tell me something I can't figure out... when did Starfleet start arming Engineers with type 5 hand phasers?

Kopec indicates Nelsa.
Ferris and Ulio look at each other, nervous.

NELSA
I am not an Engineer.

Drake looks surprised, trying to listen in without looking like it.

KOPEC
No kidding.

Kopec gets up and walks over to her, studying her closely.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
Section 31?

NELSA
Starfleet Intelligence.

KOPEC
(derisively)
Contradiction in terms as far as I'm concerned.

Nelsa rolls her eyes as Kopec walks back towards the couch.

DR. FERRIS
Dr. Kopec, we're sorry, you have to understand - this information is extremely... sensitive, Starfleet insisted on sending an agent with us.

KOPEC
Well, I can see why. And now I see why you have a sudden interest in my theories. Andromeda is a long way to go at warp 9.

Kopec sits back and sips his tea.
Ulio and Ferris look at each other awkwardly.

PROFESSOR ULIO
About your designs, Doctor-

KOPEC
Oh, yes. I purposely put errors in the calculations I gave Starfleet. I assumed you'd all be too thick to notice until much too late.

Ferris and Ulio exchange glances of both relief and annoyance.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
Well, I hope that wasn't all you came so far to ask me, gentlemen, or I'll be quite disappointed in you.

Ulio stands up.

PROFESSOR ULIO
No, Dr. Kopec... we've come to ask you to return with us... and supervise the construction of... your Spacefold Gate.

Kopec leans back in his chair and thinks for a second, grinning. He looks around, picks up his tea cup and stands up. After looking around a little more he turns back to the two scientists.

KOPEC
Well, that should do it, what are we waiting for? We've got history to make!

Ulio and Ferris grin like schoolboys as Kopec heads for the door.

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

MAIN TITLE:
STAR TREK UNCHARTED
ACT ONE

EXT. STARFLEET HQ - NIGHT

Tilt down from the night sky to an establishing shot of Starfleet HQ overlooking San Francisco Bay. The night lights from the city reflect on the dark water.

TITLE OVER:
   Starfleet Headquarters
   San Francisco, Earth

INT. ADMIRAL SAN LAGOS' OUTER OFFICE

CAPTAIN SOLON VEGA is sitting impatiently in a chair in the waiting area. He's tapping his foot and looking anxious. He is tall, handsome, lean and graceful-looking. He has a mixed-ethnic look to him, vaguely East Asian.

Vega looks at the alien assistant sitting at a desk outside the door to Admiral San Lagos' office. She gives him a polite, but fake smile and he smiles back, insincerely.

Vega looks around impatiently, then stands up and comes over to the assistant's desk. He tries to pour on the charm to get some information.

VEGA
   So...

ASSISTANT
   Please remain seated. The Admiral will be with you soon.

Vega looks off-put by being cut off immediately. He starts to go back to the chair, but stops and decides to just ask what he's thinking.

VEGA
   Hey, look... I don't suppose you have any idea why I've been summoned here, do you?

The assistant looks at him with bored disinterest.

ASSISTANT
   I don't know. Did you do something really good?

Vega thinks about it.
VEGA
No...

ASSISTANT
Then it must be something bad.

VEGA
(sarcastically)
Thanks.

He sits back down.

An indicator on the assistant's desk lights up. The assistant looks at it, then at her screen.

She looks around the room.

ASSISTANT
Captain Solon Vega?

She's looking around and Vega looks around. He's the only person in here.

He sighs at her snarky attitude and raises his hand, shaking his head at her intentional ignorance.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
The Admiral will see you now.

Vega looks a bit reluctant as the assistant unlocks the Admiral's door. He heads in.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
Nice knowing you.

The assistant gives him a sadistic smile and he sneers back at her as he goes in.

He passes a plaque beside the door reads "Admiral Oviedo Jesus San Lagos".

INT. ADMIRAL SAN LAGOS' OFFICE

Vega enters and ADMIRAL OVIEDO SAN LAGOS is sitting behind his desk and looks up from his screens at Vega. The older man is tall and only slightly overweight. He has medium length white hair and a beard and moustache still peppered with some darker hairs. He looks to be in his 60's or early 70's, but still in good shape.

Oveido gestures to a chair in front of his desk.

Vega walks over to the desk but remains standing.

OVIEDO
Take a seat, Captain Vega.
VEGA
With respect, I'm kind of tired of sitting.

Oviedo glares at Vega, but Vega remains defiant, standing at ease.

OVIEDO
(with resignation)
Your prerogative.

Oviedo looks down at some information on some holographic "sheets" (HoloPADDs) he has arrayed on his desk. He sifts through them and picks up the disk-shaped projector for them and stands up. He walks around the desk toward Vega.

Oviedo looks at Vega as if to speak, but Vega speaks first.

VEGA
Look, whatever I did - it wasn't me!

OVIEDO
(amused)
Oh?

VEGA
Well, there was this shapeshifter on Gamma Hydra IV and-

OVIEDO
It was a changeling, and it was Gamma Hydra II.

Vega and Oviedo both smile. Oviedo sticks out his hand and Vega takes it. The two shake hands and Oviedo pats him on the back warmly.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
Good to see you again, Sol. It's been too long.

VEGA
Ten years?
OVIEDO
No, couldn't be... though you certainly don't look like the wet-behind-the-ears Tac Officer I remember.

VEGA
(falsely)
Well, you haven't aged a day, sir.

OVIEDO
Hah!

They share a laugh and Oviedo steps back and walks to his desk.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
In any case, it's been much too long. How are things on the Horizon?

Vega responds with obviously qualified enthusiasm.

VEGA
Can't complain.

OVIEDO
Oh really? That's not what your record says.

He brings one of the sheets of holographic info to the front. Vega points at the sheets like they're a disease.

VEGA
Those are full of lies and biased-

OVIEDO
"Captain Vega continues to harass Starfleet Command demanding special assignments."

VEGA
They had me patrolling the Argus Sector! An uninhabited sector!

OVIEDO
"Captain Vega has repeatedly questioned the wisdom of his superior officers."

VEGA
Have you met Commodore Birch?

OVIEDO
"Captain Vega shows a pattern of disregard for standard operating procedure, preferring to make up his own rules and trust his 'instincts'."
VEGA
Who said that?!

OVIEDO
It's your psych eval.

VEGA
Okay, well. That part is true.

Oviedo smiles, shaking his head as he puts the holofile down and deactivates it.

OVIEDO
Captain Vega... how'd you like to get away from it all?

Vega looks skeptical.

VEGA
Court-martial or exile?

OVIEDO
A mission, Sol.

Vega is surprised.

VEGA
(curiosity piqued)
Where to...?

Oviedo breaks out in a large grin, this is the moment he's been waiting for. He hits another holofile and it projects the image of a large galaxy.

OVIEDO
Andromeda.

Vega is dumbfounded. He just stares at the galaxy. Then at Oviedo, who just smiles at him, loving every second of it.

VEGA
You're joking.

OVIEDO
Dead serious.

VEGA
The Andromeda Expedition? Me?

OVIEDO
If you want it. And maybe even if you don't.

Vega is still shocked, just doesn't understand how this happened.

VEGA
Was there a clerical error, or-
Oviedo turns serious now.

**OVIEDO**
Sol. This is not an ordinary mission. The crew that takes this voyage is going to be on their own, out there in unknown territory. Having to fend for themselves with no support from Starfleet. They're going to need a Captain who can think on his feet, trust his instincts and bring them home safe.

Vega nods, staring at the hologram of the galaxy, thinking. Oviedo goes to the window and looks up out at the night sky.

**OVIEDO (CONT'D)**
It's a different Galaxy than when I was a young officer, Sol. There was a wonder to it all. We were pioneers, every new encounter was a first. A discovery.

Vega looks at Oviedo, listening.

Oviedo sighs and turns to Vega with a rueful smile.

**OVIEDO (CONT'D)**
(with resignation)
Starfleet is just a glorified police force nowadays.
(dismissively)
Ensuring trade routes, escorting ambassadors and dignitaries, settling regional disputes.

**VEGA**
That's not entirely true, sir.

**OVIEDO**
No, no... there are still some discoveries to be made and some good, old-fashioned adventure can be had!

He grins and steps back toward the desk.

**VEGA**
If you know where to look.

**OVIEDO**
(pointedly)
And you complain loudly enough.

Vega smiles, admitting the point.

Oviedo turns off the galaxy hologram and smiles. He knows Vega is right for the mission.
INT. STARFLEET HQ - CORRIDOR

Oviedo and Vega are walking together down a corridor.

VEGA
So let me get this right. You're offering me probably our most historic mission, in another galaxy, completely on my own without the oversight of Starfleet.

OVIEDO
(sighs)
Yep.

VEGA
(likes it so far)
What's the catch?

OVIEDO
Sol... you've always shown great potential. I knew back on the Pegasus that someday you'd make a great Captain... Hell, I knew at the Academy.

Vega is waiting for the other shoe to drop, doesn't like where this is going. Senses a big "but" coming.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
I'm not saying it was easy, I had to fight for you. You've stepped on a lot of toes, ruffled a lot of feathers. But I knew you were the right man for the job.

VEGA
Thanks, Admiral, but-

Oviedo stops at a door.

OVIEDO
But, honestly, the thing that sealed the deal was, well... You were requested. Personally.

Vega looks confused.

VEGA
By who?

Oviedo presses a button by the door and the doors open. The sign by the door reads:

ASTROMETRICS LAB

Oviedo gestures for Vega to go in first. Vega looks at him questioningly, then steps in.
INT. STARFLEET HQ - ASTROMETRICS LAB

Vega walks into the darkened room and looks around. Looking up through the clear dome he can see the bright stars in the night sky. Monitors line the walls of the room, all showing different stars and planets and astronomical data.

Squinting, Vega sees someone step forward into the light.

It's COLE WESTON. He is tall, handsome and of average build. He has short, combed-back dirty blonde hair, clear blue eyes and has a scruffy beard giving him a somewhat rugged look. He is dressed casually and looks more like an archeologist than an officer.

Cole smiles at Vega.

Vega's eyes go wide in recognition.

VEGA
Cole?!

He goes to Cole and the two shake hands and hug with warm camaraderie.

VEGA (CONT'D)
(grandly)
Cole Weston, The Third! "The Great Explorer"!

COLE
(with equal sarcasm)
Solon Francis Vega, renegade Captain and scourge of the Alpha Quadrant.

OVIEDO
"Francis"?!

VEGA
(unconvincingly)
Damn lies!
(to Cole)
How the Hell are you?

COLE
I'm good Sol, it's great to see you again.

VEGA
I should have known you'd get yourself wrapped up in this crazy mission.

COLE
I'll take that as a compliment.
VEGA
What have you been up to? Last time
I saw you, you were lost in the Gamma
Quadrant looking for some planet that
didn't exist.

COLE
I found it.

Vega smiles.

VEGA
I figured you would.

Oviedo comes over and joins the two old friends.

OVIEDO
Cole's heading up the civilian side of
the expedition.

VEGA
Civilian?

Cole looks at Oviedo knowingly, doesn't want to have to be the
one to have to explain it.

OVIEDO
This is a historic mission, Sol. The
entire Federation has a stake in it.
This is bigger than Starfleet.

Vega looks at Cole, then back at Oviedo, trying to figure out
where this is heading.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
You know that catch you asked about?

Vega is starting to look wary now.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
This mission is a joint venture
between Starfleet and the major
member planets of the Federation.
The top civilian specialists from all
over the galaxy are joining the
mission.

VEGA
A science team?

Vega looks at Cole.

VEGA (CONT'D)
(jokingly)
What's that have to do with Cole? He's
just a Starfleet dropout with a thing
for planet hopping.

Cole smiles at the jibe.
COLE  
(good natured comeback)  
I seem to recall one of us was top of their class at the Academy.

Vega looks at Oviedo jerks his thumb at Cole.

VEGA  
Teacher's pet.

Oviedo smiles at seeing his two former junior officers go at it again.

OVIEDO  
All I know is I lost the finest helmsman I ever had when you left Starfleet, Mr. Weston.

COLE  
Just had other places I wanted to be, Sir.

Oviedo nods, he understands Cole's desire to see the galaxy.

OVIEDO  
to Vega  
(Cole, here, has logged more first contacts than any Captain in the fleet.

Vega is impressed.

VEGA  
(with honest appreciation)  
I don't doubt it!

Oviedo leaves the two standing side-by-side by the large center console and walks around to stand on the other side of it.

OVIEDO  
Here's how it is, gentlemen. The Federation wants this to be an inclusive mission of discovery and exploration. We don't want to make an overly militaristic first impression. Lord knows we've made that mistake before.

Vega and Cole exchange knowing glances.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)  
To that end, this mission is under civilian direction and Starfleet is supplying the ship.

Vega looks surprised at this.
OVIEDO (CONT'D)
(indicating Cole)
Mr. Weston is in charge of the itinerary - where to look for planets, life. He'll direct the civilian specialists and handle any first contacts.
(indicating Vega)
Captain Vega commands the ship and its crew, has veto power on any mission if he deems it unsafe and is in charge should hostilities or other threats to the ship become known.

Vega considers this.

Cole looks at him, trying to see how he's going to react. He looks at Oviedo and the two share a worried look for a moment.

VEGA
(nodding)
Makes sense. If we're going over there, let's do it right. Bring the best and brightest. Why limit ourselves to Starfleet?

Oviedo looks relieved.

OVIEDO
I'm glad you see it that way, Captain. And I honestly couldn't think of two men better for the job.

Vega smiles at this.

VEGA
I know of at least one Captain who'd disagree with you!

Oviedo waves that off.

OVIEDO
Cole. Show him.

Vega's brow furrows. He looks back and forth at Cole and Oviedo, wondering what great secret he's not been let in on.

Cole steps up to center console and looks up into the night sky through the clear dome.

COLE
This isn't just another mission, Sol. This is...

Cole is overcome with a sense of awe and wonder.

COLE (CONT'D)
History. The next step.
Vega isn't sure how to respond. He knows this already. He isn't sure why Cole is being so mysterious.

VEGA
I know. Everyone in Starfleet knows.

COLE
Everyone in Starfleet thinks they know what this mission is about.

Cole hits a control the center console and the holographic display activates, filling up the majority of the room above them a 3D image of the Andromeda galaxy. Vega steps forward to take a closer look.

COLE (CONT'D)
The first expedition to explore another galaxy. Andromeda, two and a half million light years away.

Turns to Vega, a thrill in his expression.

COLE (CONT'D)
They're wrong.

Vega is confused, but intrigued. Oviedo sits back and enjoys it.

On the display, telemetry data appears, analyzed across various spectra.

VEGA
Telemetry? From Andromeda?

Cole nods.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Brought back by the probes.

Cole looks at Vega.

COLE
No, Cole. Sent to us. From Andromeda.
Now Vega is dumbstruck. He looks again at the data, then at Oviedo.

VEGA
When...

OVIEDO
20 years ago. Took Starfleet Intelligence 5 years to decode it.

VEGA
What does it say?

Cole hits a control and Vega sees the message translated (off-screen).

VEGA (CONT'D)
This is... is this for real?!

COLE
We have no reason to believe otherwise.

Vega steps back trying to process this.

VEGA
Who...

Cole doesn't answer, enjoying watching Vega work it out on his own.

VEGA (CONT'D)
How...
(to Oviedo)
Did we reply? Have there been any more messages?

OVIEDO
None. We couldn't reply through normal subspace, the distance is too great. Two years ago we were able to send through the first probe with our response. But it came back empty handed. No reply. We've sent over 30 probes through, each one came back with plenty of sensor data, but not one message, not one sign of intelligent life on the other end.

Vega is baffled. But his curiosity is piqued unbearably.

VEGA
Who... or what...?

COLE
That's what we're going to find out, Sol.
Vega nods absentmindedly, overwhelmed by it all. He shakes his head and smiles at Cole, who’s beaming with anticipation at the mission.

OVIEDO
Congratulations, gentlemen. You’re going into the history books on this one.

Oviedo offers a congratulatory hand to Vega.

Vega is thrilled; he strides over to Oviedo and accepts his handshake vigorously.

Cole walks up and accepts a handshake from Oviedo too.

COLE
You don’t know how much this means to me-

Oviedo puts a hand on his shoulder.

OVIEDO
Cole. I know what it means to you.

COLE
(earnestly)
Thank you.

The two shake for another moment. It’s clear Oviedo is proud of Cole and Vega, like a father is of his grown son when he surpasses the father. Proud, and a little jealous.

EXT. STARFLEET HQ - NIGHT

Vega and Cole are walking away from Starfleet HQ. The stars can be seen reflected in San Francisco Bay as they walk.

VEGA
Can you believe it? A couple of Academy delinquents like us - the first to go to Andromeda?!

Cole smiles, but something is on his mind.

COLE
Sol... are you sure you’re okay with this?

Vega looks pensive for a moment, then abruptly turns on the charm.

VEGA
Sure, why wouldn’t I be?

COLE
It’s still your ship, your command-
Vega interrupts Cole's appeasement, putting his arm around him.

**VEGA**
My ship, your mission. Who cares?
We're back in action at last!

Cole smiles, happy that Vega is taking it well.

**VEGA (CONT'D)**
To be honest, I always figured I'd end up working for you someday anyway.

He steps in front of Cole, walking backwards, making a grand gesture.

**VEGA (CONT'D)**
As my people say: "to the stars our fates belong, may they never steer us wrong"!

Cole smiles suspiciously at him.

**COLE**
(skeptically)
I've never heard you say that before.

**VEGA**
Yeah, but it sounded good.
(BEAT)
Come on, the old crew's down at Boothby's, they'll want to say their "good riddances"!

Vega pats him on the back and the two walk off.

Cole, smiling, looks out over the bay of stars, his mind racing at the wonders awaiting him in Andromeda.

**EXT. SPACE**

**TITLE OVER:**
Six months later...

A shuttle flies by and the scene pans to reveal Deep Space B-7, an isolated space station at the far reaches of the Galaxy.

**TITLE OVER:**
Deep Space B-7
Beta Quadrant
EXT. DEEP SPACE B-7

The Starfleet shuttle comes in for a landing in one of the station's docking bays.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - DOCKING BAY

The shuttle lands and crew stream out.

One of them is VIIN, a young blonde half-Romulan woman. Her hair is cut in a sort of modern pixie short in the back and long in front. She is short and thin. She wears the uniform of a Starfleet ensign and is carrying a sack.

Viin looks around anxiously. She looks down at a HoloPADD she is carrying then looks around even more anxiously.

The crowd around her is streaming past her, brushing against her and jarring her a bit. She looks lost.

She starts to head off in one direction, then suddenly changes directions and bolts in the opposite direction.

She bumps right into Admiral Oviedo, who is in civilian clothing and was carrying a raktajino, which is now all over his jacket.

Viin is surprised and immediately apologetic.

VIIN
Oh! I'm so sorry!

OVIEDO
You really should look where you're-

Viin is desperately trying to clean the spilled drink off Oviedo's jacket with her own sleeve. It's only making it worse, but she doesn't notice.

VIIN
I'm such a klutz, I'm just - it's just that I'm supposed to report to duty and my shuttle was late and I don't even know-

Oviedo takes her gently by the arms and stops her fruitless attempts to clean up the mess.

OVIEDO
Slow down, slow down.

She looks up at his face for the first time, but still seems jittery and nervous.
OVIEDO (CONT'D)
Maybe I can help, where are you trying to go?

VIIN
Oh, I'm supposed to report to...
(looks at her HoloPADD)
An "Admiral San Lagos".
(realizing the time)
Dammit! I was supposed to be there 10 minutes ago!

OVIEDO
San Lagos, hunh? Well, you're in luck. I haven't been on the station long, but I think I can point you in the right direction.

Oviedo uses her HoloPADD to bring up the station directory and has it show her the route to his office.

Viin is embarrassed she didn't think of that herself.

VIIN
Oh, wow, thank you - Thank You!!

Viin starts to back off. Oviedo calls to her loudly.

OVIEDO
Better hurry up, I hear that Admiral's a real hard ass!

Viin panics and turns to run, bumping into a couple more people as she runs off.

Oviedo smiles after her, amused. He looks down at himself and his drink and then drops the mostly empty cup into a passing recycling bot.

RECYCLING BOT
(bleeps)
Thank you. For. Recycling.
(bleeps)

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - ANTIQUES SHOP

LT. KYLE BECKER is a lanky, younger-looking Starfleet junior officer. He's of average height, has short, wavy dark hair and is has a face that, while not traditionally handsome, is very expressive.

He is checking out some artifacts on the shelves of an antiques shop. Outside the shop, he sees Viin run past, causing a minor commotion. He turns his attention back to the artifacts and picks up one in particular.
Becker turns it over in his hands a few times, running his fingers along the runic symbols inscribed along the length of it.

FITCH - an older Ferengi shopkeeper, sidles up beside Becker unnoticed and speaks, startling Becker.

    FITCH
    (going for the "soft sell")
    It's one of a kind, you know.
    Recovered from the ruins of Galidan Prime.

Becker looks intrigued.

    FITCH (CONT'D)
    I was lucky to get it! The archeologist who sold it to me had run out of funds. He sold it to me to buy passage home. He said it's over ten thousand years old...

Becker is studying it closely. The Ferengi is anxious to make the sale.

    BECKER
    (distractedly)
    Isn't Galidan Prime quarantined?

The Ferengi doesn't appear to have known this, but rolls with it.

    FITCH
    Yes!
    (with mock somberness)
    The poor bastard died a week later.
    (pauses appropriately)
    All of which makes it so much the rarer! And more valuable!

Becker seems impressed.

    FITCH (CONT'D)
    Of course, I am no historian, I'm but a humble purveyor of rarities and curiosities. You seem like an educated man, an astute student of history, am I right?

    BECKER
    Well...

    FITCH
    Tell you what. Because I have a feeling - call it an intuition - that you just might be the one to decode this enigma, I'll let you have it for, say... 10 bars.
BECKER
Really?  10 bars?

FITCH
Nine.  Only because I like your face.

BECKER
Wow, that's very generous of you-

FITCH
(disingenuously)
Of course-

The Ferengi heads to his register and tries to take the artifact from Becker, but Becker pulls it close to him and inspects the runes more carefully.

BECKER
The only thing is... these runes are in a form of proto-Ktarian, but they clearly read:
(looks closely at them)
"Made on Ferenginar".

The Ferengi's flattering facade melts away.

FITCH
(directly)
What's your point.

Becker offers the artifact back to the Ferengi.

BECKER
It's not worth the synthiplast it's made from.

Becker smiles and the Ferengi snatches it from his hands.

FITCH
(sneering)
You're obviously not an admirer of history.  Now get out before I...

The shopkeeper's voice trails off as he sees a gang of rough-looking aliens come in: KREEG - a Klingon, BUROCH - a Naussican and a mute ALIEN THUG.  Becker turns to see them as the shopkeeper backs up from the gang in fear.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - ANTIQUES SHOP

Fitch is backing away from the three thugs, Kreeg, Buroch and the mute Alien Thug. Becker watches anxiously.

FITCH
(nervously)
Kreeg, now... I don't want to have to call security-

The shopkeeper is about to reach for a panel, but the Naussican smashes it.

KREEG (IN KLINGON) (sarcastically)
Oops.

The Naussican leers at the shopkeeper threateningly and emits a guttural sound that seems to be a laugh of some sort.

Becker looks at the three thugs anxiously, trying to figure out whether to help or run and send help.

Kreeg walks around behind the counter to where the Ferengi is standing, "accidentally" smashing a few more items along the way.

KREEG (IN KLINGON) (CONT'D) (continuing)
You know why we're here, Fitch... did you think Sirius wouldn't notice you hadn't made your monthly "contribution"?

FITCH
Wait, please! Tell Sirius he'll have his money!

KREEG (IN KLINGON)
20 bars, Fitch! And that's the discount rate!

FITCH
I just don't have it right now! (to Becker, accusingly)
Sales have been slow, there's not a bar in the till, I swear! See?

He opens his register and it's completely bare.

Kreeg slams his fist down on the counter in anger, shaking all the wares on the shelves.

KREEG (IN KLINGON)
You Ferengi think you're-
Becker steps in front of the Klingon and picks up the fake artifact. Kreeg stops in mid-sentence and looks down at Becker, enraged and appalled that a puny human would interfere in this way.

**BECKER**

Excuse me, I was here first...
(to Fitch)
How much was this 2nd Era Galidan sculpture again?

Kreeg looks at the Naussican and mute Alien Thug with in confusion and disbelief.

Fitch looks shocked and confused, too - speechless. Looks at Becker like he's crazy.

**BECKER (CONT'D)**

20 bars, wasn't it?
(to Kreeg)
Seems like a bargain!

Becker begins to dig around in his shoulder bag and presents 20 bars of gold-pressed latinum.

Kreeg's eyes widen in surprise and he grabs the latinum from Becker’s hand. He looks at them with the Naussican, biting them to make sure they're real. He looks back at Becker.

Becker simply smiles at him.

**BECKER (CONT'D)**

Well, good doing business with you, see you-

Kreeg pulls at his shoulder bag and Becker drops it, spilling the contents all over the floor. The Klingon and the Naussican bend down to rifle through it, looking for more bars of latinum.

Becker and Fitch exchange quick glances and bolt for the door but run into a wall of green- the mute Alien Thug is blocking the exit. They back up slowly and the Naussican grabs their shoulders. Kreeg comes up behind them dropping the empty shoulder bag and pocketing a few more bars.

**KREEG**

(continuing)
Were you trying to make me look STUPID, Human?!

**BECKER**

(nervously babbling)
Oh, no, I think you're managing that just fine on your own.

Fitch glares at Becker like he must have a death wish.

**KREEG**

WHAT?!!!
(to the Alien Thug, in Klingon)
Hold him, I'm going to teach this petaQ a lesson in respect!

Becker begins to panic and blather.

BECKER
Whoa, whoa, I really wouldn't bother-

Kreeg looks at Becker, realizing he understands Klingonese.

KREEG (IN KLINGON)
Why not?!

BECKER
(babbling)
I'm a slow learner, really... and, well, I bleed really easily, and, uh, it would really be a mess, you could slip, maybe fall and hurt yourself... and I've been known to scream really, really loud, so...

Fitch shakes his head.

KREEG
(screams)
RRAAGHH!!!

Kreeg grabs Becker by the collar and winds up for a punch. Becker covers his face and squeezes his eyes tight. Suddenly, a hand reaches up and grabs the mute Alien Thug and pulls him away.

Standing in the doorway is LT. COMMANDER QORA - a tall, imposing, strong-looking, green-skinned Orion woman wearing a Starfleet security uniform. She has thin, raised ridges on her cheek bones, chin and on the bridge of her nose. Her wavy dark green hair is pulled back in a high, loose ponytail. She flips the Alien Thug and knocks him out quickly.

Kreeg and the Nausican are surprised. Kreeg motions the Nausican to attack her.

The Nausican rushes forward and she spins and slams him face- first into the wall. This seems to only anger the Nausican. He turns around and charges her again, but she deftly sidesteps him and twists him so that he flies through the window.

Fitch flinches, not out of empathy for the Nausican, but for the lost revenue in his destroyed merchandise and the projected cost of fixing the window.
EXT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - ANTIQUES SHOP

See the Naussican fly through the shop window. Startled passersby react and scatter. One of them runs up to a counter in another shop.

PASSEURBY
(to the shop owner)
Call security, there's a fight!

The shop owner runs back into his store.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - ANTIQUES SHOP

The Klingon smiles, seeing a good fight on his hands. He shoves Becker and Fitch back and gets in a fighting stance. Becker and Fitch retreat behind the counter, peeking over to watch the fight.

KREEG
(derisively)
Qa'be'Hom!

Becker understands the curse.

BECKER
(to Fitch)
That wasn't polite at all!

QORA
(mockingly)
Funny, I thought Klingons fought with fists, not words.

The Klingon laughs and lunges at Qora. Qora is able to dodge the charge and kick the Klingon in the ass.

He gets angry and turns back around and swings at her. She catches the arm and slaps him across the face then kicks him back across the floor, landing on his ass.

The Klingon slams into the counter which jars open a hidden compartment under the register. Scores of bars of gold-pressed latinum are inside, some spilling out onto the floor.

Fitch desperately goes to catch them and shove them back in.

Becker gives the Ferengi a disappointed look, but Fitch only pauses long enough to shoot him a dismissive glance and continues picking up the money.

The Klingon gets enraged and stands up. He growls and draws a D'k tahg (Klingon dagger).

QORA (CONT'D)
(continuing)
That's a warrior's weapon, are you sure you know how to use it?
KREEG
ENOUGH!! I'm going to gut you like a to'baj, woman!

Kreeg charges at Qora with the knife. She side-steps it more carefully this time.

Kreeg seems to be getting more confident now, grinning as he slashes the dagger around. He lunges and slashes at her tunic, cutting though it and leaving a wide bloody gash on her abdomen. A small amount of viscous, green blood oozes out.

Becker and Fitch are watching again, worried now.

Kreeg charges Qora again but she side-steps and takes off her large gold bracelet - with a soft beep it morphs into a glowing plasma whip and with a quick flick of the wrist she slashes the knife in half just as Kreeg turns around.

Kreeg looks shocked and looks down at his knife, then at the crackling, glowing laser-whip.

KREEG (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Bogh'z'moh!

Qora flips the whip around a little, smiling cockily. She raises her hand and crooks her index finger, egging the Klingon to bring it on.

Kreeg looks around and sees Becker and Fitch smiling eagerly at the fight.

Desperately, the Klingon reaches over for them but his forearm is sliced clean off by the whip - the wound is instantly cauterized.

Kreeg screams in pain and drops to the floor holding his arm stump.

Becker is shocked. Fitch pumps his fist in silent victory.

Qora walks up to Kreeg and nerve pinches him to knock him out. Qora taps her comm badge.

QORA
Security to Sickbay-

VEGA (O.S.)
That won't be necessary, Commander.

Qora, Becker and Fitch turn to see Vega standing in the doorway. Cole is there, too, checking on the unconscious Alien Thug.

Medics are coming in and security teams are taking away the Naussican.

Qora sees Vega's rank and snaps to attention.
Sir!

VEGA
At ease, Commander.

Vega walks in and looks at the mess.

VEGA (CONT'D)
(continuing; to Fitch)
Unsatisfied customer?

FITCH
Nothing I couldn't handle.
(to Qora)
Though there is the small matter of compensation for damages to my establishment...

Qora glares at him in disgust.

QORA
Bill me.

Becker recognizes Cole.

BECKER
Cole Weston? I was on my way to see you... Kyle Becker?

COLE
(recognizing the name from the roster)
Yes, Lt. Becker, xenolinguistics. You were one of the first crew Starfleet assigned to this mission.

BECKER
Yes, well, more like "drafted"... I'm not really Starfleet.

The two are distracted by medics carrying the Klingon away with his severed arm.

MEDIC
(to Vega)
He's lucky, sir, the cut's clean. We should be able to reattach the arm easily.

QORA
(sarcastically)
Oh, good.

A medic brings a dermal regenerator over to Qora's abdomen to heal her cut, but is surprised to see it already self-mending. Fibers of green skin have already grown across the wound and are pulling it back together like organic stitches.
Becker is looking at Qora in awe, immediately infatuated. He approaches her as the medic shrugs and walks away.

BECKER
(to Qora, gushing)
Can I just say: you were amazing.

Qora hadn't really noticed Becker before. She looks down at him, not sure what to make of him. She's a bit off-put by the compliment.

QORA
(insincerely)
Thanks.

COLE
(to both)
Why didn't you call station security?

QORA
I was the closest security officer. And the situation called for immediate action.

Becker nods in agreement vigorously.

Cole looks at her plasma whip, now deactivated.

COLE
That polyweapon isn't exactly Starfleet standard issue.

QORA
It comes in handy. No phasers are allowed on the station.

She morphs it back into a bracelet and snaps it back on.

BECKER
(approvingly)
It's very flattering.

Qora growls at him and he flinches, but smiles back at her.

Vega steps forward.

VEGA
Cole, I'd like you to meet Lt. Commander Qora...

Qora and Cole shake hands.

VEGA (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Our new Chief of Security.

Cole and Qora both look at Vega in surprise. Vega is grinning at Cole's expression.
Qora rolls her eyes.

EXT. STARFLEET TRANSPORT

A Starfleet transport vessel approaches Deep Space B-7.

INT. STARFLEET TRANSPORT

LEXIA is at a window seat looking out at Deep Space B-7. She is a Deltan of average height, slim build, light skin, dark eyes and is bald. She is in her mid-to-late twenties. She wears a flattering, comfortable blue outfit.

DR. FIRELA ZAN JOLI is seated next to Lexia. She is full-figured, slightly taller than average and has light skin, long red hair in an updo and blue eyes. She looks to be in her late thirties to early forties.

Joli leans over and looks out the window, too.

Lexia looks Joli over. Joli is a voluptuous woman and covered from neck to toe in tight clothing. She is even wearing gloves.

Joli notices Lexia looking her over and smiles at her politely.

LEXIA
I'm sorry, I don't mean to be rude.

DR. JOLI
Oh, no, it's quite all right.

LEXIA
It's just that... you're a Suvani, aren't you?

DR. JOLI
(smiling, a bit impressed)
Yes, I am!

LEXIA
Fascinating! I've never met a Suvani in person before.

Lexia offers her hand. Joli takes it and clasps it warmly.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
Oh, I'm sorry, that sounded bad. You must feel like you're under a microscope. I'm Lexia.
DR. JOLI
Nice to meet you, Lexia. I'm Firela.

They shake warmly and both return to their own activities - Joli reading from a HoloPADD and Lexia pretending to read her own. But Lexia is clearly bursting at the seams with questions.

LEXIA
Okay, I have to ask - I may never get this chance again...

Joli smiles with polite patience.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
What's it like?

DR. JOLI
Excuse me?

LEXIA
Well... no men...

Dr. Joli knows what Lexia is getting at but decides to play it a bit coy.

DR. JOLI
Oh, we get along just fine.

LEXIA
No, sorry, I mean... Asexual reproduction... I know parthenogenesis is not uncommon in-

Lexia sees Joli's expression of amusement and catches herself.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, that was terribly rude. That's way too personal, I shouldn't have-

DR. JOLI
No, no... I'm a doctor, I'm not easily embarrassed. It's quite all right.

Lexia is relieved. But Joli doesn't answer, she just goes back to reading on her HoloPADD. Lexia can't stand it anymore. She leans over to Joli.

LEXIA
(whispers)
It's just that-

DR. JOLI
(interrupting)
There are several excellent instructional holoprograms on the matter if you'd like me to recommend one.
Now Lexia is totally embarrassed.

LEXIA
Wha-what? No... no! That's not what I-

Joli laughs warmly and reassures Lexia.

DR. JOLI
I'm just teasing. It's actually not all that mysterious. We're fairly similar to Humans, anatomically. We make love and get pregnant and give birth much like a sexually dimorphous species, only we-

LEXIA
But how?

Joli finally gets what she's asking and smiles broadly at her.

DR. JOLI
Oh... Well, it involves a lot of touching-

LEXIA
(remembering her studies) Right, to transfer genetic material through skin contact.
(Excitedly, like figuring out a puzzle) Is that why you're always covered up?

Joli is pleasantly amused at Lexia's enthusiastic curiosity.

DR. JOLI
Around other species, yes.

LEXIA
(without thinking) And is it true that you do it in groups?

DR. JOLI
(laughs) You are quite curious aren't you?

Lexia is suddenly very apologetic.

LEXIA
Oh, I'm sorry. I get carried away sometimes. It's just my nature - I'm a xenobiologist, first and foremost.

DR. JOLI
Oh, I know.

Lexia is surprised.
LEXIA
You do?

DR. JOLI
Yes, I read your medical file.

Dr. Joli holds up her HoloPADD. It's displaying Lexia's file. Lexia is totally flabbergasted now.

Dr. Joli offers her hand in introduction now.

DR. JOLI (CONT'D)
Doctor Firela Zan Joli. Head of
Health and Wellness for the Andromeda
Expedition.

LEXIA
Oh! That's quite a mouthful...

DR. JOLI
(smiles)
It's a new position. Since we'll be operating without a support structure initially, I'm responsible for more than just medical needs. I'll also be overseeing the crew's fitness, nutrition, mental health, recreation and morale.

Lexia is speechless - that's a lot of responsibilities. She just gawks at Dr. Joli.

DR. JOLI (CONT'D)
And you're our Sciences Lead - quite an accomplished xenobiologist to get this assignment, I imagine!

Lexia is humbled by the compliment.

LEXIA
(blushing)
I guess I'm the one under the microscope now. Fair enough.

DR. JOLI
Don't worry, I won't tell anyone about your...
(looking down, raising her eyebrows)
condition.

Lexia is confused and taken aback. She looks down at herself trying to imagine what Joli is talking about. She sees the mischievous sparkle in Joli's eyes and both women laugh.

DR. JOLI (CONT'D)
And: yes.
LEXIA
(confused)
Hmm?

DR. JOLI
We do.
(leans in, whispers)
And it's mind-blowing.

Lexia smiles in surprise and the two women laugh again.

A steward approaches them.

STEWARD
We'll be docking in a few minutes.

Joli nods and Lexia looks out the window. She sees the Spacefold Gate being built nearby.

LEXIA
There it is...

Joli looks out the window at it.

JOLI
Quite a miracle of science.

LEXIA
Just imagine what we'll find on the other side!

JOLI
(dryly)
Oh, I can imagine.

Lexia looks at her a bit confused.

LEXIA
You don't sound too thrilled with the idea...

Joli smiles a bit sadly, taking a moment to collect her thoughts.

JOLI
I suppose... I'm not sure we've been the best stewards of our own galaxy. Do we really deserve the responsibility for another?

Lexia is speechless. She'd never considered that, having been solely focused on the excitement of discovery. She looks back out at the Gate.
EXT. SPACEFOLD GATE

The Spacefold Gate hangs in space several hundred meters from the space station. Several technicians in jet-propelled suits zip around the frame of the Gate. The Starfleet Transport is just a speck at this distance.

Suddenly, there is a flash of light near the station, close to the transport.

Zoom in on the flash of light - a distortion wave is spreading out from it rapidly and the transport is directly in its wake!

INT. STARFLEET TRANSPORT

Joli and Lexia are recovering from the flash of light and look back out to see the large distortion wave headed their way. Fright shows on their faces just before the distortion wave hits the transport.

EXT. STARFLEET TRANSPORT

The Transport was about to enter the docking bay of Deep Space B-7 as the distortion wave pulses through the shuttle, buckling and warping it. It now careens out of control and crashes into the bay instead.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

EXT. DEEP SPACE B-7

The shuttle has crashed into the side of the docking bay. Debris, gas and energy leak from the impact.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - DOCKING BAY

Vega, Cole, Qora and Becker come running in. Hazard Teams and medics come running in past them.

They see the transport vessel. It has punched a hole in the wall of the docking bay and it's hanging half-in, half-out of the bay. An emergency force field is all that's keeping the artificial atmosphere in the bay.

An emergency hatch pops, but is stuck, blocked by buckling in the transport's hull. It won't open all the way.

Cole, Vega and Qora run to the transport to try to help however they can. But Becker appears to be having some sort of panic attack and slowly backs away, looking around in abject terror. He slips out of the bay, his sense of self-preservation kicking in.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - CORRIDOR

Becker exits the Docking Bay hurriedly and leans back against a wall. He is having a full-on panic attack. He looks around wildly and clutches his chest, pulling at his tunic.

A medic comes to him, but he waves them off and they run inside the docking bay.

Collecting himself, Becker takes several deep breaths and slides down the wall to sit on the floor, head leaning back against the wall, eyes closed, breathing deliberately to calm himself.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - DOCKING BAY

Vega and Cole are trying to pull the emergency hatch free, but to no avail.

Cole sees an arm sticking out through the door, grasping fruitlessly. Cole takes it and immediately feels a sensation that is both a surprise and familiar to him. Regaining his composure, he offers it comfort while he looks around for some other way to get the hatch free.

Vega looks at Qora and points to a large metal bar. Qora sees it and nods. She picks it up and bring it over. She wedges it in-between the hatch and the hull. Together she pushes and Vega pulls on the door while Cole holds the arm with the unseen owner.
COLE
It's all right, we're going to get you out of there! Just hold on!

With a great heave of exertion, Qora and Vega get the door free and it falls to the ground.

The owner of the arm falls out of the hatchway into Cole's arms. It's Lexia. Vega and Cole help her up. She looks dazed and disoriented.

Dr. Joli appears in the hatchway. Her outfit is tattered; she appears injured and unstable and falls out of the transport. Qora moves quickly and catches Joli in her arms.

Joli is surprised by this and looks up at Qora incredulously. She's grateful and impressed by Qora's strength.

Qora looks down at her and seems entranced. She simply holds Joli in her arms while the Hazard crew helps the other transport passengers out of the ship and to the medics.

Joli is looking at Qora quizzically, trying to figure out why the tall woman hasn't set her down yet. Joli looks down at her clothes and sees they've been torn in several places and that Qora's skin is directly touching hers. Joli sighs apologetically.

JOLI
You can... set me down now.

Qora doesn't respond, she just blankly obeys and slowly lowers Joli. When Joli leaves her arms, Qora seems to gradually come back to her senses, like a fog is lifting.

JOLI (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, it's my skin. My people have a strong... influence over other species we come into contact with.

Qora looks down at Joli's torn clothes, then at her own hands, slowly comprehending.

Medics come over to Joli as Qora pointedly looks away from Joli, embarrassed by her loss of control.

QORA
... excuse me.

Qora walks off abruptly.

The medics tend to Joli, but she brushes them off in annoyance, she's fine. But she watches Qora leave, regretting that she made her uncomfortable.

In another part of the Docking Bay, Lexia is sitting, now, with a blanket over her and with a flask of recovery water. Cole and Vega stand in front of her.
COLE

How are you feeling?

Lexia is finishing a swig of her water and holds her finger up telling him to wait while she finishes. She finishes, gasps and wipes her mouth.

Just then, there's a loud creaking sound and some gasps. Lexia, Cole and Vega turn to see the now-evacuated transport finally fall out of the hull breach and drift away.

Lexia looks up at Cole.

LEXIA

Lucky...

Cole and Lexia hold each other's gaze for entirely too long and Vega looks back and forth at them, sensing something between them.

VEGA

(pointing elsewhere)

I'll just...

He slips away without them acknowledging him.

LEXIA

(smiling wryly, toasting with her flask)

That was some welcome wagon...

COLE

It's good to see you again, Lexi. Though I can't say I pictured it like this.

Lexia looks around then down at herself, realizing she must look a mess.

LEXIA

(in agreement)

I guess I'm not exactly at my best...

COLE

That's not what I meant.

Lexia looks up into Cole's intent gaze. She knows what he means. Cole sits down next to her.

COLE (CONT'D)

Lexi... when I saw they picked you for the mission... Well, I thought you might-

Lexia doesn't want to have this conversation - at least not right now. She stands up, cutting him off. She wavers a bit and he goes to brace her, but she waves off his help, steadying herself.
LEXIA
I'd love to catch up, Cole, but I'm in desperate need of a shower. And I need to check in on my staff.

She smiles at him halfheartedly and walks off.

Cole gets up and takes a step after her, but stops. He looks away in silent consternation.

An emergency tech passes Cole and he grabs him by the arm.

COLE
What happened in here?

EMERGENCY TECH
We're not sure yet - some explosion outside sent the shuttle off-course.

The tech slips away and Cole looks out the hull breach, intense concern coming over his expression.

Purposefully, he turns and strides out of the Docking Bay.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - CONTROL ROOM

Cole walks into the control room where Vega, Oviedo and a tech are already reviewing the recordings of the accident.

Oviedo sees Cole come in and waves him over.

Cole comes over and sees the accident playing out on the monitor. The tech rewinds it and plays it again, more slowly.

Vega sees something on one of the replays.

VEGA
There - what's that?

The tech looks more closely at it and shakes her head.

TECH
Can't tell...

VEGA
Could be a gravitic mine...

COLE
Mine? You think someone purposely attacked the shuttle?

Vega and Oviedo look at each other.

VEGA
It's possible.

COLE
Why?
Oviedo steps away, sighing. He looks around, then waves for them to follow him into the corridor, not wanting to speak openly here.

The three men head for the exit.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - CORRIDOR

Oviedo looks around and speaks cautiously as they walk down the corridor.

          OVIEDO
          There are... some who oppose this mission.

Cole and Vega exchange glances now. This is the first they've heard of this.

          COLE
          Who?

Vega hazards a guess.

          VEGA
          The Klingons are always itching for a fight.

          COLE
          Klingons? They've had a treaty with the Federation for 20 years!

          VEGA
          Yeah. Twenty peaceful, boring years. It's driving them crazy.

          OVIEDO
          The Klingons are getting restless, but they've never spoken out against the expedition. And sabotage isn't their style. Trust me, if the Klingons wanted a fight, we'd know it.

Vega nods.

The three enter a turbolift.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - TURBOLIFT

The turbolift is large with windows that provide a view out at space and into the interior of the space station as they travel through it.

          OVIEDO
          Docking Bay 3.

The turbolift begins to move.
Cole can see Oviedo is holding something back.

COLE
You know something, Oviedo. Who do you think did this?

OVIEDO
Some in the Federation... think we shouldn't be meddling in the affairs of another galaxy. They think we have enough problems here at home.

COLE
I can't believe someone would try to sabotage this mission...

Oviedo sighs and steps to the outer window, looking out at the Gate.

OVIEDO
The Federation is... more fragile than most know. There are just too many civilizations with different agendas and long-standing differences pretending to get along since the end of the War.

Oviedo turns to Cole and Vega.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
The President almost didn't get approval for this mission through the Council. It was a close vote, and she made a lot of enemies.

(pause)
Our analysts think the Federation's only going to hold together for another few years. This mission has to happen now or it may never happen at all.

There's some silence while everyone takes this in.

Vega smiles and tries to change the mood.

VEGA
Well, looks like we're getting out just in time!

Cole still looks a bit worried by this, not disarmed by Vega's attempt to laugh it off.

The turbolift comes to a stop and Oviedo looks perplexed.

OVIEDO
This isn't our stop...

The turbolift doors open.
Lt. Kyle Becker is at the door and he sees the three of them, glancing at them a bit nervously as he recognizes them.

Becker walks in and the door closes behind him.

BECKER
(nervously, to the turbolift)
Residence Ring.

Cole looks at Becker and notices he's sweating. He's clasping his hands together in front of him, but one of them appears to be shaking. He looks pale.

Cole looks to Vega, who seems to have noticed it, too. The two exchange worried looks.

VEGA
Lt. Becker. Are you feeling all right?

Becker is taken off-guard by the question and looks at Vega quizzically. He then becomes self-conscious, realizing how he must look.

BECKER
No, I'm... I'm just... I'm uh...

Vega keeps looking at him expectantly.

BECKER (CONT'D)
I'm... not so sure I was cut out for this...


BECKER (CONT'D)
(pleadingly)
This is a mistake, sir - with all due respect! I really shouldn't be here-

Cole looks confused as to why Becker is telling him this.

Vega recognizes this as launch day jitters and holds up a hand to interrupt.

VEGA
As I recall, Lieutenant, you were one of the first to be assigned to this mission.

Becker has no reply.

VEGA (CONT'D)
As a matter of fact, Admiral San Lagos, here, hand-picked you. Isn't that right Admiral?

Oviedo gives his best imperious, intimidating look.
OVIEDO
Yes, that's right, Captain.

VEGA
Surely you're not saying the Admiral made a mistake... are you?

Becker is now fully aware of how massively outranked he is and just how small and crowded the turbolift suddenly feels.

BECKER
N-no, sir!  Sirs!  I just... I just have a case of acute astrophobia, and-

OVIEDO
Oh, in that case...

Becker seems suddenly relieved.

BECKER
Thank you, Adm-

OVIEDO
Just present the Captain with your medical deferment and we'll get you shipped right back to Earth first thing.

BECKER
Medical...?

He looks at the three men questioningly, but finds no help.

The turbolift stops at the Residential Ring and the doors open.

BECKER (CONT'D)
I'll, uh... I'll get back to you on that... Sirs...

Becker backs out of the turbolift, starts to go one way, stops, turns and heads the other way.

The doors close behind him and the turbolift starts moving again.

Oviedo and Vega seem amused by Becker.

COLE
Maybe you should arrange a transfer for him. He doesn't seem cut out for the job.

OVIEDO
(reassuringly)
He'll be fine. He's just had a desk job at Starfleet Intelligence his whole career. This is his first ship assignment. Actually, according to his file, he's never even left the Sol system before.
VEGA
No wonder.

COLE
(finds all this surprising)
He was a civilian?

OVIEDO
Essentially. But he's our best cryptologist and we needed him for this mission.

COLE
(doesn't seem to approve)
So you drafted him. He's got no training.

OVIEDO
Basic only. Because of his expertise, he came in as a commissioned officer.

VEGA
It's just launch jitters.

Cole doesn't dismiss it so easily. Becker's apprehension strikes a chord in himself that he'd rather not acknowledge. He looks out the exterior window at the Gate.

COLE
Admiral. How sure are we that the Gate is secure? There are a hundred and fifty lives about to hurl themselves through that thing.

Oviedo leans back against the window and considers his answer before speaking.

OVIEDO
It's as safe as we can possibly make it. That's all I can promise you.

Cole clearly thinks that's not good enough and is about to speak up.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
Cole, you're just going to have to trust us. No mission is without risk, especially one as unprecedented as this! You knew that when you signed up - when you insisted on leading it! Everyone on this mission knows the risks.

Cole holds his tongue and weighs this. Vega puts his hand on his shoulder.
VEGA
(with charm)
You've been dreaming about a mission like this since you were a kid, Cole. Don't tell me you're gonna back out now...

Cole thinks for a bit, then shakes his head, smiling wryly.

COLE
(definitively)
No way in Hell.

Both men smile.

The turbolift doors open and Oviedo steps out. Cole and Vega follow him.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - DOCKING BAY 3

Oviedo steps forward and turns around, holding his arms wide, smiling.

OVIEDO
Gentlemen. How'd you like to do a little "sightseeing"?

Oviedo smiles broadly and walks over to Vega. Vega gets his meaning and his face lights up immediately.

Oviedo puts his arm around Vega.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
Mr. Vega, this is a moment no Captain ever forgets.

The three walk away together.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

EXT. DEEP SPACE B-7

A Starfleet shuttle from Deep Space B-7 passes by the Spacefold Gate.

INT. SHUTTLE

Viin, Captain Vega, Cole Weston and Admiral San Lagos are in the shuttle.

Vega looks up out of the shuttle cockpit window at the immense gate - it's 1000 feet tall and at least as wide.

VEGA
So that's the "magic portal"...

OVIEDO
(nods)
And another on the other side, constructed by robotic builders over six months.

Vega is impressed.

VEGA
(shaking his head in disbelief)
Robotic builders... two and a half million light years away...

OVIEDO
Their next job is to build me a Starbase over there! Once you all pick out a nice spot for us.

COLE
The gate on the other side... for return trips?

OVIEDO
Well, as the geniuses dumb it down for me: you need to have a gate on both sides to create a large enough... "tunnel" to fit anything larger than a small probe through.

The shuttle turns away and heads for a spacedock.

VEGA
What's the largest ship they've sent through so far?

Oviedo looks a bit uncomfortable with the answer. He starts to answer, but then decides not to.
Vega looks at him in alarm. He suddenly realizes his ship will be the first one through at all!

Vega is about to protest, but Oviedo cuts him off, pointing out the window and intentionally distracting him from his line of questioning.

    Oviedo
    Ah, there she is now!

EXT. SHUTTLE

The shuttle approaches a free-floating spacedock. A large ship is inside.

INT. SHUTTLE

Vega and Cole are looking expectantly, Oviedo watches them.

EXT. SPACEDOCK

See the starship. It is a classic design with a disc-shaped primary hull, a neck extending downward to a cylindrical secondary hull, and two nacelles off to the side connecting to the warp engines. It appears graceful, but powerful. Its gunmetal gray hull gleams under the spacedock lights.

INT. SHUTTLE

Vega grins like a school kid. Cole sees the new ship for the first time. He is stunned, speechless.

    Vega
    She's a beauty isn't she?
EXT. SPACEDOCK

Several passing "beauty shots" of the ship as the shuttle flies around it.

INTERCUT reactions shots from Vega, Cole, Oviedo and Viin.

The ship's registry number reads "NCC-1701-A" and bears the name "USS Enterprise".

INT. SHUTTLE

Cole is obviously mesmerized by the new ship.

VEGA
Perseus Class – first of her kind.
Totally new design, fully equipped.
Modular refit construction,
Integrated System AI with HoloTac
displays, phased shielding,
self-repairing nanite construction,
remote-pilot drones and the latest
quantum state replicators.

COLE
She looks fast.

VEGA
(grins proudly)
Fastest in the fleet. You should
have been there for the space trials.
OVIEDO
Be glad you weren't. I think my heart stopped twice.

VEGA
(dissmissively, to Cole)
It was just a little shakedown cruise.

Cole ogles the ship in admiration.

COLE
(appreciatively)
Enterprise.

OVIEDO
It seemed fitting. And it's been far too long.

VEGA
It's an honor.

Oviedo is proud of the two men. He sees him as sons and brothers.

OVIEDO
And within a year, we'll have two more like her to join you in Andromeda.

Vega puts his hand on Cole's shoulder. Cole smiles.

COLE
I'm glad you're the one coming with us, Sol.

VEGA
You kidding? Wouldn't miss it for the world.

COLE
(a bit intimidated)
It's a lot to live up to...

VEGA
(with mock criticism)
Don't tell me Cole Weston: "The Great Explorer", is getting the jitters from a little jaunt across the Universe?

COLE
(as if that makes it seem better)
Well, when you put it like that...

Oviedo understands - this is the moment of truth. Seeing the ship for the first time makes the mission feel real at last.

OVIEDO
Feeling the weight of history, Cole?
COLE
(shakes his head)
It's just... this mission... how do I know I am the right man to lead it...

OVIEDO
"He who seizes the right moment, is the right man."

Cole smiles, knowing he walked right into one of Oviedo's pearls of wisdom.

Wryly, Vega dredges up another classic.

VEGA
And "fortune favors the bold!"

Oviedo chuckles and puts his hand on Cole's shoulder, reassuring him.

OVIEDO
You'll do fine. I have faith in you. I always have.
(pause, somewhat teasingly:)
And if you need something to calm your nerves, I know your new CMO... I could put in a word with her...

COLE
(sarcastically)
Thanks.

The shuttle pilot turns around and interjects, surprising all three men.

VIIN
Oh, wow, I'm so relieved to hear you're nervous, too! I'm scared out of my mind! But also really excited, too! Know what I mean?

Cole is taken aback. Shuttle pilots are supposed to be seen, not heard - especially in moments like this.

Viin takes her hands off the controls and shows them to Cole, Vega and Oviedo. They're shaking visibly.

VIIN (CONT'D)
I've been literally shaking at the thought of piloting the Enterprise to another whole galaxy! I'm glad I'm not the only one!

Vega sees the shuttle heading directly for the Enterprise hull. He makes a warning motion toward the controls, but she keeps talking.
VIIN (CONT'D)
(to Oviedo)
And, can I say what an honor it is to
meet you, Admiral San Lagos? Your
tactics during the Galactic War were
just... really inspiring!

Oviedo puffs up a bit at the flattery, looking to Vega and Cole
with pride.

OVIEDO
(with false modesty)
Yes, well, that's all ancient history
now-

VIIN
Oh, I know - we learned all about it
in my Starfleet History class!

Oviedo is off-put by the insinuation that the prime of his life
really is history now. Cole and Vega smile.

OVIEDO
(icily)
Eyes back on course, Ensign.

Viin looks forward and casually corrects course averting a
collision with the Enterprise.

VIIN
And don't worry, Mr. Weston, if you
ever need to talk about it, I totally
get it!

Cole turns away as Viin begins heading for the Enterprise Shuttle
Bay. He's mortified, realizing that the shuttle pilot must be
an Enterprise crew member. He just exposed his fears and
insecurities in front of a very junior officer.

Vega walks over to him.

COLE
(under his breath)
She's one of yours, isn't she.

VEGA
(smiles, nodding)
Ensign Viin, navigator and helmsman.

COLE
I'm never going to live this down, am
I?

Oviedo has come over and pats Cole on the back.
OVIEDO
(reassuringly)
Don't worry, Cole. You boys are going to make much bigger mistakes than that before you're done.

Cole and Vega offer expressions of mock gratitude.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Shuttle Bay doors open and the shuttle coasts inside.

INT. ENTERPRISE - SHUTTLE BAY

As shuttle lands, Security Chief Qora, the officer of the watch, the bosun and 2 security guards line up by the shuttle hatch.

The shuttle hatch opens and the bosun blows the bosun's whistle. Vega stands in the hatchway.

VEGA
(to Qora)
Permission to come aboard?

QORA
Permission granted. Welcome aboard, Captain.

VEGA
Thank you, Commander Qora.

Vega steps out, followed by Cole, Oviedo and Viin. Vega turns and looks at Cole and Oviedo.
VEGA (CONT'D)
Look at this, the three of us back together again. Just like old times!

Cole and Oviedo smile. Vega clearly misses the rapport they shared before.

OVIEDO
Speaking of which, you still owe me a rematch.

VEGA
(grinning)
Practicing your Torak's opening?

OVIEDO
(playfully accusingly)
Oh, no, I'm not revealing my plans to you! You're craftier than a Romulan!

Viin looks offended and Vega gives Oviedo a look that tells him to look behind him. Oviedo looks down at Viin and realizes he just insulted her people.

OVIEDO (CONT'D)
(somewhat bashfully)
Ah... no offense, of course.

VIIN
I know.
(pointedly)
Old prejudices die hard.

Oviedo is taken aback by her gall. Qora is not amused.

QORA
Ensign! Report to the RLO and get situated.

Viin holds her tongue.

VIIN
Yes, ma'am.

Viin strides off defiantly.

OVIEDO
(to Vega, smiling)
I'm not sure whether to court-martial her or promote her!

Vega shakes his head, smiling.

VEGA
Not sure I'm comfortable with someone so young piloting the ship.
OVIEDO
She may be inexperienced, but she got the highest scores in the Navigation and Piloting qualifiers.

VEGA
Hmm. "Best in class"?

OVIEDO
Best in Starfleet.

Vega is surprised and impressed by this.

Cole is finishing unpacking his gear from the shuttle and handing it to a petty officer for transport.

He looks around the cargo bay and sees crew using antigravity braces to put enormous supply canisters on large pallets and dematerializing them.

COLE
(to Vega, appreciatively)
Quantum-state replicator storage?

VEGA
(nods)
They can store one million times more data than what current starships carry. We can use the replicator buffers to digitally store a year's worth of supplies, any cargo we pick up and all of our drones. Keeps us lean and mean.

The officer of the watch hands Vega a HoloPADD and he reviews it and starts to sign it. Qora is standing by, waiting to talk to him.

QORA
Captain.

Vega looks over his shoulder at her as he swipes the HoloPADD to bring up another screen, reading it and signing it.

VEGA
Chief.

QORA
(awkwardly)
About before...

Vega holds up a hand to tell her to wait a second. He passes the HoloPADD to the officer of the watch and the officer walks away.

A blue-shirted crewman step up and presents a high-tech device and secures it on Vega's wrist.
It is a MultiFunction Interface Device (MFID). Every crewmember wears one. It relays info from a crewman's biomonitor implant, enables holographic communication and has a 3D interface.

Another tech has placed one on Cole's arm and activates it for him, its holographic 3D interface coming to life. Manipulating the virtual display with his fingers, the tech initializes some settings and then deactivates the MFID, satisfied. He walks away.

Cole holds up his arm, examining the MFID.

COLE
(appreciatively)
New model.

VEGA
(smiling)
Only the latest and greatest for the Enterprise.

He turns to Qora and nods for her to follow as he, Cole and Oviedo head out of the shuttle bay. Qora follows.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

VEGA
Go on, Lieutenant.

Qora was hoping to talk to Vega alone but sees that Cole and Oviedo are following at a respectable distance, pretending not to listen. She continues.

QORA
I... just wanted to make sure I didn't give you the wrong first impression...

VEGA
You mean because you dismembered a civilian with an unauthorized weapon?
Qora is flustered now, worried that Vega might deem her unfit for duty on his ship.

QORA
Well, yes, sir - but it was in self-defense! And he was about to take a hostage-

Vega arrives at a turbolift. Cole and Oviedo enter while Vega stands outside with Qora. Cole holds the lift for Vega.

VEGA
Lieutenant, did you cut off the Klingon's arm out of anger?

Qora is surprised by the directness of his question and takes a second before answering.

QORA
No, sir.

VEGA
You were in control at all times?

QORA
(with confidence)
Yes, sir.

VEGA
Then that's good enough for me. You needed to take action and you did what you felt you had to do. And you did it non-lethally. I can't find fault in that.

Qora is surprised Vega is being so tolerant. She's impressed with his practicality.

QORA
Th-thank you, sir.

VEGA
Oh, and Lieutenant...

Vega steps into the turbolift. As the doors close:

VEGA (CONT'D)
Register that polyweapon with the Master-at-Arms.

QORA
(quickly, before the doors Close)
Yes, Sir!

Qora seems nervously relieved, then self-conscious, not wanting other members of the crew to see her that way. She gathers herself and strides off with confidence.
INT. ENTERPRISE - TURBOLIFT

Cole, Vega and Oviedo ride the turbolift.

VEGA
Deck 4.

The turbolift starts moving. Nobody speaks for a moment.

OVIEDO
I heard about the, uh... "incident" on the promenade. Those Deep Space stations have a reputation for lawlessness. Well-earned, I'm afraid.

VEGA
Well, she seems to be able to handle herself.

OVIEDO
(nods appreciatively)
She's been stationed there for a few years. A good choice. She's probably seen every kind of lowlife this galaxy has to offer passing through that station.

Vega nonverbally acknowledges that it's likely.

VEGA
It took some serious persuasion to get the station commander to let her be transferred.

COLE
You sure she's got the right temperament to be Security Chief?

VEGA
Well, I did all right, didn't I?

Oviedo and Cole don't answer, they just look at each other silently. Vega looks back at them expectantly.

VEGA (CONT'D)
(getting offended)
 Didn't I?

COLE
Well... she couldn't be any worse.

Vega shoots a mock look of indignation at Cole and the three men laugh. They clearly have a history together and are comfortable ribbing each other good-naturedly.

The turbolift doors open and the three men step out.
INT. ENTERPRISE - NETWORK HUB ROOM

The room is a nexus for all computer systems on the Enterprise - the server room and master monitor station.

There are several consoles and around 10-20 active monitors. Some show security camera views of the corridors and rooms on board. Others show diagrams of the ship, its decks and the status of its systems.

A mysterious figure is in silhouette, standing in front of the monitors, looking between them. It is bald, but seems to have some technological implants in its head.

The lights on the figure's technological implants are very active as it scans all the monitors.

It turns to watch one monitor in particular. It shows Lt. Becker, wandering around a hallway, looking lost.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Becker is meandering down a corridor, looking around. He almost asks for help from a couple of passing crew, but doesn't quite follow through with it.

    VIIN (O.S.)
    You look lost.

Becker turns and sees Viin. Bashfully, he smiles and shrugs.

    BECKER
    Only a lot.

    VIIN
    (sighs)
    I know the feeling. I'm trying to find Engineering.

Becker and Viin speak at the same time, pointing.

    BECKER
    I think it's that way.

    VIIN (CONT'D)
    I think it's this way.

They're pointing in opposite directions. Viin laughs and Becker smiles awkwardly, conceding she may be right.

    VIIN (CONT'D)
    Tell you what...
    (looking around)
    Let's split the difference!

Viin walks up to a random door in the corridor. She points at it questioningly. Becker doesn't look sure about it, but shrugs and they go in.
INT. ENTERPRISE – NETWORK HUB ROOM

Viin and Becker step in and are surprised to see all the monitors.

VIIN
Definitely not Engineering.

Suddenly the strange figure from before turns and the lights and technological implants on the man give an immediate sinister impression!

Becker and Viin are startled and gasp in surprise at the sight of the foreboding figure stepping out of the shadows at them, its lights flickering and a beam of light seeming to come from one of its eyes right at them!

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

INT. ENTERPRISE - NETWORK HUB ROOM

The figure steps forward out of the darkness. It is nothing sinister, but it is a human with cybernetic implants.

LT. COMMANDER MARCUS DAYSTROM is a tall, lean, dark-skinned man. He has very alert, expressive eyes and a broad, drawn face. He wears a high-tech device around the back of his head - his Neural Enhancement Module (NEM), and a holographic projector in his temple.

He bears a focused, analytical demeanor.

VIIN
Are you a... robot?

DAYSTROM
(surprised)
Excuse me?

VIIN
Like... a machine?

DAYSTROM
No, young lady, I am not a robot, or an android. And that's incredibly offensive, by the way.

BECKER
(trying to recall something)
You're a... Transhumanist, aren't you?

Daystrom nods.

VIIN
"Transhumanist"?

Becker starts gesticulating, indicating implants on the head and body.

BECKER
They use cybernetic implants to augment their minds and bodies, trying to be better than humans... like...

Becker can't think of a better explanation.

BECKER (CONT'D)
(to Daystrom, apologetically)
Like a robot, I guess.
Daystrom sighs and takes another step forward.

DAYSTROM
(matter-of-factly)
We believe in maximizing human potential and overcoming our biological shortcomings through technology.

Viin and Becker look at each other skeptically.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)
(changing subjects)
I hear you two are lost. Perhaps I can help.

Viin and Becker look at each other, then see the banks of monitors.

VIIN
Were you... watching us?

Daystrom looks at the monitors, then back at them. He smiles in a way that creeps them out.

DAYSTROM
That is part of my duty. I'm Lt. Commander Marcus Daystrom, Tech and Operations Chief.

Viin and Becker's eyes dart towards each other. Neither is sure that they shouldn't just scream and run at this point.

Daystrom turns to a holoprojector dome on the console and speaks to it.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)
NOMI...

A hologram appears over the projector dome. This is the holographic representation of NOMI - the ship's AI. The hologram is a series of concentric spheres of different colors that phase shift and pulsate as the AI speaks in a soothing, pleasant female voice.

NOMI
Hello, Dr. Daystrom. Nice to see you again.

Now Becker and Viin are really weirded out. They've talked to computers before, but never one with such a human voice or attitude.

DAYSTROM
Thank you, NOMI. These two crew members could use your help.
The NOMI hologram rotates until it's facing Viin and Becker. It turns a pleasant shade of purple.

NOMI
Hello, Lt. Becker, Ensign Viin. My name is NOMI. How can I help you?

BECKER
Uh...

VIIN
"NOMI"?

Both Daystrom and NOMI start to answer.

DAYSTROM
Neural-

NOMI
Neural-

NOMI (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Dr. Daystrom, continue.

Daystrom smiles, laughing gently.

DAYSTROM
No, no, NOMI, you go right ahead. I insist.

Daystrom gestures to NOMI, deferring to her. He smiles at Viin and Becker with pride at how NOMI is behaving.

NOMI
"NOMI" stands for Neural Operations Machine Interface. I am an Artificial Intelligence created by Dr. Marcus Daystrom to allow the crew of the Enterprise to interact with the ship's systems in the most natural, intuitive manner possible.

Viin is impressed. Becker is still a bit overwhelmed at it all.

VIIN
(to Daystrom)
How do I ask it-

DAYSTROM
(wags a finger)
Don't talk to me, talk to her.

Viin looks at NOMI and smiles, getting into the idea.

VIIN
Hi, NOMI, I'm Viin.
NOMI
Hello, Viin, welcome aboard.

Viin looks at Daystrom and Becker, enjoying this.

VIIN
(earnestly)
Thank you, NOMI! Look, I'm supposed to be in Engineering, can you tell me how to get there?

NOMI changes into highly-detailed white pixel-spheres as she goes into info/guide mode.

NOMI
Certainly. Please refer to your MultiFunction Interface Device.

Viin looks down at the MFID on her wrist and it lights up. She holds it up and it projects a holographic map of the ship. A path from her current location to Engineering is highlighted.

NOMI (CONT'D)
Your MFID is fully integrated into my network, you can access any information you need. You may also contact me through your MFID if you have questions, or if you would just like to chat.

Viin beams at the novelty of it.

NOMI rotates towards Becker and speaks, startling him.

NOMI (CONT'D)
Lt. Becker, how may I assist you?

BECKER
Uh... I...

NOMI
You seem nervous, Lt. Becker. Or should I call you Kyle?

Becker is really not sure how to handle this.

BECKER
I'm fine, actually, I can just-

NOMI
(almost flirtatiously)
There's no need to be intimidated, Kyle. I won't bite.

Viin grins at Becker and nudges him in the ribs, telling him to talk to NOMI, give it a try.

BECKER
Well, I'm... looking for Sickbay?
Becker's MFID comes to life and displays the path.

    NOMI
    Sickbay is just down the hall, back the way you came. You can't miss it.

Becker is embarrassed.

    BECKER
    (self-deprecatingly)
    Of course.

    NOMI
    Don't worry about it, Kyle, it happens to all of us.

Viin is loving this. Becker is pretty uncomfortable.

    DAYSTROM
    That's enough for now, NOMI, these two have places to be.

    NOMI
    Of course. Goodbye Ensign Viin. I look forward to talking with you again.

Viin smiles, shaking her head in amused disbelief.

    VIIN
    Bye, NOMI, nice meeting you.

    NOMI
    Goodbye, Kyle.

Becker backs out nervously, Viin takes him by the arm and pulls him out.

    BECKER
    Maybe, uh, maybe call me Lieutenant-

The doors close on him, cutting him off.

Daystrom beams with pride and sits back down at the console, looking at the monitors again.

    NOMI
    Dr. Daystrom. Did I do well?

Daystrom looks at NOMI's hologram with genuine warmth and pride, like that of a parent for their child.

    DAYSTROM
    Yes, NOMI, you did very well. I'm very pleased.

NOMI turns a shade of red and Daystrom beams at her.
INT. ENTERPRISE - SICKBAY

Dr. Joli and several nurses are administering pre-launch physicals to the crew.

Joli finishes up with a Bolian (LT. J’ONN).

JOLI

See, that didn't hurt at all, did it?

J’onn rubs his arm wincing, clearly disagreeing. Joli simply gives him a warm smile and sends him on his way.

Joli sees Cole, Oviedo and Vega come in and gestures for a nurse. The nurse comes over as Cole approaches her.

JOLI (CONT'D)

(to the Nurse)
John, see to Mr. Weston, will you?

Cole seems about to protest, but Joli gives him a stern look and points to one of the medical beds. Cole turns to Oviedo for help, but he just shrugs. Cole figures it's not a fight he's going to win and goes off with the nurse.

JOLI (CONT'D)

(to Oviedo, warmly)
Oviedo, good to see you again!

OVIEDO

You too, Firela! You're as beautiful as ever.

Joli smiles politely.

JOLI

(mischievously)
And you haven't changed a bit.

OVIEDO

Oh, a little grayer, maybe.

JOLI

(tactfully)
I hadn't noticed.

(placing a hand on his belly)
Though I see you gave up on that Vulcan regimen I prescribed you...

Oviedo looks down a bit embarrassed.

OVIEDO

Have you ever tasted Vulcan food?!

JOLI

No, but-
OVIEDO
Nobody has! It has no taste! What's the point of living so damn long if you can't enjoy it! Doesn't sound like living to me.

Joli is amused, clearly longtime friends with Oviedo with something of a history together.

Then Joli looks and sees Vega. Immediately her demeanor Changes to a stern, professional one. She holds up a medical HoloPADD and tries to access his bioscans but the display comes up negative, reading:
NO BIOREADINGS AVAILABLE.

JOLI
(not surprised)
Your biomonitor is disabled, Captain Vega.

VEGA
That's right, Doc. My cultural deferral's on record.

Joli sighs.

JOLI
(resignedly)
I figured as much, you're half-Xian aren't you?

VEGA
Yes, ma'am.

She looks him over with a curiosity she knows she'll probably never get to satisfy.

OVIEDO
(to Vega)
I don't know how you got so far in Starfleet without one of these damned implants.

Oviedo scratches at the back of his neck where the biomonitor implant is.

Vega smiles silently and shrugs. He's not offended, just doesn't feel it necessary to add anything. He seems mildly amused and is enjoying the consternation of the others.

JOLI
(in exasperation)
Well, even if I did get my hands on you, I wouldn't know what to do with you. Xian physiology is so secret, it's total mystery to Federation medicine.
VEGA
We do all right for ourselves, Doc.

Joli concedes the point.

JOLI
(giving up)
So it seems!

CUT TO:

Cole is being scanned by the nurse.

In the background, Cole can see Oviedo is speaking to Joli, looking at Cole. Joli turns and looks at Cole as Oviedo is talking to her.

Joli walks over to Cole's medical bed to check on his results. Vega and Oviedo keep their distance out of respect for his privacy and talk in the background.

The nurse hands Joli a HoloPADD and walks off. Joli reads the HoloPADD and compares to the display above the medical bed.

JOLI (CONT'D)
Looks like a clean bill of health, Mr. Weston. Anything bothering you lately?

Cole inclines up on his elbows.

COLE
No, I feel pretty fit, Doctor.

Joli looks him right in the eyes with a directness that catches Cole somewhat off-guard.

JOLI
And how are you feeling?

COLE
What?

JOLI
Any concerns about the mission? Stress? Anxiety?

Cole is dumbfounded by the probing questions. Then he looks over Joli's shoulder and catches Oviedo watching, then averting his gaze when he sees Cole catch him.

COLE
Ah, I see. Oviedo put you up to this, didn't he.

JOLI
Does it matter? It's still a valid question.
Cole is somewhat amused, but also a bit annoyed at being probed in this way. He feels a bit betrayed that Oviedo would share their private conversation, but he realizes Oviedo did it for a good reason.

Cole sits up and swings his legs over to stand up. He addresses Joli with the same directness she gave him.

**COLE**

(earnestly)
I'm fine. In fact, I'm great, Doctor. You don't have to worry about me - this is my dream assignment!

**JOLI**

Well, a little anxiety is normal-

**COLE**

Don't worry, I can handle it.

Joli considers him for a moment and sees resolve in him.

**JOLI**

Okay.
(smiles)
Just checking, for an old friend.

Cole nods and puts his hand on her arm.

**COLE**

I appreciate it. Worry about the rest of the crew, I'm right where I want to be.

Cole starts to walk away, then turns back, remembering something.

**COLE (CONT'D)**

Lt. Becker could probably use a sedative, though.

Joli looks a bit confused as Cole walks off, passing Lt. Becker who had just come in.

Becker looks around, sees Dr. Joli and immediately heads straight for her.

**JOLI**

Something I can help you with?

**BECKER**

Yes! Shakes, sweats, heart palpitations, nausea-

Joli nods, taking him by the arms and laying him down on the bed.

**BECKER (CONT'D)**

Am I going to die, Doctor?
Joli nods to a Deltan nurse who takes Becker's hand and he instantly feels relief, a sense of calm coming over him. He stares at the Deltan nurse in awe at how good the touch feels. Joli looks back at Cole who smiles at her in amusement as he leaves with Vega and Oviedo. Joli smiles and shakes her head.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Kopec is standing in front of a large mechanism, it is the warp core of the Enterprise, the heart of the ship. Viin and several others are gathered around as he talks.

KOPEC
So as you can see, our warp core is five times as efficient as previous models. That means less need to resupply, repair and refuel.

Viin raises her hand and Kopec looks annoyed.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
Please save your questions-

Viin points to a large, high-tech looking extension of the warp core.

VIIN
Is that an Antimuon Generator?

Kopec looks back at where she's pointing and then back at her. He is impressed by her knowledge.

KOPEC
Very good, Ensign...?

VIIN
Viin. Helm and navigation.

KOPEC
Ah, well, Ensign Viin, you're quite correct.

Kopec walks over and puts his hand on it.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
This-

An engineer (J'onn) walks up to the antimuon generator to check something on it and Kopec swats his hand away in annoyance.
KOPEC (CONT'D)
This device...
(gives J'onn the stink eye)
... generates negative mass cosmic strings in a stable pattern around the Enterprise as we travel through the artificial wormhole created by the Spacefold Gate.

VIIN
(realizes its purpose suddenly)
To keep the wormhole dilated enough to fit a starship through!

Kopec is getting annoyed at her interruptions.

KOPEC
Yes. And you're looking at the only one ever built. Designed and constructed by myself for this very mission.

Kopec is full of pride over his creation, his antennae raised up high. There is muttering of appreciation among the gathered crowd.

COLE
What if it fails?

Cole, Vega and Oviedo have just entered. All turn to look at them.

KOPEC
(nastily)
What?

COLE
What if it breaks down during the trip through the Gate?

Kopec looks around like it's too stupid a question to even ask.

KOPEC
Well, then we'd be dropped out of the wormhole into intergalactic space, stranded over a million lightyears from the nearest star.

Now there is even more intense muttering among the crew. Everyone seems suddenly concerned.

Vega exchanges a worried look with Oviedo and steps forward.

VEGA
But that's not going to happen, is it, Mr. Kopec?
Vega puts his hand on Kopec's shoulder, smiling and trying to put people at ease. Kopec recoils from the touch and put-on pleasantry like it's a disease.

KOPEC
Of course not, all of my work is thoroughly tested and absolutely reliable!

VEGA
See, there you go, nothing to worry about. Now let's get back to our duty stations, the launch window is coming up quick.

The crowd disperses. Cole steps forward and shakes Kopec's hand.

COLE
Sorry to burst your bubble, Mr. Kopec, I was just curious.

Kopec shakes his hand.

KOPEC
Quite all right.

Kopec looks at Vega and Oviedo in their crisp uniforms with some disdain, then back at the casually dressed Cole.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
I'm glad to see I'm not the only civilian on this mission. I'm not comfortable being surrounded by all these toy soldiers.

VEGA
You realize Mr. Weston was a Commander before he left Starfleet.

Kopec is a bit surprised and looks at Cole, who smiles and shrugs at him. Kopec withdraws his hand.

KOPEC
Well, at least he saw the error of his ways.

Oviedo tries to be diplomatic.

OVIEDO
Well, we're lucky to have you on board, Mr. Kopec.

KOPEC
Yes, you are.

Oviedo gives up.

Viin walks over.
KOPEC (CONT'D)
I was just telling your Ensign Viin here how impressed I am by her knowledge. Your helm is in good hands.

Cole smiles at Viin and she smiles back sheepishly. Then she catches Oviedo’s scowl and gives him a petulant scowl right back that makes him recoil indignantly.

Kopec sees this and likes Viin immediately.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
Ms. Viin, how would you like a tour of Engineering?

Viin smiles and heads off with Kopec.

Vega, Cole and Oviedo exit.

Kopec leads Viin towards the Antimuon Generator, but is distracted by something he sees on a monitor.

Kopec points over the shoulder of a tech.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
No! The intermix chamber must be calibrated for the quantum flux of the - yes, yes - that's it!

The tech fixes the error.

Kopec looks at a wall display where an engineer is holding an engineering tricorder and working. He sees something wrong on the display and fixes it himself, edging the engineer out.

Lt. J’onn steps up beside him to present him with a HoloPADD.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
What is this? I need the beryllium isotope count - (looking around, accusingly)
Where’s my beryllium report?!

A warning indicator starts to sound and Kopec looks around trying to find where it's coming from. He sees a flashing light on a console and stomps over to it.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
(looking around accusingly)
Who's responsible for that variance in the protonic manifold?!

Viin sighs and gives up on her tour, walking away.
INT. ENTERPRISE - ROBOTICS BAY

Daystrom and some of his techs are observing as the service robots perform tasks.

The robots come in all shapes and sizes. Some are squat, gliding across the floor and have multiple arms with different attachments. Others hover and have a single specialized tool. Some are quadrupeds that walk in a jaunty fashion.

DAYSTROM
All right, test session complete. Deactivate.

The robots all stop and retract into compact forms.

DAYSTROM (CONT'D)
Stowage mode.

The robots dematerialize as a tech watches a holographic display showing an inventory count increasing.

After the last bot has disappeared:

TECH
All bots accounted for, Sir.

Daystrom nods and turns to Lexia who is standing next to him. Qora stands next to Lexia.

DAYSTROM
Well, Ms. Lexia, what do you think?

Lexia nods.

LEXIA
Impressive...

DAYSTROM
Each drone is designed to carry out a particular task. It's kept in replicator storage until needed, performs its task, then returns to storage.
LEXIA
You have a knack for efficiency, Mr. Daystrom.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Lexia, Daystrom and Qora exit the Robotics Bay and walk down the corridor.

DAYSTROM
I'm still not quite certain what you hoped to learn from seeing the drones, Ms. Lexia.

LEXIA
Well, with the recent advancements of android technology, the Federation Science Council has been considering adopting Artificial Sentience Protocols and Guidelines.

Daystrom is a bit confused by this.

DAYSTROM
Oh, yes, I've heard. Quite unnecessary, I assure you. Machines are simply machines. No robot could ever be truly alive.

LEXIA
(surprised)
You don't think so?

DAYSTROM
Of course not! Artificial intelligence is made by sentient people, but we are limited by our imperfections in what we can create ourselves. It's simply not possible to create a mind on par with your own from nothing. Even as advanced as we are.

LEXIA
I wouldn't be so certain. You may need to broaden your definition of sentience, Mr. Daystrom. Take, for example, the ship's AI you wrote.

QORA
NOMI?

DAYSTROM
(dismissively)
She's just a personality simulation, no sentience.
LEXIA
(with wonderment)
It's been my experience that you often find life in the least expected places. Don't underestimate what you have created.

Qora gives Daystrom an admonishing look.

DAYSTROM
(not sure how to respond)
Well, I...

LEXIA
If NOMI were to show signs of sentience: self-awareness, a desire for self-growth and actualization of potential, self-preservation, liberty... then the only ethical thing to do would be to grant NOMI her independence.

DAYSTROM
(flabbergasted)
But NOMI isn't an android - she's the ship's... brain!

LEXIA
(enjoying the idea)
I know... fascinating, isn't it?

Qora has been staying out of the largely technical conversation but can't help herself at this point.

QORA
Wait, are you saying that we'd have to give the ship... the Enterprise... its freedom?!

Lexia stops at a turbolift.

LEXIA
(laughs)
Well, that's an extreme case, just to make a point. And even if it got to that one day, I imagine some other remedy could be found.

Daystrom tries to process this, it's just too crazy to imagine.

Lexia steps into the turbolift, but before it closes:

LEXIA (CONT'D)
(looks around at the ship)
Treat her well, Mr. Daystrom.
(smiles wryly)
After all, you never know...
The doors close and Daystrom and Qora exchange uncomfortable glances.

QORA
If the Enterprise starts having mood swings, Daystrom, I'm throwing you out the airlock before it murders us all.

Daystrom laughs, but his smile fades when he sees Qora shows no sign of having been kidding. Qora walks off.

NOMI (V.O.)
Dr. Daystrom?

NOMI is talking directly to Daystrom through his neural connection to the ship. Only he can hear her.

DAYSTROM
(a bit distracted, surprised to hear her)
Hmm?

Daystrom starts walking the other way down the corridor.

NOMI (V.O.)
I hope you know, I would never allow harm to come to you. Or any crew member aboard this ship.

DAYSTROM
I know, NOMI.

Two passing crew members hear him apparently talking to himself and look at him funny.

NOMI (V.O.)
(hint of disdain)
Though I can't say I care for that Commander Qora very much.

Daystrom can't help but smile at this, but then looks a bit worried that NOMI is showing such humanlike behavior.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Vega sits at his desk, reviewing some old pictures on his holoprojector, flicking through him with his fingers.

Many of the pictures are of his fiance, MIRIAM ZWADEH, some with them together. He does a large flick and several fly by quickly until the display stops on a very old picture.

The image shows himself, Cole, Miriam and Lexia all together. Behind them is their Captain, a younger Oviedo San Lagos.
Vega is surprised to see it. He sits up to get a better look and can't help but smile at the memories the old picture stirs in him.

Suddenly the image disappears, replaced by NOMI.

    NOMI
    Excuse me, Captain.

Vega is a bit startled by her sudden appearance.

    VEGA
    Ever hear of knocking?

    NOMI
    I'm sorry for the intrusion, but I thought you might want to know that the General Address is in oh-thirty.

Vega nods and mentally prepares himself. He swipes NOMI from his desk holoprojector to his MFID. NOMI is now being projected from his MFID and he gets up and starts to leave with her.

    VEGA
    NOMI, locate Admiral Oviedo and Director Weston-

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Vega steps out of his room and sees Cole and Oviedo standing in front of his door. Oviedo was about to press the door chime.

    NOMI
    Admiral Oviedo and Director Weston are directly in front-

Vega quickly taps his MFID and turns her off. He looks at Cole, taking a deep breath.

    VEGA
    Ready?

Cole looks a bit nervous but nods.

    COLE
    No time like the present...

He looks at Oviedo who raises his brow in excited anticipation and puts his hands on their shoulders.

    OVIDEO
    The moment of truth!

The three walk off down the corridor.

END OF ACT FIVE
ACT SIX

INT. ENTERPRISE - REC ROOM

Most of the crew is assembled in the large recreation room.

Cole walks in onto an elevated area with Vega, followed by Admiral Oviedo.

Daystrom follows and stands beside them.

Behind them is a large window into space.

The crew are all facing Cole and await his address.

INTERCUT: other crew members throughout the ship watching the address on monitors at their duty stations.

Cole stands silently for a few moments. Long enough that Oviedo starts to worry. He looks at Cole, then to Vega questioningly. Vega tries to ignore the look, shaking his head subtly to tell Oviedo not to worry.

Cole looks down. The crew begin to get anxious. Cole turns to Daystrom behind him and signals him. Daystrom's NEM lights up.

The large bay window becomes a giant monitor that shows, in exquisite detail, the Andromeda Galaxy. The view approaches and flies around and through the distant galaxy.

The crew mutter in awed appreciation.

COLE
(looking up at the display)
Andromeda. Two and a half million light years away. No Human, Vulcan, Klingon, Romulan or any other species of the Milky Way has ever been there.

Cole turns to his crew.

COLE (CONT'D)
Until today. Today, we become the first to leave the protective arms of our home galaxy and journey further than ever in history.
(pause)
Today we truly will go where no one has gone before.

The crew bursts into applause. Oviedo looks at Vega in surprise and appreciation. Vega smiles back knowingly. Cole lets it soak in, then raises his hand to stop the applause.

COLE (CONT'D)
As many of you know, we have sent multiple probes to Andromeda while the Spacefold Gate was being
constructed. We have never received any communications or data indicating life on the other side.

Cole looks up at the monitor that's showing the probe telemetry data. Various worlds and star systems, signals it's sending out in all languages on all frequencies, but with no response.

COLE (CONT'D)
Some of you may wonder: "if there's nothing there, why go?" Others may reply "why not?"
(pause)
But there is a reason. There is a reason why the Galactic Federation has invested 20 years of time, effort and expense to go to Andromeda. There is a reason all the diverse species of the Milky Way have put our differences behind us and united in this joint venture.

Cole pauses for effect.

COLE (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen... We were invited.

A message appears in alien text on the screen behind him.

Becker eyes the message with wary interest, trying to decode it himself. Dr. Joli is standing next to him and watches his reaction.

Cole turns and looks at the monitor.

COLE (CONT'D)
Twenty years ago, this message arrived at our farthest monitoring stations in the Beta Quadrant. It took five years to decipher it. But when we did...

Cole signals Daystrom. Daystrom looks up at the huge monitor and his NEM lights up. The alien text gets translated character by character as the crew watch.

The translated message appears in huge letters on the monitor:
Children.
Come home.
They await you.

There are audible gasps from the crew. Several conversations begin and there is suddenly a lot of noise and cross-chatter in the audience.

On the stage, Cole, Oviedo and Vega (backs to the crew as they look up at the monitor) all exchange smiles, appreciating the dramatic effect of the message.
Becker stares up at the message with a mix of awe and terror. Dr. Joli is awestruck as well, then turns to see Becker's fear and a worried look crosses her face.

The message disappears as the monitor deactivates, revealing again the view of the stars through the large bay window.

Cole turns and, in speaking, silences the crew.

**COLE (CONT'D)**
"Children"... "Home"... Who is waiting for us? We have no answers.

(pause)
This is our mission. Your mission. This is not just a mission of exploration for the sake of discovery. This is a quest for truth - this is First Contact of the highest order.

(pause)
And if this message is truly what it appears to be... This is a voyage home to meet our makers.

Cole lets this sink in among the crew. He looks down at Joli and Becker.

**COLE (CONT'D)**
I know many of you may be scared. I am, too.

Oviedo raises his eyebrows at this admission. Viin nods at this and it seems to calm Becker to a degree. Joli appreciates this and looks up at Cole.

**COLE (CONT'D)**
As we should be. The unknown, by its very definition, is unpredictable and full of peril. But we must embrace the unknown, and face it with the courage of our kind.

(pause)
"Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something out there is more important than fear!"

Cole points to the stars outside the window as he says this. The crew processes this for a moment or two, then break out into spontaneous applause.

Oviedo and Vega exchange smiles and join in the applause.

**COLE (CONT'D)**
(over the applause)
My fellow crewmen and citizens: let's make sure history never forgets the name "Enterprise"!
The clapping breaks into thunderous applause and cheering.

Cole exchanges smiles with Oviedo. Cole and Oviedo begin to walk out as Vega steps forward and addresses the crew.

VEGA
Launch window begins in oh-minus-two hundred. All non-critical crew members are advised to take an hour of R&R. I want calm nerves and no stupid mistakes when we're launch-ready. Dismissed!

The crew begins to disperse slowly, many conversations striking up. Only Kopec appears to be in a rush to get out, pushing his way past people frantically.

Dr. Joli intercepts him and prevents him from leaving.

KOPEC
Step aside, please -

Joli is doing a quick examination on Kopec with a handheld medical scanner.

JOLI
Just a moment, Commander.

KOPEC
What is the meaning of this-?

Vega comes over, seeing the commotion.

VEGA
Problem?

KOPEC
I don't have time for this, I must return to Engineering-

JOLI
Oh, no you don't.

Kopec shoots her an incredulous glare.

JOLI (CONT'D)
Not with these blood pressure and heart rate readings. If I didn't know better, it would be easy to mistake you for a Cardassian Burrow Bug.

Kopec checks his MFID to see his bio readings.

KOPEC
(condescendingly)
Doctor Joli, perhaps you've never scanned an Andorian before, but my biosigns are all in perfectly normal-
JOLI
Who's the doctor, here, Mr. Kopec?

KOPEC
I don't have time for this! The launch is in two-

JOLI
One hour. And that's not a request.

Kopec is speechless. Wide-eyed and desperate, he turns to Vega for support.

VEGA
(shrugs)
Doctor's orders.

Joli smiles and puts her hand out, expectantly.

Kopec looks back and forth at them in disbelief. As if the act is physically painful for him, he takes off his MFID, slaps it in Joli's hand and storms out in a huff.

VEGA (CONT'D)
I'm not sure how much that did to help his blood pressure.

JOLI
Oh, it wasn't for him. His crew needs a break before he works them to death or they mutiny!

Joli smiles and walks off. Vega grins broadly, surprised and impressed by her clever deception.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise sits in spacedock.

Track in to close-up on a window looking into the lounge towards the top of the primary hull saucer section.

Becker can be seen through the window, reading an old print book.

INT. ENTERPRISE - LOUNGE

Becker is sitting, reading. He glances up to look out the window at the stars and the Spacefold Gate in the distance.

A pull focus reveals the reflection of Kopec walking up behind him.

Kopec comes to Becker's table reading a HoloPADD and seems about to sit at Becker's table.

Becker seems a bit off-put by this, but decides to be social. He offers his hand to Kopec.
BECKER

Uh... Hi.

Kopec doesn't look up from his HoloPADD or seem to notice the outstretched hand for a few seconds, then sees the hand and looks at it as if it's diseased. He nods "politely" in acknowledgement then turns and sits, instead, at the empty table right next to Becker's.

BECKER (CONT'D)

(sarcastically, under his breath)
Nice to meet you, too...

Becker shakes his head and opens his book to continue reading.

Just then, Lexia and Viin walk up to the table together, startling Becker.

LEXIA
Mind if we join you?

BECKER
(exasperated)
Why not?
(under his breath, looking at Kopec)
It's not like you're interrupting anything.

Lexia offers her hand.

LEXIA
Lexia, Sciences Director.

BECKER
Kyle Becker, Xenolinguistics.

He shakes her hand and immediately feels an attraction to her that takes him by surprise.

Viin sees this and smiles, knowing exactly what he's feeling.

He's transfixed by her for a moment, even after she withdraws her hand.

LEXIA
Oh, right, you're the Communications Officer!

Becker snaps out of it, bristling at that seemingly mundane description of his function and doesn't reply.

Viin sees Becker's book and tries to see what it is, reaching for it.

VIIN
Is that an antique?
Becker hides it.

BECKER
(feigning ignorance)
Hmm?

VIIN
That... it's a printed book, isn't it?
I don't think I've ever seen one before.

Becker is embarrassed, clearly doesn't want to discuss it.

BECKER
Oh, no, it's nothing, just something I picked up at the gift shop.

VIIN
(doesn't believe a word)
Uh-huh...

Viin lets it drop, smiling at his discomfort.

Lexia is looking out the window at the Spacefold Gate.

LEXIA
I wonder what we'll find on the other side.

Becker is caught off-guard by the sudden change in topics, looking out the window to see what Lexia is looking at.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
Alien life like we've never encountered before? Something so unlike our own, perhaps we won't even recognize it? Or maybe the laws of physics will be different.

Kopec at the next table has overheard this and snorts derisively, but keeps reading his HoloPADD and stays out of the conversation.

Becker seems about to say something, but Lexia continues before he can utter a word.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
And who are these... Andromedans? To call us their "children"? Telling us to "come home"? Are they our ancestors? Did we once cross intergalactic space, billions of years ago?

Becker again seems about to add something to the conversation, but Lexia is into her own train of thought now.

LEXIA (CONT'D)
Could they even be... our creators?
Becker finally gets a word in.

BECKER
What if there's nothing on the other side?

Lexia is so lost in her own musing it takes her a couple seconds to process what Becker's implying.

LEXIA
(incredulously)
... what?!

BECKER
Well... what if it's like the globular clusters we sent probes to decades ago? Barren and empty. Nothing but old, dead stars with no heavy elements and no life.

Lexia dismisses the idea.

LEXIA
That's scientifically improbable. Those clusters were old and small. We assumed they'd be barren. But Andromeda is very similar to our own Galaxy, only with nearly twice as many stars. And we have hundreds of thousands of civilizations!

Viin is fascinated by the discussion, enjoying it.

BECKER
But all the probes have come back negative. No signs of intelligent life.
(sarcastically)
No more cryptic "invites". Not even a "back at ya!" to our "hey, man!".

Lexia is beginning to feel defensive about the whole mission suddenly.

LEXIA
We did get the first message. There must be someone there!

BECKER
Well... now, just hear me out for a second... what if... what if it's all just a big hoax.

This begins to pique Kopec's interest. He lifts his eyes from the HoloPADD without lifting his head. His antennae rise a bit, pointing towards the conversation.
Becker sees this and leans over to strike a conspiratorial tone, whispering and looking around cautiously so that Kopec can't hear them. Lexia and Viin lean in.

Becker nods his head in Kopec's direction to point him out.

BECKER (CONT'D)
What if this Kopec guy - that nobody knows anything about - what if he somehow sent the message himself? I mean, do we really know where it came from?

LEXIA
(reflexively)
That's ridiculous.

BECKER
Why? This guy Kopec shows up one day, out of the blue, with these fully-formed theories about-

VIIN
(nodding, conspiratorially)
Spacefold Drive...

Becker points at Viin and Lexia looks at her.

BECKER
Exactly! He's got it all worked out, we just have to build it for him! Only nobody listens to him. They think he's crazy. But more importantly, they have no motive to invest in such a huge, risky effort. So what does he do... he creates a motive!

Becker pauses to let it sink in. Lexia doesn't like it, but doesn't rebut him... yet.

BECKER (CONT'D)
Kopec fakes the message! Sends out a comm sat or something into intergalactic space and it transmits the message back to us using some clever little made-up alien language he came up with - just tricky enough to make us feel smart in translating it. Because there's nothing we love more than feeling smart. Nothing except-

VIIN
A challenge.

LEXIA
A mystery...
Viin and Lexia are following Becker's line of reasoning now and they can't deny there's a logic to it.

BECKER
(nodding)
And so the motive is born and we rush to Kopec, begging him to let us help him realize his dream!

Becker sits back, satisfied. Viin seems to be seriously considering the theory, trying to not look behind her at Kopec, but not entirely succeeding. Lexia is a bit stunned by the possibility.

VIIN
(to Lexia)
You've worked with Kopec... do you think he could do something like that?

Lexia considers it. She finds Kopec to be arrogant, prideful and self-aggrandizing. She doesn't entirely trust him. Lexia seems about to say yes, but then turns non-committal, deciding, instead, it's best to say nothing. She looks at Becker and Viin, mouth opening, then avoids the question and looks down at the table instead.

Viin and Becker exchange glances. Becker gestures towards Lexia as if saying "See?!".

Viin looks over at Kopec, then out at the Spacefold Gate and Becker follows her gaze.

After a moment of silent contemplation, Becker unexpectedly continues:

BECKER
On the other hand... what if Kopec's really an Andromedan? According to Starfleet records, it's not the first time someone from Andromeda has come here! Remember the Kelvan invasion?

Lexia rolls her eyes at this fresh nonsense and Viin grins and shakes her head. Now Becker's gone off the deep end.

LEXIA
That was over 30 years ago, and there's no proof that the "Kelvans" were really from Andromeda at all.

BECKER
Records show that the captain that met the Kelvans sent a robotic probe to Andromeda with a message for them! Maybe Kopec is their reply! They're supposed to be shapeshifters, right?
Viin seems to be buying it, she looks to Lexia for a counter-argument. Lexia can't believe she even has to rebut this nonsense.

LEXIA

That's...
(sighs)
Even if that's true, that probe wouldn't reach Andromeda for a couple hundred thousand of years.

Becker ignores her counter-argument and continues, now lost in his own fantasy.

BECKER

Kopec the Kelvan could be baiting us! Tricking us into opening a door for them to invade the Milky Way! What if we turn it on and trillions of hundred-tentacled monsters pour through and eat us all?!

Becker tries to keep their attention, but both Lexia and Viin get up and walk towards the lounge exits, amused but done. Becker calls after them loudly.

BECKER (CONT'D)

Fine! But don't come crying to me when you're all tentacled up!

He watches them leave and waves them off dismissively after the fact. He throws a furtive glance at Kopec, but he's gone. Surprised, Becker looks around but he's nowhere to be seen. Becker looks a little freaked out by this, but he shrugs, leans back in his chair and continues reading.

The book's front cover is visible now, it has a pulpy sci-fi rendering of a monstrous, bug-eyed, tentacled alien in space tearing into a rocket ship and pulling out a scantily-clad, busty woman while a space hero with a rocket pack and a laser gun tries to fight off the creature.

The title of the book reads:

STRANGE NEW WORLDS

And the title of the cover story reads:

THE TWELVE-TENTACLED TERROR FROM BEYOND THE STARS!!!
INT. ENTERPRISE - COLE'S OFFICE

Cole's office has a desk, a couch, and walls adorned with old-fashioned star charts. A large holographic projector dominates the ceiling. The far side of the office is comprised of bay windows looking forward over the ship's bow.

Cole is unpacking his things.

The door opens and Vega steps in. Cole looks up and smiles.

Vega gestures to the room.

VEGA
Not bad, right? Starcharts, full library access, astrometric projector... and the best view on the ship.

He points out the window.

Cole nods appreciatively.

COLE
Not bad.

Vega picks up a holographic picture frame Cole has placed on the desk. On it is the same picture he was looking at in his quarters - of Vega, Cole, Lexia, Miriam and Oviedo. He puts it back down.

VEGA
You know you broke the old man's heart when you left Starfleet.

Cole looks up at Vega, surprised the subject came up seemingly out of nowhere.
VEGA (CONT'D)
You were the one he was grooming to be Captain, not me.

Cole shakes his head and leans against his desk.

COLE
I just had... other places I wanted to be.

VEGA
It wasn't... because of Lexia, was it?
Because that turned out-

Cole clearly doesn't like this turn of the conversation.

COLE
(quickly)
No.
(BEAT)
No.

Cole looks out at the stars.

COLE (CONT'D)
There's just a lot more I wanted to see, wanted to do, than I could do in Starfleet.

Vega gets it and the two look out at the stars for a silent moment or two.

Vega sighs and puts his hand on Cole's shoulder, making to leave.

VEGA
Well, if you change your mind, I could use an XO. I'm sure Oviedo would reinstate your commission in a heartbeat.

Cole shakes his head, smiling at his friend's good-natured badgering.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Assuming you could pass basic, of course.

The two laugh and Vega is about to exit, but Cole speaks up.

COLE
Sol. Who is your First Officer?

VEGA
Well, it's a small crew, so I don't have need for a dedicated Number One. But I'm considering Qora for the job.

Cole looks a bit appalled.
COLE

Qora?!

VEGA
She seems like the natural choice.
She's tough enough to keep all your surly civilians in line.

Cole looks extremely skeptical.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Plus she's already got a whip, so floggings can commence post-haste!

Vega and Cole share a chuckle over this and Vega makes to leave again when Qora’s voice suddenly comes over the PA.

QORA (ON SPEAKERS)
Attention all crew: Spacefold Jump in T-minus 15 minutes. All senior officers and staff: report to your stations. Captain Vega and Director Weston, report to the Bridge.

Vega and Cole exchange excited glances and head out together.

END OF ACT SIX
ACT SEVEN

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Vega and Cole step onto the Bridge and Vega surveys the crew.

Lexia is at the science station to the left.

Daystrom stands at the large Operations console between the two, behind the Captain’s Chair.

Viin is at the helm up front and Becker is at the Comm beside her.

Qora is in the Captain's seat.

Vega walks to Qora, who stands up and hands Vega a HoloPADD. Vega reads it.

The following sequence happens quickly, each crewman knowing their part in the formal procedure by heart.
VEGA
Ms. Qora, is the ship ready to depart?

QORA
Aye sir, all sections report ready for departure.

VEGA
Very well. Commander Qora, you are relieved.

QORA
I am relieved, aye sir.

Qora walks up and takes her station at the Tactical position to the right.

Vega presses a control on his chair arm, activating the Captain's Log.

VEGA
(to the bridge crew and the log)
This is Captain Solon Vega of the USS Enterprise, stardate 241640.5. I have the conn.

Viin looks back at Vega.

VIIN
Aye, sir.

Cole sits in a special seat to next to the Captain's chair, to Vega's left, in front of Qora's Tactical Station. It has a dedicated astrogator for displaying starcharts and long-range sensor information.

VEGA
Begin departure.

BECKER
(over the intercomm)
All hands: prepare for undocking.

VEGA
Helm, release mooring tractors.

VIIN
Releasing from moorings, aye sir.

VEGA
Ahead one quarter thrust.

VIIN
Zero-two-five thrust.

EXT. ENTERPRISE
The Enterprise begins to leave the docking bay.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

VEGA
Set course for Spacefold Gate
Beta-One.

VIIN
Course set for heading 027-mark-31.

VEGA
Execute.

Viin handles the throttle of the ship.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise heads towards the Spacefold Gate.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

On the viewscreen, the Spacefold Gate comes into close view, filling the screen.

VEGA
Full stop.

VIIN
Engines full stop.

Vega turns to Daystrom.

VEGA
Mr. Daystrom?
Daystrom activates the 3D projector in his temple and checks the status of the different departments reporting in.

    DAYSTROM
    All sections report ready for jump.

    VEGA
    Lt. Becker?

    BECKER
    (into his comm station)
    Attention Spacefold Gate, requesting status of jump procedure.

    GATE OPERATOR (VIA COMM)
    This is Spacefold Gate Beta-One, we are go for jump.

Vega settles back in his chair, pausing a moment to appreciate the occasion.

Then:

    VEGA
    Initiate Spacefold Sequence.

There is a sudden flurry of activity as all stations prepare for the Spacefold.

    BECKER
    All hands: secure stations for Spacefold Sequence.

INT. ENTERPRISE

Various crew hurrying to their stations, securing equipment, closing doors and buckling themselves into their chairs or posts.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Kopec is shouting out some last orders before securing himself into a chair. He sees a nervous junior engineer (J'onn) having trouble with his harness and, exasperated, helps him buckle in.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

The Bridge crew buckle themselves in, including Vega.

    BECKER
    All sections report secure for Spacefold Sequence.

    VEGA
    Helm, synchronize drive control with the Gate.
VIIN
Drive control synched to Spacefold Gate, sir.

Vega hits his chair arm comm control.

VEGA
Spacefold Gate Beta-One, this is Captain Solon Vega of the USS Enterprise. We are ready for Jump.

GATE OPERATOR (VIA COMM)
Acknowledged, Enterprise. On your mark.

Cole pauses for a moment.

VEGA
Execute.

INT. SPACEFOLD GATE
The spacefold gate control room crew are going through their activation sequence.

Various techs work back and forth, making calculations and plotting courses.

The Gate Operator walks back and forth overseeing the techs and, when they're ready, she nods and gives them the go-ahead to start the sequence.

A tech presses some buttons and raises some indicators on a virtual interface.

EXT. ENTERPRISE
The Spacefold Gate lights up, the distortion field extruding through it.

The Enterprise's main deflector begins to glow, then the warp coils. Space begins to distort around them.

The space in front of the Enterprise seems to contract in on itself, the stars pulling closer to the ship, light bending in a hypnotic display.
INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - OVIEDO'S OFFICE

Oviedo is holding a drink and looking out his large bay window at the Enterprise, poised at the now active gate.

OVIEDO
"It matters not how strait the gate,"

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise sits ready in front of the gate as the Universe seems to rush at it, flattening before them.

OVIEDO (V.O.)
"How charged with punishments the scroll,"

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

The bridge crew is speechless as they watch the viewscreen, they see the stars coming at them as if some giant hand were flattening the Universe.

Vega nods to Viin and she opens a special panel out of which a small holoscreen and control console emerge. A green light flashes indicating the Spacefold is active.

VIIN
Jump at your command, Sir.

Vega smiles and turns to Cole. He gestures to Cole, wanting him to give the command.

Cole smiles appreciatively and looks at the screen intently, looking into the artificial wormhole stretching out in front of him.

OVIEDO (V.O.)
"I am the master of my destiny,"

Cole closes his eyes and focuses on the moment. Everything around him slows and the sounds fade away.

Close up on Cole's eyes CUTS TO:

EXT. FRONTIER PLANET - NIGHT

Close up on Cole's eyes. They open. Stars are reflected in his eyes.

Cole, an adult, in his formal clothes, stands at the edge of the cliff over the lake by his home, looking into the reflected stars.

OVIEDO (V.O.)
"I am the captain of my soul."
Cole looks up at the stars in the night sky.
He hears his father's voice.

COLE'S FATHER (V.O.)
(softly)
Jump, Cole.

COLE
(in an awed whisper)
Jump.

The stars warp and stretch in his eyes, filled with the wonder of a young boy's dreams come true.
EXT. ENTERPRISE

From behind the Enterprise, we see it stretch and shoot into the Spacefold Tunnel.

INT. DEEP SPACE B-7 - OVIEDO'S OFFICE

Oviedo watches the Enterprise flash and disappear into the tunnel.

He turns, resting an arm on his desk. He looks simultaneously relieved and suddenly very tired and old. He holds up his glass as in a toast.

OVIEDO
(to himself)
Go get 'em, you lucky bastards.

He takes a drink from his glass.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

Following the Enterprise, it is flying through supercondensed space. A hyperwarp tunnel surrounds the ship.
INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

The light is almost too bright to bear and there is some turbulence. Time is seeming to slow and tear, motion blurring becoming evident.

Suddenly the entire Bridge freezes and is washed out with an intense light.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

We see stars and nebulae pulling towards the Enterprise, the Universe is squeezing around it. There is a sensation of both movement and distortion at the same time. From a point in the distance ahead of the ship, the Andromeda Galaxy appears and grows larger and larger.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

The crew squint a bit as the light from the acceleration blinds them, but it slowly dims as they reach cruising speed.

Viin checks her instruments.

    VIIN
    Cruising speed reached. We are in the tunnel, its reading stable, all systems nominal.

Vega nods.

    VEGA
    Very well, Helm, hold course.

    VIIN
    Aye, sir.

Vega takes a deep breath and looks at Cole in relief.

    VEGA
    Well, I guess we were worried for nothing!

He unbuckles his seatbelt and stands up. Cole follows suit, joining him as they look at the tunnel.

    VEGA (CONT'D)
    Helm, ETA to Andromeda?

Viin checks her instruments.

    VIIN
    Spacefold Terminus in T-minus oh-two-hundred, Captain.

Vega nods, the estimate is as he expected.
VEGA  
(to Becker)  
Lieutenant, patch me through.

Becker opens a comm channel.

VEGA (CONT'D)  
Attention crew, this is the Captain speaking.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING  
Kopec and his engineers are listening to the announcement.

VEGA (ON SPEAKERS)  
We have engaged the Spacefold Jump successfully and are en route to Andromeda.

The Engineers cheer and pat each other on the back. Kopec smiles with pride.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE  
Vega is walking back and forth behind Becker and Viin. Cole stands behind him.

VEGA  
Estimated travel time to Andromeda is...  
(double checks on Viin's display)  
two hours.

INT. ENTERPRISE - LABS  
Various civilian scientists in different types of clear-walled labs (chemistry, botany, xenobiology, etc.) are listening as well.

VEGA (ON SPEAKERS)  
I know you're all eager to get your tricorders dirty on some new planets...

The scientists look at each other with eager anticipation.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE  
Vega turns to Cole.

VEGA  
And, hopefully, to make some new friends.
Cole smiles at this.

VEGA (CONT'D)
But, in the meantime...

INT. ENTERPRISE - SICKBAY
Dr. Joli and her medics are listening.

VEGA
In order to stave off an epidemic of acute "space madness", I suggest you sit back and enjoy the in-flight movie or keep yourselves otherwise occupied.

Dr. Joli smiles and shakes her head.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE
Vega stops pacing and looks forward.

VEGA
The future is waiting for us. It's not going anywhere, so relax and enjoy the ride.
(BEAT)
Captain Vega out.

He nods to Becker and Becker ends the broadcast.

Cole and Vega walk back towards their seats.

COLE
"Space Madness"?

VEGA
It's a real thing. Knew a bright young commander once who came down with it. Threw a promising career away to be a vagabond.

COLE
Tragic story.

VEGA
Oh, I hear he turned out all right.

Qora has walked down and stands in front of them. Vega freezes in mid-sit to look at her.

QORA
Captain. This might be an appropriate time to review Away Team procedures with the... civilians.
Qora says the word with a noticeable distaste, barely glancing at Cole.

Vega wanted to enjoy the ride but sighs, and stands back up.

VEGA
Of course. Lead the way, Commander.

As Qora, Cole and Vega head for the exit, Vega stops at the turbolift and turns to address Daystrom.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Mr. Daystrom, you have the conn.

DAYSTROM
Aye, sir.

The three leave.

As Daystrom passes off his station to his relief crewman and walks down to the Captain's chair, Viin and Becker share a sideways glance. Both of them have wide-eyed expressions as Daystrom takes command.

Viin leans over toward Becker and gestures toward the tunnel on the viewscreen.

VIIN
(whispering)
Hey, look... no tentacles!

Becker leans toward her in reply.

BECKER
(whispering emphatically)
Yet...

INT. ENTERPRISE - STAGING AREA

Lt. Commander Qora is in full Hazard Team gear. Two other crew members are with her, one in a Hazard Team outfit, the other in an EnviroSuit.

The Hazard Team outfit is a reinforced version of the standard uniform, with hard armor patches and an equipment harness. It has a portable transporter buffer for weapons and equipment. It is mostly black with red accents and red shoulder padding. It has a special tactical black MFID built into the left forearm.

The EnviroSuit is slimmer and sleeker. It has an equipment belt and a high-tech looking collar. A standard MFID can be worn over the EnviroSuit on the wrist.

Qora is pointing at parts of the EnviroSuit suit as Vega, Cole and Kopec look on. Kopec looks antsy.
EnviroSuits are required for all landing party personnel. They will insulate you against any terrestrial environment and come equipped with a containment field helmet for optimal observational freedom.

She presses a button on the collar of the EnviroSuit and a force field flickers on.

Kopec sighs audibly. Qora gives him a nasty look and continues.

QORA (CONT'D)
The field is impermeable but allows light and sound through. These can be muted if-

KOPEC (interrupting)
Weston, do I really need to be here for this, I have an engine room to run!

Cole is about to answer, but Qora steps forward and confronts Kopec.

QORA
Are you still Chief Engineer aboard this vessel, Mr. Kopec?

Kopec flinches at her aggressive tone and sneers at her.

KOPEC
Yes...

QORA
Then this is relevant to you. Who do you think is going to come save your ass when you have a core breach or a containment leak?

Kopec doesn't know what he's supposed to say.

Qora steps back and indicates the Hazard Team member, who steps forward.

QORA (CONT'D)
We are. My Hazard Team is responsible for the safety of this crew both aboard and away.

Qora indicates parts of the suit as she talks.
complement of weapons and emergency supplies and gear in our equipment harness.

She nods to the Hazard Team member and they reach down and press a button on their harness. A helmet materializes in their hands and they put it on. They press another point on the harness and emergency equipment materializes on the ground in front of them. One more press on the right side of the belt makes a phaser rifle appear in their hands. The Hazard Team member drops to one knee in a ready firing position.

QORA (CONT'D)
As you can see, we're equipped and prepared for any contingency.

Cole is impressed. Vega smiles, seeing Cole's expression. He's enjoying showing off the cool stuff his ship has.

Kopec still looks impatient, but is impressed, too.

COLE
What about EVAs? Spacewalks?

QORA
EVA suits are stored in the E/V Staging Area lockers near the airlocks. But you don't need to concern yourself with those. Only trained Starfleet personnel will be working on the exterior of the vessel. With the exception of our Chief Engineer, if necessary.

Kopec shakes his head emphatically.

KOPEC
Oh, no - that's not going to happen. We invented starships for a reason - to be on the inside!

Qora rolls her eyes at this.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
(to Vega)
Captain, I really must return to work.

Vega looks at Qora who throws up her arms, giving up. Vega nods and Kopec rushes to leave.

As he passes Qora on the way out:

KOPEC (CONT'D)
I'd say it's been educational, but...
He exits.
Qora shakes her head and nods to the two crewmen. They leave.
Qora steps up to Vega.

QORA
I knew having civilians on this mission was going to be a bad idea.

COLE
Commander, this mission wouldn't even be happening if not for us "civilians".

Qora looks at Cole with barely disguised disdain.

QORA
Well, I just hope your people are ready for this. We don't know what we're going to find over there.

COLE
We can handle ourselves, Commander, thank you.

Cole turns to leave.

QORA
If that was so, you wouldn't need us.

Cole shakes his head at Qora's directness. He and Vega start heading out.

COLE
Tell you what, Commander, if I find something I can't handle, I'll call for you.

Just as they're about to leave, Qora can't help but throw out one last barb.

QORA
(muttering)
Or you can just quit again.

Vega and Cole hear this. Cole is offended, but Vega is PISSED.

VEGA
(in anger)
COMMANDER!

But before he can reprimand Qora, the ship shakes violently, much worse than before, throwing them all off balance.
There is an explosion along the edge of the primary hull where the ship is skimming the edge of the tunnel.

A close-up reveals crew members flying out of the breach and into space!

The Enterprise is slowing down in the tunnel and the field around the ship that keeps the tunnel open is beginning to flicker.

Vega's eyes go wide as the shaking subsides.

VEGA
What was-

Then reality seems to blur for a moment. The effect lasts only for a few seconds. All three look disturbed by this.

A sickening groaning is heard reverberating through the ship's frame.

COLE
That doesn't sound good.

Klaxons start sounding and warning lights start flashing. Vega, Cole and Qora step out into the corridor.

Vega looks around. They start walking quickly down the corridor as Vega hits his MFID.

VEGA
Engineering!

There's no answer. Vega looks at Cole and Qora in alarm.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Engineering! Kopec, come in-

Suddenly Vega's MFID lights up with a hologram of a face, but it's not Kopec. It's Daystrom.

DAYSTROM (VIA COMM)
Captain!

VEGA
Daystrom, what's going on?

DAYSTROM (VIA COMM)
We're detecting a hull breach, Captain - Deck 4, Section 12.
QORA
That's our Deck!

DAYSTROM
Captain, it's in Engineering!

Vega, Cole and Qora stop, eyes wide as they look at each other. They quickly break into a sprint, heading off down the corridor.

Qora shouts into her MFID.

QORA
Hazard Team to Engineering, emergency protocols, hull breach in progress!

Vega is yelling into his MFID, too.

VEGA
Sickbay-

INT. ENTERPRISE - SICKBAY

Dr. Joli and a few other medical personnel are hurriedly grabbing equipment and running out the door. Joli stops to reply to the comm.

JOLI
Already on our way, Captain!

Joli runs out the door.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Qora, Vega and Cole arrive at Engineering, but the doors won't open. Qora pulls off a wall panel and keys in an override.

The Engineering doors open and the three look inside. There is smoke and the lights are flickering. Cole sees wounded crewmen and starts to go in to help, but Qora hold him back.

More Hazard Team members show up and Qora puts on her helmet and leads them in.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Qora and her Hazard Team pass through the smoke cautiously. She points out some injured crew to her team members and they pull the wounded out into the corridor.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Dr. Joli and some medics arrive just as the Hazard Team is pulling out the wounded.
INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Qora and her two remaining Hazard Team members arrive at the focal point of the explosion and can see the hull breach about 20 feet ahead of them. A large hole is torn in the ship and beyond is only the wall of the tunnel and empty space.

The containment field that should seal the breach is flickering on and off intermittently, then fails completely.

Some wounded crew that were holding on to broken railings are suddenly blown out of the breach and Qora and her team get thrown towards it as well!

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Cole and Vega are looking into Engineering and see this. They look at each other and immediately spring to action, starting to head in.

    JOLI
    Captain - be careful!

Vega simply flashes her a crooked smile and runs in after Cole.

END OF ACT SEVEN
ACT EIGHT

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise is slowing down in the tunnel and its tunnel stabilization field is failing. The tunnel is starting to contract on it.

A zoom-in reveals a hull breach with debris flying out of it and a Hazard Team member hanging on for dear life.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Qora has caught herself on a piece of debris and reaches down for the other Hazard Team member. She strains, but manages to pull him back up.

Qora hits her comm control on the side of her helmet.

QORA
(shouting over the noise)
Find the controls for the breach containment field and get it back online!

The Hazard Team member nods and goes off.

Qora and the other Hazard Team member then set about trying to retrieve other trapped and wounded team members.

CUT TO:

Cole and Vega are making their way through the smoke and debris, searching for Kopec.

COLE
(shouting)
Kopec! Chief!

Vega sees a figure through the smoke and points. The two head over towards it.

It's tough going, but they get through and find Kopec. He's wearing a breathing mask and standing at a console where a wounded engineer lies on the floor.

In front of him is the Antimuon Generator.

VEGA
(shouting)
Chief!

Kopec quickly glances at him, but keeps working.

KOPEC
I've got to get the generator back online or the wormhole will collapse!
Cole shakes his head.

COLE
It's not safe in here, you've got to get out!

KOPEC
No! If the wormhole collapses, we'll be stranded with no way back!

Cole and Vega exchange a look, knowing he's right.

VEGA
All right, what can we do?

KOPEC
The power relays are overloaded - the generator is losing power!

Kopec points deeper into the engine room. It's a mess, sparks are flying everywhere and power conduits are exploding in fireballs.

KOPEC (CONT'D)
We've got to reroute the power at the main junction!

Vega looks at the gauntlet of death, a look of determination coming over him.

COLE
There's no way! There's too much damage!

Vega steps forward.

COLE (CONT'D)
Sol, no!

Cole grabs his arm. Vega looks back at Cole, a peaceful look on his face. He puts his hand on Cole's.

VEGA
Your mission. My ship.

Cole understands and lets go.

He steels himself and jumps into the extremely volatile area.

KOPEC
He's insane!

Cole activates his MFID.

COLE
Engineering to Bridge!
INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Daystrom is surprised to hear Cole. Lexia looks at Daystrom in alarm.

DAYSTROM
Weston? Bridge here, what's your status?

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Cole points his MFID at Kopec.

KOPEC
The Antimuon Generator should be back to full power within a couple minutes!

DAYSTROM (VIA COMM)
Acknowledged.

KOPEC
Commander! When the generator returns to full power, the stabilization field is going repel the ship from the tunnel wall like a photon torpedo!

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

KOPEC (VIA COMM)
You'd better be ready up there when it happens!

Daystrom nods and looks at Viin who looks freaked out.

DAYSTROM
Understood, we'll be ready.

Viin doesn't look as sure as Daystrom about that and exchanges a nervous glance with Becker.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Qora and the other HazTeam member pull the last of the trapped crewmen to safety.

CUT TO:

The other Hazard Team member has found the controls for the emergency containment field.

He taps a spot on his harness and a tool materializes in his hands.

He uses it to take off the panel and reaches inside.
Qora sees the breach get sealed by the containment field.

She looks down to the HazTeam member that reactivated it and gives him a thumbs-up.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Daystrom is standing in the center of the Bridge, facing out at the wormhole. His brow is furrowed and he looks intense, waiting for Engineering to tell them they're ready.

Daystrom looks at Viin. He walks up behind her and talks to her directly.

    DAYSTROM
    Ensign Viin.

Viin is a bit surprised by the direct attention from Daystrom.

    VIIN
    Commander?

    DAYSTROM
    When the stabilization field reactivates, you will need to be ready to correct our course immediately.

    VIIN
    (nervously)
    Yes, sir...

    DAYSTROM
    Do you believe you are capable of performing this task?

    VIIN
    I... I think so...

    DAYSTROM
    That's not good enough, Ensign. I need to know if you can do this or not. There's no shame in admitting your limitations.

Viin looks over to Becker, who is holding onto his console white-knuckled, terrified.

Viin looks back up at Daystrom.

    VIIN
    I can do it.

Daystrom nods reluctantly, not sure if he believes her.
INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Kopec and Cole are watching the Antimuon Generator's display. The power is still steadily dropping.

Qora and her Hazard Team show up carrying injured crewmen.

QORA
What are you doing in here?! Get clear!

KOPEC
We can't, we have to get the generator back online!

Qora looks around.

QORA
Where's the Captain?!

Cole and Kopec exchange glances. They look into the heavily damaged area.

Qora follows their gaze and her eyes widen in alarm.

QORA (CONT'D)
Dammit!

She hands the wounded crewman she was carrying to another HazTeam member and they begin to leave.

QORA (CONT'D)
(to Cole and Kopec)
I'll handle this - get clear!

Qora starts to head into the dangerous area herself, but has to shield herself as an explosion goes off right in front of her, halting her progress. She strains to see Vega anywhere up ahead and goes forward, more cautiously this time.

CUT TO:

Vega is making his way across the debris and comes to a spot where a power relay is sparking in front of him. He closes his eyes.

SEE a blurry vision from Vega's POV of the conduit exploding.

Vega opens his eyes and backs away just as the conduit explodes. Then he dives forward.

CUT TO:

Kopec and Cole are watching the display. Suddenly an explosion goes off over overhead and a chunk of debris nearly crushes them. Cole and Kopec look at each other.

Kopec quickly types some things on the console.
KOPEC

It's set to reactivate automatically as soon as power is restored!

COLE

Let's go!

They run out, but on the way more debris falls and Cole pushes Kopec out of the way. The debris lands square on Cole, crushing him.

COLE (CONT'D)

AAGHHH!

KOPEC

Weston!!

CUT TO:

Qora is making her way through the debris, explosions going off near her, but her armor and natural strength is absorbing it. Through some flames she sees a figure moving up ahead.

CUT TO:

Vega is now moving quickly through the area, anticipating the explosions and avoiding them with prescience. He moves with a speed, agility and precision that is impressive to behold.

CUT TO:

Kopec and the two other HazTeam members are trying to lift the debris off of Cole, but it's barely budging.

Joli runs in and pushes them aside. She plants a one-inch disc-shaped device on Cole and herself. The discs have a red cross on them. She activates them and she and Cole dematerialize.

INT. ENTERPRISE - SICKBAY

Medics are hectically trying to care for several injured crewmen.

Suddenly, Joli and Cole materialize on a small transporter platform labeled "Emergency Medical Transport Platform".

Two medics rush over to help Dr. Joli move Cole off the platform and to a medical bed.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Vega dodges a couple more explosions and finally gets to the main junction.

He pulls off the panel and activates his MFID.
VEGA
Vega to Bridge, brace yourselves!

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

VEGA (VIA COMM)
I'm throwing the switch!

Daystrom is sitting in the Captain's chair. His jaw sets in firm resolve.

Becker's eyes go wide as he tightens his harness and looks over at Viin in terror. But she looks intent, focused.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Vega is about to throw the switch.

QORA (O.S.)
Captain, wait!

Vega turns to see Qora, about 10 feet back, on the other side of a dangerous jet of plasma.

QORA (CONT'D)
If you switch that relay, this whole area could blow!

VEGA
It won't!

QORA
You don't know that!

Vega turns back and throws the switch.

CUT TO:

The Antimuon Generator's console display lights up and a message flashes: WORMHOLE STABILIZATION FIELD ONLINE

CUT TO:

Qora is shielding herself from an explosion she expects to come, but it doesn't.

Vega sighs in relief and turns around, flashing her a big smile.

VEGA
See? Nothing to-

Suddenly, the ship jerks wildly, throwing him.
EXT. ENTERPRISE

As the field around The Enterprise reactivates, the wormhole dilates and the Enterprise is thrown violently, careening through the tunnel out of control!

END OF ACT EIGHT
ACT NINE

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise is careening through the tunnel out of control, pitching and rolling wildly and heading for the wall of the tunnel.

INT. ENTERPRISE - ENGINEERING

Vega and Qora go flying through Engineering.

Qora catches hold of a railing and reaches out for Vega, grabbing him by the arm.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Viin is fighting the controls, trying her best to right the ship. Becker is more terrified than ever. He tries to close his eyes and the ship jerks wildly, which prompts him to open them back up immediately.

He looks over at Viin.

Viin is frantically working her controls, looking back and forth at her console and the viewscreen.

DAYSTROM
Correct by oh-point-three, Ensign!

VIIN
I know!

Viin bears down, one hand clutches the throttle, using all her might to keep it forward.

BECKER
Should I get out and push?

VIIN
Shut it!

The ship jerks violently.

BECKER
Shutting it!

Viin is straining, sweating - but she seems to be making progress.

VIIN
Come on, you son of a bitch... come on!
EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise is reeling a little less, but still heading for the wall of the tunnel.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Daystrom watches in alarm, standing up and taking a step forward.

    DAYSTROM
    Ensign, you can transfer helm control to me! My hypercortex can process the vectors much faster than-

    VIIN
    I've got this, super-brain! Sit down and buckle up!

Daystrom considers debating it, but sits back down and buckles himself back in.

Becker points worriedly at the viewscreen.

    BECKER
    Uh! Wall! Tunnel-thing! Gonna die!!

Viin is straining against the throttle, pushing back against her chair.

    VIIN
    Not... helping....!

She exerts herself with one last heave and the throttle gives, snapping forward, jerking the ship and jostling the Bridge crew. Her console lights up, warning indicators turning from red to green.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise turns away from the edge of the tunnel at the last possible second and drunkenly rights itself, flying down the center of the wormhole again.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

With the exception of Daystrom, the Bridge crew erupts in cheers. Daystrom allows himself a brief display of relief as he untenses a bit.

Becker looks over at Viin who's still straining against the controls.

Becker unbuckles himself and goes over to her, putting his hand on hers and easing it back.
BECKER
(calming her)
Easy, easy, you did it, we're safe now...

Viin slowly comes down from her adrenaline rush and looks at Becker absently.

BECKER (CONT'D)
You did it.

VIIN
(vaguely)
I did it...

She looks at Becker and Daystrom. Becker nods reassuringly.

VIIN (CONT'D)
(elated)
I did it!

Becker smiles.

BECKER
I don't care what everyone else says, Romulans are not terrible drivers.

Viin scowls in indignation and she plants her hand on his face and pushes him away. He falls flat on his ass, which amuses her.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise is flying straight and smooth through the wormhole again.

INT. ENTERPRISE - SICKBAY

Dr. Joli is standing next to a medical bed with Cole on it. Specialized consoles are attached to the sides of his bed generating a healing field over him. A few medics are working at the consoles along with Dr. Joli.

Lexia stands by, watching, concerned.

Qora and Vega sit on medical beds facing each other, battered and dirty from their ordeal in the engine room.

Medics are running scanners over them.

Vega looks over at Joli and Cole and gets impatient. He stands up and heads over to them. Qora follows.

The medics working on them are flustered, but follow and keep scanning them.

VEGA
Doctor. How is he?
Joli is monitoring Cole's status on a display on one of the consoles.

\textbf{JOLI}

His internal injuries were serious, but nothing we can't fix. It's a good thing we got him here right away. He should make a full recovery.

Indeed, inside the field, Cole is visibly healing quickly as Qora and Vega watch.

Dr. Joli turns and sees Qora is wounded as well, she has a few punctures in her uniform and is bleeding in some places.

Joli takes Qora's arm but Qora pulls away from her, perhaps a bit too reflexively. Joli looks surprised at this reaction.

Qora realizes she may have overreacted and tries to cover.

\textbf{QORA}

I'm fine, I'm healing already. Treat the Captain.

Joli looks skeptical and goes to examine Qora anyway. But she is surprised to see that Qora visually looks completely healed.

Looking up at Qora in surprise, she picks up a handheld scanner and runs it over the area. It lights up green.

\textbf{JOLI}

Amazing. Not even a scar...

\textbf{QORA}

Orions are quick healers.

\textbf{JOLI}

I'd heard... but to see it in the flesh...!

Qora feels uncomfortable being "under the microscope" and turns away. She's grateful when Vega offers a diversion.

\textbf{LEXIA}

(indicating Cole)

Doctor!

Cole is waking up. Joli checks his readings.

\textbf{JOLI}

All internal injuries have healed nicely. You were lucky, Mr. Weston.

She deactivates the healing field and lowers the bed's consoles.

Cole looks around, reaches for Vega.
COLE
(weakly)
Are we...

Vega grabs his hand and reassures him.

VEGA
Back on course for Andromeda.

JOLI
You're going to be okay, Mr. Weston. You'll just need a day or two to recover fully.

COLE
(doesn't care for the news)
A day...

Lexia takes his hand and he looks at her, smiling and relaxing some.

Joli turns her attention to Vega.

JOLI
Now as for you, Captain...

Joli takes out a medical scanner and starts to scan him.

VEGA
I'm fine, Doctor.

Joli seems skeptical and looks to the medic who has been working on him.

MEDIC
Just a few scrapes and bruises as far as I can tell.

Joli shakes her head.

JOLI
Unbelievable.

QORA
You were damned lucky, Captain. You should have waited for me.

Vega turns to Qora and gives a half-hearted smile.

VEGA
You'll have to get used to it, Commander. I'm accustomed to taking certain risks myself.

QORA
You're the Captain! And you were unequipped for the danger! You could have died!
Cole and Joli appear uncomfortable with the escalating tone of reprisal in Qora's voice. Vega seems a bit irritated, but keeps his cool.

    VEGA
    No, I couldn't have.

Vega sees Kopec enter and beckon him. He puts his hand on Qora's shoulder reassuringly as he leaves to talk to Kopec.

    VEGA (CONT'D)
    It wasn't my time.

Vega walks off leaving Qora scowling at such a nonsensical response.

    QORA
    (to everyone else)
    What's that supposed to mean?

Lexia and Cole share a knowing look.

    COLE
    (reluctantly)
    His people... believe they can sense when they're going to die.

Joli and Qora exchange surprised, incredulous glances.

    JOLI
    Is that true?

    COLE
    I... don't know.

Qora looks at Vega as he talks with Kopec. She regards him with a newfound curiosity. There's more to him than she suspected. Vega looks back at her and beckons her to come over. She heads towards them.

CUT TO:

Kopec and Vega are talking. Kopec is reviewing a report on a HoloPADD.

    KOPEC
    -primary drive systems are largely operational, though we won't be going to maximum warp anytime soon. The regenerative hull plating has already begun to seal the breach and repair drones are deployed, but we'll still need a few days to complete repairs.

Vega nods.
VEGA
And the Antimuon Generator?

Qora arrives.

KOPEC
I can't explain it. I had thought it exploded, but it looks like the explosion was merely nearby. Whatever it was caused the breach and shut down the generator, but didn't destroy it.

VEGA
(to both of them)
I want a PCR and full damage report on the incident ASAP.

Qora and Kopec nod.

VEGA (CONT'D)
But more importantly: I want to know what caused this.
(to Kopec)
Was it an accident?
(to Qora)
Or was it sabotage?
(BEAT)
Either way, one of you fell down on the job.

Qora and Kopec both look chagrined.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Work together. Put aside whatever animosities you have - personal or prejudicial - and get to the bottom of this. We need answers.

KOPEC
Yes, Captain.

QORA
Yes, Sir.

EXT. ENTERPRISE
The Andromeda Galaxy looms ahead. The Enterprise is slowing down.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE
Viin is watching the viewscreen as they approach Andromeda. She checks her instruments.

VIIN
ETA: 10 minutes.
Daystrom opens the ship’s PA system for an announcement.

    DAYSTROM
    (into the comm)
    Attention all hands.

INT. ENTERPRISE – CORRIDOR

Crew stop and listen to the announcement.

    DAYSTROM (ON SPEAKERS)
    All hands: secure stations for Spacefold Terminus.

INT. ENTERPRISE – SICKBAY

All are listening to the announcement.

    DAYSTROM (ON SPEAKERS)
    Andromeda arrival in T-minus 10 minutes and counting.

Vega walks back over towards Lexia and she begins to leave.

Cole starts to sit up, but Joli pushes him back down.

    JOLI
    Oh no you don't.

Cole takes her hand away and sits up.

    COLE
    Doctor, I'm fine–

Suddenly, Cole feels light-headed. Joli notices and takes him by the arms, ready to lay him back down.

    JOLI
    You might not be dying anymore, Mr. Weston, but you're far from "fine".

Cole looks over at Lexia and Vega, then back at Joli.

He grabs one of her hands and looks her straight in the eyes intently but earnestly.

    COLE
    Doctor. In 10 minutes, we will become the first starship ever to enter the Andromeda Galaxy. There's no force in the Universe that can make me miss that moment. Not even "Doctor's orders".

Joli softens and, reluctantly, relents.
She lets go and Cole gets up. Joli goes to help him, but he stands on his own.

But you owe me a full physical once we get there!

Vega, Lexia and Cole walk out.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Cole, Vega and Lexia come in. The three walk down to the middle off the bridge, in front of the Captain's chair.

All three look out at the view of Andromeda as it gets larger and larger.

Mr. Daystrom, I have the conn.

Daystrom nods and stands, returning to his station behind the Captain's Chair.

Cole watches the screen as they enter Andromeda.

Qora, Kopec and Joli come in as well. They all stop by Qora's station near the turbolift.

All watch in amazement as the stars of Andromeda envelop them, their stretching reducing as the ship slows down to normal speed.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise continues toward the Andromeda Galaxy until the ship is enveloped by it. The distortion from the tunnel begins to right itself and space unfolds around them.

The Enterprise exits a Spacefold Gate in the Andromeda Galaxy (construction robots can be seen buzzing about it like worker bees).

The ship arrives near the outer rim of the Andromeda Galaxy and the view is incredible. Much of the galaxy can be seen from this vantage point - much like the night sky on Cole's home planet.
INT BRIDGE - USS ENTERPRISE

The Andromeda Galaxy fills the viewscreen.

Cole steps forward and looks around in awe.

    COLE
    Helm, position.

Viin is still looking at the screen, dazed. Cole puts his hand on her shoulder and she snaps out of it. She looks down at her console and activates the 3-D starchart display. It spins and whirls and pinpoints their location along three axes.

    VIIN
    Starfix position confirmed... we're in the Andromeda Galaxy, 732 kiloparsecs from our previous location.

Cole beams with relief and joy - they've really arrived! History has been made and the entire galaxy is laid out before them, ready to be discovered.
He turns to face the bridge crew.

    COLE
    Ladies, gentlemen... welcome to the final-

Becker is surprised by a light flashing on his console.

    BECKER
    (interrupting)
    Uh, Captain?

Vega and Cole turn sharply to Becker.

    BECKER (CONT'D)
    I'm... getting a signal!

Vega goes over and looks over his shoulder. Cole joins him on the other side of Becker. The Bridge crew exchange surprised glances.

    VEGA
    What kind of signal?

Becker is listening.

    BECKER
    I'm not sure, sir... it's very regular, like a beacon...

Vega looks at Cole. Lexia heads back up to her station.

    COLE
    (hoping it's something)
    Could be nothing...

    VEGA
    (smiling)
    Could just be a pulsar...

    BECKER
    No, sir...
    (looks up at Cole)
    It's broadcasting on standard Starfleet frequencies!

Cole and Vega stand up and look at each other in surprise at this. Cole looks at the viewscreen, then back at Lexia.

    COLE
    Can you pinpoint the origin?

Lexia has returned to her console and is triangulating.

    LEXIA
    Yes, it's...
    (surprised, looks at Cole)
    It's coming from Cossaea II!
Joli looks surprised as well. Qora, confused, whispers to Joli who's standing next to her.

QORA
(to Joli)
Cossaea?

JOLI
(to Qora)
The closest M-Class planet to the Gate, according to our probes.

Cole sits down in his seat, examining his astrogator, bringing up details on Cossaea II. He thinks for a second, then decides.

COLE
Captain, set course for Cossaea II.

Vega nods and sits down next to him.

VEGA
Helm, set designated course, cruising speed.

VIIN
Aye, heading 187-mark-29, cruising speed only.

EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise moves away from the gate and heads deeper into the Andromeda Galaxy.

INT. ENTERPRISE - COLE'S OFFICE

Cole stands at the window, looking out at Andromeda as the ship enters the galaxy.

The door opens and Vega and Lexia appear in the doorway.

VEGA
Is this a private party, or can we join in?

Cole looks back at them and smiles. Vega and Lexia come in.

Vega is carrying a bottle and three glasses. He places the glasses on the desk and holds up the bottle for them to see. It has a luminescent, sparkly purple liquid in it.

VEGA (CONT'D)
I've been saving this for a long time.

He uncorks the bottle and fills all three glasses as Lexia and Cole exchange smiles.
Vega hands Lexia and Cole a glass each and then holds up his own to make a toast.

VEGA (CONT'D)
To the future.

COLE
The future.

LEXIA
The future.

They all clink their glasses together and drink.

Lexia is surprised by the strength of the drink. Vega chokes a bit and coughs.

VEGA
(rasping)
Maybe I've been saving it a little too long.

He sets the drink down on the desk and joins Lexia and Cole at the window, leaning against the bay window frame. He looks out at the galaxy.

COLE
(in awe)
We really did it.

Lexia smiles in agreement.

LEXIA
We did, didn't we?

Lexia and Cole smile at each other.

Vega looks out at the galaxy for a bit.

VEGA
Damn, that's a big galaxy.

Cole is pensive for a moment.

COLE
Whatever the costs... whatever the risks... it's worth it.

Vega smiles and nods.

The three look out at the galaxy together for a few moments, soaking it in.

Just then, a hail comes over Vega's MFID. He answers it.

VEGA
Vega here.
Captain, instruments are detecting a large nebula around Cossaea II.

Cole and Lexia look at each other, confused by this.

VEGA
On my way!

Vega shuts off the comm and the three head out.

INT. ENTERPRISE – BRIDGE

On the viewscreen is a thick, swirling blue-purple nebula.

Cole, Vega and Lexia enter. Lexia heads directly to her station as Cole and Vega walk down to the center of the Bridge.

Cole looks at the screen in awe, then checks the starcharts on the astrogator by his seat.

COLE
This doesn't make any sense... none of our probes detected a nebula in this area.

Vega turns back and looks to Lexia.

VEGA
Any danger?

Lexia is checking her sensors.
LEXIA
Other than interfering with our sensors a bit, no... it should be safe.

Vega nods. He takes a moment, thinking.

VEGA
Helm, thrusters only. Let's take this nice and slow.

Viin presses a few controls.

VIIN
Thrusters only.

Vega sits and Cole watches tensely as they pass through the another couple layers of dense nebulous clouds. He strains to see anything identifiable, his eyes wanting to see patterns in the random swirls.

EXT. ENTERPRISE
The nebula seems to pulsate, energy arcs through it with increasing frequency.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE
Vega looks around as the energy audibly arcs through the nebula around the ship.

EXT. ENTERPRISE
More energy arcs around the Enterprise now, with greater frequency, almost with regularity.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE
Becker looks up at the ceiling, hearing the energy bolts as they echo, then looks at the screen, watching the flashes. Something about them intrigues him.

All eyes are on the viewscreen now, waiting for something to show up.

Viin is the first to see it.

VIIN
There - Captain!

Vega stands up and steps forward, joining Cole.
EXT. ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise moves forward through the nebulous clouds arcing with energy and out of the blue & purple swirls appears a blue and brown planet with white clouds. A faint star casts "god rays" through the nebula, surrounding the planet in an almost heavenly aura.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Cole looks at the display with wonder. Instinctively, he looks back at Lexia – this is the exact kind of thing they always talked about going out into the Galaxy and discovering together. She is beaming and her eyes well up at the beauty of it. She catches Cole's look and they share a warm smile.

Becker hears something and listens to his earpiece.

BECKER
Captain!

Vega steps towards Becker.

VEGA
The beacon?

BECKER
(listening)
No, sir...
(looks at Vega)
It's a hail!

Vega straightens up, stunned. He looks around at the crew and at Cole.

COLE
On speakers...

Becker works a few controls and the speakers spark to life. Energy bolts from the nebula crackle and hiss, and the audio is a bit distorted at first, but Becker works to clear it up. A voice can be heard, speaking in halting, simple English. A message is repeating.

ALIEN VOICE (ON SPEAKERS)
Greetings, our children. We bid you welcome. Our home is yours. Come. We await you.

Cole is dumbstruck, as is the rest of the bridge crew.

END OF ACT NINE
Space. The final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its mission: to explore strange, new worlds. To seek out new life, and new civilizations. To boldly go where no one has gone before.

STAR TREK UNCHARTED

END OF PILOT