

THE PATH TO 2409

2379-2380

FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF PRAETOR SHINZON AT THE BATTLE OF BASSEN RIFT, THE ROMULAN GOVERNMENT FELL INTO DISARRAY. TAL'AURA, ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE ROMULAN SENATE AND A FORMER ALLY OF SHINZON, DECLARES HERSELF THE NEW PRAETOR, SUPPORTED BY FLEET COMMANDER TOMALAK AS THE NEW LEADER OF THE IMPERIAL DEFENSE FORCE.

HOWEVER, TAL'AURA'S LEADERSHIP IS OPPOSED BY COMMANDER DONATRA, WHO WITH THE SUPPORT OF COMMANDER SURAN AND FORMER ADMIRAL BRAEG RETAINS CONTROL OF THE MAJORITY OF THE FIFTH AND THIRD FLEETS. ANY HOPE OF A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES ENDS AFTER THE EXECUTION OF BRAEG, AND DONATRA VOWS NEVER TO ACCEPT TAL'AURA'S RULE.

DONATRA'S REBELLION IS NOT TAL'AURA'S ONLY CONCERN. THE REMANS, LED BY GENERAL XIOMEK OF THE REMAN KEPESZUK BATTALION, DEMAND CONTROL OF EITHER A CONTINENT ON ROMULUS OR A PLANET WITH SUFFICIENT NATURAL RESOURCES TO MAINTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENT SETTLEMENTS AS REPARATIONS FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF SLAVERY AND EXPLOITATION. IN RESPONSE, TAL'AURA CUTS SHIPMENTS OF FOOD AND NEEDED SUPPLIES TO REMUS AND COMMANDS TOMALAK TO BLOCKADE THE PLANET.

IN FEDERATION SPACE, THE *USS ENTERPRISE-E* UNDERGOES A MAJOR REPAIR AND REFIT AND RESUMES ITS MISSION OF EXPLORATION. ABOUT HALF OF HER CREW TRANSFERS TO OTHER POSTS DURING THE MONTHS-LONG OVERHAUL, INCLUDING SENIOR STAFF OFFICERS WILLIAM T. RIKER AND DEANNA TROI, WHO ARE POSTED ON THE *USS TITAN*, AND CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER BEVERLY CRUSHER, WHO BRIEFLY SERVES AS HEAD OF STARFLEET MEDICAL BEFORE RETURNING TO THE *ENTERPRISE*.

TWO TRIALS ARE OF NOTE DURING THIS TIME. ON STARDATE 56867.84, THE FOUNDER KNOWN AS THE FEMALE CHANGELING IS SENTENCED FOR CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST SENTIENT BEINGS DURING THE DOMINION WAR AND COMMITTED TO THE FEDERATION MAXIMUM SECURITY FACILITY AT ANANKE ALPHA. AND ON STARDATE 58370.4, RO LAREN SURRENDERED TO STARFLEET CUSTODY. A FORMER MEMBER OF STARFLEET WHO DEFECTED TO THE MAQUIS IN 2370, RO PLEAD GUILTY TO CHARGES OF DESERTION AND WAS ORDERED TO REPORT TO A PENAL FACILITY ON EARTH FOR REHABILITATION.

FEDERATION ANALYSTS CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE DEEPENING ECONOMIC CRISIS ON CARDASSIA PRIME. THE CARDASSIANS WERE DEVASTATED BY DOMINION BOMBARDMENT IN THE FINAL DAYS OF THE DOMINION WAR, SUFFERING MORE THAN 800 MILLION CASUALTIES. LARGE PORTIONS OF CARDASSIA PRIME REMAIN IN RUINS AND THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE THE RESOURCES TO RECOVER, ALTHOUGH IT HAS REJECTED MOST FEDERATION AID.

A NOTABLE EXCEPTION TO THIS STANCE IS THE ANDAK PROJECT, A FEDERATION-FUNDED PROGRAM INTENDED TO RESTORE CARDASSIA PRIME'S AGRICULTURAL BASE. LED BY KEIKO O'BRIEN, THE ANDAK PROJECT INITIALLY FACED STIFF RESISTANCE FROM XENOPHOBIC GROUPS SUCH AS THE TRUE WAY AND GUL MACET'S CONSERVATIVE BLOC OF THE GOVERNMENT. ONLY THE INFLUENCE OF CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENTAL ADVISER ELIM GARAK, A SUPPORTER OF THE FLEDGLING DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT, ALLOWED THE ANDAK PROJECT TO PROCEED, AND WORK IS NOW IN PROGRESS TO MAKE THE BARREN DESERT CLIMATE OF CARDASSIA PRIME SUPPORT SUFFICIENT CROPS TO FEED ITS POPULATION. EXPERTS AT THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE PREDICT THAT WITHOUT MORE SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS LIKE THE ANDAK INITIATIVE, THE CARDASSIAN UNION COULD FALL IN AS LITTLE AS THREE YEARS.

STARFLEET IS MONITORING THE DETERIORATING STATE OF THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE, WHICH APPEARS TO BE MOVING TOWARD OPEN CIVIL WAR. FEDERATION AMBASSADORS ARE CONSULTING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND OTHER ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANT POWERS ABOUT A PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION TO EITHER BRING PEACE TO THE ROMULANS OR CONTROL ANY CONFLICT THAT SPILLS OUT OF ROMULAN SPACE.

THE IMPERIAL FORCES LED BY TOMALAK HAVE SKIRMISHED REPEATEDLY WITH REMAN SHIPS IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THEIR TWO WORLDS. THE ROMULAN BLOCKADE OF REMUS IS HOLDING FOR NOW, LEADING TO CONCERNS THAT THE REMANS ARE SUFFERING FROM SHORTAGES OF FOOD AND SUPPLIES. THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS HAS OFFERED HUMANITARIAN AID TO BOTH ROMULUS AND REMUS.

WHILE AMBASSADOR SPOCK HAS RETURNED TO FEDERATION SPACE, THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT HE FOUNDED CONTINUES TO GROW ON ROMULUS. XIOMEK OF THE REMAN KEPESZUK BATTALION HAS ALLIED WITH THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT, SEEING THE UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATION AS ANOTHER POPULATION THAT HAS BEEN EXPLOITED BY THE ROMULAN GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH THE TWO SIDES DISAGREE ON HOW BEST TO REACH THEIR GOALS. XIOMEK IS PROMOTING A MILITARY SOLUTION TO FORCE THE ROMULANS TO ACCEDE TO THE REMANS' DEMANDS, WHILE THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT IS CALLING FOR A NONVIOLENT, DIPLOMATIC ALTERNATIVE.

ON STARDATE 59480.33, SPOCK PRESENTS A FORMAL REQUEST FOR AID FOR THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT TO THE FEDERATION COUNCIL, WHICH AGREES TO TAKE THE MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION.

WITH THE BLOCKADE OF REMUS AND UPHEAVAL AT HOME, PRAETOR TAL'AURA HAS INSUFFICIENT FORCES TO STOP COMMANDER DONATRA, WHO RALLIES THE BREAKAWAY MILITARY FORCES UNDER HER COMMAND TO CONQUER SEVERAL AGRICULTURAL WORLDS IN ROMULAN SPACE. WITH THESE PLANETS UNDER HER CONTROL, DONATRA DECLARES HERSELF THE FIRST EMPRESS OF THE IMPERIAL

ROMULAN STATE AND ESTABLISHES A CAPITOL ON ARCHENAR PRIME. TAL'AURA VOWS TO RETAKE THE TERRITORY BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

A COALITION OF PLANETS LED BY BAJOR DEMAND THAT MEMBERS OF THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY STAND TRIAL FOR CRIMES AGAINST SENTIENT BEINGS FOR ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE OCCUPATION OF BAJOR AND THE DOMINION WAR. THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT REFUSES ANY REQUEST TO SURRENDER ITS CITIZENS FOR PROSECUTION, SO THE COALITION APPEALS TO THE FEDERATION COUNCIL AND THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL TO JOIN THEM IN SEEKING JUSTICE FOR PAST CRIMES.

FOLLOWING INCREASED ACTIVITY BY THE BORG IN THE ALPHA QUADRANT INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE RECREATION OF A BORG QUEEN, STARFLEET APPOINTS CAPTAIN JEAN-LUC PICARD TO LEAD THE DEFENSE AGAINST THE RENEWED THREAT. HE CALLS ON SEVEN OF NINE TO RESEARCH WAYS TO USE TECHNOLOGY BROUGHT BACK FROM THE DELTA QUADRANT BY VOYAGER TO EITHER DIRECTLY COMBAT THE BORG OR TO GIVE THE FEDERATION AN ADVANTAGE IN THE COMING BATTLE.

BUT NOT ALL OF STARFLEET'S ENERGIES ARE DIRECTED TOWARD MILITARY CONCERNS. ON STARDATE 58839.03, STARFLEET CELEBRATES THE START OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE *USS STARGAZER-A* AT THE SAN FRANCISCO FLEET YARDS. THE *STARGAZER-A* AND HER SISTER SHIPS WILL BE THE FIRST OF A NEW CLASS OF STARSHIPS DESIGNED FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION.

2382

THE UNSTABLE SITUATION OF THE ROMULANS CONTINUES TO BE A SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS.

THE LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL PLANETS NOW CLAIMED BY THE IMPERIAL ROMULAN STATE THREATENS ROMULUS WITH SEVERE FOOD SHORTAGES. ROMULUS' POWER

PLANTS AND FACTORIES CANNOT INCREASE OUTPUT WITHOUT THE HEAVY METALS AND DILITHIUM THAT ONCE FLOWED FROM REMUS.

TO AVERT THE LOOMING CIVIL CRISIS, PRAETOR TAL'AURA RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTS FOOD SHIPMENTS FROM THE FEDERATION. BUT SHE REFUSES THE FEDERATION'S OFFER TO FACILITATE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HER AND EMPRESS DONATRA, SAYING THAT IT IS AN INTERNAL ROMULAN MATTER.

TAL'AURA CHARGES HER PROCONSUL, FLEET COMMANDER TOMALAK, WITH RETAKING THE PLANETS HELD BY DONATRA. TOMALAK APPOINTS ADMIRAL TARIS AS HIS SECOND IN COMMAND AND ORDERS HER TO RE-ORGANIZE AND MOBILIZE ROMULUS' REMAINING MILITARY FORCES.

SEEKING TO STABILIZE THE HOME WORLD, TAL'AURA AGREES TO REFORM THE ROMULAN SENATE. A REORGANIZATION COMMISSION SELECTED BY TAL'AURA VOTES TO ALLOW HER TO APPOINT SENATORS DIRECTLY RATHER THAN HOLDING ELECTIONS, AND SHE PACKS THE SENATE WITH HER SUPPORTERS. LEADERS OF THE ROMULAN-VULCAN UNIFICATION MOVEMENT PETITION TAL'AURA FOR REPRESENTATION IN THE SENATE FOR THEMSELVES AND THE REMANS, BUT TAL'AURA DECLINES TO RESPOND TO THEIR REQUEST.

THE MAKEUP OF THE ROMULAN SENATE ANGERS ROMULAN NOBLES, WHO DOMINATED THE SENATE PRIOR TO SHINZON'S TAKEOVER BUT NOW HOLD ONLY A HANDFUL OF SEATS. REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL OF THE NOBLE LINES ARGUE THAT FOR CENTURIES THE ROMULAN SENATE HAS BEEN A PARTNER WITH THE PRAETOR IN GOVERNING THE EMPIRE, SOMETHING THAT A WEAKENED BODY BEHOLDEN TO TAL'AURA CANNOT BE. THE LINE OF TELLUS GOES SO FAR AS TO DENOUNCE TAL'AURA PUBLICALLY AND WITHDRAW ITS MEMBERS FROM GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

THE KLINGON EMPIRE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE WEAK POSITION OF THE ROMULANS TO STAGE LIGHTNING STRIKES INTO ROMULAN SPACE, RETAKING KHITOMER

AND THE SECTOR SURROUNDING IT. THE FEDERATION COUNCIL CRITICIZES THE MOVE, BUT AMBASSADOR K'MTOK RESPONDS THAT THE EMPIRE IS SIMPLY RECLAIMING TERRITORY THAT BELONGED TO THE KLINGONS BY RIGHT.

THWARTED IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO FIND A ROLE IN THE ROMULAN GOVERNMENT, THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT, REPRESENTED BY AMBASSADOR SPOCK, PRESSES ITS CASE WITH THE FEDERATION COUNCIL. THE COUNCIL TAKES UP THE MATTER OF FORMALLY SUPPORTING THE UNIFICATIONISTS, BUT IS HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY COUNCILOR T'LOS OF VULCAN, WHO STATES THAT THE RESULT OF THE UNIFICATION OF THE TWO RACES CANNOT BE PREDETERMINED, WHILE THE PROBABLE COURSE OF THE ROMULANS AND VULCANS REMAINING SEPARATE CAN BE REASONABLY PREDICTED. THEREFORE, HER ONLY LOGICAL CHOICE IS TO PROTECT THE VULCAN WAY OF LIFE BY OPPOSING UNIFICATION.

THE COUNCIL DOES NOT REACH A DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO SUPPORT THE UNIFICATIONISTS, AND VOTES TO TABLE THE MATTER.

A LEGAL ISSUE OF INTEREST TO ANALYSTS IN THE FEDERATION IS RIGHTS FOR ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS. ON STARDATE 60334.46, ADMIRAL OWEN PARIS OF STARFLEET RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ORDERS THAT THE MOBILE EMITTER BROUGHT BACK FROM THE DELTA QUADRANT BY THE USS VOYAGER BE TAKEN TO STARFLEET'S FACILITY ON GALOR IV FOR STUDY.

THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL HOLOGRAM (EMH) KNOWN AS THE DOCTOR FILES A LAWSUIT TO BLOCK THE TRANSFER OF THE MOBILE EMITTER, ARGUING THAT HE IS A SENTIENT BEING WHO ACTED AS A MEMBER OF STARFLEET DURING VOYAGER'S TIME IN THE DELTA QUADRANT AND THAT THE MOBILE EMITTER IS NECESSARY TO HIS QUALITY OF LIFE AND PERFORMANCE OF HIS DUTIES. THE OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL ISSUES AN INJUNCTION AGAINST THE TRANSFER OF THE MOBILE EMITTER UNTIL IT CAN STUDY THE CASE AND ISSUE A RULING.

THE BAJORANS AND THEIR ALLIES CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR THE CARDASSIANS TO SURRENDER MEMBERS OF ITS GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY TO STAND TRIAL FOR WAR CRIMES. BUT OVER THE COURSE OF FOUR MONTHS, 472 CARDASSIANS WANTED BY THE BAJORANS DISAPPEAR FROM CARDASSIA PRIME.

THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT REPORTS IT IS ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE THE WHEREABOUTS OF ITS CITIZENS. THE BAJORANS RESPOND BY ACCUSING THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT OF WILLINGLY ASSISTING FUGITIVES.

RO LAREN COMPLETES HER TIME IN FEDERATION CUSTODY AND RETURNS TO BAJOR. SHE ACCEPTS A COMMISSION IN THE BAJORAN MILITIA AND IS APPOINTED HEAD OF SECURITY FOR DEEP SPACE NINE.

2383

STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE CONTINUES TO GATHER REPORTS OF UNREST ON ROMULUS. PRAETOR TAL' AURA ENACTS FOOD RATIONING AND STRICT LIMITS ON REPLICATOR USE ON THE HOMEWORLD, SAYING THAT THE EMPIRE'S RESOURCES MUST BE RESERVED TO SUPPORT THE MILITARY'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST DONATRA AND THE BREAKAWAY IMPERIAL ROMULAN STATE.

THE SHORTAGES SPARK RIOTING IN THE CAPITOL OF KI BARATAN, AND THE STRUGGLE GOES ON FOR TWO DAYS BEFORE THE PRAETOR ORDERS TROOPS TO INTERVENE. OBSERVERS ON ROMULUS SUGGEST THAT AS MANY AS 2,000 PEOPLE COULD HAVE DIED EITHER IN THE INITIAL RIOTS OR AT THE HANDS OF ROMULAN TROOPS.

THE CIVIL UNREST AND RESISTANCE FROM ROMULAN NOBLES STRAIN TAL' AURA'S COMMAND OF THE EMPIRE. SHE CALLS UPON HER ALLIES IN THE SENATE TO HELP IN STABILIZING THE GOVERNMENT, AND THEY RESPOND BY VOTING TO EXPAND THE PRAETOR'S POWERS, GIVING TAL' AURA THE POWER TO GRANT OR REMOVE NOBLE

TITLES, WHICH PREVIOUSLY WAS A PRIVILEGE THAT ONLY THE EMPEROR ENJOYED. SHE ALSO IS GRANTED THE ABILITY TO DECLARE WAR WITHOUT SENATE APPROVAL. AMBASSADOR SPOCK RETURNS TO ROMULUS TO TAKE HIS PLACE WITH THE UNIFICATIONISTS. LEADERS OF THE MOVEMENT SAY THAT ALTHOUGH THEY COULD NOT WIN THE SUPPORT OF THE FEDERATION, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO "WAGE PEACE" ON ROMULUS.

ON STARDATE 60900.31, FLEET COMMANDER TOMALAK ATTACKS DONATRA'S FLEET AT XANITLA. TOMALAK'S FORCES ARE SOUNDLY DEFEATED IN THE BATTLE, AND HE IS DEALT A FURTHER BLOW WHEN ADMIRAL TARIS AND THE TWELVE SHIPS UNDER HER COMMAND DEFECT TO THE IMPERIAL SIDE.

THE CARDASSIANS MAKE SOME GAINS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO REBUILD THEIR WAR-RAVAGED PLANET, SIGNING A NEW AGREEMENT FOR AID FROM THE FEDERATION AND BEGINNING RECONSTRUCTION OF LAKARIAN CITY. EXCAVATION OF SEVERAL SITES ON THE PLANET REVEALS HEBITIAN RELICS, AND THE PUBLICATION OF THESE FINDS SPARKS A RESURGENCE OF INTEREST AMONG CARDASSIANS IN ANCIENT RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL PRACTICES.

THE ORALIANS, A RELIGIOUS GROUP DATING BACK TO THE HEBITIAN CIVILIZATION THAT WAS OUTLAWED BY THE CARDASSIAN UNION, BEGIN OPENLY HOLDING SERVICES AND SEEKING ADHERENTS AMONG THE CARDASSIAN POPULATION, ACTS THAT WERE OUTLAWED BY THE CARDASSIAN UNION. THE RISE OF THIS SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT IS OPPOSED BY THE FOLLOWERS OF THE TRUE WAY, WHICH CONTINUES TO CALL FOR A RETURN TO THE TOTALITARIAN PRACTICES OF THE UNION.

THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS ARE AT ODDS OVER THE KLINGON TAKEOVER OF KHITOMER. IN A NARROW VOTE, THE FEDERATION COUNCIL DECIDES NOT TO FORMALLY CENSURE THE EMPIRE FOR ITS MILITARY ACTION. HOWEVER, THE FACT THAT THE MATTER WENT TO THE FULL COUNCIL FOR A VOTE IS

ENOUGH OF AN AFFRONT FOR QO'NOS TO TEMPORARILY RECALL ITS AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERATION.

HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL DEMAND THAT MARTOK EJECT FEDERATION AMBASSADORS FROM KLINGON SPACE. MARTOK REFUSES TO DO SO, AND THEN DEFEATS COUNCILOR QOLKA IN A DUEL OF HONOR AFTER HE ACCUSES MARTOK OF BEING A "PET DESPERATE FOR THE APPROVAL OF HIS STARFLEET MASTERS."

IN LEGAL MATTERS, REAR ADMIRAL JAMES BENNETT OF THE STARFLEET JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S OFFICE RULES THAT THE "DATA DECISION," REFERENCED IN THE DOCTOR'S LEGAL ARGUMENTS TO KEEP THE MOBILE EMITTER, IS TOO NARROW TO BE USED IN THIS CASE. BENNETT RULES THAT THE PRECEDENT CAN ONLY BE APPLIED TO PROVE THAT THE DOCTOR IS NOT THE PROPERTY OF STARFLEET, AND NOT TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT HE IS A SENTIENT BEING. THE DOCTOR'S COUNSEL APPEALS THE DECISION, AND ANALYSTS PREDICT THAT THE CASE WILL CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME.

THE SOONG FOUNDATION, A GROUP AFFILIATED WITH THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE AND DEDICATED TO PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS, ANNOUNCES THAT IT IS BEGINNING RESEARCH TO CREATE A MOBILE HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER OF ITS OWN DESIGN, WITH THE HOPES THAT THE TECHNOLOGY CAN BE ADAPTED FOR CIVILIAN USE.

2384

FEDERATION ANALYSTS SAY THAT A SHAKEUP IN THE ROMULAN POWER STRUCTURE HAS LEFT THE EMPIRE VULNERABLE TO ATTACK FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT. STARFLEET IS DISPATCHING ADDITIONAL SHIPS TO THE BORDER OF THE NEUTRAL ZONE AND CONSIDERS THE ROMULAN SITUATION ONE OF THE MAIN THREATS TO FEDERATION SAFETY AND SECURITY.

AFTER TOMALAK'S DEFEAT BY DONATRA AND HER FLEET, PRAETOR TAL'AURA REMOVES HIM AS PROCONSUL, CHOOSING SELA AS HER RIGHT HAND AND FLEET COMMANDER. SELA, A HUMAN-ROMULAN HYBRID WITH EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN THE MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE FIELDS, HAS BEEN A PART OF SEVERAL MAJOR ROMULAN OPERATIONS, INCLUDING A FAILED ATTEMPT TO INVADE VULCAN AND COORDINATING SUPPORT FOR THE HOUSE OF DURAS' ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL IN 2367.

AS A GIFT TO TOMALAK FOR HIS DECADES OF LOYAL SERVICE TO THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE, TAL'AURA ALLOWS HIM TO "RETIRE" TO HIS RURAL ESTATES ON ROMULUS.

THE ROMULAN DEFEAT AT XANTILA HAS MADE OPEN WAR WITH EMPRESS DONATRA UNFEASIBLE. PRAETOR TAL'AURA RELUCTANTLY AGREES TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE IMPERIAL ROMULAN STATE TO DETERMINE THE NEW BORDERS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEUTRAL ZONE, BUT REJECTS THE FEDERATION'S OFFER TO MEDIATE THE TALKS. DONATRA SAYS SHE WOULD WELCOME THE FEDERATION'S INPUT, BUT THAT SHE WILL DEFER TO TAL'AURA'S DECISION IN THIS MATTER, AND SENDS ADMIRAL TARIS TO THE ROMULAN CAPITOL AS HER REPRESENTATIVE.

ON STARDATE 61602.00, TAL'AURA IS FOUND DEAD IN HER PRIVATE CHAMBERS. TAL SHIAR INVESTIGATORS REPORT THAT THE PRAETOR APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ATTACKED IN HER SLEEP.

THE ROMULAN CAPITOL ERUPTS IN A FIRESTORM OF RUMORS AND ACCUSATIONS. GROUPS ACCUSED OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ASSASSINATION INCLUDE A COALITION OF THE NOBLE HOUSES, THE TAL SHIAR OR AGENTS WORKING FOR EMPRESS DONATRA AND THE IMPERIAL ROMULAN STATE.

DONATRA DENIES HAVING ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE MURDER. "I FACE MY ENEMIES ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE WITH HONOR," THE EMPRESS ANNOUNCES IN AN

ADDRESS TO HER CITIZENS, "NOT WITH A KNIFE IN THE DARK." SHE RECALLS TARIS FROM ROMULUS AND ORDERS HER TO PREPARE TO DEFEND IMPERIAL HOLDINGS.

AT TAL'AURA'S FUNERAL IN KI BARATAN, SELA PUBLICALLY BLAMES THE REMANS AND THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT FOR THE ATTACK. "THEY CLAIM TO DESIRE PEACE," SELA SAYS, "BUT ALLY WITH THE MURDERERS AND USURPERS WHO TERRORIZED OUR PLANET AND LED US TO THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION. THE BLOOD OF ONE PRAETOR WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR THE REMANS. TAL'AURA WAS THE VICTIM OF THEIR THIRST FOR DESTRUCTION."

BUT THE UPHEAVAL IN ROMULAN SPACE IS NOT THE ONLY POTENTIAL WAR THAT STARFLEET IS MONITORING. ON STARDATE 61829.83, THE *IKS QUV* IS ATTACKED BY A GORN SHIP AND 207 KLINGONS DIE IN THE BATTLE. REPRESENTATIVES OF KING XRATHIS OF THE GORN CLAIM THAT THE COMMANDER OF THEIR WARSHIP WAS ACTING WITHOUT ORDERS, BUT REFUSE TO SURRENDER THE SURVIVING CREW OF THE *QUV* TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE. IN RESPONSE, CHANCELLOR MARTOK EXPELS THE GORN'S DIPLOMATS FROM THE EMPIRE AND ORDERS SHIPS TO THE KLINGONS' BORDER WITH THE GORN HEGEMONY.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERATION COUNCIL ARE PLEASED TO ACCEPT BAJOR'S RENEWED APPLICATION FOR FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP, AND PLEDGE TO FAST-TRACK THE PLANET'S ADMISSION. THE INCREASED TRAFFIC AND COMMERCE THAT COULD ARRIVE WITH FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP PROMPTS THE FERENGI TO OPEN AN EXPANSIVE EMBASSY AND GIFT SHOP NEAR QUARK'S ON DEEP SPACE NINE.

ODO, ACTING AS THE GREAT LINK'S AMBASSADOR TO THE SOLIDS, MEETS WITH HIS FELLOW CHANGELING LAAS ON KORALIS III. ODO INVITES LAAS TO RETURN WITH HIM TO THE GAMMA QUADRANT. LAAS REFUSES, CHOOSING INSTEAD TO CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR OTHER CHANGELINGS IN THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS.

AND STARFLEET DECIDES TO TRANSFER THE SOONG-TYPE ANDROID B-4 TO THE CUSTODY OF THE SOONG FOUNDATION. THE PROTOTYPE ANDROID WAS DEACTIVATED AFTER ITS DISCOVERY BY THE *ENTERPRISE-E* IN 2379, BUT FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVES SAY THEY HOPE TO RESTORE HIS FULL POSITRONIC FUNCTIONING.

2385

STARFLEET COMMAND ANNOUNCES IT HAS COMPLETED ITS RE-EVALUATION OF ALL OF ITS POST-DOMINION WAR ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND THAT IT WILL BE REFOCUSING SOME SHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO DEFENSE AND DIPLOMACY TO EXPLORATION AND SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY.

AMONG THE SHIPS THAT WILL BE ASSIGNED TO NEW DUTIES IS THE *U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-E*. “THE FLAGSHIP OF STARFLEET IS NOT A WARSHIP,” SAYS COMMANDER MARIE DURANT, A SPOKESPERSON FOR STARFLEET COMMAND. “THE *ENTERPRISE* AND HER CREW ARE THE PINNACLE OF FEDERATION ACHIEVEMENT. WE NEED THEM OUT ON THE EDGE OF EXPLORED SPACE, MAKING NEW CONTACTS AND REACHING OUT IN FRIENDSHIP TO RACES ACROSS THE GALAXY.”

THE *ENTERPRISE*’S FINAL MISSION BEFORE RETURNING TO EARTH FOR REASSIGNMENT IS TO ASSIST THE POPULATION OF KHITOMER. ON STARDATE 62230.13, THE KLINGON EMPIRE ANNOUNCES IT IS EXPELLING ALL NON-KLINGON RESIDENTS OF THE PLANET AS A “SAFETY MEASURE.” IT GIVES THE RESIDENTS 14 STANDARD DAYS TO LEAVE THE PLANET, BUT CHANCELLOR MARTOK AGREES TO EXTEND THE DEADLINE AFTER SPEAKING TO CAPTAIN JEAN-LUC PICARD. THE *ENTERPRISE-E* LEADS A CONTINGENT OF SHIPS TO KHITOMER, ASSISTS IN THE EVACUATION, AND THE FORMER RESIDENTS ARE SAFELY SETTLED ON FEDERATION COLONIES.

THAT MISSION BECOMES THE LEGENDARY CAPTAIN’S FINAL ONE FOR STARFLEET AS WELL. AFTER A PERSONAL REQUEST FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION

AND A GREAT DEAL OF PERSONAL REFLECTION, CAPTAIN PICARD RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION WITH STARFLEET. AFTER A THREE-MONTH SABBATICAL IN FRANCE, PICARD TAKES HIS PLACE AS THE FEDERATION AMBASSADOR TO VULCAN.

HE IS NOT THE ONLY SENIOR STAFF MEMBER OF THE *ENTERPRISE* TO BE MOVING ONTO OTHER PROJECTS. CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER BEVERLY CRUSHER ACCEPTS THE POSITION OF CAPTAIN OF THE *U.S.S. PASTEUR*, AN *OLYMPIC*-CLASS SHIP. HER FIRST TASK WILL BE TO ASSIST EFFORTS TO REBUILD HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES ON CARDASSIA PRIME.

CHIEF ENGINEER GEORDI LA FORGE REQUESTS A LONG-TERM LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM STARFLEET TO WORK ON PERSONAL PROJECTS, INCLUDING A PLAN TO BUILD AND TEST HIS OWN STARSHIP DESIGNS. BUT HIS FIRST PROJECT IS TO ASSIST THE TEAM AT THE SOONG FOUNDATION STUDYING THE SOONG-TYPE ANDROID B-4. WITH HIS HELP, ON STARDATE 62762.91 THE TEAM UNLOCKS WHAT IT CALLS THE "DATA MATRIX," SUCCESSFULLY ACCESSING THE PERSONALITY, KNOWLEDGE AND MEMORIES OF DATA, WHO HAD DOWNLOADED THIS INFORMATION INTO B-4 BEFORE HIS DESTRUCTION IN THE BATTLE OF BASSEN RIFT.

THE DATA PERSONA ASSERTS ITSELF OVER B-4'S MORE PRIMITIVE PROGRAMMING, AND THE ANDROID IS ABLE TO ASSIST THE SOONG FOUNDATION TEAM TO UPGRADE THE POSITRONIC BRAIN AND RECREATE THE EMOTION CHIP INVENTED BY DR. NOONIEN SOONG. THE TEAM IS CONFIDENT THAT THEIR WORK WILL BE COMPLETED IN MONTHS.

AND WORF, SON OF MOGH, ALSO RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION TO STARFLEET. WORF BELIEVES THAT WITH THE RECENT STRAINS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGONS, HE WILL BEST BE OF SERVICE IN A DIPLOMATIC ROLE. HE RETURNS TO QO'NOS TO TAKE UP THE POST OF LEAD AMBASSADOR, AND A FEW MONTHS LATER BEGINS A TENTATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GRILKA, THE LEADER OF A KLINGON NOBLE HOUSE WHOM HE HAD MET WHILE SERVING ON DEEP SPACE 9.

WITH MUCH OF THE SENIOR STAFF OFF SHIP AND ITS ROLE IN FLUX, THE *ENTERPRISE-E* IS ASSIGNED TO THE SHIPYARDS OF UTOPIA PLANITIA FOR AN EXTENSIVE REFIT. THE STARFLEET CORPS OF ENGINEERS REPORTS THAT THE REFIT WILL TAKE AT LEAST A YEAR TO COMPLETE BECAUSE THEY ARE GOING TO USE THE SHIP AS A TESTING GROUND FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY. AMONG THE NEW EQUIPMENT WILL BE THE ADVANCED SENSOR ARRAY FIRST TESTED ON *LUNA*-CLASS STARSHIPS, WHICH HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR RETROFITTING ONTO OTHER CLASSES OF SHIPS.

ELSEWHERE IN STARFLEET, AFTER MORE THAN TWO YEARS WITH NO REPORTS OF BORG ACTIVITY IN FEDERATION SPACE, STARFLEET COMMAND HAS DECIDED TO DISMANTLE ITS BORG TASK FORCE AND USE THOSE RESOURCES ELSEWHERE. “WE CAN’T KEEP WAITING FOR SOMETHING THAT MAY NEVER HAPPEN,” SAYS DURANT. “AND MOST OF OUR ANALYSTS NOW AGREE THAT *VOYAGER* DEALT THEM A BIGGER BLOW IN THE DELTA QUADRANT THAN WE INITIALLY BELIEVED.”

ONE FEDERATION EXPERT ON THE BORG WHO DOES NOT AGREE WITH STARFLEET COMMAND’S DECISION IS FORMER TASK FORCE LEADER ANNIKA HANSEN, FORMERLY KNOWN AS SEVEN OF NINE. SHE LEAVES HER ROLE WITH STARFLEET IN PROTEST OF THE DECISION AND ACCEPTS AN OFFER TO CONTINUE HER RESEARCH AT THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE. WHEN PRESSED BY THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE FOR COMMENT, THE FORMER BORG SAID “THE BORG WILL RETURN. IF THE FEDERATION IS NOT PREPARED, IT WILL BE THEIR END.”

IN DIPLOMATIC NEWS, BAJORAN HARDLINERS STILL CALLING FOR THE PROSECUTION OF CARDASSIANS FOR WAR CRIMES HAVE EXPANDED THEIR DEMANDS TO INCLUDE THE SURRENDER OF COLONY WORLDS GRANTED TO THE CARDASSIANS IN THE FEDERATION-CARDASSIAN TREATY OF 2370. BOTH THE CARDASSIANS AND THE FEDERATION COUNCIL SUPPORT LEAVING THE BOUNDARIES AS DRAWN, HOWEVER, AND THE MOVEMENT IS EXPECTED TO HAVE LITTLE EFFECT.

IN ROMULAN SPACE, WHAT BEGAN AS A TUMULTUOUS YEAR AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF PRAETOR TAL'AURA HAS SETTLED DOWN INTO WHAT COULD BE A LONG-TERM SOLUTION, AND BOTH STARFLEET AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE HAVE PULLED BACK SOME SHIPS FROM THE BORDERS OF ROMULAN SPACE.

IN THE WEEKS FOLLOWING TAL'AURA'S DEATH, HER PROCONSUL, SELA, STEPPED INTO TAKE THE REINS OF CONTROL IN THE GOVERNMENT. GRANTED TEMPORARY EXECUTIVE POWERS BY THE SENATE AS AN EMERGENCY MEASURE, SELA USES THEM TO REPLACE MORE THAN TWO DOZEN OF TAL'AURA'S "POPULIST" SENATORS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NOBLE HOUSES WHO HAD OPPOSED TAL'AURA'S RULE. AMONG SELA'S APPOINTEES IS THE INFLUENTIAL NOBLE CHULAN OF THE LINE OF TELLUS.

THE BACKING OF THE NOBLES GIVES SELA THE CLOUT SHE NEEDS TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT, BUT SHE DOES NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY OR THE TAL SHIAR AND HER REGIME IS GENERALLY EXPECTED TO BE SHORT-LIVED.

REHAEK, THE LEADER OF THE TAL SHIAR, MAKES A RARE PUBLIC APPEARANCE TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE WILL PERSONALLY LEAD THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ASSASSINATION OF PRAETOR TAL'AURA. "THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS WHICH MAY SEEM EXPEDIENT BUT WHICH HONOR ABHORS. WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS CRIME TO GO UNANSWERED."

AND EMPRESS DONATRA OF THE IMPERIAL ROMULAN EMPIRE WINS HEARTS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF ROMULUS BY OFFERING FOOD SHIPMENTS TO NON-MILITARY SETTLEMENTS.

FEDERATION EXPERTS FEAR A THREE-WAY STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF ROMULUS, BUT INSTEAD DONATRA MEETS WITH SELA AND REHAEK ON ROMULUS TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THE THREE BEGRUDGINGLY AGREE TO PUT THEIR PERSONAL DISPUTES ASIDE FOR THE GOOD OF THE EMPIRE, AND THE WORLDS OF THE IMPERIAL ROMULAN STATE ARE FOLDED BACK INTO THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE. DONATRA

HOLDS ONTO THE REINS OF POWER OF THE MILITARY, AND KEEPS MUCH OF HER FORCES SAFELY OFF-WORLD IN CASE THE PEACE DOES NOT HOLD.

WITH THE THREAT OF CIVIL WAR AVERTED, THE SENATE OPENS DEBATE ON WHO TO ELECT THE NEW PRAETOR. SELA, AS TAL' AURA'S PROCONSUL, IS ONE OF THE LEADING CANDIDATES, AND SHE MAKES A PLAY FOR THE POSITION. BUT RUMORS OF HER POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE TAL' AURA DOG HER CAMPAIGN, AND WHEN DONATRA DECLINES SELA'S REQUEST FOR AN ENDORSEMENT SELA'S DEFEAT IS ALMOST ASSURED.

AFTER AN EXTENSIVE DEBATE, SENATOR CHULAN IS CHOSEN TO BE THE NEW PRAETOR. HE IS A COMPROMISE CANDIDATE WHO IS ACCEPTABLE TO, BUT NOT STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY, ANY OF THE MAJOR POWERS. FEDERATION ANALYSTS PREDICT THAT WITHOUT THE BACKING OF A COALITION OF FACTIONS, CHULAN WILL BE A WEAK LEADER.

DONATRA, WHO MOST AGREE WAS THE BROKER OF THIS NEWFOUND PEACE, TRAVELS TO REMUS TO MEET GENERAL XIOMEK OF THE REMANS. SHE OFFERS THE REMANS FULL CITIZENSHIP IN THE EMPIRE AND REPRESENTATION IN THE ROMULAN SENATE IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR SUPPORT. WHILE SELA OPPOSES THE PLAN, WHICH SHE SEES AS REWARDING THE REMANS FOR A VIOLENT UPRISING, PRAETOR CHULAN WILL NOT GO AGAINST DONATRA'S MILITARY MIGHT.

THE PHYSICAL STRENGTH OF THE REMANS, AS WELL AS THEIR SUPPLIES OF DILITHIUM AND HEAVY METALS, ADDS TO DONATRA'S FORMIDABLE MILITARY STRENGTH, AND SHE RE-OPENS SHIPYARDS AND MUNITIONS PLANTS CLOSED SINCE SHINZON'S REVOLT. AND AS RESOURCES FLOW BACK TO ROMULUS FROM REMUS AND THE WORLDS DONATRA CONTROLLED, ENERGY RATIONING AND FOOD LINES BECOME A THING OF THE PAST.

THE ROMULAN SENATE IS RELUCTANT TO DEAL WITH THE REMANS BUT IS SWAYED BY POPULAR SUPPORT FOR DONATRA, AND IT RELUCTANTLY ALLOWS XIOMEK TO TAKE A SEAT IN THE SENATE AND EXTENDS CITIZENSHIP TO THE REMANS. IN COMMON PRACTICE, HOWEVER, MOST ROMULANS CONTINUE TO TREAT REMANS AS SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS, AND THE REMANS HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO OPENLY MOVE TO ROMULAN SETTLEMENTS.

2385: SUPPLEMENTAL

I MEET ANNIKA HANSEN IN A CAFETERIA AT THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE. FORMERLY KNOWN AS SEVEN OF NINE, A BORG DRONE, HANSEN NOW LOOKS ALMOST COMPLETELY HUMAN. HER RESIDUAL BORG IMPLANTS ARE BARELY NOTICEABLE. SHE DOES, HOWEVER, RETAIN THE BREVITY OF WORDS AND DIRECTNESS HER FELLOW CREW MEMBERS FROM U.S.S. VOYAGER DESCRIBED. I THANK HER FOR JOINING ME TODAY. AS IS TYPICAL FOR HER, SHE CUTS TO THE CHASE IMMEDIATELY.]

YES. YOU YOURSELF HAVE SAID THAT ONE OF YOUR DEAREST ASPIRATIONS WAS TO BELONG TO STARFLEET. WHY, THEN, DID YOU LEAVE?

CLARIFICATION. I WISHED TO BE COUNTED AMONG THOSE I ADMIRERD DURING MY TIME ON VOYAGER. ADMIRAL JANEWAY, CAPTAIN CHAKOTAY, AND SEVERAL OTHER CREW MEMBERS CONVINCED ME OF THE HONOR AND COMPETENCE OF STARFLEET. SEEING THAT TO BE THE CASE, I WISHED TO ALSO BELONG TO STARFLEET. HOWEVER, I HAVE FOUND THAT, WHILE MANY MEMBERS OF STARFLEET ARE INDEED QUITE ADMIRABLE, THE DIRECTION STARFLEET, AS A COLLECTIVE, IS TAKING IS NEITHER ADMIRABLE, HONORABLE, NOR COMPETENT.

YOU'RE REFERRING TO THE DISSOLUTION OF THE BORG TASK FORCE LAST MONTH.

YES, I AM. STARFLEET HAS COME TO THE FLAWED CONCLUSION THAT THE BORG ARE NO LONGER A THREAT SIMPLY BECAUSE THE BORG HAVE NOT ATTACKED US RECENTLY.

THERE HAVE BEEN NO SIGNS OF THE BORG SINCE VOYAGER'S RETURN IN 2378. THAT'S SEVEN YEARS.

DO YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE THAT SEVEN YEARS, OR TWENTY YEARS, OR A HUNDRED YEARS, WOULD BE ANYTHING MORE THAN A BRIEF SETBACK FOR THE BORG? THE BORG DO NOT CONSIDER TIME AS SHALLOWLY AS HUMANS DO. THE BORG ARE NOT LIMITED BY THE LIFE SPANS OF INDIVIDUALS. THE COLLECTIVE LIVES ON. WHAT ONE KNEW, ALL KNOW. WHAT ONE REMEMBERS, ALL REMEMBER.

ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT ADMIRAL JANEWAY'S ACTIONS DESTROYED THE BORG?

THAT WOULD BE A LOVELY FAIRYTALE. ADMIRAL JANEWAY'S ACTIONS LIKELY DESTROYED THAT HUB. BUT THE BORG ARE FAR WIDER SPREAD AND HAVE CONTINGENCY PLANS DATING BACK TO BEFORE HUMANITY ACHIEVED WARP SPEED. WE MAY HAVE DELIVERED A CRIPPLING BLOW, BUT IT WAS NOT A KILLING BLOW. THE BORG STILL EXIST. SO LONG AS THEY EXIST, THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT DEFEAT. THEY PERSIST. THEY CHOOSE A GOAL AND CONTINUE UNTIL THEY ACHIEVE IT. THE BORG ARE INFINITELY PATIENT. THEY CAN AFFORD TO BE.

I UNDERSTAND THAT STARFLEET MAY WISH THEY WERE GONE. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE STUBBORN REFUSAL TO DEAL WITH REALITY. WE CANNOT SIMPLY IGNORE THE BORG THREAT AND ASSUME THEY WILL NOT NOTICE US.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE TASK FORCE WAS UNFORTUNATE AND ILL CONCEIVED.

WISHING THAT THE BORG WON'T RETURN DOES NOT MAKE IT SO.

SO YOU LEFT STARFLEET AND CAME TO THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE.

THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE MADE ME AN OFFER LONG BEFORE STARFLEET DISSOLVED THE TASK FORCE. I NEGLECTED TO ACCEPT THAT OFFER AT THE TIME. HOWEVER, THEY WERE PERCEPTIVE ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING OUR DEFENSES AGAINST THE BORG AND WERE AMENABLE WHEN I SPOKE TO THEM AGAIN. THEY HAVE PROVIDED ME WITH ALL THE RESOURCES I NEED TO CONTINUE MY WORK.

WE WILL HAVE THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE TO THANK FOR PREPARING US AGAINST BORG ATTACK. UNFORTUNATELY, WITHOUT STARFLEET MAINTAINING VIGILANCE, I CANNOT PREDICT HOW EFFECTIVE OUR EFFORTS WILL BE.

WHAT OF THE YOUNG MAN, ICHEB, WHO I BELIEVE YOU ADOPTED AS FAMILY? WHO WAS ALSO FORMER BORG. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HIS CONTINUING PRESENCE IN STARFLEET ACADEMY?

THAT IS ICHEB'S CHOICE, AND I AM PROUD OF HIM FOR MAKING IT.

WHAT DO YOUR FORMER CREWMATES FROM VOYAGER THINK OF YOUR PREDICTIONS?

THEY LISTEN. THEY KNOW, JUST AS I DO, THAT THE BORG REMAIN A THREAT.

DO YOU REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH CAPTAIN CHAKOTAY?

I'M AFRAID I DO NOT SEE THE RELEVANCE OF YOUR QUESTION.

PLEASE, HUMOR ME.

NATURALLY, I REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH MOST OF THE CREWMEMBERS FROM VOYAGER. WE ALL SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TOGETHER AND REMAIN CLOSE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE LEGAL CASE INVOLVING THE EMH KNOWN AS THE DOCTOR?

I THINK IT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF STARFLEET'S MYOPIA. THEY ARE IGNORING HIS INDIVIDUALITY, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT THIS MEANS ABOUT SENTIENCE, IN FAVOR OF STUDYING SHORT TERM TECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS.

THAT SEEMS LIKE A STRANGE APPROACH COMING FROM YOU.

BECAUSE I WAS ONCE BORG? I AM HUMAN, NOW. I AM AN INDIVIDUAL. I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THAT MEANS, AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE DOCTOR, THAN ANY NORMAL HUMAN WHO TAKES IT FOR GRANTED.

WHEN DO YOU THINK WE'LL SEE THE BORG AGAIN?

I CANNOT PREDICT WHEN, ONLY THAT IT WILL HAPPEN.

THE NEW OPENNESS ON ROMULUS HAS MADE IT MUCH EASIER FOR THE FEDERATION TO GET NEWS ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THAT WORLD, BUT NOT ALL OF IT IS FAVORABLE FOR THE LONG-TERM STABILITY OF THE REGION.

AMBASSADOR SPOCK REPORTS THAT THE ROMULAN MINING GUILD HAS FINISHED A MULTI-YEAR STUDY OF REMUS AND HAS PRESENTED ITS FINDINGS TO THE ROMULAN SENATE. THE GUILD REPORTS THAT THE PLANET HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY OVERMINED, AND RECOMMENDS THAT TO AVOID A PRAXIS SITUATION THAT THE REMAN OPERATIONS SHOULD BE SHUT DOWN AND MINING OPERATIONS SHOULD BE MOVED TO MORE DISTANT AREAS OF SPACE. THE GUILD SPREADS THEIR OPERATIONS ACROSS THE EMPIRE, SETTLING HUNDREDS OF MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ON SPACE STATIONS AND COLONIES LIGHT YEARS AWAY FROM ROMULUS.

THE GUILD FURTHER RECOMMENDS THAT IT BE PUT IN CHARGE OF ALL OFF-WORLD MINING, BUT COLONEL XIOMEK USES HIS NEW POSITION IN THE SENATE TO BLOCK THAT REQUEST. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE GUILD AND THE REMANS SPARKS A NUMBER OF SKIRMISHES BETWEEN GUILD SHIPS AND REMANS IN DISTANT AREAS OF THE EMPIRE.

XIOMEK SPEAKS TO THE SENATE AFTER THE MINING GUILD PRESENTS ITS REPORT AND ARGUES THAT IF THE REMANS ARE TO BE MOVED OFF OF REMUS, THAT THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN A CONTINENT ON ROMULUS FOR THEIR NEW HOME, A REQUEST THAT IS OVERWHELMINGLY REJECTED BY THE FULL SENATE.

WITH THE BACKING OF DONATRA, REHAEK AND PRAETOR CHULAN, AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN IS REACHED. THE REMANS ARE INSTEAD OFFERED THE PLANET OF CRATERIS, IN THE DISTANT GAMMA CRATERIS SYSTEM. THE SITE OF A FAILED ROMULAN COLONY, THE PLANET HAS A HARSH CLIMATE AND IS BESET BY ALMOST CONSTANT ELECTRICAL STORMS BUT IS RICH IN DILITHIUM, DECALITHIUM AND HEAVY METALS. XIOMEK AGREES, BECAUSE EVEN THE HARSH CLIMATE OF CRATERIS IS A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OVER REMUS. THOUSANDS OF REMANS BOARD COLONY SHIPS AND MAKE THE MOVE TO THEIR NEW HOME.

ON STARDATE 63322.55, REHAEK SENDS A STATEMENT TO THE PRAETOR AND THE LEADERS OF THE ROMULAN SENATE WITH THE CONCLUSIONS OF HIS INVESTIGATION INTO THE ASSASSINATION OF PRAETOR TAL'AURA. REHAEK RULES THAT THAT TAL'AURA WAS KILLED BY AGENTS LOYAL TO A COALITION OF NOBLE HOUSES ANGERED BY HER REFORMATION OF THE SENATE. BOTH DONATRA AND SELA REQUEST TO SEE THE EVIDENCE THAT BACKS UP HIS CLAIMS, BUT REHAEK REFUSES TO DIVULGE HIS COMPLETE FINDINGS.

IN RETALIATION FOR THE DEATH OF TAL'AURA, THE TAL SHIAR BEGINS A CAMPAIGN OF ASSAULTS ON THE NOBLE HOUSES, ARRESTING DOZENS OF NOBLES AND SEIZING THEIR ASSETS. SELA PUSHES BACK AGAINST THE PERSECUTION OF SOME OF HER MAJOR SUPPORTERS, AND SWAYS THE SENATE TO DRASTICALLY CUT FUNDING TO THE TAL SHIAR. IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE SENATE, SELA ACCUSES ELEMENTS INSIDE THE TAL SHIAR OF KNOWING ABOUT THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE TAL'AURA BUT DOING NOTHING TO STOP IT. "DOES STANDING SILENT MAKE THEM AS CULPABLE AS THE KILLERS?" SELA ASKS. "IN ABANDONING THEIR SWORN DUTY TO PROTECT THE PRAETOR, AS A SYMBOL OF ROMULUS ITSELF, THEY ARE NO BETTER THAN THOSE WHO WIELDED THE KNIVES THAT KILLED HER."

DONATRA REFUSES TO TAKE SIDES IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SELA AND REHAEK, INSTEAD ENCOURAGING THE PRAETOR TO HANDLE THE SITUATION. PRAETOR CHULAN APPOINTS A SENATE COMMITTEE TO FORMALLY INVESTIGATE THE MATTER, BUT THE COMMITTEE TAKES LITTLE ACTION.

ON STARDATE 63446.41, AN EXPLOSION DESTROYS REHAEK'S HOME ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF KIBARATAN. OBSERVERS REPORT SEVERAL VISITORS TO THE ESTATE IN THE HOURS BEFORE THE BLAST, ANY OF WHOM COULD HAVE PLANTED THE EXPLOSIVES. THE REMAINS OF REHAEK'S WIFE AND YOUNG DAUGHTER AND SEVERAL SERVANTS ARE FOUND IN THE WRECKAGE, BUT REHAEK IS MISSING. INVESTIGATORS

THEORIZE THAT THE BLAST WAS INTENSE ENOUGH TO HAVE VAPORIZED ANYONE CLOSE TO THE POINT OF DETONATION.

TWO HOURS AFTER THE EXPLOSION, TAL SHIAR FORCES STORM SELA'S TOWNHOUSE IN KI BARATAN AND TAKE HER AND HER PERSONAL GUARD INTO CUSTODY FOR THE MURDER OF REHAEK. IN A SECRET TRIAL HELD DAYS LATER, SELA IS SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR THE CRIME. AT THE LAST MINUTE, DONATRA INTERVENES. SHE ARGUES THAT THE EVIDENCE IS NOT OVERWHELMING, AND PRESSURES CHULANTO ALLOW SELA AND HER SUPPORTERS TO ACCEPT PERMANENT EXILE INSTEAD OF DEATH.

TARIS MAINTAINS A LOW PROFILE DURING THE TROUBLES, PUTTING MANY OF HER RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE HANDS OF GENERAL TEBOK. LATE IN 2386, SHE INFORMS DONATRA THAT SHE IS GOING TO TAKE HER SHIP TO LEVAERI V TO INVESTIGATE CLAIMS THAT A BLADE BELIEVED TO BE THE SWORD OF THE RAPTOR STAR HAS BEEN RECOVERED. THE ANCIENT SWORD, REPUTED TO BE ONE OF THE SWORDS CREATED BY VULCAN SWORDSMITH S'HARIEN AND TAKEN INTO EXILE BY S'TASK, IS A REVERED ARTIFACT OF THE SUNDERING.

THE GORN HEGEMONY IS MOURNING THE DEATH OF KING XRATHIS. HIS SON, CROWN PRINCE SLATHIS, ASCENDS TO THE THRONE. ONE OF HIS FIRST ACTS IS TO RE-ENFORCE THEIR BORDER WITH THE KLINGONS. SEVERAL SKIRMISHES ARE REPORTED BETWEEN THE TWO POWERS.

THE KLINGONS RESPOND TO THE BUILDUP BY THE GORN BY SENDING MORE SHIPS OF THEIR OWN TO THE BORDER. THE STANDOFF ESCALATES INTO OPEN CONFLICT ON STARDATE 63504.74, WHEN A KLINGON FLEET BOMBARDS THE GORN COLONY ON GILA VI. KLINGON TROOPS LAND ON THE PLANET TWO DAYS LATER, AND AFTER A BLOODY BATTLE WITH GORN DEFENDERS THEY SUCCEED IN TAKING THE PLANET.

FEDERATION DIPLOMATS ARE SPEAKING TO BOTH SIDES TRYING TO WORK OUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION, BUT SOME ANALYSTS PREDICT THAT A FULL WAR WILL ERUPT

WITHIN FOUR YEARS. WORF MAKES A PERSONAL APPEAL TO HIS FRIEND CHANCELLOR MARTOK TO END HOSTILITIES, BUT HE ADMITS THAT IT WILL BE A LONG PROCESS. ALL IS NOT WORK FOR WORF, THOUGH. HE WEDS GRILKA IN A TRADITIONAL KLINGON CEREMONY WITH HIS FAMILY AND MANY OF HIS FRIENDS FROM STARFLEET IN ATTENDANCE.

A SURPRISE GUEST AT THE WEDDING OF WORF AND GRILKA IS DATA. WITH HIS UPGRADES AT THE SOONG FOUNDATION COMPLETE, DATA REQUESTS THAT HIS COMMISSION IN STARFLEET BE REACTIVATED. WHILE THERE ARE SOME INITIAL QUESTIONS BECAUSE THE DATA PERSONA IS IN THE BODY ONCE USED BY B-4, AFTER JEAN-LUC PICARD, WILLIAM T. RIKER AND SEVERAL OTHER CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE ENTERPRISE CREW TESTIFY ON DATA'S BEHALF, STARFLEET COMMAND AGREES TO REINSTATE DATA. HE IS PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN AND ASSIGNED TO SUPERVISE THE COMPLETION OF THE ENTERPRISE-E'S REFIT.

ON STARDATE 63894.06, THE REFIT OF THE ENTERPRISE-E IS COMPLETED AND THE SHIP, HELMED BY CAPTAIN DATA, LEAVES THE UTOPIA PLANITIA SHIPYARDS. "WE ARE INTRODUCING A NEW ERA OF EXPLORATION AND PEACE," SAID STARFLEET COMMAND SPOKESPERSON COMMANDER MARIE DURANT.

ANOTHER UPDATE BY STARFLEET IS ITS UNIFORMS. STARFLEET COMPLETES A REDESIGN OF THE UNIFORM CODE, AND BY THE END OF THE YEAR ALL OF ITS OFFICERS ARE WEARING THE NEW DESIGNS.

ON FERENGINAR, PROTESTS ROCK THE CAPITAL FOR TWO DAYS AFTER GRAND NAGUS ROM USES TAX PROCEEDS TO START FREE SCHOOLS. MANY FERENGI SEE THE FREE EDUCATION AS AN ASSAULT ON TRADITIONAL VALUES, AND THE DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE UNTIL ROM CHARGES EACH PROTESTER TEN SLIPS OF LATNIUM FOR MASS ASSEMBLY WITHOUT A PROPER PERMIT. TO GET A PERMIT TO PROTEST, ROM CHARGES A BAR OF LATNIUM. PROCEEDS ARE USED TO FUND THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

IN ADDITION TO WORKING TO CURB THE RISING HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE KLINGONS AND THE GORN, FEDERATION DIPLOMATS ARE HARD AT WORK CRAFTING A NEW PACT BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE CARDASSIANS. ON STARDATE 63976.74, THE CARDASSIANS SIGN A NEW TREATY, IN WHICH THEY AGREE NOT TO FIELD A MILITARY OR WAGE WAR. IN EXCHANGE, THE FEDERATION AGREES TO PROVIDE AID TO REBUILD CARDASSIAN CITIES AND PROTECTION IN THE EVENT OF AN INVASION OF CARDASSIAN SPACE. IN RESPONSE TO THE LANDMARK AGREEMENT, THE BAJORAN COALITION DROPS ITS REQUEST TO PROSECUTE CARDASSIANS FOR WAR CRIMES. MANY AMONG THE BAJORANS AND CARDASSIANS HOPE THAT SOMEDAY RELATIONS BETWEEN THEM WILL BE NORMALIZED.

ON BEHALF OF THE FOUNDERS, ODO MEETS WITH LAMAT'UKAN, FIRST OF THE JEM'HADAR IN THE ALPHA QUADRANT. ODO ASKS THE JEM'HADAR TO RETURN TO THE GAMMA QUADRANT WITH HIM, BUT LAMAT'UKAN REJECTS ODO AS A FALSE GOD. "YOU WEAR THE SHAPE OF OUR GODS, BUT YOU DO NOT HAVE THEIR SPIRIT," LAMAT'UKAN IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID. "YOU ARE CORRUPTED BY YOUR ... TASTE FOR THE LIFE OF A SOLID. TO FOLLOW YOU WOULD BE TO SACRIFICE OUR SOULS. THERE WOULD BE NO VICTORY UNDER YOUR BANNER. WITHOUT VICTORY, THERE IS NO LIFE."

2386: SUPPLEMENTAL

I MEET DAVID STEINER IN QUARK'S BAR, GRILL, GAMING HOUSE, HOLOSUITE ARCADE, GIFT SHOP AND FERENGI EMBASSY. IT'S THE HUB OF SOCIAL LIFE ON DEEP SPACE NINE, AND THERE'S AN INFECTIOUS AIR OF FUN, REVELRY AND COMMERCE PUNCTUATED BY SHOUTS OF JOY AND CRIES OF DISMAY FROM THE DABO TABLES.

STEINER KEEPS HIS EYES DOWN AND HIS VOICE LOW, IGNORING THE FRIVOLITY SURROUNDING HIM. HE NURSES A SAURIAN BRANDY DURING OUR INTERVIEW, BUT FROM THE EMPTY GLASSES ON THE TABLE WHEN I ARRIVED, I COULD TELL IT WASN'T HIS FIRST DRINK OF THE EVENING.

Q: SO, YOU WERE AT THE BATTLE OF GILA IV.

A: I SAW IT ALL. AWFUL BUSINESS. AFTER THE TREATY WITH THE DOMINION WAS SIGNED, I'D HOPED NEVER TO SEE ANYTHING LIKE THAT AGAIN.

Q: YOU FOUGHT IN THE DOMINION WAR?

A: ON THE *U.S.S. BUTLEDGE*. I WAS THE NIGHT WATCH CONN OFFICER.

I ... I LOST A LOT OF FRIENDS IN THE WAR. PEOPLE WHO DIE IN A WAR, THEY'RE MORE THAN JUST NAMES ON A CASUALTY LIST. THEY'RE PEOPLE. THEY HAD FAMILIES, AND DREAMS AND LIVES. .

AFTER THE TREATY WAS SIGNED ... FIRST THERE WAS THE RELIEF. THE WAR WAS OVER. BUT AFTER A WHILE, I KNEW THAT I NEVER WANTED TO SEE THAT MUCH PAIN AND DEATH AGAIN.

Q: IS THAT WHY YOU LEFT STARFLEET?

A: YEAH. A LOT OF PEOPLE LIKE ME DID, IN THE YEARS AFTER THE WAR. IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T BELIEVE IN STARFLEET'S MISSION – I STILL DO. BUT I WAS DONE, YOU KNOW? I'D GIVEN ALL I COULD.

BUT I'M A PILOT. I DIDN'T WANT TO BE GROUNDED. SO I USED MY SAVINGS TO BUY A LITTLE TRADER. I'VE BEEN FLYING THE MAJOR TRADE ROUTES EVER SINCE. I DO THE BAJOR TO EARTH RUN SOMETIMES, BUT I GO WHEREVER THE LATINUM IS. ANYTHING TO KEEP MY SHIP FLYING.

I THOUGHT I COULD DO WHAT I LOVED AND AVOID ALL OF THE CONFLICT, ALL OF THE DEATH. I THOUGHT IF I LEFT STARFLEET I WOULD BE ... I THOUGHT I WOULD BE SAFE.

Q: WHY DID YOU GO TO GILA IV?

A: SINCE THE ATTACK ON THE KLINGON WARSHIP *QUVA* A FEW YEARS AGO, THE GORN HAVE BEEN BUYING WEAPONS, GENERATORS, HEAVY METALS, SPARE PARTS – ANYTHING THEY CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON.

I DON'T DEAL IN WEAPONS, BUT THE FERENGI ARE RIGHT – WAR IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS. I MANAGED TO GET MY HANDS ON A FULL LOAD OF VERTERIUM CORTENIDE, AND I KNEW THE GORN WOULD PAY A PREMIUM FOR IT. GILA IV WAS THE CLOSEST GORN COLONY TO MY USUAL ROUTE.

Q: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR ARRIVAL AT GILA IV.

A: (STEINER SIGHS AND STARES AT HIS GLASS. HE IS SILENT FOR A LONG MOMENT.)

I ARRIVED AT GILA IV ABOUT FOUR HOURS BEFORE THE ATTACK. I HAD TO DOCK AT THEIR SPACEPORT TO MAKE THE DEAL, SO I PLANNED TO STAY FOR A DAY OR SO AND MAKE SOME REPAIRS – I HAD A POWER COUPLING THAT NEEDED TO BE PULLED.

I ARRANGED FOR DOCK SPACE AND TALKED TO THE QUARTERMASTER ABOUT A REPLACEMENT POWER COUPLING. I NEEDED TO TALK TO THE HEAD OF THE TRADE COMMISSION TO MAKE THE DEAL FOR THE VERTERIUM CORTENIDE, BUT HE LEFT ME COOLING MY HEELS FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS.

WHEN I FINALLY GOT INTO GORASH'S OFFICE, HE SEEMED ... STRANGE.

I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE HE KNEW SOMETHING WAS COMING. HE KEPT ASKING ME ABOUT THE KLINGONS – WHAT I THOUGHT OF THEM, HAD I SEEN ANY SHIPS ON MY WAY TO GILA IV, HAD I HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE PLANNING. HE ASKED ME ABOUT THE FEDERATION TOO, AND IF I THOUGHT STARFLEET WOULD THROW IN WITH THE KLINGONS IF IT CAME TO WAR.

ITOLD HIM THAT I DIDN'T GET INVOLVED IN THINGS LIKE THAT ANY MORE – I SOLD MY CARGO, GOT MY PAY AND MOVED ON TO THE NEXT PLACE. AND I REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT HE SAID TO ME THEN ...

"EVERYONE'S INVOLVED, MY FRIEND. EVERYONE. YOU CAN IGNORE THE STORM, BUT THE LIGHTNING WILL STILL FIND YOU."

Q: AND WHAT ABOUT THE ATTACK?

A: THE KLINGONS HIT THE WEAPONS PLATFORMS SURROUNDING THE PLANET FIRST. THE GORN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN BIG ON PROTECTING WHAT IS THEIRS, SO THEY HAVE HEAVY DEFENSES FOR EVEN THE MOST OUT-OF-THE-WAY SETTLEMENTS. (STEINER CHUCKLES.) GIVE A GORN A PATCH OF DIRT TO CALL HIS OWN, AND THREE DAYS LATER IT WILL BE SURROUNDED BY FORCE FIELDS AND MORTARS.

THE KLINGONS HAD MOST OF THE PLATFORMS DOWN BEFORE THE GORN EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO REACT. THEY CALLED FOR REINFORCEMENTS AND STARTED EVACUATING THE SPACEPORT.

IT ... IT WAS JUST LIKE THE DOMINION WAR. THE SIRENS, THE LIGHTS, AND THE SHAKE OF THE STATION UNDER YOUR FEET EVERY TIME A TORPEDO HIT ... ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS RUN. HIDE. BUT ... I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE THE STARFLEET TRAINING KICKED IN. I STUFFED MY FEAR UNDER THAT GIGANTIC KNOT IN MY STOMACH AND VOLUNTEERED TO HELP WITH THE EVACUATION.

Q: DID YOU FIGHT FOR THE GORN?

A: I DON'T CONSIDER WHAT I DID FIGHTING. I WAS HELPING. BESIDES, THE WEAPONS ON MY SHIP WOULD NEVER GET THROUGH THE SHIELDS OF A BIRD-OF-PREY.

I FERRIED THREE LOADS OF CIVILIANS TO THE SURFACE. WE PACKED PEOPLE INTO EVERY AVAILABLE SPACE – THEY WERE IN THE CARGO HOLD, SITTING NEXT TO THE WARP DRIVE. HECK, ON THE LAST RUN I HAD TWO GORN HATCHLINGS UNDER MY NAVIGATION CONSOLE!

WE ... WE STARTED TAKING FIRE THAT LAST TRIP. THE GORN LINE HAD BROKEN BY THEN. THEY HADN'T RUN – YOU'LL NEVER GET A GORN TO RUN. NOT WHEN HE'S DEFENDING HIS HOME. BUT THEIR DEFENSES WERE FALLING APART. THEY'D JUST LOST TOO MANY SHIPS AT THAT POINT. THE KLINGONS HAD TAKEN SOME LOSSES TOO, BUT ... THEY'RE KLINGONS.

THREE OF THE *K' VORTS* BROKE OFF FROM THE FIGHT AND STARTED FIRING ON THE SHUTTLES GOING TO THE SURFACE. I DON'T KNOW WHY. WE WEREN'T FIGHTING BACK; WE WEREN'T TRYING TO BLOCK THEIR ADVANCE ...

I USED EVERY EVASIVE MANEUVER I LEARNED IN THE ACADEMY. I WAS DOING PRETTY WELL, TOO, UNTIL THAT PORT POWER COUPLING BLEW. I HADN'T HAD A CHANCE TO REPLACE IT.

WE LOST POWER TO THE SHIELDS, BUT I RE-ROUTED POWER AND KEPT THE NAVIGATION THRUSTERS ONLINE. THAT GAVE ME ENOUGH MANEUVERABILITY TO LAND INSTEAD OF CRASH. BUT I COULDN'T GET TO THE SETTLEMENT – WE WERE TOO FAR AWAY. I PUT HER DOWN HARD IN A STRETCH OF DESERT ABOUT FIFTEEN KILOMETERS OUT.

(STEINER PAUSES.) TWO OF THE OTHER SHUTTLES ... THEY WEREN'T AS LUCKY. THERE WERE AT LEAST A HUNDRED CIVILIANS ON BOARD.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED THEN?

A: TOOK ME A FEW HOURS TO GET EVERYONE OUT OF THE SHIP AND FIND SOMEONE WHO COULD HELP ME TREAT INJURIES. WE USED UP ALL THE MEDICAL SUPPLIES I HAD ON BOARD, AND AFTER THAT ... WE DID WHAT WE COULD.

THE GORN HANDLED THE HEAT BETTER THAN I DID, BUT WE COULDN'T STAY OUT IN THE DESERT. I COULDN'T RAISE ANYBODY ON THE EMERGENCY CHANNELS, SO WE RIGGED UP STRETCHERS FOR THE WORST OF THE INJURED, GATHERED WHAT LITTLE WATER AND SUPPLIES WE HAD LEFT AND STARTED WALKING.

IT TOOK US UNTIL AFTER NIGHTFALL TO GET TO THE SETTLEMENT. BUT WE STARTED SEEING THE SMOKE ABOUT AN HOUR BEFORE SUNSET. BY THE TIME WE GOT CLOSE WE COULD HEAR THE WEAPONS FIRE. AND THE SCREAMS.

Q: DID YOU KEEP GOING?

A: WHERE ELSE WHERE WE GOING TO GO? WE HAD HATCHLINGS WITH US, AND WOUNDED. WE NEEDED HELP.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU GOT TO THE SETTLEMENT?

A: WE WERE STOPPED BY A KLINGON PATROL ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY. I

MANAGED TO CONVINCE THE GORN WITH ME NOT TO FIGHT.

THE KLINGONS AREN'T BARBARIANS, COMMANDER. THEY FIGHT WITH HONOR. THEY CONQUER, BUT THEY TREAT THE CONQUERED FAIRLY.

ONCE WE'D SURRENDERED AND THEY DETERMINED WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY WEAPONS, THEY TRANSPORTED OUR WOUNDED TO ONE OF THEIR SICKBAYS AND TOOK THE REST OF US TO A HOLDING AREA. WE SPENT FOUR DAYS THERE, UNTIL THE LEADERS OF GILA IV SURRENDERED.

Q: IT TOOK FOUR DAYS?

A: IT TOLD YOU THAT THE GORN DEFEND WHAT IS THEIRS. THEY NEVER GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT, BUT THEY'RE NOT STUPID. ONCE THE KLINGONS OVERRAN THE CITY, THE LEADERS THAT WERE LEFT SURRENDERED THE COLONY.

Q: AND YOU WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE?

A: I'M A FEDERATION CITIZEN. IT COMES WITH CERTAIN ... ADVANTAGES. THE KLINGONS EVEN GAVE ME WHAT I NEEDED TO REPAIR MY SHIP.

Q: HAVE YOU BEEN BACK TO GILA IV SINCE THE ATTACK?

A: THE KLINGONS HAVE CUT THE COLONY OFF FROM OUTSIDE CONTACT. NO SUBSPACE, NO TRADING ... IT'S OFF THE CHARTS AS FAR AS THE REST OF US ARE CONCERNED.

I'LL TELL YOU THIS, THOUGH. THE GORN WON'T FORGET GILA IV. THIS WAR MAY HAVE STARTED WITH ONE SHIP, BUT IT'S GOING TO GET A LOT BIGGER.

2387

THE DAYSTROM INSTITUTE HAS ANNOUNCED THE SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF THE "JELLYFISH," AN EXPERIMENTAL SPACECRAFT EQUIPPED WITH TRANS-METAPHASIC

SHIELDING DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND CONDITIONS THAT WOULD DESTROY MOST OTHER SHIPS.

DESIGNED BY FAMED ENGINEER GEORDI LA FORGE, THE SHIP IS SLATED FOR EXTENSIVE TESTING BEFORE IT CAN BE USED FOR SCIENTIFIC AND EXPLORATION MISSIONS. STARFLEET IS WORKING WITH LA FORGE AND THE INSTITUTE TO DETERMINE WHICH OF THE SHIP'S SYSTEMS CAN BE ADAPTED FOR FEDERATION USE.

STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE RECOMMENDS THAT THE FEDERATION KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON ACTIVITIES OF THE ORION SYNDICATE. A MULTI-YEAR CRACKDOWN ON CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN CURBING THE THREAT OF THE SYNDICATE FOR FEDERATION CITIZENS, BUT ON STARDATE 64163.8 HASSAN THE UNDYING ASSASSINATES TOP SYNDICATE BOSS RAIMUS ON FARIUS PRIME.

RAIMUS'S DEATH OPENS THE DOOR FOR HASSAN'S EMPLOYER, MELANI D'IAN, TO TAKE OVER RAIMUS'S SYNDICATE OPERATIONS. STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES THAT MELANI D'IAN NOW CONTROLS AS MUCH AS 30 PERCENT OF THE SYNDICATE'S OPERATIONS, AND THAT OTHER SYNDICATE BOSSES MAY SEEK TO TOPPLE HER BEFORE SHE SEEKS TO EXPAND HER POWERBASE EVEN MORE. ANALYSTS NOTE THAT MELANI D'IAN IS THE FIRST ORION TO RISE TO A TOP SPOT IN SYNDICATE LEADERSHIP IN MORE THAN 20 YEARS, AND SPECULATE THAT THIS COULD MARK THE RETURN OF THE ORIONS AS AN INTERSTELLAR POWER.

ON FERENGINAR, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS PUSHED BY GRAND NAGUS ROM ARE A TOPIC ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS THE STOCK MARKET. THE NAGUS PRESENTS A BILL TO THE ECONOMIC CONGRESS OF FERENGI ADVISERS THAT WOULD FORMALLY ALLY THE FERENGI WITH THE FEDERATION. OPPONENTS OF THE BILL LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN OF ADVERTISEMENTS THAT ARGUE THAT A FORMAL ALLIANCE WITH THE FEDERATION IS AN ATTACK ON TRADITIONAL FERENGI VALUES, AND THAT THE FEDERATION WOULD FORCE THE FERENGI TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON PROFIT AND THE

GREAT MATERIAL CONTINUUM. THE BILL FAILS TO PASS THE CONGRESS AFTER SEVERAL LAWMAKERS ARE PAID TO VOTE AGAINST IT.

ON STARDATE 64317.6, KLINGON LONG RANGE SENSORS PICK UP A SMALL ROMULAN FLEET LED BY SELA. THE FLEET PASSES THE BETA STROMGREM SUPERNOVA REMNANT AND CONTINUES INTO UNEXPLORED SPACE. STARFLEET SENDS A FLEET TO CARDASSIA PRIME TO ASSIST THE CARDASSIANS WITH THE DISMANTLING OF THEIR MILITARY, A PROCESS WHICH IS EXPECTED TO TAKE SEVERAL YEARS. THE CARDASSIANS PLAN TO USE A MUCH SMALLER SELF DEFENSE FORCE TO PATROL THEIR SPACE, AND COORDINATE WITH STARFLEET FOR ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THEIR BORDERS.

THIS ARRANGEMENT IS SOON TESTED WHEN ALPHA JEM'HADAR TAKE CONTROL OF DEVOS II, WHICH HAS BEEN MOSTLY UNPOPULATED SINCE THE DOMINION WAR. THE JEM'HADAR ESTABLISH A BASE OF OPERATIONS NEAR A FORMER DOMINION KETRACEL-WHITE STORAGE FACILITY, AND THEN EXPAND THE FACILITY SO THEY CAN MANUFACTURE THEIR OWN SUPPLIES OF THE SUBSTANCE. STARFLEET SENDS THE *USS STARGAZER-A* TO THE DEVOS SYSTEM AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, BUT CHOOSES TO TAKE NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AS LONG AS THE ALPHA JEM'HADAR MAKE NO FURTHER AGGRESSIVE MOVES.

ON STARDATE 64333.4, A ROMULAN MINING GUILD SHIP OBSERVES THE START OF A CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT WILL FOREVER CHANGE THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS. THE STAR IN THE HOBUS SYSTEM, IN THE FAR REACHES OF ROMULAN SPACE, BEGINS TO EXHIBIT MASSIVE FLUXUATIONS OF RADIATION. DAYS LATER, AMBASSADOR SPOCK OF THE FEDERATION APPEARS BEFORE THE ROMULAN SENATE TO WARN THEM ABOUT THE DANGERS OF THIS STAR.

SPOCK BELIEVES THAT IF THE HOBUS STAR GOES SUPERNOVA, IT COULD CREATE A REACTION THAT WOULD THREATEN MUCH OF THE ROMULAN EMPIRE, AND HE ASKS

THE SENATE TO COORDINATE WITH VULCAN TO FIND A SOLUTION. AFTER A LENGTHY DEBATE, THE SENATE REJECTS SPOCK'S PLAN.

AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE SENATE'S SESSION, DONATRA ACCEPTS AN INVITATION FROM COLONEL XIOMEK TO VISIT CRATERIS AND INSPECT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW ROMAN COLONY. THEIR PATH ALLOWS THEM TO PERFORM A SENSOR SWEEP OF THE HOBUS SYSTEM.

AFTER ARRIVING ON CRATERIS, DONATRA AND XIOMEK SPEND SEVERAL HOURS IN A PRIVATE MEETING, WHERE IT IS BELIEVED THAT XIOMEK GIVES DONATRA INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE ROGUE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ROMULAN MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT. DONATRA DECIDES TO RETURN TO ROMULUS EARLIER THAN PLANNED, AND INVITES XIOMEK TO TAKE PASSAGE ON HER SHIP, THE *RW VALDORE*, SO HE CAN BE IN KI BARATAN FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ROMULAN SENATE.

ON THE WAY BACK TO ROMULUS, DONATRA CONTACTS ADMIRAL TARIS, WHO IS IN THE LEVAERI SYSTEM, AND ORDERS HER TO RETURN TO ROMULUS. THE MESSAGE IS RECORDED BY ROMULAN MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS RELAY STATIONS, BUT TARIS DOES NOT CHANGE COURSE. A LATER REVIEW FINDS THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF THE MESSAGE IN THE COMPUTER BANKS OF TARIS'S SHIP, AND THAT THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN ON DUTY DURING THAT TIME CANNOT BE FOUND.

AMBASSADOR SPOCK RETURNS TO VULCAN, WHERE HE MEETS WITH AMBASSADOR JEAN-LUC PICARD. THE TWO APPEAL TO THE VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY TO ASSIST THE ROMULANS WITH THE CRISIS IN THE HOBUS SYSTEM, BUT THE ACADEMY DECLINES THEIR REQUEST WITHOUT COMMENT. THE TWO FORMER STARFLEET OFFICERS DECIDE THAT THEY WILL MAKE THEIR OWN PLANS TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION.

ON STARDATE 64444.5, THE *RW VALDORE* REPORTS UNUSUAL STELLAR ACTIVITY, INCLUDING A DISTURBANCE EQUIVALENT TO A FORCE SEVEN ION STORM. ROMULUS

LOSES CONTACT WITH DONATRA'S SHIP, AND DISPATCHES FOUR D'DERIDEX CLASS WARBIRDS TO SEARCH FOR THE *VALDORE*.

THE ROMULAN SENATE FINALLY AUTHORIZES AN EVACUATION ORDER, AND SHIPS ARE RECALLED TO HELP FERRY ROMULUS RESIDENTS OFF-WORLD. MILITARY ESTIMATES ARE THAT IT WILL TAKE A MINIMUM OF SIX WEEKS TO EVACUATE THE HOMEWORLD.

TWENTY-SEVEN HOURS LATER, THE HOBUS STAR GOES SUPERNOVA. THE RESULTING CHAIN REACTION DESTROYS ROMULUS AND REMUS. BILLIONS OF ROMULANS ARE KILLED.

STARFLEET IMMEDIATELY ORDERS ALL AVAILABLE SHIPS TO CROSS THE NEUTRAL ZONE AND ASSIST THE ROMULANS WITH ANY POSSIBLE RELIEF AND RECOVERY EFFORTS. SEVERAL OF THESE SHIPS ARE ATTACKED BY NERO, WHO IS CAPTAINING THE *NARADA*, A HEAVILY MODIFIED ROMULAN VESSEL. ADDITIONAL CRUISERS ARE DIVERTED TO ESCORT RELIEF VESSELS TO ROMULAN SPACE.

INTERCEPTED ROMULAN TRANSMISSIONS INDICATE THAT PRAETOR CHULAN AND THE LEADERS OF THE SENATE ESCAPED ROMULUS BEFORE THE PLANET'S DESTRUCTION. BUT THE *USS NOBEL*, EN ROUTE TO ROMULUS, FIND THE BODIES OF CHULAN AND THE SENATE'S RULING COUNCIL FLOATING IN SPACE NEAR THEIR DERELICT SHUTTLE.

AFTER NERO EXPANDS HIS ATTACKS TO KLINGON SHIPS, CHANCELLOR MARTOK ORDERS A FLEET TO ENTER ROMULAN SPACE. HE APPOINTS HIS FRIEND Worf AS ONE OF THE MISSION'S COMMANDERS, GIVING HIM THE RANK OF GENERAL FOR THE MISSION.

MEANWHILE, GEORDI LA FORGE BRINGS THE *JELLYFISH* TO VULCAN AND AGREES TO ALLOW SPOCK TO PILOT IT TO THE HOBUS SYSTEM.

ACCORDING TO SENSOR REPORTS RECORDED ON STARDATE 64471.6 BY THE *USS ENTERPRISE-E*, THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA WAS CONTAINED BY A LIMITED

SINGULARITY, ENDING THE THREAT TO THE QUADRANT. STARFLEET BELIEVES THAT BOTH THE *JELL YFISH* AND THE *NARADA* WERE LOST.

"HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE US ALL," AMBASSADOR PICARD SAYS OF HIS FRIEND SPOCK. "MAY HIS SOUL LIVE LONG AND PROSPER."

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COMMANDER SURAN, ONCE CAPTAIN OF THE WARBIRD SOTERUS, NOW LIVES AS A GENTLEMAN FARMER ON THE PLANET TAL VATH. TAL VATH HAS RECENTLY PETITIONED FOR FEDERATION PROTECTION, WHICH IS WHAT BRINGS ME HERE TO INTERVIEW HIM. HE IS THE HIGHEST RANKING MILITARY OFFICER ON THE PLANET, AND HAS INDEED BECOME SOMETHING OF AN ELDER STATESMAN. HIS INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF ROMULAN POLITICS, AND INVOLVEMENT WITHIN DEFINITIVE POLITICAL EVENTS DATING BACK TO THE CONFLICT WITH PRAETOR SHINZON, MAKES HIM AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION. HE SMILES AT ME, OFFERING ME A GLASS OF WATER AS WE SIT ON THE PORCH OF HIS SPRAWLING RANCH.

I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE. *[HE TILTS HIS OWN GLASS AT ME]* OH, YOU MAY SAY IT'S TO GATHER INFORMATION AND DETERMINE WHETHER YOUR FEDERATION WILL ACCEPT US. BUT YOU HAVE ALL THE SAME QUESTIONS EVERYONE ELSE DOES.

WHAT QUESTIONS WOULD THOSE BE?

YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT DONATRA, OF COURSE, THE MISSING EMPRESS*. IF ONLY SHE HADN'T DISAPPEARED, HOW DIFFERENT EVERYTHING WOULD BE! *[HE SPEAKS IN A HIGHER PITCH, CLEARLY MIMICKING SOMEONE]* ROMULANS WOULD STILL BE STRONG, STILL BE A POWER TO RECKON WITH IN THE UNIVERSE! *[HE LAUGHS]* WELL, I'M AFRAID I WILL DISAPPOINT YOU. THEY'RE RIGHT, YOU SEE. IF DONATRA HAD LIVED, EVERYTHING WOULD BE DIFFERENT. I CAN'T TELL YOU IF WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AVOID ALL THE CATASTROPHES THAT BEFELL US, BUT WE WOULD BE A MUCH STRONGER PEOPLE.

I'M AFRAID, AS WELL, THAT I CAN'T TELL YOU WHERE SHE'S GONE. IF I COULD, BELIEVE ME, I WOULD HAVE SOUGHT HER OUT LONG SINCE.

THERE ARE RUMORS THAT THE TWO OF YOU HAD A FALLING OUT.

FALLING OUT? PAH! WE DISAGREED A TIME OR TWO. AND THAT RUMOR SHE HAD ME KILLED? CLEARLY EXAGGERATED. SHE DID THREATEN TO KILL ME, BUT TRUE FRIENDSHIP IS A BOND THAT SURVIVES DEATH THREATS. [HE LAUGHS] SHE WAS A FIRE BRAND. NO, A COMET, FLARING BRILLIANTLY IN THE NIGHT SKY.

NOW, I KNOW YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS FOR ME. YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THOSE DAYS AFTER SHINZON DIED, AND GOOD RIDDANCE TO HIM. AND YOU LIKELY HAVE A QUESTION OR TWO ABOUT OUR ERSTWHILE PRAETOR TAL'AURA. EVERYTHING THAT NEEDS SAYING HAS BEEN SAID WHEN IT COMES TO SHINZON AND WHAT HE DID TO ROMULUS. [HE STOPS SPEAKING, STARING OFF INTO THE DISTANCE]

AH, FORGIVE ME. THESE ARE STRANGE TIMES. IT IS HARD TO REALIZE THAT THE GLORY OF THE EMPIRE IS GONE. IT IS EVEN, AT TIMES, UNTHINKABLE. AND YET.

WHAT OF PRAETOR TAL'AURA?

[HE PUTS HIS GLASS DOWN ON THE TABLE, LEANS TOWARDS ME CONSPIRATORILY] I SHALL TELL YOU SOMETHING – SOMETHING I WOULD NEVER HAVE DARED TO SAY WERE DONATRA STILL HERE. TAL'AURA DID US ALL A FAVOR WHEN SHE KILLED GENERAL BRAEG.

YOU'RE SHOCKED. [HE SMILES] OF COURSE YOU'RE SHOCKED.

YOU HAVE PUBLICALLY CONDEMNED HER FOR GENERAL BRAEG'S EXECUTION.

MANY TIMES, INDEED. AND IT WAS AN ATROCIOUS THING, AND I FULLY BELIEVE SHE DESERVED TO DIE IN TURN FOR HAVING DONE THAT. SO, APPARENTLY, DID SOMEONE ELSE. ALTHOUGH THAT COULD HAVE BEEN IN RETURN FOR SO COMPLETELY MISMANAGING THE EMPIRE. BUT I DIGRESS.

GENERAL BRAEG WAS A DEAR FRIEND OF MINE. I MOURNED HIS DEATH. I STILL MOURN HIS DEATH. HE WAS ALSO A CHARISMATIC LEADER. DID YOU HEAR HOW HE FOMENTED REBELLION ON ROMULUS, UNDER TAL'AURA'S VERY NOSE? IT WAS BRILLIANT. HE HAD A GIFT. NOT ONLY WAS HE CLEVER ENOUGH TO SEE HER MISTAKES AND UNDERSTAND HOW HORRIBLY SHE WAS MISHANDLING THE EMPIRE, HE HAD A RARE INSTINCT FOR SHOWMANSHIP. HE MADE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND! HE GOT THROUGH TO THE MOB. HE SHOWED THEM THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL, AND TOLD THEM WE NEEDED TO GET OUT OF IT. HE MADE THEM BELIEVE!

BUT THEN HE DIED. AND IT WAS THE DEATH OF A HERO. TAL'AURA'S MEN HAD SURROUNDED THE CROWD HE WAS PREACHING TO AT VICTORY SQUARE, AND HAD ACTUALLY BROUGHT A MILITARY HOVERCRAFT – WHICH WAS ILLEGAL ON ROMULUS – IN AN ATTEMPT TO REACH BRAEG! HE COULD HAVE EASILY FLED. HE COULD HAVE LET INNOCENT PEOPLE DIE, AND NO ONE WOULD HAVE BLAMED HIM FOR IT. INSTEAD, HE TURNED HIMSELF OVER TO TAL'AURA'S MEN, WHICH STOPPED THE ATTACK AND ENABLED HIS FOLLOWERS TO ESCAPE. HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF.

AT FIRST, I THOUGHT HE WAS AN IDIOT. I THOUGHT, *WELL, HE SAVED A FEW PEOPLE THAT DAY BUT LOST THE EMPIRE!* WHAT A SHORTSIGHTED GESTURE! BUT PERHAPS HE KNEW BETTER THAN I WHAT WOULD HAPPEN AFTER HIS DEATH.

AND HERE I WILL TELL YOU SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T HEARD BEFORE: BRAEG WAS DONATRA'S LOVER. HAD BEEN FOR YEARS. VERY FEW KNEW THIS AT THE TIME. I HAD MY SUSPICIONS BEFORE HIS DEATH, BUT NEVER SPOKE OF IT. AFTER HIS DEATH, DONATRA TOLD ME. THERE WERE TEARS RUNNING DOWN HER CHEEKS AS SHE TOLD ME THAT THEY HAD LOVED EACH OTHER. THAT WAS THE ONLY TIME I SAW HER CRY. SHE SPOKE OF HIM MANY TIMES AGAIN, IN GLORIOUS SPEECHES, CALLING ALL ROMULANS TO BATTLE! BUT SHE NEVER CRIED.

WHEN HE DIED, IT LIT A FIRE IN HER THE LIKES OF WHICH I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE. I ALWAYS KNEW SHE HAD PASSION. ALWAYS KNEW SHE HAD THE ABILITY TO LEAD. I DIDN'T REALIZE SHE HAD THE ABILITY TO TOUCH MEN'S SOULS AND MAKE THEM BLAZE. SHE BECAME EMPRESS BECAUSE BRAEG DIED. I DON'T THINK SHE WOULD HAVE DONE THAT HAD HE LIVED, AND I DON'T THINK HE'D HAVE BEEN AS GOOD A LEADER AS SHE. ALL OF HIS SHOWMANSHIP COULD NOT MATCH THE PURITY OF HER CAUSE. THE WORST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ROMULUS WAS LOSING DONATRA. I KNOW, IT'S A SHOCKING THING TO SAY, WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED. HAD SHE REMAINED EMPRESS, THESE LAST TWO DECADES AND MORE WOULD HAVE BEEN INCREDIBLY DIFFERENT.

I WILL TELL YOU THIS, AS WELL. I DO NOT BELIEVE SHE IS DEAD. WHERE SHE IS, I DON'T KNOW. BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE HEARD THE LAST OF EMPRESS DONATRA.

**THE SHIP VALDORE, CARRYING EMPRESS DONATRA AND ALL HER CREW, DISAPPEARED IN 2387 DURING THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA. THE GENERAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT THE SHIP AND CREW WERE DESTROYED, BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE.*

2388

FALLOUT FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ROMULAN SYSTEM DOMINATES INTERSTELLAR EVENTS IN 2388.

THE ROMULAN COLONY WORLDS REEL FROM THE LOSS OF THEIR HOMEWORLD AND A VACUUM IN LEADERSHIP. WITH THE DEATH OF PRAETOR CHULAN AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DONATRA, THERE IS NO ONE WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO CALL THE WORLDS TO ORDER OR ORGANIZE A NEW GOVERNMENT. THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF RATOR III DECLARES ITSELF TO BE THE NEW ROMULAN SENATE AND RATOR III AS THE NEW CAPITAL OF THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE, BUT IT IS QUICKLY CHALLENGED BY THE LEADERS OF ACHENAR PRIME AND ABRAHAS V, WHO MAKE SIMILAR CLAIMS.

ONE PERSON MANY LOOK TOWARD TO PULL THE ROMULAN PEOPLE BACK TOGETHER IS ADMIRAL TARIS. SHE CONCENTRATES ON EVALUATING WHAT MILITARY FORCES REMAIN, AND ISSUES A CALL FOR ALL REMAINING SHIPS, EVEN DEEP EXPLORATION VESSELS, TO RETURN TO ROMULAN SPACE.

INTERNAL SQUABBLING AND POLITICS HINDER THE FEDERATION'S RELIEF EFFORTS IN ROMULAN SPACE.

THE FEDERATION COUNCIL DISPATCHES A FLEET OF SHIPS TO PROVIDE FOOD AND AID TO REFUGEES AND TO HELP THE DISPLACED SURVIVORS OF THE DISASTER FIND NEW HOMES, BUT STARFLEET FINDS IT MUST NEGOTIATE WITH EACH OF THE COLONY WORLDS. WHAT ONE WORLD WELCOMES, ANOTHER SEES AS FALSE FRIENDSHIP, OR EVEN AN ACT OF WAR. THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE THREE "CAPITAL" WORLDS FURTHER COMPLICATES ISSUES, BECAUSE ANY ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO ONE OF THEM MUST BE GRANTED TO ALL TO AVOID ACCUSATIONS OF FAVORING ONE FACTION OR ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE WITH THE ROMULANS' INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

MOST OF THE FEDERATION'S ALLIES AGREE TO SEND SHIPS AND SUPPLIES TO SUPPLEMENT THE ROMULAN RELIEF EFFORT. EVEN THE CARDASSIANS, WHO ARE STILL STRUGGLING TO REBUILD THEIR HOMEWORLD, AGREE TO A TOKEN CONTRIBUTION. BUT THE FEDERATION'S APPEAL TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE TO JOIN THE RELIEF CONVOYS IS HARSHLY REJECTED.

"THE KLINGONS WILL OFFER NO TREATY, NO AID, AND NO HAND THAT IS NOT HOLDING A BLADE," CHANCELLOR MARTOK RESPONDS.

HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL, LED BY COUNCILOR J'MPOK, DEMAND THAT BOTH THE ROMULANS AND THE FEDERATION BE MADE TO PAY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLEET LED INTO ROMULAN SPACE BY WORF. SOME ARGUE THAT BECAUSE MARTOK HANDED COMMAND OF THE FLEET TO HIS FRIEND WORF, A FEDERATION AMBASSADOR, RATHER THAN A GENERAL OF THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE, THAT THE ENTIRE AFFAIR MAY HAVE BEEN A TRICK TO WEAKEN THE EMPIRE.

AND THAT EVEN IF IT WAS NOT A PLOT, THE FACT REMAINS THAT HUNDREDS OF WARRIORS DIED UNDER THE COMMAND OF A FEDERATION OFFICIAL. IN SOME KLINGON MINDS, THAT MAKES THE FEDERATION RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR DEATHS.

MARTOK REJECTS INSINUATIONS THAT WORF WAS PART OF A "COWARDLY FEDERATION TRICK" AND ISSUES A STANDING CHALLENGE TO ANYONE WHO DARES TO INSULT THE HONOR OF A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF MARTOK. AND, DESPITE HEAVY PRESSURE FROM HARDLINERS ON THE COUNCIL, THE CHANCELLOR ULTIMATELY REFUSES CALLS TO RETALIATE AGAINST THE FEDERATION.

ALTHOUGH A DIPLOMATIC CRISIS IS AVERTED, THIS IS YET ANOTHER STRAIN ON AN ALLIANCE THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN TESTED BY THE RETAKING OF KHITOMER AND THE KLINGONS' CONFLICT WITH THE GORN. ANALYSTS REPORT THAT FEDERATION-KLINGON RELATIONS ARE AT THEIR WEAKEST POINT SINCE THE KLINGONS BRIEFLY WITHDREW FROM THE KHITOMER ACCORDS IN 2372.

ALSO OCCUPYING MARTOK'S TIME THIS YEAR IS A POSSIBLE TREATY WITH THE ORIONS. REALIZING THAT THEIR HOMEWORLD IN THE RIGEL SYSTEM IS BESET WITH POLLUTION AND IS ALMOST COMPLETELY DEPLETED OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THAT STARFLEET CRACKDOWNS ON CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ARE BECOMING A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR SYNDICATE OPERATIONS, A DELEGATION OF ORIONS LED BY MELANI D'IAN OPENS TALKS WITH BOTH THE KLINGONS AND THE BREEN FOR POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE. MELANI DANGLES THE PROMISE OF ORION SUPPORT AND STOCKPILES OF ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE AND TREASURES, BUT REFUSES TO COMMIT TO EITHER SIDE UNTIL THEY DETAIL WHAT THEY COULD OFFER THE ORIONS IN RETURN.

FOR HIS PART, WORF REMAINS ON QO'NOS, RECUPERATING FROM HIS INJURIES AND FULFILLING HIS DUTIES AS FEDERATION AMBASSADOR TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE. ON STARDATE 65548.43, HE IS PRESENT FOR THE BIRTH OF HIS SECOND SON, K'DHAN. ON STARDATE 65776.64, THE FEDERATION NEWS NETWORK BREAKS A STORY THAT REPORTS THAT THE VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY KNEW OF THE THREAT TO ROMULUS

BUT REFUSED TO TAKE ACTION TO ASSIST THE ROMULANS BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR HOMEWORLD.

THE OUTCRY IS IMMEDIATE. THE VULCANS DECISION IS CONDEMNED BY DOZENS OF POLITICIANS AND ANALYSTS. SEVENTEEN INDEPENDENT PLANETS RECALL THE AMBASSADORS TO VULCAN IN PROTEST, AS DO FEDERATION MEMBERS PACIFICA AND ZARAN II. TWO DAYS LATER, THE FEDERATION COUNCIL VOTES TO OPEN AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE VULCANS REFUSAL TO HELP THE ROMULANS, AS WELL AS THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ACADEMY'S WORK IN RED MATTER MANIPULATION.

THE FEDERATION PRESIDENT MAKES A PUBLIC APPEAL IN AN ADDRESS TO THE FEDERATION COUNCIL FOR THE MEMBER WORLDS TO REMAIN CALM AND NOT OSTRACIZE VULCAN OR ANYONE INVOLVED. "IN THIS TIME OF STRIFE WE NEED TO REMAIN UNITED," PRESIDENT NANIETTA BACCO SAYS. "ASSIGNING BLAME DOES NOT HEAL THE INJURED, SOOTHE THE STRICKEN OR COMFORT THE GRIEVING."

2388: SUPPLEMENTAL

I MEET WITH AMBASSADOR WORF IN HIS HOME ON QO'NOS. HE HASN'T SPOKEN WITH ANY REPORTER SINCE THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE HOBUS EXPLOSION. THE AMBASSADOR IS AN OLD FRIEND OF MY FAMILY, WHICH IS WHY I THOUGHT I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SPEAK WITH HIM. IT APPEARS THAT I WAS RIGHT.

AMBASSADOR WORF IS A WARRIOR. HE IS CLEARLY STILL RECOVERING FROM THE NEAR FATAL INJURIES HE TOOK WHILE FIGHTING THE MADMAN, NERO. JUST AS CLEARLY, HE REFUSES TO ALLOW THOSE INJURIES TO SLOW HIM DOWN.

HE IS ALSO FURIOUS WITH ME.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! DO YOU KNOW HOW FOOLISH YOUR ACTIONS HAVE BEEN? WANDERING AROUND QO'NOS ON YOUR OWN? THE FEDERATION IS NOT VERY... POPULAR.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, TOO, WORF.

WHAT WOULD YOUR FATHER SAY IF HE KNEW YOU WERE HERE!?

[I MEET HIS GAZE AND KEEP MINE STEADY. AMBASSADOR Worf IS THE SORT OF MAN WHO RESPECTS CONFIDENCE, AND DIRECTNESS.]

HE'D PROBABLY SAY THE SAME THING HE USED TO SAY. 'WHAT IS JAKE THINKING!' AND THEN HE'D SAY THAT I'M A MAN NOW, CAPABLE OF MAKING MY OWN DECISIONS. I'VE GROWN UP.

BAH! GROWN UP. [HE GROWLS AT ME, BUT SETTLES INTO HIS CHAIR]

AND JUST HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO REACH ME?

THAT WOULD BE REVEALING MY SOURCES, WHICH A GOOD REPORTER NEVER DOES.

DO YOU REALIZE HOW DANGEROUS IT IS BEING A FEDERATION CITIZEN IN KLINGON SPACE? ONE FALSE STEP, AND YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF IN TROUBLE. A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE.

RELAX, I HAVE NO PLANS OF GETTING INTO TROUBLE.

YOU NEVER DO. HOWEVER, YOU ARE FREQUENTLY IN DANGER REGARDLESS OF YOUR PLANS.

I JUST WANTED A CHANCE TO TALK TO YOU.

WE ARE TALKING.

YES, I GUESS WE ARE. BUT I WANTED TO INTERVIEW YOU, AND GET YOUR STORY.

[HE GIVES ME A CONSIDERING LOOK.] VERY WELL. BUT I WILL ONLY AGREE TO YOUR REQUEST ON TWO CONDITIONS.

NAME IT!

YOU WILL ACCEPT THE SERVICES OF ONE OF MY GUARDS WHILE YOU REMAIN ON QO'NOS. AND ONCE YOU HAVE LEFT, YOU WILL NOT RETURN TO KLINGON SPACE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION.

BUT A REPORTER NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO MOVE AROUND EASILY. HAVING A GUARD WITH ME WILL JUST SLOW ME DOWN, AND –

NO. YOU MUST ACCEPT MY TERMS OR I WILL HAVE YOU SENT BACK TO THE
FEDERATION. TEMPER HERE ARE... HIGH.

BECAUSE OF THE GORN CONFLICT?

[HE GRUNTS] I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO SAY.

ALL RIGHT. || CHANGE MY APPROACH, SEEING THAT HE WON'T BUDGE ON THAT SUBJECT|
ARE YOU AT LIBERTY TO TALK ABOUT YOUR RECENT ENCOUNTER WITH NERO? AND THE
DESTRUCTION OF THE KLINGON FLEET?

I DO NOT WISH TO TALK ABOUT THOSE EVENTS. I BELIEVE AMBASSADOR PICARD HAS
ALREADY SPOKEN EXTENSIVELY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED. I HAVE NOTHING TO ADD TO
HIS ACCOUNTS.

WELL, HOW ABOUT TELLING ME WHY THE KLINGONS SENT A FLEET INTO BATTLE WHEN
THEY INITIALLY REFUSED TO HELP EVACUATE ROMULUS?

WE WERE NOT HELPING ROMULANS. NERO BEGAN ATTACKING KLINGON SHIPS. OF
COURSE WE WENT INTO BATTLE. NOT TO DO SO WOULD HAVE BEEN UNTHINKABLE. THE
EMPIRE COULD NOT SIMPLY STAND BY AND CONDONE HIS ATTACKS.

WHY DIDN'T THE KLINGON EMPIRE WANT TO HELP THE ROMULANS?

ROMULANS HAVE NOT BEEN FRIENDS TO THE EMPIRE. AND WE HAD OUR OWN...
CONCERNS AT THE TIME.

YOU MEAN THE CONFLICT WITH THE GORN?

AS I SAID EARLIER, I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO DISCUSS SUCH THINGS. REPEATING THE
QUESTION WILL NOT CHANGE THE ANSWER.

CAN'T BLAME ME FOR TRYING. || SMILE| I HEAR THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS HERE ON
QO'NOS WITH MEMBERS OF THE HIGH COUNCIL CLAIMING THAT YOU LED THE FLEET INTO
NERO'S GRASP AS PART OF SOME FEDERATION PLOY TO WEAKEN THE EMPIRE –
[HE SLAMS HIS FIST ON THE TABLE AND LEANS FORWARD, INTERRUPTING ME]

THAT IS RIDICULOUS! THE FEDERATION WOULD NEVER ASK SUCH A THING OF ME, AND I WOULD CERTAINLY NEVER DO IT! IT WOULD BE DISHONORABLE AND COWARDLY!

I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD! ANYONE WHO KNOWS YOU KNOWS THAT COULDN'T BE TRUE!

WHAT I WANTED TO KNOW IS WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ON QO'NOS SINCE THEN. DO YOU FEEL SAFE THERE?

[HE LAUGHS. IT'S NOT A SIGHT YOU SEE OFTEN, SO I'M FASCINATED.]

THERE AS ANYWHERE. CHANCELLOR MARTOK HAS MADE CLEAR HIS SUPPORT FOR ME. ANYONE WHO DARES QUESTION ME WILL HAVE TO FACE HIM. AND I RELISH THE CHANCE TO DO BATTLE AND DEFEND MY NAME!

[HE SMILES, AND LEANS BACK]

AND I WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO SEE ANYONE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO SAY SUCH THINGS TO GRILKA.

YOUR WIFE. HOW IS SHE?

SHE IS GLORIOUS.

WELL, I KNOW THAT. HOW IS SHE DOING? SHE JUST GAVE BIRTH, DIDN'T SHE?

SHE DID. AND HER SHOUTS RANG THROUGH THE CITY AS SHE BIRTHED MY SON.

THAT'S... GREAT.

YES. [HE SMILES, PERHAPS A BIT SMUGLY] IT IS.

THIS IS YOUR SECOND SON, ISN'T IT?

YES. I AM QUITE PROUD.

WHAT DO YOU THINK HIS FUTURE WILL BE LIKE? WILL HE GROW UP IN A TIME OF PEACE,

OR A TIME OF WAR? I KNOW YOU CAN'T SAY MUCH, BUT PLEASE. WITH EVERYTHING

THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING LATELY – THE LOSS OF ROMULUS, THE BATTLE WITH NERO, THE

CONFLICT WITH THE GORN – DO YOU THINK WAR IS COMING?

[HE LOOKS AT ME, INTENSELY ENOUGH THAT I BEGIN TO WORRY]

THERE IS ALWAYS WAR. ONLY THE PARTICIPANTS CHANGE.

DO YOU THINK WAR BETWEEN THE EMPIRE AND THE FEDERATION IS LIKELY?

[HE DOESN'T ANSWER]

AND IF THERE IS, WHAT WILL YOU DO?

I DO NOT KNOW.

2389

INFIGHTING CONTINUES AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE ROMULAN COLONY WORLDS. WHILE BASIC NEEDS ARE BEING MET AND STARFLEET IS DELIVERING SUPPLIES AND REPLICATORS TO EVERY WORLD THAT WILL ACCEPT THEIR HELP, THE ROMULANS LACK A STABLE GOVERNMENT AND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND OF THE MILITARY IS CHAOTIC.

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF 2389, FIVE ROMULANS TRY TO SEIZE THE EMPEROR'S THRONE, MORE THAN TWO DOZEN PEOPLE DECLARE THEMSELVES PRAETOR, AND AT LEAST A DOZEN MORE CLAIM THE ROLE OF SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ROMULAN FLEET. MOST OF THESE ERSTWHILE LEADERS FALL PREY TO QUICK ASSASSINATIONS. A FORTUNATE FEW ARE SIMPLY IGNORED.

FEDERATION ANALYSTS AGREE THAT THE ROMULAN EMPIRE WILL REMAIN IN TURMOIL UNTIL THERE IS A LEADER WHO IS ABLE TO COMMAND THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE COLONY WORLDS. FEDERATION DIPLOMATIC TEAMS ATTEMPT TO ORGANIZE A CONFERENCE WHERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH OF THE COLONY WORLDS CAN TAKE THE FIRST STEPS TO ESTABLISHING A NEW GOVERNMENT AND CHOOSING LEADERS, BUT THE ROMULANS CANNOT EVEN AGREE ON WHERE THE MEETING SHOULD BE HELD AND THE PLAN COLLAPSES.

THE KLINGON EMPIRE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION WITH LIGHTNING STRIKES INTO ROMULAN SPACE. THE EMPIRE TAKES CONTROL OF THE TRANOME SAR AND NEQUENCIA SYSTEMS IN A MATTER OF DAYS, AND IS POISED TO STRIKE DEEPER INTO ROMULAN TERRITORY. THE KLINGONS TEMPORARILY HALT THEIR ADVANCE WHEN STARFLEET SENDS A FLEET TO PROTECT THE ROMULAN/KLINGON BORDER, BUT

TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH AND THERE ARE REPORTS OF MINOR SKIRMISHES BETWEEN FEDERATION AND KLINGON STARSHIPS.

THE CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER ROMULAN SPACE IS NOT THE ONLY MILITARY CONFLICT THE KLINGON EMPIRE IS ENGAGED IN DURING 2389. THEIR CONFLICT WITH THE GORN, WHICH HAD QUIETED AFTER THE BATTLE FOR GILA IV, ERUPTS AGAIN WHEN THE TWO POWERS STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE GAMMA ORIONIS SYSTEM. THE GORN TAKE THE ADVANTAGE WHEN KING SLATHIS NEGOTIATES WITH THE NAUSICAAANS, WHO AGREE TO CONTRIBUTE SHIPS AND WEAPONS TO THE GORN WAR EFFORTS IN EXCHANGE FOR RIGHTS TO SEVERAL ASTEROID BELTS AND A SUBSTANTIAL PAYMENT. THE KLINGONS REFUSE TO GIVE UP THE FIGHT FOR GAMMA ORIONIS, WINNING SEVERAL BATTLES EVEN WHEN OUTNUMBERED, AND STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT THERE ARE NO SIGNS THAT THE CONFLICT WILL END ANYTIME SOON.

IN ADDITION, INTERNAL STRIFE DIVIDES THE KLINGON NOBLE HOUSES. ON STARDATE 66091.53, AAKAN OF THE HOUSE OF MO'KAI SLAYS K'DAS, SON OF B'VAT. THE DEATH REIGNITES A CENTURY-LONG BLOOD FEUD BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES, AND B'VAT THROWS ALL HIS EFFORTS INTO HUNTING DOWN EVERY MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF MO'KAI. ALLIES OF BOTH OF THE NOBLE FAMILIES ENTER INTO THE FIGHT, BUT IN THE END, AAKAN IS THE LAST OF HIS HOUSE. AFTER AAKAN FLEES QO'NOS, HE IS RUN TO GROUND BY AGENTS OF THE HOUSE OF B'VAT, WHO CORNER HIM ON H'ATORIA ON STARDATE 66306.71. TWO DAYS LATER, B'VAT DEFEATS AAKAN IN RITUAL COMBAT, AND CHANCELLOR MARTOK FORMALLY DISSOLVES THE HOUSE OF MO'KAI.

THE CARDASSIANS TAKE A MAJOR STEP TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY WHEN THEY VOTE TO REPLACE THE RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE WITH DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED LEADERS. IN THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO THE ELECTION, TWO GROUPS DOMINATE THE DEBATE: A CIVILIAN COALITION WITH ELIM GARAK AS A PROMINENT MEMBER, AND A HARDLINER GROUP CALLING FOR THE CARDASSIANS TO WITHDRAW

FROM THE FEDERATION-CARDASSIAN TREATY OF 2386 AND REESTABLISH THE MILITARY.

GARAK'S COALITION WINS A NARROW VICTORY, AND IN ITS FIRST ACT REFORMS THE DETAPA COUNCIL AS A REPRESENTATIVE BODY. THE COUNCIL FACES ITS FIRST CONTROVERSY WHEN IT VOTES TO SEND SIX SHIPS AS A TOKEN FORCE TO ASSIST THE FEDERATION'S RECOVERY EFFORTS IN ROMULAN SPACE. POPULAR OPINION IS AGAINST THE DECISION, AND POLLS SHOW THAT MOST CARDASSIANS FEEL THAT THEY SHOULD RESERVE THEIR RESOURCES. THE FEDERATION COUNCIL'S DECISION TO CUT FUNDING FOR CARDASSIAN RECONSTRUCTION BY 30 PERCENT MAKES AID TO THE ROMULANS EVEN LESS POPULAR, AND SUPPORT FOR THE COUNCIL PLUMMETS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS FROM THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CULAT, ELIM GARAK DEFENDED THE DETAPA COUNCIL'S ACTIONS. "WE'VE SEEN WHAT SUSPICION AND BACKROOM DEALS HAVE BROUGHT US," GARAK SAID. "WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE TURN OUR BACKS ON THE REST OF THE GALAXY AND JUST WORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS ON OUR OWN STREET, IN OUR OWN CITY, ON OUR OWN PLANET. MAYBE IT'S TIME TO TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT."

ONE OF THE FIRST INDUSTRIES TO BE RESTARTED IN CARDASSIAN SPACE IS MINING. A FORMER MEMBER OF THE MILITARY, GUL MADRED, ACQUIRES THE RIGHTS TO SEVERAL-MINERAL RICH PLANETOIDS AND BEGINS BUILDING A LARGE MINING OPERATION IN THE SEPTIMUS SYSTEM.

FEDERATION PRESIDENT NANIETTA BACCO FOCUSES FOR MUCH OF 2389 ON SMOOTHING RELATIONS BETWEEN VULCAN AND THE OTHER WORLDS OF THE FEDERATION. SHE AND AMBASSADOR JEAN-LUC PICARD DO MUCH TO SOOTHE THE WOUNDS CAUSED BY THE REVELATION THAT THE VULCANS MAY HAVE KNOWN ABOUT THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA.

ON STARDATE 66839.72, THE FEDERATION COUNCIL ANNOUNCES THE RESULTS INTO AN INVESTIGATION OF THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA AND THE VULCAN SCIENCE

ACADEMY'S RESEARCH INTO RED MATTER MANIPULATION. THE COUNCIL DECIDES THAT THE VULCANS MAY NOT HAVE REALIZED THE FULL EXTENT OF THE THREAT OF THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA, AS THE SCOPE OF THE EXPLOSION WAS GREATER AND MORE VIOLENT THAN ANY SUPERNOVA PREVIOUSLY RECORDED. IN ADDITION, THE CHAIN REACTION OF THE DETONATION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN PREDICTED, AND THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE MATTER BE SUBJECTED TO FURTHER SCIENTIFIC STUDY.

HOWEVER, THE COUNCIL CRITICIZES THE VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY FOR CREATING RED MATTER WITHOUT CONSULTING OR INFORMING FEDERATION AUTHORITIES. IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE FEDERATION COUNCIL, COUNCILOR T'LOS OF VULCAN EXPRESSES REGRET IF ANY OF THE ACTIONS OR INACTIONS OF HER PEOPLE HAVE CAUSED HARM TO THE FEDERATION. SHE ANNOUNCES THAT ALL OF THE ACADEMY'S RED MATTER WAS ON BOARD THE JELLYFISH WHEN IT DISAPPEARED, AND THAT THE VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY HAS PLEDGED TO DO NO FURTHER RED MATTER MANIPULATION RESEARCH WITHOUT THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND COOPERATION OF THE FEDERATION SCIENCE COUNCIL. TO THE ROMULANS, SHE DIRECTS A SINGLE STATEMENT: "WE GRIEVE WITH THEE."

AT THE END OF HER ADDRESS, T'LOS SAYS THAT IS ONLY LOGICAL TO CHANGE WHO SPEAKS FOR VULCAN, AS THE PAST YEAR HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT SHE HAS BEEN INADEQUATE TO THE TASK. SHE RESIGNS FROM THE FEDERATION COUNCIL AND RETURNS HOME.

IN THE COURTS, THE CASE OF THE PHOTONIC LIFEFORM KNOWN AS THE DOCTOR MAKES A SMALL ADVANCEMENT AFTER YEARS OF BEING STALLED IN HEARINGS AND APPEALS. ON STARDATE 66954.79, A FEDERATION JUDGE RULES THAT THE LAWSUIT MAY BE EXPANDED INTO A CLASS-ACTION SUIT ENCOMPASSING ALL SENTIENT ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS IN THE FEDERATION. "THIS IS ABOUT MORE THAN ONE BEING AND A MOBILE EMITTER," SAYS ALYSSA COGLEY-SHAW, A LAWYER FOR THE SOONG FOUNDATION. "THIS IS ABOUT BASIC RIGHTS."

COGLEY-SHAW SAYS THAT WHILE THE EXPANSION OF THE LAWSUIT MAY MEAN THAT IT WILL REMAIN TANGLED IN THE COURTS FOR YEARS TO COME, ITS ULTIMATE RESOLUTION MAY MEAN AN END TO THE FORCED SERVITUDE OF MORE THAN 600 EMH MARK I HOLOGRAMS. AND, AS STARFLEET RE-EQUIPS MORE OF ITS STARSHIPS WITH HOLOPROJECTORS TO EXPAND THE USEFULNESS OF PHOTONIC "TOOLS" SUCH AS THE EMERGENCY COMMAND AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL HOLOGRAMS, SOMEDAY THOSE LIFEFORMS MAY BE CONSIDERED STARFLEET OFFICERS WITH ALL OF THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF THEIR RANK.

2389: SUPPLEMENTAL

[ELIM GARAK, MEMBER OF THE DETAPA COUNCIL ON CARDASSIA PRIME, VERY KINDLY WELCOMES ME INTO HIS HOME FOR AN EARLY BREAKFAST.]

RED LEAF TEA?

YES, PLEASE.

AND I FEAR I HAVE VERY FEW HUMAN FOODS ON HAND. PERHAPS YOU WOULD ENJOY SCONES AND JAM? AS I'M SURE YOU RECALL, OUR DEAR DR. BASHIR IS RATHER FOND OF THEM.

[HE PLACES A PLATE IN FRONT OF ME.]

I CERTAINLY DO. I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU LIKED THEM, TOO.

ONE PICKS UP HABITS, OVER TIME. [GARAK TILTS HIS CUP SLIGHTLY TOWARD ME] DRINK UP, MY YOUNG FRIEND.

I'M NOT THAT YOUNG ANYMORE, GARAK.

OH, MY DEAR BOY, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE YOUNG TO THOSE OF US WHO KNEW YOU IN YOUR YOUTH, AND OUR ADULTHOOD. DELIGHT IN IT, FOR IT MEANS THAT WE WILL ALWAYS FIND YOU CHARMING IN WAYS NO ONE ELSE WILL.

THANK YOU, I THINK.

THINK NOTHING OF IT. AND NOW, SHALL I GUESS WHY I'VE BEEN HONORED WITH SUCH A VISIT? YOU ARE, OF COURSE, EAGER TO SEE THE GLORIOUS SIGHTS OF CARDASSIA! I AM AFRAID I MUST DISAPPOINT YOU. MANY WERE REDUCED TO RUBBLE 14 YEARS AGO. YOU MAY RECALL.

OF COURSE, I-

NO, INDEED. YOU ARE VISITING BECAUSE YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT EVENT COMING UP, YES? AND YOU WISH FOR NONE OTHER THAN YOUR OLD, DEAR FRIEND GARAK TO MAKE YOU THE PERFECT SUIT. PERHAPS A WEDDING? I AM AFRAID I AM NO LONGER TAKING TAILORING COMMISSIONS, BUT PERHAPS FOR SUCH AN OLD FRIEND I MIGHT CONSIDER IT.

NO, NO. WELL, ACTUALLY, YES, I AM GETTING MARRIED. BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I CAME TO SEE YOU -

OH? THEN YOU MUST TELL ME WHY.

II LAUGH. I KNOW THAT GARAK SPECIALIZES IN THIS SORT OF PATTERN, TO GET PEOPLE A BIT OFF BALANCE. IT'S NOT PERSONAL. IT'S JUST WHAT HE DOES WITH BOTH FRIENDS AND ENEMIES.]

I CAME TO ASK YOU ABOUT THE DETAPA COUNCIL AND WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON HERE DURING THE REBUILDING OF CARDASSIA.

AH, YES. I SUPPOSE THAT WOULD INTEREST A FELLOW SUCH AS YOURSELF.

IT IS PART OF THE JOB.

TELL ME, HOW IS YOUR BOOK DOING? THE ONE YOU WROTE ABOUT LIVING ON DEEP SPACE 9 DURING THE DOMINION WAR?

IT'S DOING WELL. THANK YOU. BUT BACK TO THE QUESTION AT HAND-

I WASN'T AWARE THERE WAS A QUESTION.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GOING TO HAPPEN ON CARDASSIA? NOW THAT THE DETAPA COUNCIL IS IN PLACE?

I AM FAR TOO SIMPLE A FELLOW TO KNOW THAT. BUT, IF ASKED, AS YOU HAVE JUST ASKED ME, I MIGHT SAY THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL PATHS CARDASSIA COULD TAKE. ONE WOULD BE TO REBUILD PEACEFULLY AND BECOME A PRODUCTIVE PART OF THE INTERGALACTIC COMMUNITY. ONE, WHICH I HOPE THE DETAPA COUNCIL WILL PREVENT, IS A PATH INTO THE PAST. THAT WOULD BE A PATH ATTEMPTING TO RECLAIM OUR PAST GLORY AND REBUILD OUR MILITARY MIGHT. THE ONE OUR GOOD FRIENDS IN THE TRUE WAY WOULD ADVOCATE.

I'D HEARD THEY'D BECOME ACTIVE AGAIN. THEY WERE YOUR MAIN OPPOSITION DURING THE DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, WEREN'T THEY?

INDEED. LEAD BY THE MOST RESPECTED GUL MADRED. WHO, OF COURSE, FAVORS A RETURN TO OUR DAYS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT.

SO YOU'RE OPPOSED TO BUILDING UP THE CARDASSIAN MILITARY?

OH, I NEVER SAID THAT. A MILITARY IS AN IMPORTANT THING. BUT I AM OPPOSED TO CHASING AFTER THE PAST FOREVER. AFTER ALL, WE DO RECALL WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST TIME.

YOU MEAN THE ALLIANCE WITH THE DOMINION?

OF COURSE, WHAT ELSE COULD I POSSIBLY MEAN? FOR A FEW BRIEF MOMENTS OF MILITARY MIGHT, CARDASSIA PAID WITH OVER EIGHT HUNDRED MILLION DEATHS, AND DESTRUCTION THE LIKES OF WHICH I HOPE NEVER TO SEE AGAIN. THE MILITARY THREW US RIGHT BACK INTO THE FAMINE AND DISEASE OF OUR PRE-CARDASSIAN UNION DARK AGES. IRONIC, ISN'T IT? THAT THE MILITARY CAME ABOUT TO SAVE US FROM DESTRUCTION, AND THEN PLUNGED US BACK INTO THE VERY SAME SITUATION CENTURIES LATER.

HAS THE TRUE WAY BEEN CAUSING PROBLEMS?

GROWING PAINS, MY YOUNG FRIEND. CARDASSIA IS HAVING GROWING PAINS. IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT SOME OF OUR MORE FEARFUL MEMBERS WOULD WISH TO CLING TO THE

OLD WAYS. I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT THE TRUE WAY WILL ONE DAY JOIN US IN
LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF CARDASSIA.

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?

WOULD I SAY SOMETHING I DIDN'T BELIEVE?

YES.

WELL, THEN. [HE SMILES AT ME. IT'S THAT PLEASANT, ENIGMATIC SMILE I REMEMBER
FROM OUR TIME ON DS9. WHICH MEANS THERE'S NO GETTING ANYTHING MORE OUT OF
HIM ON THIS TOPIC.]

HOW HAS THE RESTRUCTURING BEEN GOING?

WE'VE REBUILT WHAT WE COULD. OF COURSE, THE RECENT CUTBACKS OF FUNDING
FROM THE FEDERATION HAVE HURT OUR PROGRESS.

BUT THE FEDERATION NEEDS TO HELP OUT THE ROMULANS-

OH, I WAS NOT CHIDING YOUR MOST EXCELLENT FEDERATION! FAR FROM IT! WE
CANNOT LEAVE ROMULANS TO THEIR OWN DEVICES. NO, INDEED NOT. FOR WHO DARES
TO TRUST A ROMULAN WITHOUT A PLANET TO PIN HIM TO? THAT WOULD BE LIKE LEAVING A
BOWL OF SEM'HAL STEW UNATTENDED UPON A TABLE, ALL THE WHILE KNOWING THAT A
STARVING CARDASSIAN VOLE WAS HIDING UNDER YOUR CHAIR.

THE FEDERATION IS HELPING OUT OF GOOD WILL.

OF COURSE THEY ARE. AND IT IS OUT OF GOOD WILL THAT WE OF CARDASSIA SENT SIX
SHIPS TO AID THE FEDERATION IN ITS QUEST OF GOOD WILL TOWARD THE ROMULAN
EMPIRE.

ACTUALLY, I'VE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT THAT. IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A VERY
POPULAR MOVE HERE ON CARDASSIA.

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY HAVE GIVEN YOU THAT IDEA?

THE CROWDS OF PEOPLE PROTESTING IT THE OTHER DAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CULAT.

AH, YES. WELL, NOT EVERY GOVERNMENTAL ACT CAN BE UNIVERSALLY LOVED. INDEED, DO NOT TRUST ANY PLANET, OR ANY PEOPLE, WHO CLAIM THAT EVERY LAW AND EVERY GOVERNMENTAL DECISION IS LOVED.

THEY SEEMED PRETTY UPSET.

WELL, THE FEDERATION HAS REDUCED AID TO CARDASSIA. SO THOSE WHO ARE IN FAVOR OF THE FEDERATION ARE JUST A TAD BIT UPSET. AND THEY FEEL, UNDERSTANDABLY, THAT WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES. THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE FEDERATION – WELL, THEY CERTAINLY DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING TO HELP THE FEDERATION.

THEN WHY DID THE DETAPA COUNCIL VOTE TO SEND SHIPS?

THERE ARE ALWAYS MORE REASONS THAN THOSE ON THE SURFACE. IT IS REALLY VERY SIMPLE.

WILL YOU EXPLAIN IT TO ME?

I FEAR NOT. I SHALL LEAVE IT TO YOU TO PUT TOGETHER. TELL ME, HAVE YOU ENJOYED YOUR BREAKFAST?

2390

RAIDS ON CIVILIAN SHIPS AND SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE BORDERS OF THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND GORN HEGEMONY RISE DRAMATICALLY AND STARFLEET IDENTIFIES AT LEAST EIGHT PLACES NEAR THE BORDERS WHERE THE NAUSICAANS ARE CONSTRUCTING BASES HIDDEN IN ASTEROID BELTS OR NEBULAE. STARFLEET COMMAND DOES NOT CONSIDER THESE BASES TO BE A MAJOR THREAT, BUT THE FEDERATION TRANSPORT UNION, WHICH REPRESENTS A LARGE NUMBER OF CIVILIAN FREIGHTER CAPTAINS, IS DEMANDING THAT STARFLEET INCREASE ITS PATROLS IN THE BORDER REGIONS AND OFFER ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS FOR CIVILIAN SHIPPING TRAFFIC.

THIS PUTS STARFLEET IN A POSITION OF HAVING TO BALANCE THE NEED FOR DEFENSE WITH THE FEDERATION'S DETERIORATING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE KLINGON EMPIRE. MORE STARSHIPS ON THE BORDER WILL BE SEEN AS A HOSTILE ACT BY THE HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL, AND TENSIONS ARE ALREADY HIGH BECAUSE OF THE SHIPS THAT STARFLEET IS USING TO REINFORCE THE ROMULAN BORDER WITH THE KLINGON EMPIRE.

THE DEBATE ON WHAT TO DO RAGES FOR MUCH OF THE YEAR, AND THE FEW STARFLEET VESSELS THAT ARE ASSIGNED TO THE REGION ARE STRETCHED THIN AND STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH THE SWIFT RAIDER ATTACKS. BY THE TIME A STARSHIP CAN RESPOND TO A DISTRESS SIGNAL, IT IS OFTEN TOO LATE TO CATCH THE NAUSICAA SHIPS.

THE BEST-CASE SCENARIO FOR THE FEDERATION, ANALYSTS AGREE, IS IF THE KLINGON AND GORN FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION BEFORE THE CONFLICT HAS A CHANCE TO ENGULF NEARBY WORLDS. TO THIS END, THE FEDERATION OFFERS TO MEDIATE TALKS BETWEEN THE GORN AND THE KLINGONS AT A NEUTRAL LOCATION. NEITHER PARTY IS OVEREAGER TO ACCEPT "HUMAN" MEDDLING IN A PERSONAL DISPUTE AND PRELIMINARY TALKS TO HASH OUT THE DETAILS OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE DRAG ON FOR WEEKS. THE PROCESS COMES TO AN ABRUPT HALT WHEN CHANCELLOR MARTOK ANNOUNCES THAT THE KLINGONS WILL NOT PARTICIPATE UNLESS STARFLEET WITHDRAWS ALL OF ITS SHIPS FROM THE ROMULAN-KLINGON BORDER.

WHILE THE CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE ROMULANS AND THE GORN ARE BOTH EXTREMELY POPULAR ON QO'NOS, PROJECTIONS BY THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE SHOW THAT THE EMPIRE'S RESOURCES ARE BEING STRETCHED THIN BY A TWO-FRONT WAR. THE KDF RECOMMENDS A RAPID INCREASE IN SHIP PRODUCTION, ELIMINATING SOME OF THE BLOCKS TO NON-COMMISSIONED SOLDIERS RISING TO THE RANK OF OFFICER AND POSSIBLY SCALING BACK THE ROMULAN WAR IN THE SHORT TERM, BECAUSE THE DISORGANIZED, DISPLACED ROMULANS ARE NOT AN IMMEDIATE THREAT.

ULTIMATELY, THE KLINGONS DECIDE TO SLOW THEIR ADVANCE INTO ROMULAN SPACE, BUT THEY CONTINUE TO GARRISON AND DEFEND THE TERRITORY GAINED IN THE 2389 CAMPAIGN.

THE ROMULAN COLONY WORLDS ARE STARTING TO DEVELOP A LOOSE NETWORK OF ALLIANCES AND RIVALRIES, BUT NONE OF THE POTENTIAL ROMULAN LEADERS HAS BEEN ABLE TO UNIFY THE WORLDS UNDER ONE BANNER. LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES, SOME OF THE WORLDS ARE LOOKING TO FIND ALLIES OUTSIDE THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE. ON STARDATE 67620.54, THE ROMULAN COLONY OF TALVATH FORMALLY REQUESTS FEDERATION PROTECTION AND OFFERS TO OPEN TALKS THAT COULD LEAD TO TALVATH APPLYING FOR FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP. SOME SEE THIS AS THE FIRST STEP TO THE DISSOLUTION OF THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE.

A BRIGHT SPOT FOR THE ROMULANS HAS BEEN ADMIRAL TARIS, WHO HAS BEEN ORGANIZING THE REMAINING SHIPS INTO A NEW FLEET. IN AREAS WITH HOLES IN THE CHAINS OF COMMAND, TARIS HAS BEEN APPROACHING EACH SHIP CAPTAIN PERSONALLY, AND OUTSIDE OBSERVERS EXPECT HER TO HAVE THE ROMULAN MILITARY FULLY OPERATIONAL WITHIN SEVEN MONTHS.

FEDERATION ANALYSTS WARN THAT A STRONG FLEET COULD QUICKLY OVERWHELM THE WEAK LEADERS OF THE COLONY WORLDS, AND THAT THE ROMULANS MAY SOON BE UNDER MILITARY CONTROL. FOR HER PART, TARIS HAS NOT PUBLICALLY EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN GOVERNING THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, AND HAS ORDERED THE FORCES UNDER HER CONTROL TO CONCENTRATE ON RELIEF EFFORTS AND DEFENSE OF THE BORDER REGIONS.

ON CARDASSIA, THE DETAPA COUNCIL SPENDS MOST OF THE YEAR MUSTERING SUPPORT FOR A SLATE OF REFORM MEASURES DESIGNED TO EXPAND PERSONAL FREEDOMS AND PROMOTE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT. WHILE THE POPULATION ENJOYS ITS NEWFOUND LIBERTY AND THE ORALIAN SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT FLOURISHES, MANY CARDASSIANS ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT THIS NEW DIRECTION FOR THEIR WORLD. THE

COUNCIL'S TASK IS COMPLICATED BY GUL MADRED AND HIS FOLLOWERS, WHO USE THE EXPANSIONS IN FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY TO ORGANIZE RALLIES PROMOTING A RETURN TO THE "TRUE" WAYS OF THE CARDASSIAN UNION.

A TASK FORCE MADE UP OF SCIENTISTS ASSIGNED TO THE *U.S.S. PASTEUR*, COMMANDED BY CAPTAIN BEVERLY CRUSHER, AND THE CARDASSIAN MINISTRY OF SCIENCE ANNOUNCES THAT IT HAS FOUND A POSSIBLE CURE FOR YARMIN FEL SYNDROME. THE COMPOUND, SYNTHESIZED FROM A RARE FLOWER THAT GROWS IN THE MOST REMOTE AREAS OF CARDASSIA PRIME, CANNOT BE REPLICATED. BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED SUPPLY OF THE DRUG, IT MAY BE SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE THE TREATMENT HAS BEEN FULLY TESTED AND IS READY FOR PUBLIC USE.

ON EARTH, THE FEDERATION SUPREME COURT AGREES TO HEAR ORAL ARGUMENTS FROM A GROUP OF HOLONOVEL PUBLISHERS AND PROGRAMMERS WHO ARE SEEKING TO BLOCK THE CLASS-ACTION LAWSUIT ASKING FOR CIVIL RIGHTS FOR HOLOGRAMS. THE GROUP HIRES A RETIRED STARFLEET REAR ADMIRAL, PHILLIPA LOUVOIS OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S OFFICE, TO LEAD THEIR CASE, AND SHE ARGUES THAT APPEARING SENTIENT DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY MEAN A HOLOGRAM IS SENTIENT. UNLESS THE HOLOGRAMS CAN BE DETERMINED TO BE INTELLIGENT AND SELF AWARE, THE ACTS OF CUMBERLAND AND THE FEDERATION CONSTITUTION DO NOT OFFER THEM FULL PROTECTION.

THE SOONG FOUNDATION ARGUES THAT WITHOUT FULL HOLOEMITTER TECHNOLOGY, IT CANNOT BRING WITNESSES TO COURT TO SPEAK IN THEIR OWN DEFENSE, AND THAT COURT RULES PRECLUDE REMOTE TESTIMONY IN MATTERS SUCH AS THIS. THE JUSTICES GRANT THE SOONG FOUNDATION A DELAY.

THE *U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-E* RETURNS FROM A SURVEY OF THE MCALLISTER C-5 NEBULA. CAPTAIN DATA REPORTS THAT THE ENTERPRISE FOUND RESIDUAL SIGNS OF MULTIPLE QUANTUM SINGULARITIES IN THE AREA OF THE NEBULA THAT CORRESPOND TO THOSE USED BY A DELTA QUADRANT RACE KNOWN AS SPECIES 8472 TO CROSS OVER

FROM FLUIDIC SPACE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE PROPERTIES OF THE PROTOSTELLAR NEBULA IN WHICH THE SINGULARITIES WERE FOUND MAKE DEFINITIVE IDENTIFICATION IMPOSSIBLE. IF THESE SINGULARITIES WERE USED BY SPECIES 8472, IT IS THE FIRST SIGN OF THEM NEAR FEDERATION SPACE.

2390: SUPPLEMENTAL

I MEET WITH CAPTAIN DATA IN THE READY ROOM OF THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE. HE'S GONE THROUGH A LOT TO GET WHERE HE IS. THERE HAVE BEEN CONCERNS WITHIN STARFLEET ABOUT HIS ABILITY TO DO HIS JOB, AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS ORIGINAL BODY. HOWEVER, THE WORK DONE BY GEORDI LA FORGE AND THE SOONG FOUNDATION TO RESUSCITATE THE "DATA MATRIX" LODGED WITHIN B-4 APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A COMPLETE SUCCESS. CERTAINLY, THE LAST FOUR YEARS DURING WHICH HE HAS BEEN CAPTAIN OF THE ENTERPRISE WOULD INDICATE THAT.

I APOLOGIZE, MR. SSKO, THAT I WAS UNABLE TO MEET YOU AT THE TRANSPORTER ROOM. THE ENTERPRISE IS UNDERGOING MAINTENANCE AT PRESENT AND I FEAR MY SCHEDULE IS RATHER FULL. PLEASE, THINK NOTHING OF IT.

VERY WELL. I CLEARLY, HE REALLY WILL THINK NOTHING OF IT. IT'S REFRESHING TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE WHO WILL TAKE ME AT MY WORD.] HOW MAY I BE OF ASSISTANCE?

YOUR RECENT REPORT TO STARFLEET INDICATED THAT SPECIES 8472 HAS FOUND THEIR WAY TO FEDERATION SPACE. COULD YOU ELABORATE ON THAT?

YOU ARE SUFFERING UNDER SOMETHING OF A MISAPPREHENSION. MY REPORT INDICATED THERE WAS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO CAUSE CONCERN THAT SPECIES 8472 MAY HAVE CROSSED OVER FROM THEIR HOME DIMENSION TO FEDERATION SPACE. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE. DUE TO THE PROPERTIES OF THE PROTOSTELLAR NEBULA, OUR INSTRUMENTS WERE UNABLE TO TAKE COMPLETELY ACCURATE READINGS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ODDS ARE THAT THEY HAVE CROSSED OVER FROM FLUIDIC SPACE?

I HAVE INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO MAKE SUCH A PREDICTION.

STARFLEET IS TAKING YOUR REPORT PRETTY SERIOUSLY.

IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT THE FEDERATION.

WELL, THEY DIDN'T SEEM TO TAKE ANNIKA HANSEN'S WARNINGS ABOUT THE BORG QUITE SO SERIOUSLY.

I CANNOT EXPLAIN THE PRIORITIES OF STARFLEET, AS I AM NOT PRIVY TO ALL OF THE INFORMATION WITH WHICH THEY MAKE THEIR DECISIONS.

DO YOU BELIEVE STARFLEET WAS RIGHT TO IGNORE HER WARNINGS OF A FUTURE BORG ATTACK?

AS I SAID, I AM NOT PRIVY TO THE INFORMATION THEY USED TO MAKE THAT DECISION.

HOWEVER, I CAN SAY THAT THE BORG ARE INDEED PERSISTENT. THERE IS A 99% LIKELIHOOD THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO ATTACK THE FEDERATION AGAIN, SHOULD THEY BE IN A POSITION TO DO SO. THE LIKELIHOOD OF THAT BEING WITHIN YOUR LIFETIME IS SIGNIFICANTLY SMALLER.

WHAT WOULD YOU GUESS?

IF I MUST HAZARD A GUESS, I WOULD SAY THE LIKELIHOOD OF A BORG ATTACK IN THE NEXT 30 YEARS WOULD BE 64.58%. THAT IS ASSUMING THAT THEY SUFFERED MODERATE DAMAGE AT THE HANDS OF ADMIRAL JANEWAY DURING VOYAGER'S RETURN.

AND SPECIES 8472?

AS I SAID EARLIER IN OUR CONVERSATION, I HAVE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FROM WHICH TO DRAW A CONCLUSION, I FEAR.

WELL, WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU'D BE WILLING TO SHARE?

IN ADDITION TO OUR RECENT FINDINGS, WE HAVE ONLY THE EVIDENCE OF VOYAGER'S RECORDS. ADMIRAL JANEWAY WAS ABLE TO NEGOTIATE WITH SEVERAL REPRESENTATIVES OF SPECIES 8472 AND COME TO A PEACEFUL AGREEMENT.

HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR FROM HER RECORDS THAT IT WAS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, AND APPLIED ONLY TO THAT SMALL SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION. WE CANNOT KNOW HOW THE SPECIES AT LARGE REGARDS THE FEDERATION.

SURELY YOU MUST HAVE A GUESS. OR A HUNCH. DO YOU REALLY THINK THE QUANTUM SINGULARITIES YOU FOUND IN THE MCALLISTER C-5 NEBULA WERE FROM SPECIES 8472?

I WISH I COULD GIVE YOU A MORE ACCURATE ANSWER. I WILL SAY THAT IT IS A SERIOUS CONCERN.

IF IT WAS THEM, DO YOU THINK THIS IS SIGN OF AN ATTACK COMING?

I DO NOT KNOW. IT IS POSSIBLE.

[I'VE BEEN HOLDING BACK AND TRYING NOT TO ASK THIS QUESTION THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE INTERVIEW. I FINALLY BLURT IT OUT.] CAPTAIN DATA, COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? AND B-4? HOW WAS THE SOONG FOUNDATION ABLE TO RECOVER YOU?

[HE GIVES ME A SLIGHT SMILE.] I'M AFRAID I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO SAY AT THIS TIME.

I APOLOGIZE FOR ASKING SO PERSONAL A QUESTION.

PLEASE DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF. IT IS, AFTER ALL, A NATURAL QUESTION TO ASK.

2391

RAIDS BY NAUSICAA PIRATES CONTINUE TO DISRUPT SHIPPING LINES ON THE EDGES OF FEDERATION SPACE. ANGRY AT WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS A LACK OF RESPONSE BY STARFLEET AND THE FEDERATION GOVERNMENT, THE FEDERATION TRANSPORT UNION RECOMMENDS THAT ITS MEMBERS REFUSE ANY OFFICIAL CARGOS WITHOUT ADEQUATE PROTECTION.

THIS CAUSES A CRISIS FOR THE FEDERATION GOVERNMENT. WITH SO MANY STARFLEET VESSELS ASSIGNED TO ROMULAN AND CARDASSIAN RELIEF EFFORTS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RELYING HEAVILY ON CIVILIAN SHIPS FOR ROUTINE DELIVERIES TO FEDERATION WORLDS AND PROTECTORATES. BUT THE UNION'S ACTION THREATENS EVERYTHING FROM SHIPMENTS OF REPLICATORS TO ALPHA CENTAURI TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SUPPLIES DESTINED FOR RUTIA IV.

FEDERATION PRESIDENT NAN BACCO MEETS PERSONALLY WITH THE LEADERS OF THE TRANSPORT UNION, BUT THE UNION REFUSES TO BUDGE ON WHAT IT SAYS IS AN ESSENTIAL SAFETY ISSUE – TOO MANY SHIPS AND TOO MANY CREWS HAVE BEEN LOST TO NAUSICAAN RAIDS. PRESIDENTIAL AIDES SUGGEST THAT STARFLEET VESSELS ASSIGNED TO EXPLORATION AND SCIENCE MISSIONS COULD BE REROUTED TO BORDER DEFENSE, BUT MANY OF THOSE SHIPS ARE IN DEEP SPACE AND IT COULD TAKE THEM MONTHS TO RETURN.

STARFLEET COMMAND RELUCTANTLY AGREES TO PULL BACK FROM THE KLINGON-ROMULAN BORDER AND REASSIGN THOSE SHIPS TO PATROL THE SHIPPING ROUTES. LEADERS OF SOME OF THE ROMULAN COLONY WORLDS HOWL WITH INDIGNATION THAT THE FEDERATION HAS BROKEN PROMISES OF PROTECTION, BUT THOSE VOICES ARE SILENCED AFTER A SHARP REBUKE FROM ADMIRAL TARIS. "WE ARE ROMULAN. WE FIGHT OUR OWN BATTLES. I WOULD RATHER SEE ROMULANS DIE WITH PRIDE IN THEIR HEARTS AND SWORDS IN THEIR HANDS INSTEAD OF MEWING FOR PROTECTION LIKE SCARED YOUNGLINGS."

WITH THE FEDERATION WITHDRAWN FROM THE ROMULAN BORDER, CHANCELLOR MARTOK AGREES TO HONOR HIS PROMISE TO PARTICIPATE IN FEDERATION-MEDIATED PEACE TALKS WITH THE GORN. REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE KLINGONS, GORN AND NAUSICAANS CONVERGE ON DEEP SPACE K-7 FOR THE CONFERENCE, AND THE FEDERATION SENDS SOME OF ITS MOST CELEBRATED DIPLOMATS TO FACILITATE THE TALKS.

INITIAL PROGRESS APPEARS PROMISING, BUT TWO DAYS INTO THE CONFERENCE AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE HIDDEN IN A SERVING CART SERIOUSLY INJURES AMBASSADOR ZOGOZIN OF THE GORN. THE KLINGON, GORN AND NAUSICAAN DELEGATIONS MAKE PLANS FOR IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE, BUT ARE BLOCKED FROM LEAVING THE STATION BY STARFLEET SECURITY, WHICH LOCKS DOWN THE STATION DURING THE HUNT FOR ZOGOZIN'S ATTACKER.

TWO DAYS AFTER THE ATTACK, J'DAH, A KLINGON WITH TIES TO EXTREMIST GROUPS OPPOSED TO MARTOK'S RULE, IS FOUND DEAD. SECURITY OFFICERS DETERMINE THAT J'DAH WAS KILLED BY A DISRUPTOR BLAST AT CLOSE RANGE AND SHOVED OUT AN AIRLOCK HOURS AFTER THE EXPLOSION THAT INJURED ZOGOZIN. IF J'DAH'S BODY HAD NOT SNAGGED ON A PIECE OF THE STATION, IT MAY HAVE BEEN LOST. FORENSIC EVIDENCE PROVES THAT J'DAH WAS THE PERSON WHO PLANTED THE EXPLOSIVE THAT INJURED THE GORN AMBASSADOR, BUT HIS KILLER IS NOT FOUND. JOURNALS LEFT BEHIND IN J'DAH'S QUARTERS INDICATE THAT HIS INTENDED TARGET MAY HAVE BEEN THE FEDERATION NEGOTIATION TEAM, WHO ALL ESCAPED UNSCATHED.

AFTER THE ATTACK, TALKS BETWEEN THE KLINGONS AND GORN BREAK DOWN. THE KLINGONS PUSH THEIR ADVANCE INTO GORN TERRITORY, AND THE GORN, MINDFUL OF THE NEED TO PROTECT THEIR HOMEWORLD, MOVE SHIPS AWAY FROM THEIR OUTLYING TERRITORIES. KING SLATHIS APPROACHES THE LETHEANS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, BUT MOST OUTSIDE ANALYSTS BELIEVE THAT THE GORN DO NOT HAVE THE SPARE RESOURCES TO HIRE LETHEAN MERCENARIES AND STILL PAY THE PRICES COMMANDED BY THE NAUSICAANS FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF FEDERATION SHIPS FROM THE KLINGON-ROMULAN BORDER, HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL PUSH FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE STALLED ROMULAN CAMPAIGN. MARTOK AND HIS FOLLOWERS URGE CAUTION, PREFERRING TO CONCENTRATE ON THE GORN WAR AND BUILDING UP THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE TO PRE-DOMINION WAR LEVELS.

REBUFFED BY MARTOK, COUNCILOR J'MPOK GATHERS SHIP COMMANDERS LOYAL TO HIS HOUSE AND THE HOUSES OF HIS ALLIES AND INVADES THE ZETA PICTORIS SYSTEM. THEY CLASH WITH A ROMULAN FLEET COMMANDED BY ADMIRAL TARIS, AND THE ROMULANS FORCE THE KLINGONS TO RETREAT. SURVIVORS OF THE BATTLE REPORT THE APPEARANCE OF HIGHLY ADVANCED STARSHIPS ON THE ROMULAN SIDE, BUT THEIR EXISTENCE CANNOT BE CONFIRMED. MARTOK ORDERS KLINGON INTELLIGENCE TO LOOK INTO THE REPORTS IN MORE DETAIL, AND THE CHOS BATTLE GROUP IS DISPATCHED TO INVESTIGATE.

FEDERATION POLITICAL ANALYSTS SAY THAT WHILE THE KLINGON HARDLINER'S CAMPAIGN IN THE ZETA PICTORIS SYSTEM WAS A FAILURE, J'MPOK'S POINT WAS MADE: IF MARTOK IS UNWILLING TO LEAD THE KLINGONS INTO BATTLE THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WILL DO SO. THE HIGH COUNCIL BEGINS TO DIVIDE BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE LOYAL TO MARTOK AND THOSE WHO WOULD PREFER NEW LEADERSHIP.

TARIS' VICTORY IN THE ZETA PICTORIS SYSTEM RALLIES THE ROMULANS, WHO HAVE BEEN DESPERATELY SEEKING A SIGN OF THEIR FORMER GLORY. RATOR III IS THE FIRST TO PROCLAIM TARIS AS THE LEADER OF THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE, QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY ACHENAR PRIME AND MORE THAN A DOZEN OTHER WORLDS. IN AN ADDRESS BROADCAST THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE, TARIS SAYS "I AM A MILITARY COMMANDER, AND I WOULD PREFER TO REMAIN SO. THE SEAS OF POLITICS ARE RIFE WITH SUBMERGED HAZARDS AND HIDDEN PERILS, AND A WISE PERSON DOES WELL TO AVOID THEM. BUT MY EMPIRE CALLS AND I CANNOT RESIST HER PLEA." TARIS CALLS ON THE LEADERS OF THE COLONY WORLDS TO MEET AT RATOR III TO SELECT REPRESENTATIVES FOR A NEW ROMULAN SENATE AND MAKE PLANS TO ORGANIZE A GOVERNMENT AND BUILD A NEW CAPITOL.

A FEDERATION OPERATIVE INSERTED INTO THE FLEET THAT DEPARTED ROMULAN SPACE WITH SELA IN 2386 HAS REPORTED THAT SELA AND HER FOLLOWERS HAVE LANDED ON MAKAR, AN M-CLASS PLANET IN THE BETA QUADRANT WITH ABUNDANT

SUPPLIES OF DECALITHIUM AND HEAVY METALS. A HUMANOID RACE WITH TECHNOLOGY EQUIVALENT TO EARTH'S IRON AGE INHABITED TWO OF MAKAR'S TEMPERATE SOUTHERN CONTINENTS, BUT SELA SEES THE POPULATION AS AN ADDITIONAL NATURAL RESOURCE, AND WITHIN WEEKS HER FORCES HAVE HUNDREDS OF MAKARANS WORKING IN THE MINES.

THE OPERATIVE ALSO REPORTS THAT SELA'S SHIP PICKED UP A SIGNAL THAT WAS SIMILAR TO THE ARTIFICIAL QUANTUM SINGULARITIES THAT THE ROMULANS USE TO POWER THEIR WARP DRIVES, AS WELL AS SIGNS OF A MASSIVE GRAVITATIONAL FIELD. SELA HAS DISPATCHED TWO SHIPS TO INVESTIGATE THESE ANOMALIES.

THE CARDASSIAN DETAPA COUNCIL SCORES A MAJOR VICTORY WHEN IT CONCLUDES NEGOTIATIONS WITH FERENGİ GRAND NAGUS ROM FOR ASSISTANCE IN REBUILDING THEIR INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES. ROM WILL PROVIDE THE FUNDING TO REBUILD FACTORIES, DESIGN HOUSES AND REPLICATION FACILITIES, AS WELL AS RETURNING SEVERAL VALUABLE JEVONITE ARTIFACTS SACRED TO FOLLOWERS OF THE ORALIANS TO THE CARDASSIAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE. IN RETURN, ROM RECEIVES EXCLUSIVE TRADE AGREEMENTS FOR CARDASSIAN TRADE GOODS ONCE THE FACTORIES REOPEN. WHILE ROM IS MOCKED BY MANY FERENGİ FOR HIS LACK OF LOBES WHEN IT COMES TO BUSINESS, IF THE DEAL SUCCEEDS IT COULD BE ONE OF THE MOST LUCRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN RECENT MEMORY.

ON EARTH, THE FEDERATION SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF PHILLIPA LOUVOIS AND THE HOLONOVEL PUBLISHERS AND PROGRAMMERS SHE REPRESENTS, SAYING THAT THE ACTS OF CUMBERLAND WOULD NOT APPLY TO NON-SENTIENT HOLOGRAPHIC OR ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS. THEY RETURN THE SOONG FOUNDATION'S CLASS ACTION SUIT TO A LOWER COURT TO DETERMINE WHAT DEFINES SENTIENCE IN A LEGAL SENSE. NOT CONTENT WITH PURSUING ITS AGENDA IN THE COURTS, THE SOONG FOUNDATION LAUNCHES A CAMPAIGN TO LOBBY FEDERATION WORLDS TO ADD RIGHTS FOR ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS TO THE FEDERATION CONSTITUTION.

RESPONDING TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SPECIES 8472 APPEARING IN FEDERATION SPACE, STARFLEET COMMAND ASSIGNS A TASK FORCE TO INVESTIGATE ANY POSSIBLE APPEARANCES OF THE RACE. A SKILLED TEAM OF SCIENTISTS, DIPLOMATS AND SECURITY EXPERTS WILL BE LOOKING INTO ANY SIGNS THAT THE SPECIES IS IN THE ALPHA QUADRANT AND FORMULATING POSSIBLE PLANS OF ACTION. AS A START TO THEIR RESEARCH, THE TEAM IS CONDUCTING EXTENSIVE INTERVIEWS OF THE CREW OF THE *ENTERPRISE-E*, WHICH FOUND THE ANOMALIES IN THE MCALLISTER C-5 NEBULA, AND FORMER CREW MEMBERS OF *VOYAGER*, WHICH IS THE ONLY STARFLEET SHIP KNOWN TO HAVE DEFINITIVE CONTACT WITH THE MYSTERIOUS ALIENS.

AND, CITING THE SUCCESS OF THE EXTREMELY DIVERSE CREWS OF THE *U.S.S. TITAN* AND HER SISTER SHIPS, STARFLEET ASSIGNS A COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER EXPANDING THE ADMISSION STANDARDS AT STARFLEET ACADEMY TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RACES THAT ARE FORMALLY ALLIED WITH THE FEDERATION BUT ARE NOT FULL MEMBER WORLDS. "NOT EVERYONE KNOWS A STARFLEET CAPTAIN AND CAN GET A PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION," SAID SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY WOULDN'T BE FINE OFFICERS."

2391: SUPPLEMENTAL

EXCERPT FROM A CLASSIFIED REPORT FROM LIEUTENANT MARK FISCHER, FEDERATION OPERATIVE PLACED WITH THE TROOPS OF THE EXILED ROMULAN COMMANDER SELA. MAKAR COMPOUND

I BELIEVE COMMANDER SELA HAS FOUND ALLIES IN HER BID FOR POWER. THE ARTIFICIAL QUANTUM SINGULARITIES WE WERE ABLE TO TRACK SEEM TO HAVE BEEN LEFT BY A SPECIES WE'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED BEFORE. COMMANDER SELA MANAGED TO CONTACT THEM AND BEGIN SOME SORT OF NEGOTIATIONS.

I HAD FURTHER INDICATIONS OF SOME SORT OF POTENTIAL ALLIANCE THREE NIGHTS AGO, WHEN T'LOS AND I WERE GUARDING COMMANDER SELA'S QUARTERS. T'LOS, AS

SELA'S RIGHT HAND MAN, RARELY ACTS AS A SIMPLE GUARD. WHEN HE JOINED ME, HE TOLD ME TO EXPECT VISITORS.

"DON'T SAY ANYTHING," HE TOLD ME. "I WILL GREET THEM. BUT KEEP YOUR WEAPON READY. THEY ARE NOT A PEACEFUL PEOPLE, FROM WHAT THE COMMANDER HAS GATHERED."

THEY WERE ALSO NOT A SMALL PEOPLE! THE VISITORS SHOWED UP TWENTY MINUTES PAST MAKAR MIDNIGHT. OUR BORDER GUARDS BROUGHT THEM IN, AND THEY TOWERED OVER THE GUARDS. I WAS PUT IN MIND OF A TARG BEING HERDED BY A HOUSE CAT. ANY ONE OF OUR VISITORS COULD HAVE EASILY BACKHANDED A GUARD INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS.

THEY WORE CORRUGATED BLACK ARMOR AND MASKS THAT PARTIALLY OBSCURED THEIR FACES.

"WELCOME TO MAKAR," T'LOS BOWED WHEN THEY ARRIVED.

THEY JUST STARED DOWN AT HIM WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING.

"COMMANDER SELA AWAITS YOU INSIDE, IF YOU'D PLEASE SET ASIDE YOUR WEAPONS BEFORE ENTERING," HE CONTINUED.

THE ONE IN THE LEAD NARROWED HIS EYES. "WE WILL NOT UNARM," HE SAID. "NO HUNTER EVER GOES WITHOUT HIS WEAPONS AT THE REQUEST OF PREY."

"I CANNOT ALLOW YOU INTO COMMANDER SELA'S PRESENCE WITH THOSE WEAPONS," T'LOS INSISTED. "I WILL KEEP THEM HERE, SAFE FOR YOU. NO ONE WILL TOUCH THEM. YOU MAY TRUST ME."

THE LEADER LAUGHED, LOOKING BACK AT HIS MEN. "IT ASKS US TO OFFER IT TRUST!"

AT THAT POINT T'LOS PUT HIS HAND ON HIS DISRUPTOR. "YOU WILL GIVE ME YOUR WEAPONS."

I SUSPECT, AT THAT POINT, THE EXCHANGE WOULD HAVE DEGENERATED INTO OUTRIGHT FIGHTING, EXCEPT COMMANDER SELA CAME OUT.

“GENTLEMEN, PLEASE,” SHE SAID, PUTTING ONE HAND ON T’LOS’ SHOULDER.

“NATURALLY, WE WOULD NEVER REQUIRE THAT HUNTERS OF YOUR STATURE DISARM. WE KNOW WE CAN TRUST YOU, DON’T WE?” SHE KEPT HER EYES STEADY AND FOCUSED ON THE LEADER.

AFTER A MOMENT, HE NODDED TO HER. “OF COURSE.”

“AND YOU WILL HAVE NO OBJECTIONS TO MY GUARDS REMAINING WITH US AND REMAINING ARMED. AFTER ALL, AS THE LEADER OF MY PEOPLE I MUST TAKE PROPER PRECAUTIONS.”

SOMEHOW SHE HAD THEM ALL DANCING TO HER TUNE. THEY FOLLOWED HER IN WITHOUT FURTHER COMPLAINT, AS DID THE ROMULAN GUARDS. T’LOS AND I REMAINED ON GUARD AT THE DOOR.

I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE T’LOS SMILING, NO SIGNS OF HIS EARLIER ANGER LEFT AT ALL.

“THAT WENT WELL,” HE TOLD ME. “THAT WENT EXACTLY AS WE’D HOPED. YOU’LL SEE, SOON ENOUGH.”

SOON ENOUGH, ANOTHER GUARD CAME TO RELIEVE T’LOS AND HE JOINED IN THE CONVERSATION IN COMMANDER SELA’S QUARTERS.

I DON’T KNOW WHAT WAS SAID. BY THE TIME I WAS RELIEVED OF MY SHIFT, THEY WERE STILL TALKING AND OUR VISITORS HAD SHOWN NO INTENTIONS OF LEAVING.

THE FOLLOWING DAY COMMANDER SELA WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN, BUT T’LOS WAS GIVING ORDERS AND DIRECTING OUR NATIVE “SERVANTS” IN THE MINING EFFORT.

WHEN THE COMMANDER APPEARED AGAIN THE FOLLOWING DAY, SHE SEEMED FIRED UP. HER BODY LANGUAGE HAD COMPLETELY CHANGED. HER SHOULDERS WERE NO LONGER SO TENSE, NOR WAS SHE AS FREQUENT TO LASH OUT AT THOSE OF US

SERVING HER. IN FACT, INFRACTIONS THAT NORMALLY WOULD HAVE EARNED HER DISPLEASURE ONLY MERITED A LAUGH. I HAVE NEVER SEEN HER SO CHEERFUL. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HER NEXT MOVE WILL BE, BUT I'M CERTAIN, EVEN IN EXILE, THAT SHE HASN'T GIVEN UP ON TAKING OVER THE ROMULAN EMPIRE.

2392

NEWS OF THE RACE FOR FEDERATION PRESIDENT DOMINATES NEWS NETS FOR MUCH OF THE YEAR. PRESIDENT NAN BACCO DECLINES TO RUN AGAIN, STATING THAT WHILE SHE DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT LEAVING OFFICE DURING THE ROMULAN CRISIS, "I'VE BEEN HERE TOO LONG. WE NEED NEW BLOOD AND NEW IDEAS."

THE POPULAR BACCO DOESN'T ENDORSE A SUCCESSOR, THROWING THE FIELD OPEN TO DOZENS OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES. JAED MAZ OF TRILL IS FREQUENTLY MENTIONED BY POLITICAL COMMENTATORS, AS ARE FEDERATION COUNCILORS SORON OF VULCAN AND KEVIN STEINER OF TERRA NOVA. CANDIDATES FROM BAJOR, ANDORIA AND SAURIA ARE SEEN AS OUTSIDE CHOICES.

HOWEVER, SORON AND CHARIVRETHA ZH'THANE OF ANDORIA NEVER BECOME FORMAL CANDIDATES AND STEINER ABANDONS HIS CAMPAIGN TWO MONTHS BEFORE THE ELECTION AFTER HIS TIES TO THE ORION SYNDICATE ARE EXPOSED BY THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE. THE REMAINING HOPEFULS ENGAGE IN A FIERCE CAMPAIGN IN WHICH TOP ISSUES ARE AID TO THE CARDASSIANS AND ROMULANS, THE INCREASING CONFLICTS WITH THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND WHETHER STARFLEET SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO RESPOND TO THE INCREASING THREATS TO FEDERATION CITIZENS.

ULTIMATELY, AENNIK OKEG OF SAURIA IS ELECTED IN A CLOSE VOTE OVER JAED MAZ, WITH BAJORAN SHAD ONA IN THIRD PLACE. OKEG, THE FIRST SAURIAN EVER TO HOLD THE FEDERATION PRESIDENCY, BEGINS HIS TERM BY OFFERING MAZ AND SHAD

PLACES IN HIS CABINET IN AN EFFORT TO PROMOTE UNITY AMONG SUPPORTERS OF HIS COMPETITORS.

OKEG'S FIRST STATE TRIP TAKES HIM TO CESTUS III, WHERE THE KLINGON EMPIRE HAS AGREED TO A NEW ROUND OF FEDERATION-MODERATED TALKS AIMED AT ENDING THEIR WAR WITH THE GORN. WHILE THE FEDERATION DIPLOMATIC TEAM, LED BY ALEXANDER ROSHENKO, HOPES THAT A SUCCESSFUL CEASE FIRE AGREEMENT WILL OPEN THE DOOR TO EXPAND THE SUMMIT TO DEAL WITH KLINGON-FEDERATION TRADE AND DEFENSE AGREEMENTS THAT ARE SET TO EXPIRE IN 2394, IT QUICKLY BECOMES OBVIOUS THAT NEITHER THE KLINGONS NOR THE GORN ARE WILLING TO BUDGE ON THEIR DEMANDS.

THREE WEEKS INTO THE TALKS, REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE KLINGONS AND GORN ARE STILL HAGGLING OVER THE OFFICIAL AGENDA FOR NEGOTIATIONS, AND EVEN A PERSONAL APPEAL TO CHANCELLOR MARTOK BY FEDERATION AMBASSADOR WORF HAS FAILED TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS. THE FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETS IN EMERGENCY SESSION TO DEBATE OF POSSIBLE INCENTIVES THE FEDERATION COULD OFFER THE GORN AND KLINGONS, BUT ALL PEACE EFFORTS COLLAPSE ON STARDATE 69259.56 WHEN A GORN AND NAUSICAAAN FLEET ATTACKS THE KLINGON WORLD OF OGAT.

FIGHTING RAGES AROUND OGAT FOR MORE THAN TWO WEEKS BEFORE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCES PUSH THE GORN AND NAUSICAANS OUT OF THE SYSTEM. THE KLINGONS DENOUNCE THE ATTACK AS DISHONORABLE AND MARTOK FORMALLY PULLS THE EMPIRE OUT OF ALL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. KLINGON AND GORN SHIPS NOW ATTACK ONE ANOTHER ON SIGHT, AND WHEN THE *U.S.S. MONTANA* TRIES TO INTERVENE IN ONE SKIRMISH IT IS HEAVILY DAMAGED BY KLINGON DISRUPTOR FIRE.

HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL, LED BY J'MPOK, DEMAND EVEN MORE AGGRESSIVE ACTION AGAINST THE GORN, CALLING FOR AN INVASION INTO THE GORN HEGEMONY. WHEN MARTOK COUNCILS CAUTION, PREFERRING TO KEEP THE GORN OUT OF KLINGON SPACE UNTIL A NEW FLEET OF WARSHIPS CAN BE LAUNCHED, J'MPOK

DENOUNCES HIM AS A "WEAK OLD MAN, HIDING IN HIS BED INSTEAD OF MEETING ALL CHALLENGERS ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE."

FEDERATION POLITICAL ANALYSTS EXPECT THE SCHISM ON THE HIGH COUNCIL TO COME TO A HEAD SOME TIME IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS, AND LOOK WITH CONCERN AT THE GROWING SUPPORT FOR J'MPOK AND HIS HAWK-LIKE AGENDA. ONE OF THE MAJOR HOUSES OPENLY SUPPORTING J'MPOK IS THE HOUSE OF TORG, A FORMER ALLY OF THE HOUSE OF DURAS. IN FACT, TORG'S ADOPTED HEIR, JA'ROD, IS THE SON OF LURSA, DURAS'S SISTER AND AN OPEN FOE OF THE FEDERATION WHO WAS KILLED ATTACKING THE *ENTERPRISE-D* IN 2371.

JA'ROD, WHO WAS ON OGAT WHEN IT WAS ATTACKED BY THE GORN, SURVIVES THE BATTLE AND ENTERS TRAINING WITH THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE ON STARDATE 69637.18.

IN CARDASSIA PRIME, THE DETAPA COUNCIL ENACTS A SERIES OF REFORM MEASURES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE POPULATION GROWTH AND ECONOMIC STABILITY. BENEFITS ARE OFFERED TO FAMILIES WITH MORE THAN ONE CHILD, AND THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS DISPLACED WHEN THE CARDASSIAN MILITARY WAS DISBANDED ARE PROVIDED WITH RETRAINING AND PLACEMENT INTO CARDASSIA'S BURGEONING CIVILIAN INDUSTRIES. MANY FORMER MILITARY OFFICERS END UP EMPLOYED BY GUL MADRED IN HIS MINING INTERESTS ON SEPTIMUS.

MADRED'S MINES ARE OPERATING AT SUCH A HIGH CAPACITY THAT HE BEGINS EXPORTING KELINDIDE AND URIDIUM THROUGH FERENGI BROKERS. HIS FIRST MAJOR BUYER IS THE ROMULANS, WHO ARE DESPERATE TO REBUILD SHIPS AND EXPAND COLONIES AND NEED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.

ONE OF THE ROMULANS'S CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IS RIHAN, A NEW CAPITAL CITY BEING CONSTRUCTED ON RATOR III. THE FIRST BUILDING COMPLETED IS USED TO HOUSE MEETINGS OF THE ROMULAN COLONIAL ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE, WHICH WAS FORMED UNDER THE DIRECTIONS OF ADMIRAL TARIS.

THE COMMITTEE LAYS SOME INITIAL GROUNDWORK FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT, BUT IS BESET BY THE IN-FIGHTING AND FACTIONALIZATION THAT HAS PLAGUED THE ROMULANS SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR HOMEWORLD. A GROUP OF MODERATES SUGGESTS THAT THE ROMULANS NEED A SINGLE FIGURE TO FOCUS THEIR ENERGIES AND CITES HISTORICAL RECORDS OF ROMULAN RULERS. REMINDERS OF DONATRA DECLARING HERSELF EMPRESS OF A BREAKAWAY STATE TROUBLE SOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, BUT ADMIRAL TARIS INDICATES THAT SHE WOULD SUPPORT THE REVIVAL OF THE MONARCHY. HOWEVER, TARIS SAYS THAT ANY MOVE TO CROWN A RULER MUST BE MADE BY THE ROMULAN PEOPLE.

2392: SUPPLEMENTAL

EXCERPT FROM THE PERSONAL JOURNALS OF JA'ROD OF THE HOUSE OF TORG:

THE *KANG* IS A GLORIOUS SHIP, AND I AM PROUD TO SERVE UPON HER. BUT... CAPTAIN KLOR SEEMS OVERCAUTIOUS.

WE WERE DOING A ROUTINE PATROL WHEN WE CAUGHT WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE TRAIL OF ONE OF THE GORN SHIPS. BUT DID WE PURSUE? NO. DID WE INVESTIGATE FURTHER? NO!

CAPTAIN KLOR SAID IT WAS SURELY NOTHING. NO GORN WOULD DARE COME SO CLOSE WITHIN KLINGON TERRITORY. AND YET, THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE GORN DID ON OGAT! WHY ELSE ARE WE PATROLLING THAN TO DEFEND AGAINST THE GORN ATTACKING US AGAIN?

I ASKED HIM THAT. "WHY LET THEM FLEE WHEN WE COULD FACE THEM NOW?"

"WE DO NOT KNOW THAT WHAT WE FOUND WAS EVEN GORN!" HE SAID. "IT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN SOME TRADER. WHY PURSUE IMAGINARY TARGETS?"

"BUT IF IT IS THE GORN--"

"IF IT IS THE GORN," HE ROARED AT ME, "WE ARE BUT ONE SHIP! WOULD YOU HAVE US MAKE POINTLESS SACRIFICE?"

“WHAT ARE WE, IF NOT WARRIORS?!”

HE STARED AT ME, AND THEN BEGANTO LAUGH, QUIETLY. “IT IS A GOOD THING YOU SPOKE TO ME ALONE, SON OF LURSA.” THERE WAS A THREAT IN HIS VOICE WHEN HE SAID MY MOTHER’S NAME.

“I AM OF THE HOUSE OF TORG,” I SAID.

“ADOPTED HEIR OF TORG,” HE SAID. “YOU MAY BE A HERO OF THE BATTLE OF OGAT, BUT YOU ARE A BOY. YOU ARE YOUNG, AND YOU ARE SHAPED BY THE HISTORY OF YOUR FAMILY. YOU WILL GROW, AND YOU WILL BECOME WISER. TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM ME,” HE SMILED, “AN OLDER AND WISER WARRIOR. DARE TO SPEAK TO ME SO AGAIN, AND I WILL KILL YOU. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?”

I UNDERSTOOD. I UNDERSTOOD THEN HIS GRUDGE AGAINST MY MOTHER. AND HOW NOBLE AND HONORABLE HE FELT HE WAS AS A CAPTAIN ACCEPTING MY SERVICE IN SPIRE OF THAT. HE IS WATCHING ME FOR REBELLION AND TRICKERY. I UNDERSTOOD, TOO, THAT HE DID NOT THINK J’MPOK WISE.

HE IS, CLEARLY, ONE OF MARTOK’S PETS. COUNSELING CAUTION, IGNORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BATTLE. WHAT ARE WE IF WE HIDE FROM WAR?

COUNCILOR J’MPOK IS RIGHT. WE MUST NOT ALLOW THE GORN VICTORY. WE MUST STAND AGAINST THEM AND FIGHT.

BUT I AM NOT THE CAPTAIN.

2393

THE RAPID RISE OF A NEW CHANCELLOR FOR THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL HAS THROWN THE EMPIRE’S RELATIONS WITH THE FEDERATION AND OTHER MAJOR POWERS INTO DOUBT.

"WHETHER YOU LOVED OR HATED MARTOK, HE WAS A KNOWN QUANTITY," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON COMMANDER MARIE DURANT. "WE SIMPLY DON'T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT J'MPOK."

STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE HAVE MADE GATHERING DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION ON QO'NOS DIFFICULT.

THE TASK IS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT ONE OF J'MPOK'S FIRST ACTS WAS TO BAR THE FEDERATION'S AMBASSADOR FROM THE GREAT HALL. AMBASSADOR WORF IS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF MARTOK AND WAS ONE OF MARTOK'S STAUNCHEST SUPPORTERS.

WHAT IS KNOWN IS THAT TENSIONS HAD BEEN RISING BETWEEN MARTOK AND J'MPOK FOR SOME TIME. J'MPOK AND HIS FOLLOWERS ON THE COUNCIL ACCUSED MARTOK OF BEING A WEAK LEADER AND A PUPPET FOR FEDERATION INTERESTS. THEY QUESTIONED HIS CLOSE TIES TO WORF, AS WELL HAS MARTOK'S WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE GORN.

IN RETURN, MARTOK'S SUPPORTERS ACCUSED J'MPOK OF ACTING DISHONORABLY AND UNDERMINING THE ACTIONS OF MARTOK AND THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE DURING A TIME OF WAR.

ON STARDATE 70437.47, DURING A DEBATE OVER WHETHER TO SEND MORE SHIPS TO FIGHT THE GORN, TENSIONS ROSE TO A BOILING POINT. INFURIATED BY J'MPOK'S JIBES AND THREATS, MARTOK EXPELS J'MPOK FROM THE HIGH COUNCIL AND ORDERS HIS LANDS AND TITLES SEIZED. THE HOUSE OF J'MPOK WOULD BE DISSOLVED. MARTOK'S DECREE ONLY SERVES TO FURTHER DIVIDE THE COUNCIL BETWEEN FOLLOWERS OF MARTOK AND J'MPOK, AND BOTH SIDES BEGIN PREPARING FOR WAR. FIGHTING BREAKS OUT BETWEEN THE GROUPS IN THE STREETS OF QO'NOS, AND REPORTS OF SHIP CREWS SPLITTING INTO FACTIONS BEGIN FILTERING BACK TO KLINGON COMMAND.

REMEMBERING THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE CIVIL WAR AFTER CHANCELLOR K'MPEC'S DEATH, MARTOK TELLS ADVISERS THAT HE IS GOING TO TRY TO FIND A RESOLUTION WITH J'MPOK THAT WILL END THE CONFLICT. ON STARDATE 70669.86, HE ORDERS J'MPOK TO MEET WITH HIM AT THE GREAT HALL. MARTOK ORDERS HIS BODYGUARDS, THE YAN-ISLETH, TO GUARD THE DOORS AND ALLOW NO ONE TO DISTURB THEM.

TWO HOURS LATER, J'MPOK OPENS THE DOORS OF THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND ANNOUNCES THAT MARTOK IS DEAD, AND THAT HE IS NOW CHANCELLOR OF THE KLINGON EMPIRE.

DREX, SON OF MARTOK, CHALLENGES J'MPOK, ACCUSING HIM OF MURDERING MARTOK IN DISHONORABLE COMBAT. HOWEVER, DREX IS SEEN BY MOST AS CALLOW AND UNWORTHY OF TAKING UP HIS FATHER'S MANTLE. B'VAT, THE ARBITER OF SUCCESSION, REJECTS HIS CLAIM.

UNDAUNTED, DREX CLAIMS THE RIGHT OF VENGEANCE AND CHALLENGES J'MPOK TO COMBAT. DREX IS SEVERELY INJURED IN THE ENSUING BATTLE, BUT J'MPOK DECLINES TO KILL HIM. OTHER CHALLENGERS TO J'MPOK'S CLAIM QUICKLY FADE AWAY, AND HIS CLAIM TO THE POSITION OF CHANCELLOR IS RATIFIED BY THE HIGH COUNCIL.

THE REGIME CHANGE IN THE KLINGON EMPIRE IS A MAJOR CAUSE FOR CONCERN FOR THE FEDERATION, AND PRESIDENT OKEG RECALLS AMBASSADOR WOLF TO EARTH FOR CONSULTATIONS. ULTIMATELY, THE FEDERATION DECIDES TO TAKE A WAIT-AND-SEE APPROACH, WELCOMING J'MPOK AND INVITING HIM TO MEET WITH THE FEDERATION AT HIS EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.

J'MPOK SENDS WORD THROUGH AN INTERMEDIARY THAT WHILE HE APPRECIATES OKEG'S OFFER, AFFAIRS ON THE HOMEWORLD WILL KEEP HIM OCCUPIED FOR SOME TIME.

HAPPIER NEWS FOR THE FEDERATION IS THE FORMAL ADMISSION OF BAJOR AND TAMA PRIME AS FULL MEMBERS. THE LONG PROCESS OF ACCLIMATING THE PLANETS'

ECONOMIES AND POPULATIONS TO LIFE IN THE FEDERATION BEGINS, ALTHOUGH THIS PROCESS IS EASED SOMEWHAT IN BAJOR'S CASE BECAUSE OF THE CLOSE TIES BAJOR HAS HAD WITH THE FEDERATION SINCE THE END OF THE CARDASSIAN OCCUPATION IN 2369.

ONE NOTABLE EXCEPTION TO THE CONVERSION IS QUARK'S BAR, GRILL, GAMING HOUSE, HOLOSUITE ARCADE, GIFT SHOP AND EMBASSY ON DEEP SPACE 9. AS A FORMAL EMBASSY FOR THE FERengi ALLIANCE, IT'S BUSINESS AS USUAL AT QUARK'S. BEING THE BEST PLACE FOR FREE TRADE IN THE BAJOR SECTOR BRINGS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN TRAFFIC TO QUARK'S, AND THE OWNER IS SAID TO BE IN THE MARKET FOR A MOON.

IN ONE OF THEIR FIRST VENTURES AS FEDERATION CITIZENS, THE CHILDREN OF TAMA WORK WITH STARFLEET TO OPEN A NEW LINGUISTIC RESEARCH FACILITY ON EL-ADREL IV. "DATHON AND PICARD, AT EL-ADREL. PICARD, HIS HEART OPEN," SAID CO-DIRECTOR MELTHA AT THE FACILITY'S DEDICATION.

WHILE DOING A STELLAR SURVEY NEAR 2466 PM, THE U.S.S. STARGAZER-A IS CONTACTED BY AN ENTITY CLAIMING TO BE FROM THE METRON CONSORTIUM. IF THIS BEING'S CLAIM WAS CORRECT, IT WOULD BE THE FIRST CONTACT THE FEDERATION HAS HAD WITH THE METRONS SINCE 2267. THE BEING AGREED TO TOUR THE SHIP, MET WITH CAPTAIN ROMA GIORDANO, AND SAID THAT WHILE THE YOUNGER RACES WERE STILL UNREADY FOR CONTACT, THEY HAVE MADE PROGRESS.

THE LEGAL FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS FOR ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORM HITS A SNAG OVER THE HOLOGRAM KNOWN AS "MORIARTY." ALERTED TO ITS EXISTENCE IN A STARFLEET COMPUTER, THE SOONG FOUNDATION SUES TO HAVE THE PROGRAM RELEASED INTO ITS CUSTODY. ATTORNEYS FOR STARFLEET ARGUE THAT MORIARTY AND HIS COMPANION ARE A SECURITY RISK, AND THAT THE PROGRAM'S ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER THE U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-D IN 2369 ALLOWS STARFLEET TO KEEP IT IN INDEFINITE CUSTODY TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC. "THAT'S JUST IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT A TRIAL," ARGUES

ALYSSA COGLEY-SHAW, LEAD ATTORNEY FOR THE SOONG FOUNDATION. "SINCE WHEN DID STARFLEET TURN INTO THE OBSIDIAN ORDER?"

THE CARDASSIANS TAKE A MAJOR STEP TOWARD SELF SUFFICIENCY WHEN DETAPA COUNCIL MEMBER NATIMA LANG STRIKES AN AGREEMENT WITH REMAN LEADER GENERAL LORIX. LORIX AGREES TO SELL DILITHIUM AND HEAVY METAL ORES TO THE CARDASSIANS, WHICH ALLOWS THEM TO DRASTICALLY EXPAND THEIR PRODUCTION OF SHIPS AND WARP DRIVES. BY THE END OF THE YEAR, THE CARDASSIANS ARE USING FERENGI BROKERS TO SELL SHIPS INCLUDING THE TYPE V COMMERCIAL LABORATORY THROUGHOUT THE ALPHA QUADRANT.

THE INCREASE IN SHIP PRODUCTION LEADS TO MORE COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC IN AND OUT OF THE SEPTIMUS SYSTEM, WHERE GUL MADRED OWNS SEVERAL LARGE MINING OPERATIONS. CLAIMING THAT HIS MINES HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY RAIDERS AND THAT THE CARDASSIAN DEFENSE FORCE CANNOT ADEQUATELY PROTECT CARDASSIAN CITIZENS, MADRED CONTACTS LAMAT'UKAN, LEADER OF THE JEM'HADAR IN THE ALPHA QUADRANT.

LAMAT'UKAN SENDS TROOPS TO PROTECT MADRED'S MINES OVER THE PROTESTS OF THE CARDASSIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH SEES THE PRESENCE OF THE JEM'HADAR AS A THREAT. MADRED ARGUES THAT HIRING PRIVATE SECURITY TO PROTECT HIS PROPERTY AND EMPLOYEES IS HIS RIGHT AS A BUSINESS OWNER, AND THAT IF THE JEM'HADAR DO NOT BREAK LAWS OR THREATEN CARDASSIAN CITIZENS; IT IS NONE OF THE DETAPA COUNCIL'S CONCERN.

IN ROMULAN SPACE, THE ROMULAN COLONIAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE CONTINUES THE WORK OF FORMING A NEW ROMULAN GOVERNMENT. SEVERAL LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS ARE INTERRUPTED BY ARGUMENTS BETWEEN GENERAL TARIS AND GENERAL TEBOK ABOUT WHAT THE ROLE OF THE ROMULAN MILITARY SHOULD BE.

TEBOK SWAYS A PORTION OF THE RCOC WITH HIS ARGUMENT THAT FAR-FLUNG AREAS OF THE EMPIRE, PARTICULARLY THE AREAS NEAR KLINGON SPACE, CAN AND SHOULD BE SACRIFICED IN THE SHORT-TERM TO STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF WHAT ARE NOW THE ROMULAN CORE WORLDS, BUT TARIS SAYS THAT IT IS THEIR DUTY TO KEEP FIGHTING FOR EVERY WORLD. THE DEBATE TAKES UP MUCH OF THE LATER PART OF THE YEAR FOR THE RCOC, BUT NO DECISION IS REACHED.

2393: ARCHIVAL LOG

TER TAKEN FROM THE PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE OF DETAPA COUNCIL MEMBER
NATIMA LANG

MY MOST ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE,

I AM SURE IT WILL NOT SURPRISE YOU IN THE LEAST THAT OUR DEAR GUL MADRED HAS CONTRACTED RECENTLY WITH THE ITINERANT JEM'HADAR. I CAN ASSURE YOU, AS THE DEAR GUL WOULD HIMSELF, THAT ALL OF HIS CONTRACTS ARE PRECISE AND DESIGNED TO BE COMPLETELY NON-THREATENING TO CARDASSIA AT LARGE AND THE DETAPA COUNCIL IN SPECIFIC. HIS EXPECTATIONS OF HIS JEM'HADAR MERCENARIES ARE SPELLED OUT QUITE CLEARLY AND BEAR STRICT LIMITATIONS. THEY ARE IN HIS EMPLOY SOLELY TO PROTECT HIS MINING OPERATIONS ON SEPTIMUS.

INDEED, THE GUL'S RECORDS ARE IN SUCH PERFECT ORDER AND SHOW SUCH TREMENDOUS ATTENTION TO DETAIL, ONE CAN ONLY ASSUME HE IS A THOROUGHLY DEVOTED BUSINESSMAN WHO HAS COMPLETELY TURNED HIS BACK ON POLITICS. IN FACT, I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANY DOCUMENTATION QUITE SO PAINSTAKINGLY TRANSPARENT.

NATIMA, TAKE WARNING. GUL MADRED HAS DONE A GREAT DEAL TO APPEAR SUCH AN UPSTANDING CITIZEN. ONLY THE TRULY DISHONEST EVER EXPEND SUCH EFFORT. AS YOU AND I BOTH KNOW, THE ONLY MERCHANTS WITH PERFECTLY KEPT BOOKS ARE THOSE WHO HAVE A SECOND SET.

EVER YOUR DEVOTED SERVANT,
GARAK

2394

CHANCELLOR J'MPOK OF THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL MOVES TO CEMENT HIS POSITION BY LAUNCH THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH MELANI DI'AN OF THE ORION SYNDICATE INTO HIGH GEAR.

"MARTOK WAS INTERESTED IN THE SECRETS SHE CLAIMED TO OFFER, BUT HE KNEW THAT ANY AGREEMENT WITH THE SYNDICATE WOULD BE DIFFICULT," SAID TAG MORKEK, A POLITICAL ANALYST FOR THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE WHO SPECIALIZES IN KLINGON AFFAIRS. "THE EMERALD EMPRESS IS SLIPPERY. MELANI'S IDEA OF 'TRUTH' CAN CHANGE FROM MINUTE TO MINUTE.

"STILL, J'MPOK'S HOUSE IS WEAK. HE'S GOING TO NEED SUPPORT IF HE WANTS TO STAY IN POWER." FEDERATION INFORMANTS INSIDE THE KLINGON EMPIRE SAY THAT THE HOUSE OF J'MPOK, WHICH IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST OF THE GREAT HOUSES, IS BEING PRESSURED BY THE HOUSE OF MARTOK AND ITS ALLIES. J'MPOK'S RAPID RISE TO THE CHANCELLORSHIP HAS IMPROVED THE HOUSE'S PROSPECTS, BUT IT LACKS RESOURCES AND SHIPS AND ITS LANDS IN THE PHEBEN SYSTEM ARE POOR.

"THE ONLY THING KEEPING THE HOUSE OF MARTOK FROM DECLARING OPEN WAR IS DRAX," SAID ONE ANONYMOUS SOURCE. "ONCE HE RECOVERS FROM HIS WOUNDS, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME." WHEN THAT HAPPENS, HOWEVER, J'MPOK MAY HAVE THE ORION SYNDICATE FIGHTING AT HIS SIDE. ON STARDATE 71283.12, MELANI DI'AN MEETS J'MPOK IN PERSON ON TER'JAS MOR. AFTER FOUR DAYS OF NEGOTIATIONS, THE TWO AGREE TO SIGN A NON-AGGRESSION AND MUTUAL DEFENSE PACT.

IN EXCHANGE FOR THE SYNDICATE'S ALLEGIANCE, THE KLINGON EMPIRE WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH SHIPS AND WEAPONS. IN ADDITION, MELANI DI'AN FURTHER AGREED

TO SHARE TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION WITH THE KLINGONS IN EXCHANGE FOR A PLANET IN KLINGON SPACE THAT THE ORIONS CAN RULE AS A VASSAL STATE.

"HAVING ACCESS TO THE SYNDICATE INFORMATION NETWORK COULD BE A HUGE ADVANTAGE FOR THE EMPIRE," TAG SAID. "KLINGON INTELLIGENCE IS GOOD, BUT THEY'RE NOT EVERYWHERE LIKE THE SYNDICATE IS."

THE FEDERATION COUNCIL CONDEMNS THE NEW ALLIANCE AS SUPPORT FOR CRIMINALS, AND STARFLEET COMMAND VOWS TO CONTINUE PURSUING AND SHUTTING DOWN SYNDICATE OPERATIONS IN FEDERATION SPACE. "THERE'S NOTHING IN THE KHITOMER ACCORDS THAT SAY WE NEED TO STAND BY AND LET ALLIES OF THE KLINGONS SELL ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, RAID OUR COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTS AND TRAFFIC IN RESTRICTED TECHNOLOGY."

IN FACT, REVIEWS OF STARFLEET REPORTS SHOW THAT SYNDICATE TRAFFIC HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE MELANI DI'AN SEIZED CONTROL. MELANI HAS RUTHLESSLY PURGED ANYONE SHE DEEMS "UNTRUSTWORTHY," AND FUSED THE REMAINING ORIONS INTO A UNIFIED ORGANIZATION THAT ANSWERS TO HER ALONE. "SHE'S DANGEROUS," ADMITTED ADMIRAL JOREL QUINN ON AN EPISODE OF THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE PROGRAM ILLUMINATING THE CITY OF LIGHT. "BEFORE, THE SYNDICATE WAS CONTROLLABLE BECAUSE THERE WERE MULTIPLE LEADERS COMPETING FOR INFLUENCE AND POWER. NOW STARFLEET COMMAND HAS TO DEDICATE MORE RESOURCES TO KEEPING THEM IN CHECK."

AS A GIFT TO CELEBRATE THEIR NEW ALLIANCE, MELANI SENDS 1,500 ORION WOMEN TO BE SERVANTS IN THE GREAT HOUSES ON QO'NOS. MELANI HERSELF SETTLES INTO AN ESTATE ON TER'JAS MOR, AND THE REMAINING ORIONS STILL ON THE ORION HOMEWORLD MAKE PLANS TO EMIGRATE BY THE END OF 2394. IN ROMULAN SPACE, THE ROMULAN COLONIAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE COMPLETES ITS INITIAL WORK AT FORMING A PERMANENT GOVERNMENT FOR THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE. THE

RCOC NARROWLY REJECTS THE PLAN TO REFORM THE ROMULAN MONARCHY, DECIDING INSTEAD TO REFORM THE ROMULAN SENATE ON NOVA ROMA.

THEY OFFER GENERAL TARIS, THE HERO OF ZETA PICTORIS, THE POSITION OF PRAETOR, BUT THE MAJORITY OF LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POWER IS HELD IN THE HANDS OF THE SENATORS.

THE CASE AT THE HEART OF THE FIGHT OVER THE LEGAL STATUS OF ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS COMES TO A CLOSE, AS THE SUPREME COURT OF THE FEDERATION RULES THAT THE DOCTOR IS INDEED A SENTIENT BEING, AND, AS SUCH, HE HAS THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE RIGHT TO RETAIN THE MOBILE EMITTER BROUGHT BACK FROM THE DELTA QUADRANT.

THE COURT GOES ON TO SET STANDARDS WHICH ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS MUST PASS TO BE CONSIDERED SENTIENT, AND RULES THAT ANY THAT CANNOT DO SO ARE TECHNOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS THAT ARE THE PROPERTY OF THEIR CREATORS OR OWNERS.

"THIS IS A MAJOR VICTORY, BUT THE FIGHT CONTINUES," SAID ALYSSA COGLEY-SHAW OF THE SOONG FOUNDATION AFTER THE RULING. "THESE ARE PEOPLE, NOT REPLICATORS. WE WON'T STOP UNTIL EVERY PHOTONIC LIFEFORM HAS THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE HOW THEY WANT TO LIVE."

AND AS AMBASSADOR WORF RETURNS TO QO'NOS, HE FINDS HE IS IN NEED OF A NEW EXECUTIVE AIDE. THE AMBASSADOR'S SON, ALEXANDER ROZHENKO, RESIGNS HIS POSITION AS A DIPLOMAT FOR THE FEDERATION AND LEAVES QO'NOS, SENDING HIS SON D'VAK TO STAY WITH WORF AND HIS FAMILY. FRIENDS SAY D'VAK'S MOTHER HAS RETURNED TO HER HOME ON H'ATORIA AND ROZHENKO IS ON WHAT HE CALLS A "PERSONAL EXPLORATION." HIS FIRST STOP IS BORETH. WHILE THERE, HE MAY UNDERGO THE CHALLENGE OF SPIRIT.

2394: ARCHIVAL LOG

LETTER TAKEN FROM THE PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE OF “EMERALD EMPRESS”
OF THE ORION SYNDICATE, MELANIE D’IAN

DEAR SISTER,

YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF YOUR DAUGHTER. IRINA DANCED BESIDE ME DURING OUR FIRST EVENING WITH THE KLINGONS. AS I HAD INSTRUCTED, SHE SUCCESSFULLY CAUGHT THE EYE OF THEIR CHIEF NEGOTIATOR. HE WAS PRACTICALLY DROOLING AS SHE DANCED CLOSE TO HIM. THE LOOK ON HIS FACE WHEN SHE REACHED OUT TO STROKE HIS BEARD WAS PRICELESS; SHE TRULY SERVED AS A WONDERFUL INCENTIVE FOR OUR NEW ALLIES.

OUR NEGOTIATIONS WENT WELL. IRINA AND I OBSERVED ALL, KNEELING AT HASSAN’S FEET AS OBEDIENT LITTLE SLAVE GIRLS. WHENEVER THE KLINGON BALKED, HASSAN WOULD SIMPLY REACH DOWN AND REST HIS HAND ON ONE OF OUR SHOULDERS. WHEN HASSAN OFFERED IRINA AS A PERSONAL GIFT, AND THEN FOLLOWED UP BY SUGGESTING WE SEND 150 OF OUR FINEST GIRLS TO SERVE IN THE GREAT HOUSES OF QO’NOS, THE NEGOTIATIONS SPED UP QUITE A BIT. SUCH A DELIGHTFULLY PREDICTABLE RACE, THE KLINGONS. EVEN AS I WRITE, YOUR DAUGHTER PREPARES FOR HER SOJOURN ON QO’NOS. I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE IN HER ABILITY, AND THOSE OF THE OTHER GIRLS WE’RE SENDING. I REALLY MUST COMPLIMENT YOU; YOU DID A SUPERB JOB TRAINING HER. SHE QUITE REMINDS ME OF MYSELF.

WITH LOVE AND AFFECTION ALWAYS,

YOUR SISTER

2395

TRAGEDY STRIKES FOR STARFLEET ON STARDATE 72487.91, WHEN THE *U.S.S. KELSO* IS LOST WITH ALL HANDS.

THE *KELSO* WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ON A ROUTINE MISSION TO STUDY THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF THE HOBUS SUPERNOVA ON STAR SYSTEMS IN THE DEVRON SECTOR WHEN IT WAS DESTROYED. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATED THAT THE *KELSO* COULD HAVE COME UNDER ATTACK. HOWEVER, WHEN THE REMAINS OF THE VESSEL WERE RECOVERED BY THE *U.S.S. APRIL* IT WAS FOUND THAT A COOLANT LEAK CAUSED BY AN EXPERIMENTAL CLOAKING DEVICE ONBOARD THE *KELSO* CAUSED PLASMA TO VENT FROM THE SHIP. THE PLASMA REACTED WITH IONIZING RADIATION PRESENT IN THE AREA, CAUSING THE EXPLOSION WHICH DESTROYED THE *KELSO*.

AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, CAPTAIN BARAX WENN OF THE *APRIL* REVEALS THE CAUSE OF THE *KELSO*'S DESTRUCTION TO THE ROMULAN SHIPS ASSISTING IN THE SEARCH FOR THE VESSEL. PRAETOR TARIS LODGES AN IMMEDIATE COMPLAINT WITH THE FEDERATION COUNCIL, AND, AS A "GESTURE OF GOOD FAITH," INFORMS THE KLINGON EMPIRE OF THE DETAILS OF THE *KELSO*'S DESTRUCTION AS WELL.

STARFLEET SECURITY ADMITS THAT THE *U.S.S. KELSO* WAS TESTING A FEDERATION CLOAKING DEVICE. THE ROMULANS EJECT ALL FEDERATION DIPLOMATS AND SHIPS FROM THEIR SPACE IN PROTEST, AND CHANCELLOR J'MPOK RECALLS THE KLINGON AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERATION BACK TO QO'NOS FOR "STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS."

TENSIONS BETWEEN THE THREE POWERS ARE AT THEIR HIGHEST POINT SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ROMULAN HOMEWORLD IN 2387. AFTER A FULL INQUIRY, SIX MEMBERS OF STARFLEET SECURITY ARE COURT-MARTIALED.

IT TAKES THREE MONTHS FOR FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG TO CONVINCE THE ROMULANS AND THE KLINGONS TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO A SUMMIT TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION. WHEN THE MEETING FINALLY BEGINS, OKEG MAKES THE FEDERATION'S POSITION CLEAR. HE APOLOGIZES FOR THE EXPERIMENTS INTO CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY, AND SAYS THAT HE HAS SIGNED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER BANNING ALL RESEARCH INTO OR CREATION OF FEDERATION CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY.

"THE NARROW LEGAL VIEW MAY BE THAT THE TREATY OF ALGERON ENDED WHEN ROMULUS WAS DESTROYED," OKEG SAYS. "THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE WE KNEW IS GONE, AND YOU ARE A NEW PEOPLE. WHAT HAS NOT CHANGED IS THE FEDERATION'S COMMITMENT TO PEACE."

HAPPIER NEWS FOR STARFLEET IS THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE DISPUTE OVER THE MOBILE EMITTER NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE PHOTONIC LIFEFORM KNOWN AS THE DOCTOR. HE AGREES TO ACCEPT A COMMISSION AS A LIEUTENANT COMMANDER IN STARFLEET AND TAKES THE POST OF CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AT THE RESEARCH FACILITY ON GALOR IV. BECAUSE THE MOBILE EMITTER WILL BE WITH HIM AT GALOR IV, THE STARFLEET CORPS OF ENGINEERS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE DEVICE. "IT WAS NEVER THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO LET STARFLEET LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MOBILE EMITTER," SAID THE DOCTOR IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE. "I RESPECT STARFLEET A GREAT DEAL, AND I HAVE THE UTMOST AMOUNT OF ADMIRATION FOR ADMIRAL JANEWAY AND THE FINE MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SERVICE. I NEEDED STARFLEET TO RESPECT ME."

ON STARDATE 72858.96, THE VULCANS HONOR THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMPLETION OF WORK ON THE MONASTERY AT P'JEM. THE ORIGINAL MONASTERY WAS CONSTRUCTED MORE THAN 3,000 YEARS AGO, BUT IT WAS DESTROYED BY ANDORIAN ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT IN 2151.

AFTER THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS WAS FOUNDED IN 2161, A COALITION OF ANDORIAN, VULCAN AND HUMAN CRAFTSMEN REBUILT THE MONASTERY USING HAND TOOLS AND ANCIENT VULCAN TECHNIQUES.

A STRANGE INCIDENT IS REPORTED ON THE KLINGON WORLD OF RHA'DARUS. WHILE ON SHORE LEAVE FROM HIS DUTIES ON THE *I.K.S. KANG*, JA'ROD, SON OF TORG, IS AMBUSHED BY THREE KLINGON WARRIORS. HE MANAGES TO KILL TWO OF THEM, AND BRINGS THE THIRD BACK TO HIS SHIP. EXPECTING THE ATTACK TO BE FROM AN ENEMY OF THE HOUSE OF DURAS, JA'ROD IS SHOCKED TO DISCOVER THAT HIS ATTACKERS

WEREN'T KLINGON AT ALL! APPLICATION OF A PAINSTIK FORCES THE CAPTIVE TO CHANGE AND ITS SHAPE MORPHS FROM A KLINGON TO A STRANGE TRIPEDAL ALIEN.

UNDER QUESTIONING BY JA'ROD AND MEMBERS OF THE *KANG'S* CREW, THE ALIEN REVEALS THAT IT IS A MEMBER OF A SPECIES KNOWN BY ITS BORG DESIGNATION OF SPECIES 8472. THE ALIEN CALLS ITSELF AN UNDINE, AND REVEALS THAT NOT ONLY WAS ITS PARTY SPECIFICALLY SENT TO RHA'DARUS TO CAPTURE JA'ROD AND REPLACE HIM, THIS WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME THE UNDINE HAVE DONE SO.

THERE ARE UNDINE INFILTRATORS IN EVERY MAJOR POLITICAL ENTITY OF THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS.

2395: ARCHIVAL LOG

EXCERPT TAKEN FROM THE JOURNALS OF JA'ROD, SON OF TORG:

... IT WAS IN THE BAR THAT I FIRST REALIZED I WAS BEING WATCHED. IT IS NO NEW EXPERIENCE TO ME. THANKS TO MY MOTHER'S LEGACY, I HAVE BEEN SPIED UPON MANY TIMES. BUT I DID NOT RECOGNIZE EITHER OF THE TWO WARRIORS WATCHING ME. AND THEY DID NOT TOAST APPROPRIATELY WHEN MY SHIPMATE DECLARED A DRINK IN HONOR OF THE EMPIRE. THEY WERE TOO CAUTIOUS TO BE TRUE KLINGON WARRIORS. I KNEW THEY WOULD FOLLOW ME WHEN I LEFT. SO, WHEN MY SHIPMATE DECIDED TO CONTINUE ON TO VISIT A WIDOW HE HAD GROWN FOND OF, I TOLD HIM I WOULD RETURN TO OUR ROOM ALONE. THE STRANGERS FOLLOWED ME, AS I SUSPECTED THEY WOULD. I WATCHED THEIR SHADOWS AS I PRETENDED TO DRUNKENNESS. A THIRD JOINED THEM.

I TURNED DOWN AN ALLEY, ONE I KNEW HAD NO OUTLET. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE THEIR SMUG SATISFACTION AS THEY BELIEVED THEY'D CAUGHT ME. BUT I WAS MORE THAN READY FOR THEM.

I KILLED THE TWO FROM THE BAR, AND CAPTURED THE OTHER. EVEN NOW CAPTAIN KLOP PREPARES TO QUESTION HIM. OR IT, I SHOULD SAY. OUR SCIENCE OFFICER SAYS THAT MY PRISONER IS NO KLINGON, BUT A SHAPECHANGER...

2396

A MEDICAL CRISIS PUTS A STRAIN ON THE REBUILDING ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE. AN OUTBREAK OF BLOODFIRE RAVAGES THE KEVRATAS SYSTEM, ULTIMATELY SPREADING TO MULTIPLE COLONY WORLDS.

THE DISEASE IS LETHAL TO SEVERAL SPECIES, INCLUDING ROMULANS, BUT IS CURABLE IF TREATED PROMPTLY WITH A DRUG DEVELOPED BY BEVERLY CRUSHER. PRAETOR TARIS SEEMS UNINTERESTED IN TREATING THE DISEASE, HOWEVER, PREFERRING TO STOP ITS SPREAD WITH A QUARANTINE OF THE KEVRATAS SYSTEM.

THE QUARANTINE IS ENFORCED BY A BLOCKADE OF ROMULAN SHIPS, AND STOPS ALL FOOD AND MEDICAL SHIPMENTS TO THE PLANET DURING ITS COLDEST SEASON. THOUSANDS DIE FROM DISEASE AND STARVATION. "IT SEEMS LIKE TARIS IS LETTING THESE PEOPLE DIE LIKE IT'S SOME SORT OF EXPERIMENT TO HER," SAID ADMIRAL ZELLE, AN EXPERT ON ROMULAN POLITICS. "IF SHE EVER SAW SOMEONE DIE FROM BLOODFIRE, SHE'D HAVE MORE COMPASSION."

ON CARDASSIA PRIME, DETAPA COUNCIL STAFFERS COMPLETE A THREE-YEAR AUDIT OF POST-DOMINION WAR ASSETS. THE AUDIT FINDS THAT THE REBUILDING OF CITIES DEVASTATED BY THE DOMINION BOMBARDMENT IS PROCEEDING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, AND THAT WORK CREWS CAN MOVE TO LAKARIAN CITY BY THE END OF THE YEAR. AN OMINOUS COUNTERPOINT TO THE SUCCESSFUL REBUILDING OF THE HOMEWORLD, HOWEVER, IS THE FACT THAT AT LEAST 75 WARSHIPS AND AN UNDETERMINED AMOUNT OF WEAPONS KNOWN TO HAVE SURVIVED THE WAR ARE NOW MISSING.

"THESE AREN'T SHUTTLECRAFT, THEY'RE GALOR-CLASS WARSHIPS!" SAID BAJORAN ACTIVIST CROM NERET. "DO YOU KNOW WHAT SOMEONE COULD DO WITH FIREPOWER LIKE THIS? THAT'S ENOUGH TO LAUNCH ANOTHER INVASION!"

STARFLEET HASTENED TO ASSURE THE BAJORANS AND CARDASSIANS THAT THEY ARE SAFE. "WE'RE HERE. WE WILL PROTECT YOU," SAID STARFLEET COMMAND SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "WE WILL HONOR OUR TREATIES WITH THE DETAPA COUNCIL, AND WE WILL ASSIST THE CARDASSIAN DEFENSE FORCE IN ANY WAY WE CAN. THESE SHIPS WILL BE ACCOUNTED FOR."

NAUSICAA FORCES WORKING FOR THE GORN HEGEMONY DESTROY THREE KLINGON OUTPOSTS WITH A COORDINATED SURPRISE ATTACK. J'MPOK WAVES OFF ACCUSATIONS OF BEING UNPREPARED BY REMARKING THAT "THERE ARE ALWAYS CASUALTIES IN WAR," AND RETALIATES BY SENDING GENERAL D'ALD AND THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE'S SEVENTH FLEET TO THE ORELIOUS SYSTEM.

THE FLEET OBLITERATES A HIDDEN NAUSICAA BASE IN THE ORELIOUS IX ASTEROID BELT, AND THEN PROCEEDS TO HUNT DOWN AND DESTROY EVERY NAUSICAA SHIP THAT ESCAPED BEFORE THE BASE WAS DESTROYED.

ONE SHIP IS MISSING FROM THE SEVENTH FLEET'S ATTACK. WHEN CAPTAIN KLOB OF THE *I.K.S. KANG* REFUSES TO FULLY INVESTIGATE THE CLAIMS OF THE UNDIS CAPTURED IN THE RHA'DARUS SYSTEM, JA'ROD, THE SECOND OFFICER, LEADS AN UPRISING OF THE CREW. KLOB AND HIS FIRST OFFICER ARE EXECUTED, AND THE CREW PROCLAIMS JA'ROD TO BE THE NEW CAPTAIN.

AFTER TRANSMITTING A CODED MESSAGE TO QO'NOS, THE *KANG* CLOAKS. ITS CURRENT WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN.

GENERAL D'ALD ORDERS THE SHIP TO RETURN TO ITS PATROL, BUT THERE IS NO RESPONSE. AT THAT POINT, J'MPOK STEPS IN, ORDERING D'ALD TO STOP ATTEMPTING TO LOCATE CAPTAIN JA'ROD.

OBSERVERS OF KLINGON EMPIRE POLITICS SPECULATE THAT J'MPOK COULD BE ATTEMPTING CURRY FAVOR WITH THE HOUSES OF TORG AND DURAS BY GIVING JA'ROD A FREE REIN. BOTH OF THOSE HOUSES ARE AMONG THE OLDEST IN THE EMPIRE, WITH TIES THAT STRETCH BACK TO THE IMPERIAL BLOODLINE. WHILE THEIR LOSSES IN THE KLINGON CIVIL WAR OF 2368 AND SUBSEQUENT DEFEATS DIMMED THE HOUSE OF DURAS' LUSTER, THERE ARE MANY HOUSES THAT STILL OWE FAVORS OR OUTRIGHT ALLEGIANCE TO DURAS. ALSO, THESE OBSERVERS SAY, CAPTAIN KLOD WAS A MEMBER OF A HOUSE LOYAL TO THE HOUSE OF MARTOK, SO HIS DEATH WAS NO GREAT LOSS FOR THE CHANCELLOR.

"TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE INTRICACIES OF THE GREAT HOUSES IS LIKE TRYING TO PLAY ANBO-JYUTSU WITH BAT'LETHS," SAID TAG MORKEK OF THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE. "EVERYONE IS GOING TO BE BLOODY WHEN IT'S OVER. THERE ARE OATHS OF HONOR AND FEUDS THAT STRETCH BACK FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN SOMEONE'S GOING TO CALL IN A DEBT TAKEN ON BY YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GREAT GRANDFATHER."

STARFLEET OBSERVATION POSTS ARE SEEING AN INCREASE IN SHIP TRAFFIC GOING TO THE FAR REACHES OF THE BETA QUADRANT. REPORTS ARE THAT THE DOPTERIANS ARE FUNNELING SHIPS AND SUPPLIES TO ROMULAN EXILE SELA AND HER FOLLOWERS IN EXCHANGE FOR DECALITHIUM. SHIPS SIMILAR TO REPORTS FROM THE *U.S.S. VOYAGER* HAVE ALSO BEEN SIGHTED.

SINCE SELA IS WELL OUT OF FEDERATION SPACE, STARFLEET HAS NO GROUNDS ON WHICH TO STOP THE TRADE. HOWEVER, STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE IS KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON THE SITUATION, AND REPORTS ARE THAT THEY ARE FORMULATING A PLAN IN CASE SELA BECOMES A THREAT TO THE FEDERATION. ALSO, SINCE DECALITHIUM IS A HIGHLY RESTRICTED SUBSTANCE, ANY ORE THAT THE DOPTERIANS BRING INTO FEDERATION SPACE IS SUBJECT TO SEIZURE.

ALEXANDER ROZHENKO RETURNS TO EARTH WITH HIS SON D'VAK. ROZHENKO TAKES A POST TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE SAINT PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY AND TELLS FRIENDS THAT HE IS CONSIDERING WRITING A BOOK ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES ON BORETH, BUT THAT HE HAS NO PLANS TO RETURN TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE.

AND ON STARDATE 73963.51, CAPTAIN T'VIX OF THE *U.S.S. COCHRANE* IS REMOVED FROM DUTY, ALONG WITH HER FIRST OFFICER AND CHIEF OF SECURITY. THE *COCHRANE* WAS ASSIGNED TO MONITOR THE NEUTRAL ZONE, BUT IS RECALLED TO EARTH SPACEDOCK DAYS LATER FOR PERSONNEL REASSIGNMENT, AND THE REMAINING CREW IS DISPERSED AMONG MORE THAN A DOZEN OTHER POSTS. STARFLEET GIVES NO REASON FOR THE ORDERS, AND ALL RECORDS OF WHAT HAPPENED ON THE FINAL DAYS OF THE *COCHRANE*'S MISSIONS ARE SEALED BY STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE.

IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE *COCHRANE* WILL RETURN TO DUTY AFTER A REFIT WITH A NEW CREW, BUT ONE ANONYMOUS REPORT STATES THAT THE SHIP HAS BEEN SENT TO A SI STARBASE FOR ANALYSIS.

2397

AN ERA ENDS WHEN GEORDI LA FORGE LEAVES ENGINEERING FOR COMMAND. LA FORGE HAD BEEN DIVIDING HIS TIME BETWEEN SHIP DESIGN AND HIS DUTIES WITH STARFLEET FOR SEVERAL YEARS, BUT WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY ARRIVES TO TAKE HIS OWN COMMAND HE CANNOT TURN IT DOWN. LA FORGE IS PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN OF THE *U.S.S. CHALLENGER*, AND RECOMMENDS COMMANDER NOG TO BE CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE *U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-E*.

THE PROMOTION GIVES THE FIRST FERengi IN STARFLEET ANOTHER RECORD. HE IS THE FIRST FERengi TO SERVE ON STARFLEET'S FLAGSHIP. NOG'S EXAMPLE INSPIRES

OTHER FERENGI, AND THE 2396 CLASS AT STARFLEET ACADEMY INCLUDES FOUR FERENGI CADETS.

"WE'RE SEEING A DRAMATIC CHANGE IN THE FERENGI CULTURE," SAID TALSA GRAY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALPHA CENTAURI. "COMMERCE AND PROFIT STILL PLAY A HUGE ROLE IN WHO THE FERENGI ARE, BUT THE SOCIAL REFORMS OF GRAND NAGUS ROM AND THE EXAMPLE OF HIS SON ARE SHOWING YOUNGER FERENGI THAT THEY CAN MAKE THEIR OWN CHOICES. IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE LOBES FOR BUSINESS, DO SOMETHING ELSE."

AFTER REPEATED APPEALS FROM THE FEDERATION, CHANCELLOR J'MPOK RELUCTANTLY AGREES TO A THIRD ROUND OF PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND THE GORN HEGEMONY. HIS DECISION PUTS HIM IN OPPOSITION TO A LARGE BLOC ON THE HIGH COUNCIL, INCLUDING SEVERAL MEMBERS WHO SUPPORTED HIS RISE TO POWER. THESE OPPONENTS FAVOR A FINAL DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST THE GORN, AND THERE ARE RUMBLINGS IN THE HALLS OF QO'NOS THAT J'MPOK IS CATERING TO THE FEDERATION JUST AS MARTOK DID.

FOR HIS PART, J'MPOK SAYS THAT IT IS ONLY WISE TO EXPLORE ALL OPTIONS. AND ON STARDATE 74461.35, HE SILENCES MANY OF HIS CRITICS IN A MOST DRAMATIC FASHION.

THE *I.K.S. KANG*, MISSING SINCE THE PREVIOUS YEAR, REAPPEARS LONG ENOUGH FOR ITS CAPTAIN TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE HOUSE OF DURAS WILL FORMALLY ALLY WITH THE HOUSE OF J'MPOK. CAPTAIN JA'ROD, NOW CALLING HIMSELF JA'ROD, SON OF LURSA, SAYS THAT HE IS TAKING LEADERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF DURAS AND THAT THE HOUSE OF TORG WILL BE MERGED INTO THE HOUSE OF DURAS UPON THE DEATH OF HIS FOSTER FATHER.

THE ALLIANCE WITH DURAS GIVES J'MPOK'S HOUSE THE SUPPORT OF MANY OF THE OLDEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL OF THE GREAT HOUSES, AND J'MPOK WASTES NO TIME IN REMINDING MANY ON THE HIGH COUNCIL THAT DEBTS OWED TO DURAS ARE NOW

OWED TO HIM AS WELL. THE MOVE ALSO FULLY RETURNS THE HOUSE OF DURAS TO LEGITIMACY, AS J'MPOK USES HIS POWERS AS CHANCELLOR TO WIPE AWAY PAST RULINGS AGAINST THE HOUSE.

THE SHAKEUP IN THE KLINGON POLITICAL SCENE NOW MEANS THAT MOST OF THE GREAT HOUSES ARE BEHOLDEN TO EITHER THE HOUSE OF DURAS OR THE HOUSE OF MARTOK, AND OBSERVERS SAY THAT THE POLARIZATION OF THE EMPIRE WILL ONLY CONTINUE.

FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENTS, THE *I.K.S. KANG* CLOAKS AND DISAPPEARS AGAIN. HOWEVER, DATA FROM KLINGON SENSOR STATIONS PLACES THE *KANG* NEAR THE M'CHAR SYSTEM, WHICH IS NEAR THE BORDER BETWEEN THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND THE GORN HEGEMONY.

STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT HASSAN THE UNDYING HAS MOVED HIS BASE OF OPERATIONS TO THE FORMER ORION HOMEWORLD. OBSERVERS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A SIGN OF A BREAK BETWEEN MELANI DI'AN AND HER GREATEST ALLY, BUT SUGGEST THAT HASSAN MAY STILL BE ACTING ON HER ORDERS.

"THERE'S NO REASON FOR MELANI TO TOSS HASSAN ASIDE," SAID BLIX BROL, AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER FOR THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE. "IF ANYTHING, THE EMERALD EMPRESS WANTS SOMEONE THAT SHE TRUSTS IMPLICITLY RUNNING SYNDICATE OPERATIONS OUTSIDE OF KLINGON SPACE WHILE SHE STAYS SAFE BEHIND A WALL OF WARRIORS."

IN ROMULAN SPACE, THE GOVERNMENT OF KEVRATAS, WHICH WAS DECIMATED BY A PLAGUE OF BLOODFIRE AND THE SUBSEQUENT ROMULAN QUARANTINE, DECLARES ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM ROMULAN RULE.

"THEY'VE GIVEN US NOTHING BUT DEATH AND OFFERED NOTHING BUT MORE PAIN," SAID KEVATRA LEADER KITO. "WE OWE TARIS NO ALLEGIANCE."

PRAETOR TARIS ORDERS GENERAL TEBOK TO PUT DOWN THE INSURRECTION WITH FORCE, BUT THE GENERAL REFUSES TO ORDER HIS TROOPS TO FIRE ON CIVILIANS.

HE INSTEAD NEGOTIATES A SETTLEMENT WITH KITO, AGREEING TO GIVE THE KEVATRAN LEADERS SAFE PASSAGE TO NOVA ROMA TO PRESENT THEIR GRIEVANCES TO THE ROMULAN SENATE AND ORDERING THAT RELIEF SUPPLIES AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL BE SENT TO KEVATRAS IMMEDIATELY.

IN RESPONSE FOR HIS INSUBORDINATION, TARIS ORDERS TEBOK TO RESIGN HIS POSITION AS HEAD OF THE ROMULAN MILITARY. TEBOK REFUSES AND INSTEAD APPEALS TO THE SENATE, WHICH OVERRULES TARIS. "IN THE OLD DAYS OF THE ROMULANS, TEBOK WOULD HAVE ENDED UP ON THE WRONG END OF AN HONOR BLADE," SAID EMAL KOTAY OF THE TRILL NEWS SERVICE. "NOW, NOT ONLY IS HE ALIVE, HE'S STILL IN CHARGE OF THE FLEET. THE CRACKS ARE APPEARING IN PRAETOR TARIS' RULE, AND IF SHE DOESN'T DO SOMETHING SOON SHE WON'T LAST."

2398

AFTER SIX YEARS OF REPORTS, PANELS AND LEGISLATIVE WRANGLING, THE FEDERATION COUNCIL APPROVES RULES FOR DUAL CITIZENSHIP. THIS OPTION IS CREATED TO ALLOW BEINGS TO APPLY FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCY AND OTHER RIGHTS WITHOUT SUNDERING ALL OF THEIR TIES TO THEIR HOMEWORLDS. DUAL CITIZENS CAN LIVE AND WORK ANYWHERE IN THE FEDERATION, APPLY FOR FEDERATION GRANTS, AND EVEN VOTE IN FEDERATION ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, DUAL CITIZENS OWE ALLEGIANCE TO AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF BOTH POLITICAL ENTITIES OF WHICH THEY ARE CITIZENS. ALSO, THE HOMEWORLD OF AN APPLICANT MUST ALLOW DUAL CITIZENSHIP AS WELL.

THE SOONG FOUNDATION AND OTHER ARTIFICIAL LIFE GROUPS ARGUE THAT THE BILL SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS, BUT THE FEDERATION COUNCIL REFUSES. ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS MUST EITHER PASS THE TESTS ESTABLISHED BY THE SUPREME COURT OF THE FEDERATION TO BE GRANTED FULL CITIZENSHIP, OR THEY ARE PROPERTY. THERE IS NO MIDDLE GROUND.

CARDASSIA PRIME'S DETAPA COUNCIL QUICKLY PASSES A LAW ALLOWING CARDASSIANS TO BECOME DUAL CITIZENS OF THE FEDERATION, AND GRAND NAGUS ROM BULLIES A MEASURE THROUGH THE FERENGI ECONOMIC CONGRESS OF ADVISORS THAT ALLOWS FERENGI TO TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAM AFTER PURCHASING A CITIZENSHIP LICENSE.

DOZENS OF UNAFFILIATED WORLDS MOVE TO ALLOW THIS OPTION TO THEIR CITIZENS AS WELL, BUT ON QO'NOS, THE HIGH COUNCIL REFUSES TO FOLLOW SUIT. THEIR REFUSAL BLOCKS KLINGONS WHO HAVEN'T SEVERED TIES TO THE EMPIRE FROM APPLYING FOR FEDERATION CITIZENSHIP.

RHEA, A FERENGI GEOLOGIST WORKING ON EARTH, IS THE FIRST BEING TO BE GRANTED DUAL CITIZENSHIP UNDER THE NEW PROGRAM. "I'M PROUD TO BE PART OF THE FEDERATION, BUT FERENGINAR IS MY HOME," RHEA SAID. "THIS COST ME A FEW BARS OF LATINUM, BUT IT'S WORTH EVERY STRIP."

FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG HAS BEEN A TIRELESS CHAMPION FOR DUAL CITIZENSHIP, AND MANY ATTRIBUTE THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM TO HIS INFLUENCE. A BOOST FROM NEW VOTERS EASILY PUSHES OKEG PAST CHALLENGERS FROM ALPHA CENTAURI AND TRILL INTO A SECOND TERM OF OFFICE. IN HIS RE-INAUGURATION SPEECH, OKEG REACHES OUT TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE. "WE HAVE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER THAN APART," OKEG SAID. "UNITY IS THE HONORABLE PATH."

IN STARFLEET, LIEUTENANT NAOMI WILDMAN IS ASSIGNED AS THE NEW HELM OFFICER OF THE *U.S.S. HATHAWAY*. AND MIRAL PARIS, ANOTHER CHILD WHO WAS BORN ON THE *U.S.S. VOYAGER*, ENTERS STARFLEET ACADEMY.

PARIS' PRESENCE IN THE INCOMING ACADEMY CLASS IS NOTABLE TO THOSE WHO FOLLOW KLINGON AFFAIRS. SEVERAL NEWS STORIES ABOUT PARIS AND THE NEW RECRUITS REPORT THE LEGEND OF THE KUVAH'MAGH, A KLINGON RELIGIOUS FIGURE THAT IS BELIEVED TO BE A PROPHETIC FIGURE BY SOME. AFTER REPORTERS MAKE AN

ATTEMPT TO ENTER THE DORMITORIES AT THE ACADEMY, STARFLEET ISSUES A STATEMENT FROM PARIS ASKING FOR PRIVACY. "I'M A STUDENT, NOT A SAVIOR," THE STATEMENT READS IN PART. "ALLOW ME AND MY CLASSMATES PEACE AND PRIVACY."

ON STARDATE 75705.90, THE FEDERATION-MEDIATED PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE GORN HEGEMONY AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE ARE DISRUPTED BY AN EXPLOSION THAT ROCKS THE RESORT ON CASPERIA PRIME WHERE THE TALKS ARE BEING HELD. SEVEN PEOPLE WERE CRITICALLY INJURED BY THE BLAST, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR K'MTOK OF QO'NOS AND MIRA GENSTRA, A DEPUTY MEDIATOR FOR THE FEDERATION. GENSTRA IS STABILIZED AND THEN EVACUATED TO HER HOME ON BETAZED, BUT K'MTOK DIES DURING SURGERY ONBOARD THE *I.K.S. GORKON*.

THE CREW OF THE *GORKON* COOPERATES WITH CAPTAIN DATA OF THE *U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-E* TO INVESTIGATE THE EXPLOSION. THEY FIND THAT AN ULTRITIUM RESIN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE WAS SLIPPED ONTO A BEVERAGE CART, WHICH WAS THEN DELIVERED TO THE ROOM WHERE THE DELEGATES WERE MEETING. BECAUSE ULTRITIUM RESIN WAS USED, THE DEVICE WAS NOT PICKED UP BY SECURITY SENSORS.

ALTHOUGH IT IS INITIALLY THOUGHT THAT THE DEVICE WAS PLANTED BY A MEMBER OF THE RESORT STAFF, TIES TO KLINGON EXTREMIST GROUPS ARE QUICKLY UNCOVERED. THE DEVICE IS TRACKED BACK TO TORAL, SON OF DURAS, WHO IS WANTED FOR CRIMES AGAINST BOTH THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE. THE *GORKON* PURSUES TORAL'S SHIP INTO THE ARCHANIS SECTOR, BUT IT ESCAPES.

THE FEDERATION ATTEMPTS TO RESTART THE PEACE TALKS, BUT BOTH THE KLINGONS AND THE GORN RECALL THEIR DELEGATIONS. THERE WILL BE NO CEASE-FIRE.

"IF I WERE INTO CONSPIRACIES, I'D MENTION THAT K'MTOK WAS APPOINTED BY CHANCELLOR MARTOK, AND NOW THE DOOR'S OPEN FOR J'MPOK TO APPOINT ONE OF HIS ALLIES AS AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERATION. BUT I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT, BECAUSE I'M NOT A CONSPIRACY THEORIST," SAID TAG MORKEK, A POLITICAL ANALYST FOR THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE.

IN WHAT IS SEEN AS A DELIBERATE INSULT TO PRAETOR TARIS, GENERAL TEBOK PROMOTES GENERAL VELAL TO COMMAND OF THE ROMULAN SECOND FLEET. VELAL HAS BEEN OPENLY CRITICAL OF THE PRATEOR AND HER POLICIES, AND WAS ONE OF THE OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEGOTIATING THE AGREEMENT THAT KEPT KEVATRAS UNDER ROMULAN CONTROL.

OPERATIVES FOR STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE REPORT THAT THE CHANGELING KNOWN AS LAAS HAS ARRIVED IN THE DEVOS SYSTEM WITH TWO ADDITIONAL CHANGELINGS. WHEN LAAS WAS LAST SEEN, HE WAS SEARCHING FOR OTHER CHANGELINGS WHO HAD BEEN SENT TO THE ALPHA QUADRANT AS OBSERVERS. WHETHER OR NOT THESE CHANGELINGS ARE PART OF THAT GROUP IS UNKNOWN.

2399

RESPONDING TO THE SUCCESS OF THE FEDERATION DUAL CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM, STARFLEET EXPANDS THE STARFLEET ACADEMY ADMISSION GUIDELINES TO ACCEPT APPLICANTS FROM RACES ALLIED WITH, BUT NOT FORMALLY PART OF THE FEDERATION. THESE CADETS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO APPLY FOR DUAL CITIZENSHIP AND WOULD OTHERWISE BE CONSIDERED A FULL CITIZEN OF THE FEDERATION, AND THEREFORE WOULD NOT NEED A COMMAND-LEVEL RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE.

"THERE ARE MANY DEDICATED, QUALITY APPLICANTS OUT THERE WHO SIMPLY DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO A STARFLEET CAPTAIN," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "WE'RE OPENING THE DOORS." ONE CHANGE THAT STARFLEET SEES IMMEDIATELY IS A RUSH OF FERENGI APPLICANTS. INSPIRED BY THE EXAMPLE OF NOG AND SOCIAL REFORMS ON FERENGINAR, HUNDREDS OF FERENGI APPLY TO JOIN STARFLEET.

AND ON STARDATE 76014.61, DIGNITARIES FROM THROUGHOUT THE FEDERATION GATHER TO CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF THE FIRST LINKS OF THE FEDERATION TRANSWARP NETWORK.

"PLANETS THAT WERE WEEKS AWAY AT WARP WILL BE CONNECTED IN WAYS THEY NEVER COULD BE BEFORE," SAID FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG. "WHEN THE CREW OF THE *U.S.S. VOYAGER* BROUGHT THIS TECHNOLOGY BACK FROM THE DELTA QUADRANT, THEY CREATED A WORLD WHERE SOMEDAY YOU CAN HAVE BREAKFAST ON DEEP SPACE NINE, AND BE AT CESTUS III IN TIME TO CATCH AN AFTERNOON BASEBALL GAME."

BUT THE CELEBRATORY SPIRIT OF THE EARLY DAYS OF 2399 IS QUICKLY OVERSHADOWED BY EVENTS IN THE ROMULAN AND KLINGON EMPIRES. ON STARDATE 76306.19, THE *I.B. W. ALTH'INDOR* NOTIFIES NOVA ROMA THAT IT IS EXPERIENCING UNEXPLAINED MALFUNCTIONS IN SEVERAL SYSTEMS, BUT THAT THE PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT IMPEDE THE SHIP'S PROGRESS.

GENERAL VELAL OFFERS TO SEND A SHIP TO RENDEZVOUS WITH THE *ALTH'INDOR*. GENERAL TEBOK IS DUE BACK IN NOVA ROMA IN 32 HOURS FOR A MEETING OF THE ROMULAN SENATE. TEBOK ASSURES VELAL THAT THE ENGINEERS ON THE *ALTH'INDOR* BELIEVE THE PROBLEMS ARE BEING CAUSED BY A COMPUTER VIRUS AND THAT THEY WILL HAVE A SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEM SHORTLY.

TWO HOURS LATER, THE *ALTH'INDOR* DROPS OUT OF WARP AND TRANSMITS A FINAL DISTRESS SIGNAL. THE *I.B. W. KAI'DOR* IS THE CLOSEST VESSEL, AND IT RACES TO THE *ALTH'INDOR*'S LOCATION. THE *KAI'DOR* REPORTS DETECTING AN ANTIMATTER CONTAINMENT FAILURE, BUT BEFORE HER CREW CAN ACT THE *ALTH'INDOR* EXPLODES, KILLING GENERAL TEBOK AND ALL HANDS.

PRAETOR TARIS ORDERS THAT UNTIL A NEW COMMANDER FOR THE FLEET IS SELECTED, THAT ALL FLEETS MUST REPORT TO HER DIRECTLY. VELAL GOES TO TEBOK'S ALLIES IN THE SENATE TO BLOCK TARIS, AND THE SENATE QUICKLY PASSES A BILL THAT CALLS FOR ALL SENATE APPROVAL FOR ALL HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY APPOINTMENTS.

THE UNCERTAINTY IN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND ONCE AGAIN THROWS THE ROMULAN FLEET INTO CHAOS, AND SEVERAL COMMANDERS ANNOUNCE THAT THEY

WILL NO LONGER REPORT TO ANY AUTHORITY BUT THEIR OWN. STARFLEET STEPS UP BORDER PATROLS IN RESPONSE, HOPING TO BLOCK ANY ROGUE SHIP BEFORE IT CAN ATTACK A FEDERATION TARGET.

PRESIDENT OKEG ANNOUNCES PLANS TO TRAVEL TO QO'NOS TO MEET WITH CHANCELLOR J'MPOK AND TRY TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE KLINGONS' CONFLICT WITH THE GORN. HOWEVER, BEFORE HE CAN DEPART PARIS, THE *I.K.S. KANG* RETURNS TO QO'NOS.

CAPTAIN JA'ROD MEETS IN A CLOSED SESSION WITH J'MPOK AND THE HIGH COUNCIL FOR MORE THAN SEVEN HOURS. REPORTS ARE THAT JA'ROD REVEALS THE DETAILS OF HIS INVESTIGATION INTO THE UNDINE PRESENCE IN THE GORN HEGEMONY TO THE COUNCIL, AND THAT THE INFILTRATION GOES MUCH DEEPER THAN PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED.

A DAY LATER, J'MPOK, WITH THE FULL BACKING OF THE HIGH COUNCIL, ORDERS AN INVASION OF THE GORN HEGEMONY. "NO MORE WAITING. NO MORE TALKING. WE ARE KLINGON, AND WE WILL PROTECT THE ALPHA QUADRANT FROM THESE QA'MEH QUV – THESE REPLACERS OF HONOR WITH DISHONOR. WE ATTACK!"

A COMBINED KLINGON AND ORION FLEET STORMS ACROSS THE BORDER INTO THE GORN HEGEMONY WITHIN WEEKS. THE SHIPS CLASH WITH GORN AND NAUSICAAAN FORCES IN MULTIPLE SYSTEMS, AND THE SIMMERING CONFLICT FLARES INTO OPEN WARFARE.

J'MPOK SENDS A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT OKEG, ASKING FOR FEDERATION ASSISTANCE AS SPELLED OUT IN THE KHITOMER ACCORDS. HOWEVER, THE FEDERATION COUNCIL INSTEAD CONDEMNS THE INVASION AND DEMANDS THAT THE KLINGONS WITHDRAW FROM GORN SPACE AND RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. "THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT THE KLINGONS HAVE ACTED RASHLY," SAID COUNCILOR ASTONI-YHARD OF GRAZER. "FOR ALL WE KNOW, THEY'RE CHASING SHADOWS. WHAT REASON WOULD THESE 'UNDINE' HAVE FOR BEING HERE NOW?"

THE KLINGON RESPONSE IS SWIFT. IN A TERSELY WORDED MESSAGE, J'MPOK PULLS THE KLINGON EMPIRE OUT OF THE KHITOMER ACCORDS AND RECALLS ALL KLINGON AMBASSADORS BACK TO QO'NOS. "CHANCELLOR J'MPOK'S DECISION IS REGRETTABLE," OKEG SAYS. "HOWEVER, IT IS HIS TO MAKE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO ALL WE CAN TO REPAIR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR LONGTIME FRIENDS IN THE KLINGON EMPIRE."

FEDERATION CITIZENS ARE UNCEREMONIOUSLY EJECTED FROM THE EMPIRE, AND IT IS ONLY BECAUSE OF HIS TIES TO QO'NOS THAT AMBASSADOR WORF IS ALLOWED TO STAY IN THE CAPITAL CITY.

"J'MPOK NEEDS THE SHIPS AND CREWS LOYAL TO THE HOUSE OF MARTOK FIGHTING THE GORN," A FEDERATION GOVERNMENT INSIDER TOLD THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE. "IF HE HAD KICKED WORF OUT, DREX WOULD HAVE PULLED HIS SUPPORT."

"STILL, DON'T THINK THAT THE FIGHT BETWEEN DREX AND J'MPOK IS OVER. THE NEEDS OF THE EMPIRE MAY BE FOREMOST TODAY. TOMORROW IS A DIFFERENT STORY."

2400

THE COMBINED FORCE OF THE GORN AND NAUSICAAAN FLEETS INITIALLY REPELS THE KLINGON ADVANCE, EARNING THEM A MEASURE OF RESPECT FOR THEIR FEROCITY IN BATTLE.

"THE GORN DO NOT SURRENDER," SAID K'MEK, CAPTAIN OF THE *I.K.S. VEQLARGH*. "THEY FIGHT ALMOST AS WELL AS KLINGONS."

STARFLEET OBSERVERS SAY THAT THIS TIME, THE KLINGONS MAY NOT HAVE AN EASY VICTORY. "THE GORN ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR HOMES," SAID ADMIRAL JOREL QUINN. "THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE THE KLINGONS BLEED FOR EVERY METER OF SPACE."

FOR ITS PART, THE FEDERATION IS REINFORCING OUTPOSTS AND COLONIES ALONG THE BORDER OF KLINGON SPACE AND PREPARING TO HANDLE ANY SPILLOVER OF HOSTILITIES. HOWEVER, STANDARD ORDERS ARE TO NOT SEEK OUT A CONFRONTATION.

"WE ARE PROTECTING FEDERATION CITIZENS AND PROPERTY," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "BUT WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN GETTING INVOLVED IN WHAT IS A MATTER BETWEEN THE KLINGON AND THE GORN."

THE FEDERATION COUNCIL PASSES A MEASURE THAT DECLARES THE WAR UNLAWFUL, CITING VIOLATIONS OF THE KHITOMER ACCORDS AND THE JANKATA ACCORD. BOTH THE KLINGONS AND THE GORN IGNORE THE CENSURE.

"I THINK IT SHOWS JUST HOW INEFFECTUAL THE FEDERATION COUNCIL IS THESE DAYS," SAID MILLA VAN OF THE TRILL NEWS NETWORK. "WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO NEXT, OUTLAW EXCESSIVE HEAT IN VULCAN'S FORGE?"

THE INTRACTABILITY OF THE FEDERATION COUNCIL'S POSITION LIMITS DIPLOMATIC ENDEAVORS, BUT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AMBASSADOR WORF AND FEDERATION OFFICIALS REPEATEDLY ATTEMPT TO TALK TO CHANCELLOR J'MPOK OR MEMBERS OF THE HIGH COUNCIL IN AN EFFORT TO RESTART THE FEDERATION-KLINGON ALLIANCE OR EVEN GET THE KLINGONS TO ATTEND A SUMMIT WITH FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG TO AIR THEIR GRIEVANCES. FOR THE MOST PART, THEIR REQUESTS ARE DENIED.

"THE WAR IS CONSUMING MUCH OF THE HIGH COUNCIL'S TIME," OKEG TELLS A REPORTER FROM THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE. "WE'LL KEEP EXTENDING THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP. WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, THE KLINGONS WILL KNOW THAT WE'RE WILLING TO LET WHATEVER BYGONES THERE ARE BE FORGOTTEN." ONE DIPLOMATIC VICTORY FOR THE FEDERATION IS THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CARDASSIANS AND THE BAJORANS. WITH THE BAJORANS ENTRY INTO THE FEDERATION, IT HAD BEEN A PRIORITY FOR THE FEDERATION AND THE DETAPA COUNCIL TO SETTLE THE LAST FEW REMAINING ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS. ON STARDATE 77418.94,

THE CARDASSIANS OPEN AN EMBASSY ON BAJOR, AND VISA RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED ON TRAVEL BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS.

"IT'S TAKEN MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS TO HEAL THE SCARS OF THE OCCUPATION," SAID CARDASSIAN DE TAPA COUNCILOR NATIMA LANG AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW EMBASSY, "BUT AS BAJOR BLOOMS ON THIS SUMMER MORNING, SO TOO SHOULD THE TIES OF FRIENDSHIP AND FIDELITY BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES." COMMANDER HARRY KIM IS APPOINTED AS HEAD OF SECURITY FOR STARBASE 11. IN ADDITION TO HIS DUTIES AT THE STARBASE, KIM WILL BE HELPING TO ORGANIZE IMPROVEMENTS IN STARBASE DEFENSES FOR OUTPOSTS ALONG THE NEUTRAL ZONE.

IN A STATEMENT TRANSMITTED TO DEEP SPACE NINE, THE FOUNDERS DISAVOWED ANY CONNECTION WITH SHAPESHIFTERS IN THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS, SAYING THAT ANY CHANGELINGS OPERATING OUTSIDE THEIR AUTHORITY ARE ROGUE. THE TERSE SUBSPACE STATEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AT LAAS, BUT STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE BELIEVES THAT IT WAS A RESPONSE TO REPORTS OF UNDISCOVERED INFILTRATION. ON NOVA ROMA, PRAETOR TARIS CLASHES YET AGAIN WITH THE ROMULAN SENATE OVER A PLAN TO FURTHER RESTRICT THE POWERS OF THE PRAETOR. TARIS MAKES A RARE PERSONAL APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SENATE TO ARGUE AGAINST THE PROPOSAL. "IN THE ABSENCE OF A MONARCH, AND AT A TIME OF EXTREME UPHEAVAL IN THE ALPHA AND BETA QUADRANTS," TARIS SAYS, "WE MUST HAVE ONE VOICE TO SPEAK FOR OUR EMPIRE TO THE GALAXY. ONLY BY EXPANDING THE PRAETOR'S POWERS WILL WE HAVE STABILITY AND STRENGTH. A DISHARMONIOUS CHORUS LEADS TO CHAOS."

TARIS SWAYS SOME SENATORS TO HER SIDE, BUT HER GENERAL UNPOPULARITY WITH THE ROMULAN POPULACE DOOMS HER CALL FOR EXPANDED EXECUTIVE POWERS. THE SENATE PROCEEDS WITH ITS PLAN TO LIMIT THE POWER OF THE PRAETOR.

IN ANOTHER POSSIBLE PROBLEM FOR THE ROMULAN PRAETOR, AGENTS FOR STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE HAVE INTERCEPTED AND DECODED SEVERAL MESSAGES FROM NOVA ROMA TO A PLANET DEEP IN THE BETA QUADRANT. THESE MESSAGES POINT OUT IRREGULARITIES IN THE REPORTS ABOUT THE DEATH OF GENERAL TEBOK AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE *I.B. W. ALTH'LNDOR*. SELA HAS ORDERED HER SPIES TO INVESTIGATE AND FIND THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER.

2401

STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE OBSERVERS REPORT THAT A POSSIBLE UPRISING IN ROMULAN SPACE THAT COULD FURTHER DESTABILIZE THE ALREADY TROUBLED EMPIRE.

"VELAL HAS HAD ENOUGH," SAYS ONE ANONYMOUS OBSERVER. "BUT TO GET RID OF THE DEVIL, HE MIGHT BE MAKING A DEAL WITH A FEK'LHR."

THE COMMANDER OF THE ROMULAN SECOND FLEET REPORTEDLY MET WITH SELA AND SOME OF HER EXILED FOLLOWERS IN THE ZETA VOLANTIS SYSTEM. FOLLOWING THAT RENDEZVOUS, GENERAL VELAL GATHERED A TRUSTED GROUP OF SHIP COMMANDERS.

"TARIS MUST BE REMOVED FOR THE GOOD OF THE EMPIRE," SAID A SOURCE CLOSE TO GENERAL VELAL. "VELAL'S ALLIANCE WITH SELA WILL GIVE HIM THE SHIPS AND WEAPONS HE NEEDS TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. WE DON'T WANT A CIVIL WAR, BUT WE KNOW THAT THERE WILL BE SOME PARTS OF THE FLEET THAT WILL REMAIN LOYAL TO THE PRAETOR."

ON STARDATE 78092.83, NATIMA LANG IS ELECTED AS THE CASTELLAN OF THE CARDASSIAN UNION. THE POSITION PUTS HER ON THE FRONT LINES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND SHE STEPS INTO NEGOTIATIONS ON TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH THE FERENGI ALLIANCE AND INFORMATION SHARING PACTS WITH THE FEDERATION. "I HAVE FOCUSED MUCH OF MY ENERGY THESE PAST YEARS INWARD. RECONSTRUCTING CARDASSIA PRIME WAS MY ONLY GOAL," LANG SAYS AFTER HER ELECTION. "BUT WE'VE LOOKED

INWARD LONG ENOUGH. CARDASSIA PRIME NEEDS TO BUILD ITSELF A PLACE IN THE QUADRANT JUST AS MUCH AS IT NEEDS NEW HOUSES AND SCHOOLS."

ONE SIGN OF A RETURN TO NORMALCY FOR THE CARDASSIANS IS THE RESUMPTION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. ON STARDATE 78441.78, THE CARDASSIAN SCIENCE MINISTRY ANNOUNCES THAT IT HAS DEVELOPED A CURE FOR POTTRIK SYNDROME. THE TERMINAL RESPIRATORY AILMENT AFFLICTS HUNDREDS OF CARDASSIANS EACH YEAR. THE MINISTRY REPORTS THAT THE TREATMENT IS IN FINAL TESTING, AND WILL BE AVAILABLE TO PATIENTS BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

TWO STARFLEET ADVANCEMENTS OF NOTE: LIEUTENANT COMMANDER NAOMI WILDMAN IS APPOINTED AS SECOND OFFICER OF THE *U.S.S. HATHAWAY*, AND MILES O'BRIEN IS NAMED HEAD OF THE STARFLEET CORPS OF ENGINEERS, THE FIRST TIME A NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER HAS HELD THAT POSITION. "THIS ISN'T ABOUT RANK, IT'S ABOUT TALENT," SAYS OUTGOING SCE CHIEF CAPTAIN SONYA GOMEZ. "MILES IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL ENGINEER, AND HIS TALENT FOR MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE MAKES HIM THE IDEAL PERSON FOR THIS JOB."

OVERSHADOWING EVERYTHING IN 2401 IS THE KLINGON-GORN WAR. THE COMBINED GORN AND NAUSICAN FORCES ARE HOLDING STEADY, BUT ANALYSTS BELIEVE THAT THE KLINGONS WILL EVENTUALLY BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH THEIR LINES AND ATTACK THE CORE WORLDS OF THE GORN HEGEMONY.

"IT'S A STALEMATE RIGHT NOW, BUT GILA IV SHOWED US THAT THE GORN SIMPLY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH SOLDIERS AND SHIPS TO REPEL THE KLINGONS FOREVER," SAID APELA LUSS OF THE FEDERATION NEWS NETWORK. "I'M AFRAID THERE WILL BE MANY MORE DEATHS – ON BOTH SIDES – BEFORE A RESOLUTION IS REACHED."

ON QO'NOS, THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL IS ROCKED BY THE REVELATION THAT COUNCILOR KONJAH IS AN UNDINE.

WHAT STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE LEARNS ABOUT THE SITUATION IS THIS: AFTER A NIGHT OF REVELRY IN THE CAPITOL CITY, KONJAH WAS WALKING WITH TWO OTHER

KLINGONS BACK TO HIS LODGINGS WHEN HE WAS ATTACKED BY LETHEAN MERCENARIES. THE TELEPATHIC ASSAULT FORCED KONJAH TO LOSE HIS HUMANOID FORM, AND HE SHIFTED UNTIL HIS TRUE APPEARANCE.

THE UNDINE MASQUERADING AS KONJAH WAS KILLED, AND HIS BODY TAKEN TO THE HIGH COUNCIL CHAMBERS. CHANCELLOR J'MPOK THEN STRIPS THE HOUSE OF KONJAH OF ITS TITLES AND STATUS, AND ITS MEMBERS ARE EITHER KILLED OR FORCED INTO HIDING.

"IT WAS A WITCH HUNT," SAYS LOR TORET, A BAJORAN WHO OWNED A RESTAURANT ON QO'NOS BEFORE THE KHITOMER ACCORDS WERE DISSOLVED IN 2399. "I STILL HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS IN THE CAPITOL, AND THEY'RE TELLING ME THAT KONJAH'S FAMILY WAS HUNTED DOWN LIKE THEY WERE ALL UNDINE. THE SAD THING IS THAT NO ONE KNOWS HOW LONG THE UNDINE HAD BEEN IN KONJAH'S PLACE OR WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ORIGINAL. DID THEY KILL HIM, OR IS HE STUCK IN SOME UNDINE PRISON?"

WHILE THE OFFICIAL FEDERATION POSITION IS NON-INTERFERENCE, NOT EVERYONE IN STARFLEET AGREES WITH THIS. ON STARDATE 78733.25, CAPTAIN ZACHARY MACALLISTER DISOBEYS A DIRECT ORDER FROM STARFLEET COMMAND AND ATTEMPTS TO TAKE THE *U.S.S. LINDBERG* INTO GORN SPACE.

"HE WANTED TO HELP THE GORN," REPORTS ENSIGN E'SWA D'REX. "CAPTAIN MACALLISTER KEPT SAYING THAT WHEN THE KLINGONS WERE THROUGH WITH THE GORN, THEY'D ATTACK THE FEDERATION NEXT. AND THAT WE HAD TO STOP THEM BEFORE THAT COULD HAPPEN."

AFTER A TENSE THREE DAYS TRAVELING THROUGH A WAR ZONE, THE *LINDBERG* IS CONFRONTED BY A KLINGON PATROL. MACALLISTER ORDERS HIS CREW TO OPEN FIRE, BUT INSTEAD THE FIRST OFFICER AND CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER ATTEMPT TO REMOVE MACALLISTER FROM DUTY AND SURRENDER THE SHIP. THERE IS A RUNNING FIREFIGHT THROUGH THE SHIP, AS MACALLISTER AND A FEW SUPPORTERS ATTEMPT TO

ESCAPE CAPTURE. MACALLISTER MAKES IT TO A SHUTTLE BAY AND ESCAPES. HE IS STILL A FUGITIVE. A CONTINGENT OF RETIRED AND CURRENT STARFLEET OFFICERS, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR WORF, ADMIRALS BEVERLY CRUSHER, KATHRYN JANEWAY AND CHAKOTAY AND RETIRED CAPTAINS EZRI DAX AND TUVOK APPEAL TO THE FEDERATION COUNCIL TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON THE KLINGON-GORN WAR.

"THE UNDINE THREAT IS REAL," ADMIRAL CHAKOTAY TELLS THE COUNCIL. "THE KLINGONS KNOW IT. WE SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE IT. PERHAPS IF WE WERE HELPING THEM FIGHT THE UNDINE, MORE INNOCENT PEOPLE COULD BE SAVED.

"THERE'S A WAR COMING, AND IT WILL BE A LONG ONE."

AMBASSADOR SOKKETH OF VULCAN LEADS THE OPPOSITION. "WHILE WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SERVICE OF THESE FINE STARFLEET OFFICERS, THE THREAT OF THE UNDINE IS OVERSTATED," SOKKETH SAYS. "I'M SURE, GIVENTIME, THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO COME TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION WITH THESE ... OBSERVERS FROM FLUIDIC SPACE."

2402

AFTER TWO YEARS OF WAR, THE KLINGONS BLOCKADE THE GORN HOMEWORLD; IT SEEMS VERY LIKELY THAT THEY WILL SOON WIN THE WAR.

A KLINGON RELIGIOUS GROUP ATTEMPTS TO KIDNAP MIRAL PARIS DURING HER SENIOR CADET CRUISE, CLAIMING SHE IS THEIR KUVAH' MAH. THE GROUP ATTACKS THE *U.S.S. PIKE*, BUT IS REPELLED.

IN POSITIVE NEWS, STARFLEET REVOLUTIONIZES SHIP BUILDING PROCESSES TO CREATE A MORE MODULAR SYSTEM. THIS ALLOWS FOR EASIER CUSTOMIZATION AND REPAIR OF STARFLEET SHIPS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE *U.S.S. VOYAGER* MAKES FIRST CONTACT WITH A NEW AVIAN SPECIES, THE LORIANS.

AMBASSADOR JEAN-LUC PICARD RETIRES AND SETTLES IN FRANCE.

ON STARDATE 80344.81, THE WEB OF TRANSPORT INHIBITORS PROTECTING THE GORN HOMEWORLD COLLAPSES AFTER THE KLINGON FLEET BLOCKADING THE PLANET USES SURGICAL STRIKES TO TAKE OUT THE PLANET'S POWER RELAY NETWORK. LESS THAN 50 MINUTES AFTER THE NETWORK IS DESTROYED, THE FIRST KLINGON LANDING PARTIES TRANSPORT ONTO THE PLANET'S SURFACE.

THE REMAINING GORN FORCES PLANETSIDE MAKE A LAST STAND DEFENDING KEY AREAS, AND LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION TAKE UP ARMS TO DEFEND THEIR HOMES AND FAMILIES. HOWEVER, THE KLINGONS SHOW LITTLE INTEREST IN ENGAGING CIVILIAN MILITIAS AND INSTEAD MASS THEIR FORCES FOR AN ASSAULT ON THE CAPITOL CITY.

TWENTY-EIGHT HOURS AFTER THE FIRST KLINGON LANDED ON THE GORN HOMEWORLD, FORCES FROM THE FIFTH FLEET ENTER THE ROYAL PALACE, AND THE GORN HEGEMONY FALLS TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE.

ONCE KING SLATHIS SURRENDERS AND GUARANTEES THAT ANY TROOPS LEFT PLANET SIDE WILL NOT ATTACK THE KLINGON FORCES, GENERAL KLAG AGREES NOT TO TAKE CIVILIANS INTO CUSTODY WITHOUT CAUSE AND TO LIFT MARTIAL LAW ORDERS FOR MOST OF THE GORN POPULATION.

"THE KLINGONS SEEMED ALMOST SOLICITOUS TO THE GORN," SAID ADMIRAL JOREL QUINN ON AN EPISODE OF "ILLUMINATING THE CITY OF LIGHT." "THEY WERE CAREFUL NOT TO GIVE THE PEOPLE A REASON TO REVOLT. IT WASN'T STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR THE KLINGONS AFTER THEY CONQUER A WORLD ... OF COURSE, AS SOON AS J'MPOK ARRIVED, WE ALL FOUND OUT WHY."

GENERAL KLAG IS GIVEN A WEEK TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION ON THE GORN HOMEWORLD BEFORE CHANCELLOR J'MPOK ARRIVES WITH THE I.K.S. VO'QUV. AFTER TRANSPORTING DOWN AND MEETING WITH KING SLATHIS, J'MPOK ORDERS A GLOBAL

BROADCAST, AND USES THE KLINGON FLEET TO EXTEND THE RANGE OF THE TRANSMISSION TO HIT MOST GORN COLONY WORLDS AND SHIPS.

DURING THIS BROADCAST, THE KLINGONS REVEAL THE GORN PRIME MINISTER, HEAD OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, AND MULTIPLE OTHER HIGH-RANKING MEMBERS OF THE GORN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY TO BE UNDINE INFILTRATORS. THE INFILTRATORS ARE THEN IMMEDIATELY EXECUTED.

"WE HAVE SHOWN THE TRUE FACE OF THE QA'MEH QUV," J'MPOK SAYS. "WE ARE DEFENDING THE ALPHA QUADRANT, NOT DESTROYING IT."

HARDLINERS ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL WANT SLATHIS AND HIS FAMILY EXECUTED AS WELL, TO PREVENT THE ROYAL FAMILY FROM BEING A FOCUS FOR REVOLUTIONARIES. "WE'VE CONQUERED THEM. NOW WE NEED TO RULE THEM," COUNCILOR MARAB SAYS. "THERE CANNOT BE A KING IN OUR EMPIRE."

AFTER MUCH DELIBERATION, CHANCELLOR J'MPOK DECIDES TO OFFER THE GORN SELF-RULE, AS LONG AS THEY SWEAR FEALTY TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE. SLATHIS AGREES, AND AS PART OF THE SETTLEMENT HE IS GIVEN A NON-VOTING SEAT ON THE KLINGON HIGH COUNCIL. THE FIFTH FLEET THEN WITHDRAWS FROM GORN SPACE.

"THE KLINGONS HAVE WOODED THE ORIONS. THEY'VE CONQUERED THE GORN. RACES LIKE THE NAUSICAANS ARE SEEING THE WRITING ON THE WALL," SAID TAG MORKEK OF THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE. "THE FEDERATION'S GOT REAL COMPETITION IN THE COALITION-BUILDING BUSINESS."

FOR HIS PART IN REVEALING THE UNDINE THREAT, CAPTAIN JA'ROD IS OFFERED A SEAT ON THE HIGH COUNCIL. JA'ROD DECLINES AND RETURNS TO THE COMMAND OF THE *I.K.S. KANG*.

"UNTIL I HAVE FULLY PROVEN MY WORTH TO THE EMPIRE," JA'ROD TELLS THE COUNCIL, "I DO NOT DESERVE TO BE IN YOUR NUMBER. I WILL RETURN TO QO'NOS AS A HERO, OR NOT AT ALL."

ONE BLOW FOR THE KLINGONS THIS YEAR IS THE DEPARTURE OF EMPEROR KAHLESS. LATE IN THE YEAR, KAHLESS HANDPICKS A CREW FROM THE ORDER OF THE BAT'LETH AND DEPARTS ON THE *I.K.S. BAT'LEH*.

KAHLESS LEAVES A MESSAGE BEHIND SAYING THAT THE KLINGONS NO LONGER NEED HIS GUIDANCE, SO HE IS DEPARTING TO LOOK FOR NEW BATTLES TO FIGHT. KAHLESS PROMISES TO RETURN WHEN HE IS MOST NEEDED.

IN ROMULAN SPACE, THE CONFLICT BETWEEN PRAETOR TARIS AND GENERAL VELAL CONTINUES TO DIVIDE THE ALREADY FRACTURED EMPIRE. KEVATRAS AND ABRAXAS PRIME THROW THEIR SUPPORT BEHIND THE REBELLION, GIVING VELAL AND SELA'S FORCES MUCH NEEDED SAFE HAVENS AND SUPPLY BASES. THE WAR COMES TO AN ABRUPT END ON STARDATE 80957.96, WHEN FORCES OF THE ROMULAN SECOND FLEET APPROACH RATOR III.

"THE PRAETOR HAD BEEN LOCKED IN HER ROOMS FOR A FEW DAYS AT THIS POINT, AND SHE WOULDN'T ALLOW ANYONE TO ENTER," A STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE OBSERVER REPORTS. "HER STAFF FINALLY BROKE DOWN THE DOOR WHEN VELAL'S FLEET ENTERED ORBIT. I THINK THEY WERE GOING TO TRY TO GET TARIS TO SAFETY ... BUT SHE WAS ALREADY GONE."

AN EXTENSIVE SEARCH OF THE PALACE TURNS UP NO CLUES. THE TAL SHIAR EXTENDS THE SEARCH TO ALL OF NOVA ROMA, BUT PRAETOR TARIS HAS DISAPPEARED.

VELAL AND SELA LAND IN NOVA ROMA WHILE THE SEARCH IS STILL ONGOING, AND PROCEED DIRECTLY TO THE ROMULAN SENATE.

"SELA MADE A VERY PRETTY SPEECH ABOUT HOW SHE WAS A LOYAL ROMULAN AND A FRIEND TO THE SENATE, AND NEVER ONCE DID SHE MENTION THE DOZENS OF WARBIRDS SHE HAD IN ORBIT OVER THEIR HEADS," SAID MIRA MANDEL OF THE FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE. "NO ONE WAS SURPRISED WHEN THE SENATORS TRIPPED OVER THEMSELVES TO OFFER HER THEIR FEALTY."

THE SENATE NAMES SELA AS PRAETOR AND GENERAL VELAL AS THE LEADER OF THE ROMULAN FLEET BY ACCLAMATION. THE REIGN OF PRAETOR TARIS IS OVER.

2404

STARFLEET CELEBRATES THE OPENING OF MORE LINKS IN THE FEDERATION TRANSWARP NETWORK.

"IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES, THIS TECHNOLOGY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER," SAID ADMIRAL CHAKOTAY AT THE OPENING OF A TRANSWARP HUB IN THE ALPHA CENTAURI SYSTEM. "SPEED IS ESSENTIAL IF WE NEED TO REPEL AN ATTACK BY THE KLINGONS OR THE ROMULANS, OR EVACUATE AN ENTIRE PLANET IF THERE IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER.

"JUST AS WARP DRIVE ONCE MADE THE STARS REACHABLE, TRANSWARP WILL MAKE EXPLORATION OF THE ENTIRE GALAXY POSSIBLE."

THE SOONG FOUNDATION GETS AN INJUNCTION TO FORCE STARFLEET TO REVEAL THE WHEREABOUTS AND CONDITION OF ALL OF ITS HOLOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS. "WE WANT TO REVIEW THESE CASES," SAYS SOONG FOUNDATION ATTORNEY ALYSSA COGLEY-SHAW. "THERE ARE SENTIENT LIFEFORMS TRAPPED IN LIVES OF MISERY AND SLAVERY, LIKE THE EMH MARK I HOLOGRAMS WHO HAVE BEEN MINING DILITHIUM FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS!"

STARFLEET APPEALS THE INJUNCTION, SAYING THAT THE REQUEST IS TOO BROAD AND THAT IT INVADES OFFICERS' PRIVACY. "THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN SERVING THE FEDERATION DESERVE TO HAVE SOME HOLOGRAPHIC ENTERTAINMENT WITHOUT LEGAL REVIEW," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "EVEN IF ALL CLASSIFIED USES OF HOLOGRAMS WERE STRUCK FROM THIS INJUNCTION, IT IS STILL ILLEGAL AND IRRESPONSIBLE."

LEGAL ANALYSTS PREDICT THIS HOLORIGHTS CASE, LIKE THAT OF THE DOCTOR, COULD GO ALL THE WAY TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE FEDERATION.

ACCORDING TO FEDERATION NEWS SERVICE POLLS, MORE THAN SEVENTY PERCENT OF FEDERATION CITIZENS OPPOSE ACCEDING TO THE KLINGONS' DEMANDS. "WELL OF COURSE WE'RE NOT LEAVING," SAID CASSIDY MUNZER, A MUSICIAN LIVING ON EARTH. "WE HAVE TO STOP THE KLINGONS SOMEWHERE, DON'T WE?"

FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG CALLS FOR CALM. "LET'S NOT FIGHT THE WAR BEFORE THE FIRST SHOT IS FIRED," OKEG SAID. "WE WILL EXPLORE EVERY OPTION OPEN TO US, AND PEACE IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE."

THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE IS ENJOYING A TIME OF PEACE THAT IT HASN'T SEEN SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ROMULAN HOMEWORLD ALMOST TWO DECADES AGO. PRAETOR SELA SETTLES LONG-SIMMERING DISPUTES BETWEEN COLONY WORLDS, OPENS THE ROMULUS MEMORIAL AT THE REMAINS OF THE HOMEWORLD, AND GENTLY SHAPES THE SENATE TO HER WAY OF THINKING.

"SHE'S USING A LITTLE BIT OF BLACKMAIL, A DOSE OF CHARM AND A LOT OF GUILT," SAID A STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE ON NOVA ROMA. "BUT ROMULUS HASN'T HAD A LEADER WHO CAN PULL PEOPLE TOGETHER LIKE SHE CAN SINCE DONATRA DISAPPEARED."

2405

ON STARDATE 82001.36, FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG INFORMS THE KLINGON EMPIRE THAT THE FEDERATION WILL NOT LEAVE THE HRUMI CLUSTER OR THE SECTORS SURROUNDING IT.

"WE WILL CONTINUE OUR EXPLORATIONS OF THE CLUSTER. WE WILL NOT UPROOT FEDERATION SETTLEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN IN THESE SECTORS FOR DECADES. YOU CLAIM YOU HAVE ANCIENT CLAIMS TO THIS REGION OF SPACE. I SAY THAT CURRENT POSSESSION COUNTS FOR SOMETHING.

"WE DO NOT WANT WAR," OKEG CONTINUES. "BUT WE WILL DEFEND OURSELVES."

THE KLINGON RESPONSE IS SWIFT. THREE DAYS LATER A KLINGON FLEET INVADES THE KORVAT SYSTEM, A TARGET THAT MAY HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR ITS SYMBOLIC VALUE. IN 2289, THE KORVAT COLONY WAS THE SITE OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE THAT WERE A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THE SUCCESSFUL SIGNING OF THE KHITOMER ACCORDS IN 2293.

"IF THE FEDERATION WAS STILL WELCOME IN KHITOMER, IT IS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT CHANCELLOR J'MPOK WOULD HAVE ATTACKED THERE," SAID ADMIRAL T'NAE ON AN EPISODE OF "ILLUMINATING THE CITY OF LIGHT." "I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT CONQUERING THE KORVAT SYSTEM IS AS IMPORTANT TO THE KLINGONS AS THE MESSAGE. THE ALLIANCE HAS ENDED."

THE KLINGONS CLASH WITH A FLEET OF STARFLEET SHIPS SENT TO PROTECT THE COLONY AND STOP KLINGON LANDING PARTIES ATTEMPTING TO FORCIBLY REMOVE FEDERATION CITIZENS FROM THE PLANET.

"INITIAL REPORTS FROM THE FRONT ARE GOOD," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON MARIE DURANT. "THE *U.S.S. MONTGOMERY SCOTT* WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED IN THE ASSAULT, BUT IT IS BEING TOWED TO A STARBASE FOR REPAIRS. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT STARFLEET CAN PROTECT THE RESIDENTS OF KORVAT COLONY, AND THE ENTIRE FEDERATION."

THE KLINGONS GETS MORE SUPPORT WHEN A COALITION OF NAUSICAAN TRIBES SIGNS A NON-AGGRESSION PACT WITH THE EMPIRE. NAUSICAANS WHO CHOOSE TO SWEAR FEALTY TO THE KLINGON EMPIRE WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN THE KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE AND OWN PROPERTY IN THE EMPIRE.

"KING SLATHIS OF THE GORN SHOULD GET THE CREDIT FOR BRINGING THE NAUSICAANS INTO THE EMPIRE," SAID TAG MORKEK OF THE TELLAR NEWS SERVICE. "I THINK HE SEES THE POTENTIAL IN A GROUP OF LIKE-MINDED SPECIES ... LIKE THE FEDERATION."

OBSERVERS OF KLINGON POLITICS NOTE A DEVELOPMENT THAT COULD AFFECT AFFAIRS ON QO'NOS WHEN GENERAL Worf AGREES TO BE GIN'TAK FOR DRAX, SON OF MARTOK.

"Worf HAS TAKEN THE TITLE GIVEN TO HIM BY HIS OLD FRIEND MARTOK, AND NOW HE WILL ADVISE MARTOK'S SON ON HOW TO RUN HIS HOUSE," SAYS AN ANONYMOUS REPORT. "Worf'S SKILL IN BATTLE AND POLITICS COULD BE JUST WHAT THE HOUSE OF MARTOK NEEDS TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN THE EMPIRE AGAIN."

THE FEDERATION IS GAINING ALLIES AS WELL. THE CARDASSIANS AGREE TO A SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PACT THAT FURTHER CEMENTS THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE DETAPA COUNCIL. AND ON FERENGINAR, GRAND NAGUS ROM USES A PORTION OF THE PROFITS FROM HIS TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH THE CARDASSIANS TO FINANCE THE PASSAGE OF EXPANDED TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENTS WITH THE FEDERATION.

"HE'S TYING US TO THOSE CHARITY-LOVING, NO-LATINUM NO-GOODS IN THE FEDERATION," RAGES QARIS, AN INDEPENDENT FERENGI RUNNING A TRADING STATION IN THE ARGELIUS SYSTEM. "I'M A LEGITIMATE BUSINESSMAN! I WON'T STAND FOR IT!" WHILE MANY FERENGI OPPOSE CLOSER TIES WITH THE FEDERATION, AND OTHERS SEE THE PROFIT AVAILABLE IN TRADING WITH THE KLINGON EMPIRE AND OTHER FEDERATION FOES, ROM ARGUES THAT THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS LIES WITH GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE FEDERATION.

WHEN OPPOSITION FROM THE ECONOMIC CONGRESS OF FERENGI ADVISERS PROVES TOO COSTLY TO OVERCOME, ROM TAKES HIS VICTORIES AND ENDS HIS FIGHT FOR A FORMAL ALLIANCE WITH THE FEDERATION. BUOYED BY EARLY VICTORIES AGAINST THE KLINGONS AND THE FERENGI AGREEMENTS, FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG SAILS TO AN EASY VICTORY FOR HIS THIRD TERM.

"WHY CHANGE NOW?" ASKS ROSA OLIVER, A GEOLOGIST WORKING FOR JANUS MINING. "HE SEEMS TO BE DOING A GOOD JOB."

ON STARDATE 82626.64, THE GORN ENTER THE WAR ON THE SIDE OF THE KLINGON EMPIRE. A GORN FLEET LAUNCHES AN INVASION OF SHERMAN'S PLANET THAT IS EASILY TURNED AWAY BY FEDERATION FORCES LAUNCHING FROM THE NEARBY DEEP SPACE K-7.

"I THINK THE GORN WERE TESTING US," SAYS STATION COMMANDER CAPTAIN SHIR TH'TALIAS. "NOW THEY KNOW THAT WE'RE READY FOR A FIGHT."

2406

THE WAR BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGON EMPIRE HEATS UP WHEN THE KLINGON FLEETS INVADE THE ARCHANIS SECTOR.

LONG-DESIRED BY THE KLINGONS, THE SECTOR WAS RELINQUISHED TO THE FEDERATION IN THE MID-23RD CENTURY. KLINGON FORCES INVADED IT IN 2372 DURING THE LAST FEDERATION-KLINGON WAR, AND THE AREA HAS BEEN HOTLY CONTESTED BY BOTH FACTIONS EVER SINCE.

"WE TOOK IT BACK ONCE," SAID COMMANDER AKIRA SULU. "WE CAN DO IT AGAIN. I HAVE UT MOST FAITH IN THE ABILITIES AND COURAGE OF MY FELLOW STARFLEET OFFICERS."

MILITARY OBSERVERS PREDICT THAT THE FIGHT FOR THE ARCHANIS SECTOR WILL BE A LONG ONE. "THE FORCES THERE ARE EVENLY MATCHED," MILITARY STRATEGIST SONA OF VULCAN TOLD THE FEDERATION NEWS NETWORK. "THE KLINGONS AND THEIR ALLIES ARE FIERCE FIGHTERS, BUT STARFLEET HAS NEVER LACKED IN COURAGE OR TENACITY. THERE IS AN 82.47 PERCENT CHANCE THAT THIS STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR."

ONE THING THAT MAY HELP STARFLEET IS AN ADVANCE IN POWER CELL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPED BY THE RESEARCH TEAMS AT MEMORY ALPHA. THE NEW CELLS MAKE PERSONAL SHIELD GENERATORS FEASIBLE FOR STARFLEET OFFICERS ON AWAY TEAMS.

"THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL KEEP OUR OFFICERS SAFE," SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON LORIS BREX. "IT IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF WHAT THE FEDERATION CAN DO. THERE IS NO PROBLEM THAT WE CANNOT SOLVE."

THE FIRST SHIELD GENERATORS ARE ISSUED TO SPECIAL TEAMS ON GROUND ASSAULTS IN THE ARCHANIS SECTOR. ONCE THE TECHNOLOGY IS ADEQUATELY TESTED, IT WILL BE PROVIDED TO ALL STARFLEET OFFICERS. THREE COMPANIES ANNOUNCE THAT THEY ARE WORKING ON VARIATIONS OF THE TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMERCIAL USE.

"FORGET THE SHIELDS, GIVE US THE POWER CELLS," SAID SOONG FOUNDATION RESEARCHER ALEXANDER BAKER. "IF WE HAD ACCESS TO THE CELL TECHNOLOGY NOW, IT COULD CUT TWO WEEKS OFF OF OUR TIMETABLE TO RELEASE A MOBILE EMITTER FOR HOLOGRAPHIC LIFEFORMS WHO DON'T HAPPEN TO ALSO BE IN STARFLEET." STARFLEET MEDICAL SHIPS, INCLUDING THE *U.S.S. PASTEUR*, *U.S.S. COMFORT*, *U.S.S. CURIE* AND *U.S.S. FLEMING*, ARE DIVERTED TO THE FEDERATION COLONY IN THE CARNEGIE SYSTEM TO COMBAT A HIGHLY-VIRULENT PLAGUE THAT REPORTEDLY HAS AFFECTED MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SITUATION ON CARNEGIE IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN, AS SUBSPACE TRANSMISSIONS OFF-WORLD ARE BEING BLOCKED BY STARFLEET FOR "STRATEGIC REASONS." SHIPS APPROACHING THE CARNEGIE SYSTEM ARE TURNED AWAY, AND NO CARNEGIE VESSELS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE SYSTEM.

"WE'RE AT WAR, AND AT THE SAME TIME WE'RE DEALING WITH A VIRUS THAT IS DEVASTATING A COLONY THAT HAS FACTORIES AND REPLICATOR FACILITIES THAT SUPPLY GOODS TO MUCH OF THE FEDERATION," BREX TELLS REPORTERS WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE SECRECY. "NOT EVERY DETAIL OF EVERY SITUATION NEEDS TO BE ON THE NIGHTLY NEWSFEED."

THERE ARE WIDESPREAD RUMORS THAT THE PLAGUE IS NOT BIOLOGICAL IN ORIGIN. FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG REFUSES TO COMMENT ON THESE RUMORS WHEN ASKS, SAYING ONLY THAT STARFLEET NEEDS TIME AND RESOURCES TO TREAT THE POPULATION AND STOP THE SPREAD OF THE CONTAGION.

IN ONE STARFLEET PROMOTION OF NOTE, ADMIRAL CHAKOTAY IS NAMED THE NEW HEAD OF STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE. CHAKOTAY PROMISES TO BRING MORE OPENNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO WHAT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN A VERY RECLUSIVE POST.

IN ONE OF THE ADMIRAL'S FIRST BRIEFINGS TO STARFLEET COMMAND, HE LAYS OUT WHAT HE SEES AS THE CURRENT UNDINE SITUATION IN THE FEDERATION. CHAKOTAY ADMITS THAT STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE BELIEVES THAT THERE ARE AT LEAST 30 INDIVIDUALS IN STARFLEET OR HIGH-LEVEL FEDERATION POSTS WHO ARE ACTUALLY UNDINE INFILTRATORS.

"WE'RE IN TROUBLE," CHAKOTAY SAYS. "THERE COULD BE AN UNDINE IN THIS ROOM, AND WE WOULDN'T KNOW."

WHILE STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE DOES NOT HAVE A FOOLPROOF METHOD OF DETECTING UNDINE IN HUMANOID FORM, IT IS WORKING ON NEW TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE THIS MORE FEASIBLE.

2407

FIGHTING CONTINUES IN THE ARCHANIS SECTOR, WITH BOTH THE FEDERATION AND THE KLINGONS REPORTING SIGNIFICANT LOSSES.

"THE KLINGONS MIGHT BE HAPPY THAT THEIR CREWS ARE DYING WITH HONOR, BUT WE SENT OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS TO STARFLEET TO EXPLORE, NOT FIGHT," SAYS ACTIVIST CROM NERET. "ISN'T IT TIME TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION?"

IN FACT, THE FEDERATION TRIES TO DO JUST THAT, SENDING REPEATED MESSAGES FROM THE FEDERATION COUNCIL AND EVEN A PERSONAL ENTREATY FROM

FEDERATION PRESIDENT AENNIK OKEG TO CHANCELLOR J'MPOK. THE FEDERATION IS SEEKING PEACE TALKS OR A CEASE-FIRE SO THAT GROUNDWORK CAN BE MADE TOWARD A FULL PEACE SUMMIT.

J'MPOK REFUSES. "NO LONGER WILL WE DIE THE DEATH OF A THOUSAND CUTS," J'MPOK TELLS THE HIGH COUNCIL. "PEACE WAS THE DEATH OF THE KLINGON EMPIRE. THANKFULLY, IT WAS A MISTAKE THAT WE CAUGHT IN TIME.

"CONFLICT MAKES US KLINGON. COMBAT MAKES US STRONG. I WRITE MY STORY WITH MY BLADE, AND THE INK IS THE BLOOD OF MY ENEMIES."

THE VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY IS WORKING ON IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSWARP TECHNOLOGY. "IT'S OBVIOUS THAT WE NEED TO IMPROVE OUR SECURITY AND SPEED," SAID S'LARIN, ONE OF THE LEAD RESEARCHERS. "TRANSWARP IS THE FUTURE OF INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL ... AND THE FEDERATION." REPORTS FROM THE PHYLOS SYSTEM INDICATE THAT THE PHYLOSAINS HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY A SIMILAR VIRUS TO THAT WHICH CONTINUES TO RAGE THROUGH THE CARNEGIE SYSTEM. STARFLEET MEDICAL IS DISPATCHING EXOBIOLOGY AND MEDICAL TEAMS, BUT THEY DO NOT EXPECT TO FIND A COUNTERAGENT QUICKLY.

"THE UNUSUAL NATURE OF PHYLOSAIN ANATOMY MAKES ANY TREATMENT DIFFICULT," SAID ADMIRAL BEVERLY CRUSHER, CHIEF OF STARFLEET MEDICAL. "HOWEVER, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT, IN COOPERATION WITH PHYLOSAIN SCIENTISTS, WE WILL BE ABLE TO HELP THEM."

IN ROMULAN SPACE, STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE OBSERVERS REPORT THAT SELA HAS REVIVED ONE OF PRAETOR TARIS' IDEAS – A ROMULAN MONARCH.

"SELA HASN'T SAID A WORD ABOUT IT HERSELF, OF COURSE, BUT ALLIES OF HERS IN THE SENATE ARE FLOATING THE IDEA," ONE AGENT SAYS. "AND IT'S NOT A COINCIDENCE THAT PEOPLE HAVE STARTED MAKING COMPARISONS BETWEEN SELA AND BELOVED ROMULAN RULERS LIKE AEL I-MHIESSANT'RLLAILLIEU. "THERE'S EVEN A

QUIET SEARCH GOING ON FOR THE SWORD OF S'TASK, EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE BELIEVES IT WAS DESTROYED WHEN THE HOME WORLD WAS LOST."

ON QO'NOS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LETHEANS HAVE APPROACHED CHANCELLOR J'MPOK, SEEKING EITHER ENTRY INTO THE EMPIRE OR A NON-AGGRESSION PACT LIKE THE NAUSICAANS SIGNED. J'MPOK SEEMS AMENABLE TO HAVING LETHEANS OWE ALLEGIANCE TO THE EMPIRE, BUT OVERALL THE KLINGONS DO NOT SEE THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE A HIGH PRIORITY AND PROGRESS IS SLOW.

IN THE GHOMBA SYSTEM, FORCES FROM THE HOUSES OF MARTOK AND DURAS CLASH OVER POSSESSION OF A SMALL PLANETOID RICH IN RESOURCES.

"THIS IS THE START OF THE WAR, MARK MY WORDS," SAID TIRAN, A HISTORIAN AND LORESINGER ON QO'NOS. "I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE. THERE WILL BE GLORY AND HONOR ... AND BLOOD. MUCH BLOOD WILL BE SHED."

2408

THE KLINGON AND GORN INVADE CESTUS III, AND STARFLEET MASSES A FLEET TO DEFEND THE PLANET AND ITS POPULATION.

"THIS AREA HAS BEEN ON THE GORN'S LIST SINCE THE DAYS OF JAMES T. KIRK," SAID PIKE CITY MAYOR JAE AARON. "BUT WE'RE NOT AFRAID OF THE GORN, OR THE KLINGONS, OR ANYONE ELSE FOR THAT MATTER. NO ONE'S LEAVING THE STADIUM UNTIL THE FINAL INNING."

STARFLEET OFFICIALS TRY TO CONVINCE THE COLONISTS TO EVACUATE FOR SAFETY REASONS, BUT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEM REFUSE TO LEAVE. THE RESIDENTS OF CESTUS III WILL DEFEND THEIR HOMES.

"WE APPRECIATE THE SPIRIT OF THE CESTUS III RESIDENTS, BUT WE IMPLORE THEM TO CONSIDER EVACUATING. AT LEAST SEND THE YOUNG AND ILL TO SAFETY,"

SAID STARFLEET SPOKESPERSON LORIS BREX. "THIS IS A WAR. WE CAN'T PROMISE A HAPPY ENDING."

ON STARDATE 85365.28, YEARS OF INSTABILITY AND INFIGHTING IN THE ROMULAN STAR EMPIRE SEEMINGLY COME TO A CLOSE WITH THE CORONATION OF EMPRESS SELA. THE NEW EMPRESS WILL HAVE NO PRAETOR, AND THE SENATE WILL SERVE AT HER PLEASURE.

"SECURITY HAS CLAMPED DOWN IN THE CAPITOL CITY," A STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE SOURCE INSIDE ROMULAN SPACE SAID. "THE ROMULANS SAY THAT THEY HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE MAY BE AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON THE EMPRESS, BUT I THINK IT'S MORE THAN THAT. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SELA CAN SHOW JUST HOW MUCH CONTROL SHE HAS."

OBSERVERS AT THE CORONATION SAY THAT IT PROCEEDS WITH AS MUCH POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE AS THE RECOVERING EMPIRE CAN MUSTER. SELA CALLS FOR A RETURN TO THE TRADITIONS OF OLD, INCLUDING THE CARRYING OF HONOR BLADES AND BLOOD OATHS.

IN FACT, BEFORE TAKING THE CROWN THE EMPRESS PUBLICLY USES A JEWELLED BLADE TO CUT HER OWN PALM. AS THE BLOOD DRIPPED DOWN ONTO A RUG OF WHITE FUR, SELA TAKES AN OATH TO UPHOLD AND PRESERVE THE EMPIRE WITH HER LIFE.

"TRADITION IS VERY IMPORTANT IN THIS NEW ORDER," THE SI SOURCE SAYS. "SELA IS CONSCIOUSLY RECALLING A GOLDEN AGE ON THE OLD HOME WORLD, AND USING THOSE MEMORIES TO INSPIRE THE PEOPLE. THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT MNHEI'SAHE AGAIN, AND A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE STARTED REFERRING TO NOVA ROMA AS MOL'RIHAN, WHICH IS 'NEW ROMULUS' IN HIGH RIHANNSU."

AFTER STARFLEET LOSES CONTACT WITH STARBASE 236 IN LATE SEPTEMBER, IT SENDS THE U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-E TO INVESTIGATE.

"THIS COULD BE RELATED TO THE WAR. IT COULD BE SOMETHING ELSE. IT COULD BE A SIMPLE EQUIPMENT FAILURE," BREX SAYS. "OUR PRIMARY CONCERN IS THE SAFETY OF THE STARBASE CREW."

AND A STARFLEET COMMITTEE HAS DETERMINED THAT BECAUSE OF RETIREMENTS, DEATHS AND THE INCREASING DEMANDS OF THE KLINGON WAR, STARFLEET IS FACING A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED COMMAND PERSONNEL. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS REVISING RULES ON AWAY TEAMS TO ENCOURAGE MORE OFFICERS TO SEEK COMMAND POSITIONS, INCREASING ENROLLMENT AT STARFLEET ACADEMY AND REVISING THE COMMAND STRUCTURE TO ALLOW FOR THE BEST USE OF EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL.

"I THINK WE'RE PAST THE POINT WHERE YOU NEED TO SPEND TWENTY YEARS AS AN OFFICER BEFORE YOU CAN BE CONSIDERED FOR COMMAND," SAID COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ADMIRAL JOREL QUINN. "WE NEED TO PROMOTE EXCEPTIONAL OFFICERS QUICKLY. WE NEED OUR CAPTAINS LEADING AWAY TEAMS. STARFLEET NEEDS TO LOOK AT OUR WHOLE COMMAND STRUCTURE AND DO WHAT WORKS NOW, NOT WHAT WORKED 30 YEARS AGO."