

STAR TREK:

SHADOWS

By: B.J. Ford

PROLOGUE:

Recently the Federation was at peace. The Borg hadn't been heard from since 2373, seven years, when they had traveled back in time to destroy first contact with the Vulcans. The Enterprise-E had saved the day, destroying the Borg, and allowing first contact to happen. Seven years before that, the Borg had decimated Starfleet with the destruction of 39 vessels at the Battle of Wolf 359. This resulted in the "Qapla" Class Starship Development Project, a joint Federation-Klingon effort. In early 2380, four Qapla class starships, equipped with a Klingon cloaking device and capable of cruising at warp 9.9, were commissioned. At roughly the same time, all Galaxy class vessels underwent their first major refit, adding heavier armaments and the third engine nacelle, allowing them to cruise at warp 9.9. The Battle of Wolf 359 also resulted in the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP). SLEP simply stated that if the Borg ever invaded either Klingon, Federation, or Romulan space; that all three races would immediately dispatch every vessel available to combat the Borg threat.

The Dominion was gone, no longer a threat to the Federation. Just over nine years ago, the Romulans' Tal Shiar joined forces with the Cardassians' Obsidian Order in a daring attempt to destroy the Dominion's Founders. The combined fleet of over 40 ships was ruthlessly annihilated by a fleet of 150 Jem'Hadar warships. This defeat took a major toll on the Tal Shiar, as their power began to dissolve. The destruction of so many ships greatly hindered production of Romulan vessels. Years later, the Romulan fleet still hadn't fully recovered.

A few years later, the Dominion launched a full-scale invasion of the Alpha Quadrant. The Jem'Hadar fleet bypassed DS9 and headed for Cardassia, which was now a member of the Dominion. Captain Sisko saw to the mining of the Bajoran wormhole with cloaked, self-replicating mines. With the mines now activated, Deep Space 9 faced a large force of Jem'Hadar warships. Captain Sisko gave the evacuation signal, and the Defiant headed for Starbase 375. Months later, the Defiant led an assault to take back Deep Space 9. The Second, Fifth, and Ninth Fleets suffered heavy losses by over 1,254 Dominion warships. With the detonation of the minefield, reinforcements for the Dominion were on their way. In an attempt to stop the invading fleet, Sisko took the Defiant into the wormhole. The mysterious wormhole entities nullified the invading Dominion fleet. Defenseless, and up against Starfleet vessels, DS9 is evacuated and reclaimed by the Federation. Starfleet chose Sisko to plan the eventual invasion of Cardassia. Gul Dukat, former leader of Cardassia and surgically altered to look Bajoran, returned to the station where he murders Jadzia Dax and closed the Bajoran wormhole. Dukat and Kai Winn, minister of Bajor, search for a way to release the Pah-wraiths, a group of exiled aliens intent on destroying Bajor. Gowron, leader of the Klingon Empire, overthrew Martok's command of Klingon forces. Worf challenged Gowron's corrupt leadership, which resulted in Gowron's death. Bashir searched for a cure to the disease that is slowly killing the Founders. In 2374, Sisko launched the Federation/Klingon/Romulan attack against the Dominion on Cardassia. The Cardassian people started to rise up against the Dominion, as the favor of the war began to turn. Dukat and Kai Winn

went to the Fire Caves on Bajor to release the Pah-wraiths. Kira, Garak, and Damar, former leader of Cardassia, took over the Dominion briefing room. Kira held the Founder leader at gunpoint ordering her to stop the war, which she didn't. Kira contacted Sisko, who ordered Odo to link with the Founder. As soon as he did, he cured the disease that had ravaged her people. She immediately called a cease fire, and the war ended. Sisko had a vision of the Sarah prophet, who told him to go to the Fire Caves. There he encountered a possessed Dukat, during the struggle, both Sisko and Dukat plunged into the abyss. Sisko awoke to learn he had become a prophet, the Pah-wraiths had been returned to the Fire Caves, and his destiny was now fulfilled. Meanwhile, Kira was placed in command of Deep Space Nine, Worf was made Federation Ambassador to Qo'noS, Odo returned to the Founder homeworld to cure them of their disease, and Martok became leader of the Klingon High Counsel.

The Furies were also gone, never to be heard from again. Over a century ago, Starfleet first learned of the satanic alien race called the Furies. Millenia ago, the Furies had lost a 100,000 year war with a race known as the "Unclean", and were banished to the far side of the galaxy. A new Fury culture grew, based solely on returning to the place they called "Heaven". Survivors were stranded on many worlds, forming the basis of demon legends. Captain Kirk and General Kellen faced the first wave of Fury warships in 2261. The combined strength of the Enterprise and Kellen's fleet obliterates the Fury warship, but not before it sent a message to the far side of the galaxy at nearly warp 25: "The Battle of Garamanus is lost. We have not survived, but this is our rightful place. Try

again.” In 2370, the Furies will return, emerging through a wormhole. Lt. Sam Redbay, of the Enterprise-D, sacrificed himself by piloting a shuttlecraft through the wormhole and destroying its generator, which collapsed the wormhole and prevented hundreds of Fury warships from invading Federation space. Later that year, the USS Voyager located the Fury homeworld in the Delta Quadrant. The Furies were intent on using their sun’s energy to power an immense Belay neutron array to generate a brief wormhole capable of transporting their entire world of 27 billion into the Alpha Quadrant. The crew of the Voyager succeeded in altering the world’s direction, and the Furies vanished into the abyss.

CHAPTER 1: FINAL CONFRONTATION

USS YAMATO, TYPHON SECTOR

MAY 9, 2380

Captain’s log. Stardate 23805.10.

USS Yamato approaching Typhon Sector to begin investigation into the disappearance of the Ra’ku Mar’ru cargo ship. She was last heard from two days ago, after a routine transmission.

“Begin scans ensign, standard search pattern.” Ordered Captain Harriman.

“I sir.”

The Yamato executed a slight right turn, as her sensors turned toward the blackness of space.

Ensign Hawks said, "Captain, strange readings coming from coordinates 243.23."

"Active sensors, Ensign."

"I sir."

As soon as Ensign Hawks went to active sensors, he could see exactly what it was. He exclaimed, "Captian, Borg cude on course 243.23."

"Raise shields! Red alert! All hands to battle stations! Get me Starfleet command!" Called the Captain.

It was too late, the Captain watched as his ship was torn apart around him, and then as the bridge erupted into flames. In that last second before the darkness of the shadow descended upon the, and single hand reached across a console, sending the coded distress signal that simply stated "The Borg..."

WARBIRD DECIUS, NEUTRAL ZONE

MAY 9, 2380

Captain's log. Stardate 23805.10.

Imperial Romulan Warbird Decius on potrol of the Romulan border to test newly designed phase cloak. We are ordered to proceed across the border, to see if we draw attention to ourselves.

"Ensign, engage phase cloak." Ordered Captain Te'ran.

"I sir. Phase cloak engaged."

The Warbird disappeared into the shadows, showing no signs that it was ever there. The Decius continued on course, crossing the Neutral Zone border.

The Warbird made it to Chal, just inside Klingon territory, and then turned back. This was only designed as a test, just a quick run around the block.

“Very impressive, sir. We made it Chal without being detected.”

Te’ran replied, “Yes. We can attack without warning. This is what we have waited for.”

Just then both men looked up at the blaring alarms of red alert.

“What is it?” asked Captain Te’ran.

“Sir, sensors have just picked up a Borg cude on course 549 mark 46.”

“We’re cloaked, they can’t detect us.” Said Te’ran.

“Captain! They’re locking weapons!”

“What! Shields!!!! Get me Romulus!!!!” yelled Te’ran.

The communication to Romulus started, “This is the Decius. We are under attack by the Borg. We do not know how but...”

It was too late to finish the sentence, the first beam cut through the main hull of the Decius, tearing apart one of the warp nacelles. The second beam cut into the neck of the warbird, blowing it into two pieces. The third beam finished the Decius off, striking a direct hit in the quantum singularity power source. In seconds, the chain reaction blew the ship into the shadows.

IKC CH’TANG, PRAXIS MOON

MAY 9 2380

Captain’s log. Stardate 23805.10.

Imperial Klingon Cruiser Ch’Tang

Imperial Romulan Warbird Decius on patrol of the Romulan border to test newly designed phase cloak. We are ordered to proceed across the border, to see if we draw attention to ourselves

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, EARTH

MAY 10, 2380

The secretary came in and said, "Starfleet Command here to see you, Sir."

"Send them in."

Three Admirals came in and sat down, one spoke, "Mr. President, I've just got a disturbing report from the Typhon sector. As you know two ships have disappeared in that sector in two days, we now have a third to add to that list."

"The Farroget?" The President asked.

The Admiral nodded his head, "I'm afraid so. She was sent to discover why the two other ships had disappeared. Then yesterday at 1532 hours, a priority one distress signal was received. It was cut off in mid-sentence, but two words are distinguishable. It states 'The Borg.'"

The President needed no more explanation than that. The Borg, the greatest enemy the galaxy has ever seen. The devastation they could bring was unimaginable.

KLINGON HIGH COUNSEL, Qo'noS

MAY 10, 2380

Mar'tok sat in his chair, the chair given to him by Gow'ron, the old leader of the High Counsel. He really had nothing to do, the Empire would hold together for now. He wished he had someone or something to fight; however, he got his wish sooner than he would have liked.

The guard came in suddenly and said, "Transmission from the President for you, Sir."

"Thank you, I'll take it in my office." He replied.

He walked swiftly into his office, and as he sat down, he punched his command code into the console on his desk.

The President's face came to him in a mere second, the voice came to him also, "Mar'tok, we have a problem. Three ships have now disappeared in the Typhon sector in the last two days. About one hour ago the Farroget sent a priority one distress signal, simply saying, the Borg."

The Borg, Mar'tok needed no more explanation than that. The gravest, most lethal enemy this galaxy had to offer were on their way. To assimilate every known being. He knew what the President was going to ask of him next.

"First of all, I need you to send a fleet to meet with ours at Theal IV, on the edge of the Typhon sector. Then I want you to contact your allies in the Romulan Senate, we need their help as well."

"What if they don't want to help us?" Asked Mar'tok.

"Then tell them that after the Borg get done with the Federation, they'll go on to the next race, and the next race, and the next race after that. They will not stop until every culture in this quadrant is destroyed or assimilated."

“I will. Mr. President, Good Luck.”

“To all of us.” The President replied.

SENATE MEETING, ROMULUS

MAY 10, 2380

Valdus sat and listened to the cries of his people. They complained about everything. Now they were complaining that the entire fleet needed to be refitted. According to them, the fleet had suffered great losses recently. Which of course was right, it had suffered extreme losses by the Dominion and Federation, but there simply wasn't enough money in the budget. They had been having many small conflicts recently with the Federation. A few years back, the Obsidian Order and a Romulan fleet attempted a daring assault against the Founders. Even now, years later, the Romulan fleet was still feeling the after affects.

The advisor came and whispered to him, “There's a call from Mar'tok for you.”

He simply let the people continue talking, and walked to the nearest console. He entered his command code for personal messages.

Mar'tok's face and voice came to him a second later, “We have a problem, The Borg have begun an invasion of the Federation.”

“Explain how a Borg invasion of the Federation, concerns the Romulan Empire.”

Mar'tok was ready for that question, “I thought you might ask me that, I believe I have an answer. The President told me to tell you that the Borg will

continue to attack race after race until every race in this galaxy is assimilated. The Federation is just the first step. You can be assured that we will follow, and not to far behind us will be the Romulans.”

Mar'tok of course was right; the Borg would never stop attacking until their goal had been reached. “Very well, we will send a fleet.” he said.

“Thank you, we will meet with the Federation fleet at Theal IV, on the edge of the Typhon sector, as soon as possible.” Mar'tok replied. His image winked out.

He would now have to convince the people that attacking the Borg would be best for the Empire. He turned off the console and walked back into the Senate floor. He stood in his rightful place, at the head of the long conference table, which held all of the Romulan Senators. He grabbed the mallet on the table, and hit the table four times. The room instantly became quiet.

They all listened intently as the Emperor spoke, “I have just got some very grave news, the Borg have attacked the Federation. We are going to help them in their fight.”

“Why?” came the cries of many people.

“Because, the Borg would then come after us. It would be a lot better to do this now with the help of the Federation and Klingons, then wait until after they were both gone. I don't like the Federation, but it is in the best interest of the Empire to help them.”

SPACEDOCK, EARTH

MAY 10, 2380

The President walked up to the podium and said, "Greetings people of the Federation. I have grave news, the Borg our most lethal enemy have begun an invasion of the Federation. We have already made too many retreats against them. They invade our space and we fall back. They assimilate countless worlds and we fall back. That all ends NOW. In one hour, ships will leave from countless ports across this quadrant; they will be heading for the Typhon sector, where we will make our stand! We will no longer be afraid; it's their turn to be afraid. We will not rest until every Borg in this galaxy lies dead at our feet. We will show them no mercy. We will slaughter them like they would have slaughtered us."

After he said this, the lead ship of the fleet, the Enterprise, warped away. Every starship in the Federation warped away right behind her. Some of the ships were brand new, just off the assembly line. Others were old, some over twenty-five years, but all of them beautiful as Earth's sun shined off the bright silver hull. The letterings etched in their hulls each telling a different story of where they went, where they're going, and what they have to do. The crews looking out windows or on screens to see Earth slide away until it disappeared, each of them knowing it might be the last time they ever see home.

FEDERATION FLEET, THEAL IV

MAY 10, 2380

The Enterprise was the first ship to slow to impulse power for Theal orbit. The entire fleet was right behind her and slowed as well. Everyone looked out

and saw the Klingon fleet waiting for them. It was a magnificent sight, hundreds of ships surrounded the planet. The Klingon fleet contained a multitude of different ships from the thirty year old B'rel class Bird-of-Prey to the new and improved Vor'Cha Attack Cruiser

On the Bridge of the Enterprise, Picard asked, "Well the Klingons are here, but where are the Romulans?"

As soon as he said that a Romulan Warbird uncloaked and hailed the Enterprise.

The Romulan commander's face came on the screen saying, "Greetings, we were sent here to help in a fight against the Borg."

Picard responded, "Yes, but you were supposed to bring a fleet."

"Captain, please."

She had cut the communication line, but when Picard looked toward the viewscreen he saw why. Romulan Warbird after Romulan Warbird was de-cloaking, it was non-stop. It went on until finally the Romulan fleet had surrounded both of the other fleets.

Picard watched the screen where the Klingon fleet had surrounded the planet, the Federation fleet facing the Klingons, and the Romulan fleet surrounding both. After a long silence he said, "Will, I've dreamed of this for a long time."

"What do you mean, Sir?"

"I mean, look at that out there, the Klingons, Romulans, and Federation all, once mortal enemies, joined to fight a common threat. We can no longer be

consumed by our differences. It's a bit ironical isn't it? That we always try to prevent wars from happening, but sometimes in the end it's the wars that bring us closer together."

The Ensign says, "We have a Borg cube coming toward us, Sir."

Picard replied, "Red alert, all hands to battle stations. Hailing frequencies open, Ensign."

With a superb swiftness the Ensign complied.

Then with horror and terror they all listened to the jumble of voices on the speakers. "We are Borg, lower your shields and surrender your ships. We will add your technological and biological distinctiveness to our own; your culture will adapt to service ours. Resistance is futile."

Picard replied, "Take your best shot, because we are about to resist."

Then Picard had a horrifying vision, and he knew in that instant that they would never make it out of there alive.

He yelled, "Get us out of here! They have more ships on their way!"

The bridge crew looked stunned. Riker broke the silence, "What are you talking about, Sir?" Then he looked the screen and saw; a fleet of twenty maybe thirty Borg ships was on their way. Riker continued, "My God."

The Enterprise swung around, and fired all of her phasers at one of the oncoming Borg ships. The phasers barely scratched the surface; they had already adapted Picard thought. The Borg cube activated its tractor beam, which could drain shield power on starships. The blue beam grabbed the Enterprise, but because the Enterprise continued to rotate shield frequencies, the shields

would not drain. Picard knew the Borg all too well, and he knew that sometime they would adapt to the shield frequencies. This standoff lasted for a few minutes, the Borg tractor beam unable to drain the shields and the Enterprise's phasers unable to penetrate the electromagnetic field. Finally, the Borg beam adapted to the shield frequencies, and the Enterprise's shields were drained. She sat there like a sitting duck, still unable to penetrate the magnetic field of the Borg ship. The Borg activated their cutting beam, and used it to slice a hole in the side of the Engineering section of the Enterprise. Picard remembered something from back when he was assimilated, he remembered a weakness in the Borg ships, all he needed was the time to implement it. Picard looked out at the battle scene; the Romulan fleet was just sitting there. What the hell were the Romulans doing, he thought. He kept watching hoping they would finally engage, then he saw a lone Romulan Warbird de-cloak, turn, and face the rest of the Romulan fleet.

General Seletrel, commander of the Romulan fleet, sat in her chair on the Socrah, and watched as the Avatar of Tomad de-cloaked, turned, and faced her ship.

Emperor Valdus's face came to her on her forward screen. He looked very upset, and said, "Seletrel, what do you think you're doing? The Federation and Klingon fleets are getting pounded. Help them!!!"

Seletrel ordered the fleet to attack; she did not want to, she wanted to wait for the perfect time and opportunity to strike. However the Emperor himself had

given her a direct order, and she had to oblige. She noticed on her viewscreen, the Enterprise was locked in a battle with a large Borg cube. He turned her ship towards the two ships and, when close enough, fired disrupters at the cube. The tractor beam and cutting beam instantly disengaged, and tried to find the target of the Socrah, but she had all ready turned away. The Borg beams found only empty space, and that gave Picard just what he needed. The Enterprise fired five quantum torpedoes; they each went right through the electromagnetic field like it wasn't there. All of them hit, doing serious damage, until the last one, which blew the Borg ship into pieces. The Enterprise flew through the debris, looking for another target, but only finding the remains of the Klingon fleet.

Picard hailed the Klingon fleet, moments later he stared into the face of Mar'tok.

Picard said, "Our forces are down to 23%, How are yours?"

Mar'tok replied with a harsh voice, "Down to 19%, what of the Romulans?"

"They're down to 31%. We have destroyed some Borg ships, but their fleet is still at 97%. I'm afraid we must retreat and withdraw."

Mar'tok nodded his head, and cut communication. He hated the idea of retreat, but there was no other way. A Klingon would gladly die in battle, but today was not such a day. He knew the Klingon legend of Havoc, when the darkness would fall. He thought, this is the day the shadows come to claim us all. He ordered his ships for a full retreat. The few Federation ships, the few Romulan ships, and the few Klingon ships all turned and limped off toward the sun. The Excelsior stayed behind to fight the Borg and give the retreat at least a

chance of surviving. The ships phasers continued to fire, and when a Borg ship came upon them; the crew closed their eyes and the darkness came.

STARFLEET COMMAND

MAY 10, 2380

Admiral West, the Commander-in-Chief, spoke, "My friends, I regret to inform you that three hours ago most of our joint fleet was lost to the Borg. We have an even graver situation than we thought. Before when the Borg attacked us, it was only one ship. The reason it was only one ship is because each separate ship is a separate branch of the collective. This time, however, the branches have all joined together, that is why they have a lot more ships than ever before. Right now they are on a direct course for Earth. We do have ships left, but nothing that can stop them. They will conquer us, it is inevitable--"

Just then he was interrupted by Captain Picard, "Wait! I suggest that we send a distress signal to anyone who will help us."

"Where should we send it, Captain?" West asked.

"Send it across the galaxy."

STARFLEET COMMAND

MAY 11, 2380

The next day, Starfleet waited for an answer to the distress signal, finally it came.

An Ensign answered the incoming transmission and informed Admiral West, "Sir, I believe we have an answer to our distress signal."

West asked, "Who is it, Ensign?"

West waited for an answer, then looked at the shocked Ensign's face as he said it, "Sir, it's the Furies."

"What?"

"It's the Furies, Sir. They want to know if there is anything they can do to help."

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, EARTH

MAY 11, 2380

"Why are the Furies trying to help us?" Asked the President.

"They may want to storm in on the Alpha Quadrant." Replied an admiral.

"But if they wanted to storm the Quadrant, why not wait until after the Borg have decimated our fleet, why try to help us?" Said another admiral.

The President's secretary came in and whispered something to him. He quickly got up and said, "If you will excuse me gentlemen, there is a transmission for me." He left them talking about this problem.

He walked into his personal office, and typed his command code in. He turned to the screen to see his first sight of a Fury. This one was red colored, and had horns on the top of his head. He looked like the devil himself.

His voice was cold when he spoke, "My name is Zutegre. I understand you have a problem with certain Borg infestation."

“Yes that is true. I wish to know what you want in return,” replied the President.

“What we want. Hmmm. We want two Federation ships, two Klingon ships, and two Romulan ships.”

The President looked stunned. “Why?” he asked.

“That is the second part of our bargain, no questions asked. You give us what we want no questions asked, and we get rid of the Borg for you. A fair deal, don’t you think, trillions of lives for the price of six ships.”

The President knew there had to be something more, something Zutegre wasn’t telling him. Why would they help races half a galaxy away, and then ask for six ships, where their own ships would be far superior.

“So, do we have a deal?”

He didn’t like this one bit, but he liked the idea of being conquered by the Borg even less. “Yes, we have a deal.” he said.

“Excellent. Excellent.”

“How will you get here?” Asked the President.

“We have a special way to get there, our ships are equipped with a wormhole engine. The design is quite impressive. We will make our way to Typhon 542 as soon as possible.”

The transmission cut off just like that, he would now have to convince Starfleet Command that this was the best thing to do.

He walked back into the conference room, and turned to the admirals saying, “Gentlemen, The Furies have asked for one thing in return for their help

in defeating the Borg. The Romulans must give them two ships, the Klingons must give them two ships, and we must give them two of our ships..” A gasp fell over the entire room.

“Are you out of your mind?” one admiral asked. “That means they can discover weaknesses in our ships. Do you know what they can do with that?”

“Yes I am afraid I do, however if we sit here the Borg will destroy us anyway. There is no chance that the Borg will turn back; there is a chance that the Furies will not attack us. I’ve made my decision, I’ll go with the Furies.”

STARFLEET COMMAND

MAY 11, 2380

Everyone in the office looked tense, waiting for word to come in. Then it came.

An officer spoke, “Transmission from the Furies at Typhon 542. They’ve engaged The Borg.”

TYPHON 542, BATTLE ZONE

MAY 11, 2380

The design of the Fury ships was remarkable, their silhouettes beautiful as gleaming light shined off their purple hull. Curvature after curvature after curvature, the ships were sleek, aerodynamic. They looked as if they could fly just as good in an atmosphere, or even under water. Faster than their Borg counterparts, they could reach speeds up to warp 19.9. The ships were more

maneuverable than a shuttlecraft, each dodging this way and that way, as Borg weapons tried to find their targets, but couldn't get close. Occasionally, a Borg weapon got lucky and hit a Fury ship, but the weapon simply bounced off the Fury-made hull, they didn't even need deflector shields. The Fury ships were using their new quantum phasers, which rarely missed its target. Dodging this way and that way, the Fury fleet went to work picking apart the Borg one by one. They seared a corner of a Borg ship off, then sliced another one in half, and then sliced an entire side off one. One Fury ship went directly towards a Borg cube, spinning and turning to evade return fire. When it was close enough it fired right into the heart of the Borg ship. The quantum phasers sliced a hole in the cube the size of a starship all the way through the ship. In half a second the ship was torn apart in flames. Another Borg ship chased a Fury ship down, and activated its tractor beam. The Borg tried to drain the shields, but the Fury ships didn't have shields, they had powerful hull. The tractor beam held the Fury ship in place, and the cutting beam was activated. The cutting beam had no effect; it couldn't cut through the all-powerful hull. A second Fury ship came upon the two ships, and used its phasers to disable the beams. An entire section of the Borg ship blew off. The other Fury ship, now free, flipped up and around locking on to the last Borg ship that was left. Both Fury ships fired at the same time, and the Borg were blown away.

"The Borg will never bother you again," said Zutegre, leader of the Furies.

“On behalf of the entire Alpha Quadrant, we owe you a debt of gratitude,”
replied West.

The transmission ended just like that. The Fury fleet went back into a wormhole and vanished into the night. They took with them the secrets of Starfleet, and unbelievable, unstoppable power. West asked himself one question: Was this the price of victory?

TYPHON 542, BATTLE ZONE

MAY 12, 2380

The Enterprise was looking for anything that maybe was left in working order. Picard was on the bridge, looking at the viewscreen. It took him back to ten years ago, when he was assimilated by the Borg. He remembered the ceremony at Wolf 359. The 39 ships left in ruins, the thousands killed in minutes. He drifted back to the present, and looked at the ruined Borg ships. They had won; had really won. The Borg were completely destroyed. He smiled when he thought; no one will ever go through what I went through, again! But then he thought about the Furies, would they storm the Alpha Quadrant? What would stop them from being like the Borg? In his mind one sentence held the answer: Resistance is NOT futile.

CHAPTER 2: ARMIES OF FORCE

AVATAR OF TOMAD, DEEP SPACE

JUNE 6, 2380

Emperor Valdus was on his way to the senate meeting on Romulus. He walked along the deck of his ship, the ship he loved, the ship that took him anywhere, the Avatar of Tomad. They would arrive at Romulus in less than two hours. He was traveling this way because he was at a conference on Calder II for five days. He was happy to finally be heading home, back to the world he loved, to his wife. He suddenly heard the alarms of trouble, and walked swiftly to the bridge.

He got there just in time to see two Warbirds attacking the Avatar of Tomad.

“What are they doing? Hail them.” He asked

“They’re not responding, Sir.” Replied the helmsman.

“Return fire. Get me---“ Valdus was interrupted.

“Sir, our shields just went down!” Cried the tactical officer.

“Raise them!”

“I can’t, malfunction, Sir.”

In that instant, his last second of life, he realized that he had left no son, no daughter to take his place. No one would lead the Empire into the next decade. His last thought was that he failed, and the Empire would not survive. The two other Warbirds secretly opened up a wormhole and vanished without a trace. The wormhole glowed a brilliant flash of blue light, and was gone.

ROMULAN WARBIRD CEZA, ROMULUS

JUNE 7, 2380

Transmission from Romulus to Tomalak:

Emperor Valdus's ship was destroyed yesterday by an unknown ship, no survivors, and no witnesses. Orders are to discover identity of unknown ship. Could possibly lead to civil war in the Empire. End transmission.

Tomalak could not believe it, Valdus had been killed. Who would lead the Romulan Empire? Valdus had no son. Trel, his second-in-command and most trusted friend, stood at his side.

Trel spoke, "Who will take his place as Emperor? If I may speak frankly, I think it should be you who takes over."

"It is not that simple, there are others, like Sela, who also want the position." Replied Tomalak. "I will fight her, if she does not withdraw it shall plunge the Empire into civil war, but I will need help. Sela is a general, and so had her own fleet. I believe I know of a general who may help us."

The two beamed down to the Capital City on Romulus. They walked into a bar next to the Senate building. Tomalak looked around the room and saw who he was looking for. She sat at the bar, drinking a large glass of Romulan Ale; Tomalak came up beside her with Trel in tow.

He said, "Greetings General Seletrel, I wish to speak with you."

"Tomalak! Its so good to see you again! How are your wife and kids?"

She replied.

"Fine, they're all fine. Tron, our oldest, is about to start military school. Tral, our youngest, is always home playing with his toy ships. Tal, my wife, is still the same as always."

“Very good, I will have come and see them sometime soon.”

“I’m sure they would like that very much.” Said Tomalak.

“Now, what did you want to speak to me about?” Asked Seletrel.

“As you know by now Emperor Valdus was killed yesterday. Sela has assembled a fleet to take over the Empire, with your help I plan to challenge her.”

“I see.” Seletrel said as she nodded her head. “What exactly is in it for me?”

“I will give you a position in the Romulan Government, we could rule the Empire together. The Romulan Empire could become an empire once again.”

“Okay,” she said. “Let’s do it. Let’s take Sela down.”

SELA’S FLEET, REMUS

JUNE 7, 2380

Sela already knew who it was who had killed the Emperor, it was Tomalak, and she would soon prove it. Then the position would be all hers. She wanted to make the Empire better that was the Emperor’s job. The Emperor was supposed to protect the people from corruption. Tomalak would never do that, he was too power hungry; he wanted everything right now and wanted it his way. She thought about what she would do after she became Emperor. The Romulan Government had many problems right now, the entire fleet needed to repaired and refitted, but there wasn’t enough money. She had an idea of how to get more money. The actual problem was that Government officials were paid too much money, and she would take care of that when she got to be Emperor. She

knew she wanted to get rid of the Tael Shi Ar, sure they were the Emperor's personal bodyguards, but they also couldn't be trusted.

"General, Tomalak has assembled a fleet on Romulus." Said the Tactical officer.

She turned to her second-in-command saying, "Set course for Romulus, maximum warp."

"I Sir. Why are we heading for Romulus?" Came the reply.

"We are going to give Tomalak a grave surprise and attack him when he least expects it."

SELETREL'S FLEET, ROMULUS

JUNE 7, 2380

Tomalak was happy with the way things were going so far. Seletrel had delivered on her promise to assemble a fleet for him. She commanded most of the entire Romulan fleet. Any day now he would become Emperor, he should be happy, but at this time he wasn't. The fall of the Empire was unstoppable. This civil war would eventually tear the Romulan Empire in two, and all that he had worked for would be lost. He still had not found out the identity of the unknown ship, but he guessed it was one of Sela's ships. He was thinking about what he would do after he got to be Emperor, conquer the Federation perhaps? It would be the time, they had lost most of Starfleet to the Borg a few months ago, then the Furies came and wiped out the Borg completely. No other Romulan had ever tried to conquer the Federation. Some thought that the Federation would be

needed again, especially if the Borg or Dominion began a full-scale invasion of the Alpha Quadrant. Most; however, thought that if anyone attacked the Federation, the Klingons would come to the rescue, and vice versa. The Romulans had the power to destroy one fleet, but not two combined. In the end the Federation/Klingon alliance would win by sheer number. He knew that could destroy the Federation, then take care of the Klingons, the Dominion, even the Ferengi. The Romulan Empire would be spread across the entire galaxy. Suddenly he was surrounded by blaring alarms and red lights flashing. He quickly made his way to the bridge.

He got there just in time to see Sela's fleet attacking and getting ripped apart.

"Evasive maneuvers!" Seletrel yelled.

It was too late, most of her ships lay in utter ruins. Then Tomalak saw the Vengeance, Sela's command ship, coming straight towards them. He closed his eyes waiting for his body and ship to be torn apart. After several seconds there was nothing, he opened his eyes and looked, all of her ships were gone. She had spared him, why? He would not have if he were in her place. Seletrel barked a few orders and got to work fixing her ships for another day.

PROCONSUL NERET'S SHIP, DEEP SPACE

JUNE 7, 2380

Proconsul Neret was here investigating the murder of Emperor Valdus and his crew. He was sent to by the Romulan Government, who believed that some

outside force was at work here. They were currently running sensor scans of the area where the Avatar of Tomad was last reported.

His personal assistant, Ambassador Tehrol soon said, “Sir, you had better take a look at this.”

“What is it?” Neret asked coming over to the console.

Tehrol continued, “We have been running scans of the area, and have discovered something interesting.” He point to the screen, Neret saw what he meant instantly.

“That looks Romulan.”

“Exactly, Sir, it’s a Romulan warp signature.”

“Are you saying the Avatar of Tomad was destroyed by another Romulan ship?” Neret said.

“Yes, however, the warp signature contains traces of elements not found in this quadrant.”

“What?”

“I would hypothesize that this is possibly a remaining ship from the strike by the Obsidian Order on the Founders.

“Who would do this? Why?” Neret asked.

“I don’t know, Sir, but we better blame it on somebody or else the government will not back your policies.” Tehrol exclaimed. Proconsul Neret nodded in agreement. They would have to make up a story, because the government was down his throat to find out who was behind this.

Neret proclaimed, “If we can’t tell the truth, who can we blame this on?”

“Maybe it would be better if some inside force was behind it.”

“Indeed.” Replied Neret, nodding his head. “What about the Teal Shi Ar?”

“Excellent choice, Sir.” Said Tehrol.

“They’re so caught up in duty and honor, that they wouldn’t even realize this was blamed on them. Send a transmission to Romulus.

REMUS NEWS

JUNE 8, 2380

“Two days ago, Emperor Valdus’s ship was destroyed by an unknown ship. We now have a confirmed report as to who was behind that attack.

Minutes ago, the Romulan Government issued a statement saying Proconsul Neret has investigated this and found it was the Tael Shi Ar. Again, we have a confirmed report, the Teal Shi Ar behind the assault on the Avatar of Tomad.”

SELA’S FLEET, ROMULUS

JUNE 8, 2380

Sela couldn’t understand, the Tael Shi Ar killed the Emperor, she thought for sure it was Tomalak. The Tael Shi Ar had sworn their lives to the Emperor’s protection, there had to be something more, something the government wasn’t telling anyone. Why would they do this? To gain power for themselves? To be rid of her? To be rid of Tomalak? Then she saw the flashing red lights. She looked up and heard the red alert sounds of trouble. She ran to her bridge.

When she got there she saw what was going on, Tomalak’s fleet had uncloaked and were attacking. Her entire fleet was getting ripped in pieces. Her

ships continued to fight and hold their own, but Tomalak's fleet was larger and better equipped. This lasted until only her ship remained. Her last thought was that she failed, and the Empire would be overrun by darkness. She knew it was hopeless and she closed her eyes and waited for the shadows to come for her. Tomalak's entire fleet went towards the Vengeance and pounded it with every weapon they had. In a blue flash of light its shields vaporized, and then the Vengeance was ripped apart in a giant ball of flames.

CAPITAL CITY, ROMULUS

JUNE 8, 2380

Tomalak had gained victory, there was only one thing left to do, seize the Capital. His and Seletrel's troops surrounded the Senate building. They silently burst through the door, and ran swiftly to the Senate floor.

The Senate was in session today, when everyone in the room heard shots outside the door. A second later the first troops burst through the door, and troops and more troops filled the entire room.

"What's the meaning of all of this!!!!"

Tomalak came forward and spoke, "Ah. Proconsul Neret, How are you?"

"Tomalak, what do you think you're doing?"

"Well, you see I have defeated Sela, and thus the Emperor's throne is mine. I have come here to seize and take complete control of the Government. I have Seletrel's entire fleet under my command, you will not stop me. Sela's fleet is gone, and you have no fleet.

Neret sat there and thought, this was it; the legend of shobah had come true. He remembered that legend, the one that said on day a shadow would come upon us all. He nodded in agreement with Tomalak; the day of shobah had finally come. The Empire had not survived, and all that he had worked for and built up was lost forever. Soon a horrifying thought came to him, that maybe someone had planned this whole thing and the fall of the Empire had been deliberate.

OTHER SIDE OF THE GALAXY

JUNE 9, 2380

On the other side of the galaxy, a face, a dark face, a predator laughs. Not just any laugh, but a victorious, evil laugh. He looks out over the bridge of his ship at the viewscreen, and sees a line, two ships long. The ships seem familiar, their long necks and tapered wings resemble a bird, a bird of prey. He speaks in a cold voice, "Phase one is completed, proceeding with Phase two."

CHAPTER 3: DARK FUTURE

QU'AL OUTPOST, KLINGON BORDER

JUNE 13, 2380

The Klingon outpost on Qu'aL was an older outpost, in the time where the Klingons and the Federation were at war. The outpost had minimal defenses, two transports for protection and a low-grade energy shield. The Captain was

running checks on the phasers. They had been going on and off line for the past two hours. As of now they were off-line again. Suddenly the blaring alarms of a red-alert echoed through the station. On the sensors, were two birds-of-prey, which were attacking the station. What were they doing? The outpost launched its two transports, which were no match for two birds-of-prey.

The Captain sent out a distress signal, "This is the outpost on Qu'aL. We are under attack by two Klingon warships! Can anyone assist us?" But it was too late the Captain watched as the transports were blown away, and as the station blew into pieces, and then the darkness came.

KLINGON HIGH COUNSEL, Qo'noS

JUNE 14, 2380

Mar'tok had been in this position before, long ago, or so it seemed. He had been involved in the civil war between Gow'ron and the Duras family that had almost destroyed the Empire. Now he was here again, one day ago, a Klingon outpost on Qu'al was destroyed by two unknown Klingon birds-of-prey. Around him now was the High Counsel, discussing what to do about this incident.

"As all of you know by now the outpost on Qu'al was destroyed yesterday by renegade Klingons hoping to bring us into a second civil war" Mar'tok exclaimed.

"Where did these renegade Klingons come from?" asked Captain Klang.

"We do not know," replied Mar'tok. "The question is what do we do about it. Should we sent a fleet to destroy them and hope our arrogance shall not plunge the Empire into civil war again!"

"Mar'tok, they attacked Klingon citizens, who were unarmed and utterly defenseless. We have to protect the Empire. An old saying says that any Klingon should put the good of the Empire above his own pride. We must protect the people, for the Empire!" proclaimed Klang.

"Sir, those are Klingon citizens, no matter what they have done or what they plan to do, they are Klingons, their heart is of this world." Said Ko'lar.

Ko'lar was a promising young Klingon with a bright future ahead of him. He was Mar'tok's new Chief-of-Staff. What both Klang and Ko'lar had said were true, but now was not time for truth, it was time for action.

"Very well, assemble a fleet to protect Qo'noS." ordered Mar'tok.

Klang came up to his chair saying, " You're doing the right thing. Tomorrow you and I shall have bloodwine and drink to victory. Ka'plah, Success"

As Klang left Mar'tok replied, "Ka'plah, to you as well my old friend. I have a feeling, however, we will not be drinking to victory, but to darkness."

DURAS HOME, Qo'noS

JUNE 14, 2380

Lursa and Be'tor were sitting quietly in the home of their father. Gowron had arrested them for treason many years ago, but they had easily escaped.

They had collaborated with the Romulans to gain control of the government, now they waited for a second chance at the Empire.

A guard walked in just then, "comm channel for you, Sir"

"Which one of us?" Asked Be'tor.

"Both of you," came the reply.

They walked to the screen, activated it, and sat down, waiting. The screen was fuzzy, but then became clear as they both looked into the face of pure evil.

The voice came to them next, "Lursa and Be'tor, I presume. Allow me to introduce myself; I am Zutegre, leader of the Furies. I have a proposition for you. I want you to take my two Klingon birds-of-prey and attack and destroy the fleet stationed at Qo'noS."

"What is in it for us?" Lursa asked.

"Then I will allow you to control the entire Klingon Empire, and rule it however you two desire. That's what you want, isn't it?"

"Do you honestly believe two ships can destroy an entire fleet?" Asked Be'tor.

"Ha. Ha. Ha. These are Klingon ships modified by Fury technology, Fury weapons, Fury hull, Fury engines. In a sense, you have two Fury warships that can take down an entire fleet in a matter of moments."

Lursa and Be'tor grin at each other, they had found their way for revenge. "All right we'll do it." they both replied.

"Excellent, the two birds-of-prey will rendezvous with you at the manufacturing plant at Praxis in less than one hour."

The communication was cut just like that. Lursa and Be'tor jumped up and went to their ship to prepare for the rendezvous.

WEAPONS PLANT, PRAXIS

JUNE 14, 2380

The Duras sisters' ship came up quickly on the moon of Praxis, and went into slow orbit. The weapons plant was laid out in front of them, it was magnificent. The lights shone from every angle, and crevice. This base was where Klingons made weapons for the black market. Weapons made and then sold to the Ferengi, Maquis, Romulans, and so on. The Klingon government had no knowledge of this plant, and thus they would be undetected here. Their minds turned back to the task at hand.

"Where are the birds-of-prey we were promised?" Lursa asked.

"I don't know." Be'tor replied.

Then, as if summoned, a flash of red light glowed in front of them. A brilliant wormhole opened like magic, and from its mouth two birds-of-prey came swooping out of the darkness of the shadows. Both ships turned directly toward the base, and opened fire. Blue phasers burned through the atmosphere and blew away buildings, roads, and even people. Klingon weapons tried to retaliate, but simply bounced off the Fury-modified hull. In seconds, the entire weapons plant was in flames, totally destroyed.

Lursa and Be'tor watched all of this on their screen, in utter disbelief. After it was over, the comm unit bleeped to life.

"Private communication for you, Sir." said an officer.

"We'll take it on the console." replied Be'tor.

As before, the same evil face and voice came to them. "Greetings, by now you have seen an entire facility disappear in a matter of seconds. I hope you're pleased with the modifications we've made." Said Zutegre.

"That was quiet impressive." exclaimed Lursa.

"Thank you. Now, proceed with the second phase of the plan." The screen went dark as quickly as it had come on.

"Helmsman, set course for Qo'noS, maximum warp, and signal the two ships to follow us." ordered Lursa.

"Prepare to cloak, as well." ordered Be'tor.

"I Sir." came the reply from all over the bridge.

The Duras ship cloaked into a haze, and disappeared into the shadows of the night. The two Fury-modified ships also cloaked and disappeared into the night.

KLINGON FLEET, Qo'noS

JUNE 15, 2380

Ko'lar was leading this fleet, as Mar'tok busing with affairs of state. Ko'lar had opposed the fleet, because a fleet was not needed to protect the homeworld from only two renegade ships; however, had been given a direct order and thus

had to obey. He looked out toward the screen. It was a wondrous sight, ship after ship after ship, surrounding the homeworld of Qo'noS. Ships from the thirty year old bird-of-prey to the new Vor'cha attack cruiser.

What am I doing out here? he thought to himself.

Just then, he got his answer. The blaring alarms and red alert sounds jolted him back to reality. This was trouble.

"What's happening?" he asked walking out onto the bridge.

"Three Birds-of-prey have uncloaked, and are attacking us, Sir." replied someone from behind.

"Can you Identify them?" Ko'lar asked.

"Two of them I can't, but one looks to be the ship of the Duras sisters." proclaimed the same officer.

"Lursa and Be'tor, the traitors!" shouted Ko'lar. "Attack position, fire at will!"

The Klingon fleet opened fire with everything it had. The Duras ship shook under the force of heavy fire. The other two birds-of-prey remained completely intact. One flipped up side down, and locked on to a Vor'cha attack cruiser. It fired its phasers straight down the heart. The blue phaser hit the port side nacelle, blowing it completely off, and continued down the port side, slicing a hole right through the hull. The beam continued slicing and hit the neck, blowing the bridge section away. When the beam finally disengaged, there was nothing left, and the ship fell apart in flames.

Ko'lar had been watching all of this in disbelief. He said, "Retreat, retreat, all ships full retreat. Get me the High Counsel."

A picture of Mar'tok's face appeared on the screen. "Ko'lar how goes the fight?"

"Not well, we will have to call for a full retreat."

"You're joking, against two ships!"

"Yes, they have some sort of-----"

It broke off in mid sentence. Ko'lar shouted, "Get him back! Get him back!"

His crew had all turned to face the viewscreen, he followed their eyes. The two unknown ships were heading directly for them.

"Evasive. Try to signal our surrender"

It was no use, the ships continued their course toward them, and then opened fire. The blue beam crossed the side of the Bortas, and hit the engines blowing the back of the ship off. The Bortas, now severely disabled, had no chance. The second beam caught directly under the bridge and in seconds the ship was engulfed in flames. The shockwave went for what seemed like forever, and then calmed. There was nothing left of the Klingon fleet, but pieces floating here and there.

On the bridge of their ship, Lursa and Be'tor celebrated their victory. The Empire was theirs.

"Victory is ours, Be'tor." said Lursa.

"Yes, only one thing is left undone. Prepare our troops for transport to the capital city."

"At once, Sir" was the reply.

CAPITAL CITY, Qo'noS

JUNE 15, 2380

Mar'tok was worried, he had not heard from Ko'lar or the fleet since that communication was cut off in mid-sentence. How could two ships pose such a threat? Then he heard the sound of phaser fire outside the High Counsel, and became more worried. In moments, hundreds of troops burst through the door, and surrounded the entire counsel. Lursa and Be'tor walked in right after.

"Lursa, Be'tor, you traitors!" exclaimed Mar'tok. "What's the meaning of all of this?"

"Mar'tok, just a few hours ago, we destroyed your entire fleet, and now have come to seize the capital." replied Lursa.

Mar'tok understood, his fleet was now gone, the leader of the High Counsel could lead no more.

Klang now responded, "You have no right to take the Counsel throne!"

"Ah, but we do, you can't stop us." Be'tor said.

"I will stop you, myself." Klang said.

One nod from Lursa and a phaser shot right into Klang, knocking him to the ground.

"He's dead." replied someone standing over Klang.

Mar'tok knew it was hopeless, that they would not win this war. He went and knelt by the body of his friend, Klang.

"I told you we would be drinking to darkness, my foolish old friend. I promise you that one day, in Stoval Core, we shall drink to victory."

CHAPTER 4: OBJECTIVE: EARTH

USS ENTERPRISE, EARTH

JUNE 19, 2380

The Enterprise was finally home, back to the world that had created her, back to where she belonged. The crew was on the planet, taking some well-dissevered shoreleave. Captain Picard walked along the hedge leading to his old house in La Barre, France. He needed some relaxation, with the Borg threat now gone, and the Romulans ravaged by civil war, not one was really a threat to the Federation. After over two hundred years, the Federation was finally at peace. He slid quietly inside the house of his father, which was now condemned. His father had died a long time ago, and the house was passed on to his brother Robret. Robret died in a fire with his twelve year old son, Rene. Picard just stood looking around at everything. He walked out into the vineyard out the back, and for the first time in his life he felt at peace, everything had changed.

USS EXCELSIOR, BRISTAR CLUSTER

JUNE 19, 2380

The USS Excelsior was on a mission of exploration in the Bristar Cluster. Captain Shelby was pacing the bridge of her ship; she loved being a captain. It was tough work though; you had to make the big decisions, because everybody else looked to you for advice.

“Got anything yet, Ensign?” she asked, turning to the science station.

“Nothing yet, Sir” replied the young Ensign McGregor. “Wait, I think I may have something. Coordinates are 349 mark 43.”

“On screen.” Said Shelby.

The viewscreen flickered on, and the sight was amazing. A bright red hue was glowing in the darkness, and then like magic the mouth flashed open to reveal a beautiful wormhole.

“Wow.” Came the reply from all over the bridge.

“I’m getting something coming through the wormhole.” Said Ensign McGregor.

“Identify.” Replied Captain Shelby.

“Two unknown warp signatures, of a type I have never seen.”

Shelby knew all too well what those words meant. They were all about to come face to face with pure evil. It also meant that they might be at war. “Red alert, all hands to battle stations!” she yelled.

The blaring alarms went crazy, calling the crew to arms. The wormhole now glowing bright red, deposited its two ships and then just as suddenly as it had appeared, it vanished into the night.

“Show me those two ship!” Shelby called.

The viewscreen now switched to a close-up of the two ships. The crew gasped as they stared into a mirror image of their own.

“Is it possible?” asked Shelby.

“Cross referenced and verified. I am now reading only us and two Federation ships directly ahead, the USS Excalibur, and the USS Nova.” Replied Ensign McGregor from behind the science station.

“Hail them.”

“I Sir.” Said Comm officer Hawking. “No response.”

McGregor’s voice came then, “Captain their arming weapons!”

Oh no, to Shelby that meant only one thing, this time the Federation was under attack from within. “Get me Starfleet Command!” she yelled.

“I can’t get through, they’re using some sort of jamming system.”

The first blue blast hit the Excelsior in the starboard side, slicing through the hull. The Excelsior returned fire, but the phasers were completely absorbed by the hull of the two attacking ships. The Excelsior tried to turn and run, but a second blue beam caught her directly in the engines, blowing the back of the ship totally off. From that point on she had no chance, the next beam hit the bridge section and then suddenly the ship was engulfed in a giant shockwave, and was blown into the shadows.

The two ships turned, activated the wormhole, and slid silently through,. The wormhole closed in a flash of red light, and vanished into the darkness.

USS ENTERPRISE, EARTH

JUNE 20, 2380

Captain Picard walked onto the bridge of his ship, now finished with refits and upgrades. She was once again ready to fly out into the darkness, and make the galaxy safe peace.

“Communication for you, Sir.” Said Commander Data.

“Thank you Mr. Data, I’ll take it in my ready room.”

He walked off the bridge and into his ready room. Sitting down on the chair, he punched in his command code. The voice and picture of Admiral West came to him in a second.

“Jean-Luc, how are you?” asked West.

“Well, I’m fine Admiral, and you?”

“Unfortunately, not well. Captain, Starfleet Command has some serious concerns.”

“Concerns, what kind of concerns?” asked Picard.

“Yesterday, at about 1500 hours, the USS Excelsior sent a routine transmission, she’s not been heard from since.”

“Any speculations as to why?”

“None so far. She was supposed to be investigating the Bristar Cluster. I want the Enterprise to look into the matter.”

“We’re on our way, Admiral.”

“Good. Godspeed, Jean-Luc.”

“To you as well, Admiral.” Replied Picard.

Walking out the door, he ordered, “Set course for the Bristar Cluster, warp 8.”

"I Sir," came the reply.

"Trouble, Captain?" said Commander Riker.

"It would appear so Number One."

USS ENTERPRISE, BRISTAR CLUSTER

JUNE 21, 2380

The Enterprise dropped out of warp, slowing to begin the search for the Excelsior. She slowly and carefully entered the now completely deserted Bristar Cluster.

"Begin scans, Mr. Data. Number one, standard search pattern." Said Picard.

"Aye, Sir," came the reply from both.

Picard stood pacing the bridge, as the Enterprise executed a slight port turn. The bridge crew looked unusually tense at this moment in time, as if they could sense something bad was going to happen.

Data spoke next, "Captain, I believe I may have something."

Picard walked up next to him, "What is it Data?"

"I have detected some unusual readings in sector 3."

"Can you be more specific?"

"The readings come neutron radiation surges."

"Radiation surges? Any idea as to the causes?"

"Several possibilities, however, only one that could exist in the Bristar Cluster."

“Only one?” replied Picard.

“Yes, a completely balanced wormhole effect.”

“But there aren’t any wormholes in the Bristar Cluster, it’s been studied.”

Said Picard.

“Precisely my point, Sir.”

It hit Picard instantly, what Data had said, and he knew why. The Furies, the Furies had attacked the Excelsior. He looked around at his crew and knew that they understood as well. In that same instant, he a vision, he saw Starfleet HQ utterly in ruins. Was it a fantasy or a prediction of the future? He knew he couldn’t take that chance.

He turned to the Helmsman, “Get us out of here.” He ordered.

“Course heading, Sir?” asked the Helmsman.

He looked at the viewscreen, and without a thought simply said, “Earth.”

SPACE DOCK, EARTH

JUNE 21, 2380

The Space Dock hung there, like a beautiful gleaming city floating in the blackness of space. It was an impressive display of millions of lights and tons of tritanium that took 150,000 people over 5 years to build. The scene was beautiful with Earth and her Space Dock, and the sun setting directly behind both. But a small dot of red glowed in the distance. Instantly, the redness flashed open to reveal a perfectly created wormhole. Two ships came swooping out of the redness, and then turned towards Earth. The wormhole closed as

easily and silently as it had come. The two disguised ships continued towards Earth, and blended in easily with the local ship traffic. They came upon the Space Dock, and when they were close enough they fired. The blue beams shot through the space doors, and went out the other side. Local traffic tried to help out, but none were starships, and were no match. The next set of beams started picking apart the base piece by piece. When the final beam cut through, the base was engulfed in flames. The two ships now turned their attention to the planet, and started firing at the surface.

STARFLEET COMMAND, SAN FRANCISCO

JUNE 21, 2380

The people of San Francisco walked along the streets, which were very busy as usual. Dr. Leah Brahms slowly walked toward Starfleet Command Headquarters. She was going there to meet with the Fleet Admiral. She had new ideas of warp design theory, better than those ideas she had when she built the Enterprise-D. She heard the squeal of brakes, and the crashing of metal. She looked over her shoulder and saw two hovercars had collided, but their owners were looking up at the sky. She followed their eyes and saw her fate. It glowed bright blue from just being fired, an energy beam she thought. She watched as it fell down from the sky, and sliced into the Starfleet Command Headquarters, blowing it to flames. Windows shattered, hovercars flipped over and over, the noise was too much to bear so she covered her ears. The flames continued to rumble through the city. Leah saw them coming, fast, very fast.

She turned and ran for her life, like the others right beside her. She ran, faster, but the flames were still gaining on her. The last time she turned to look, she tripped and fell on the sidewalk. She raised her head and saw, the flames were upon her. She closed her eyes and the shadows of death came.

USS ENTERPRISE, EARTH

JUNE 22, 2380

The Enterprise glided smoothly to a close Earth orbit. She turned silently through the debris that had once been a great Space Station but now was only garbage.

Picard was first to speak, "My god, what has happened here?"

Data answered, "Captain, I have been scanning the surface, and—"

"and what? Data?" replied Picard.

"It's Starfleet Command, Sir."

"What about it?" asked Picard.

"I can confirm the location of Starfleet, but I cannot confirm the existence of Starfleet."

"On screen."

The viewscreen flickered on and showed the horrible truth, the city of San Francisco lay to waste. The once proud Starfleet Command Headquarters building that had stood for over two centuries as a symbol of peace was in shambles.

"Lifesigns Data?" asked Picard.

"I am reading thousands of lifesigns throughout the city, but the attack seem to have been centered around the Starfleet Command building. I am detecting no lifesigns there." Replied Data.

Picard knew what that meant, the Federation President, Vice-President, and Federation Counsel had all been killed. Starfleet Command had been destroyed. A thought came to him; back when he had battled to Borg over four years ago, when the Borg Queen had said, "Watch your future's end!" This was indeed the future's end, for how could you rebuild a government without a government? Chaos would run rampant, and no one would be able to stop it. The Klingons, the Romulans, the Federation; all once proud armies of light, were now soldiers of darkness.

CHAPTER 5: A CALL TO ARMS

USS ENTERPRISE, EARTH

JUNE 22, 2380

Picard walked swiftly into the observation lounge; he had no idea why he was at this meeting. This meeting was of those who were lucky enough to have survived the attack. He looked around the room, at old familiar faces, and sat down at his chair. There was Admiral West, who was on shoreleave at the time. There were Admirals Hirohito, Shantee, and Sheridan who had been in the basement and thus were protected from the attack.

West spoke first, "We need to make a decision for an intern President."

Picard spoke, "Admiral, perhaps I shouldn't be here."

"Oh, no, Captain, you have to be here. We have all made the decision to make you our new President."

Picard was speechless, "Admiral, with all do respect, there are plenty of other people much better suited than me, like you. You need all of the ships you can get, who would command the Enterprise?"

"Commander Riker could handle the job very nicely, don't you think." replied Sheridan.

"Well, yes, of course. But there are better equipped people to have this position."

West answered, "As much as I would like to, I am about to take over the C-in-C's job. All the other Admirals either don't want to or have other duties now. You are the next logical step. Jean-Luc we need you, the Federation needs you. The Federation is what you've worked your life to protect and serve, I know you won't give that up."

Picard slowly nodded his head, "Ok, I'll do it. I will relinquish command of the Enterprise to Commander Riker immediately."

Two hours later, Picard walked out onto the bridge for what would be his last time for a while. He walked to the front of the bridge, and turned to face his beloved crew.

He spoke softly, dreading what he was about to say, "The fleet Admirals have just asked me to become the intern President. It is a position I cannot

refuse, at least not at this time. I therefore hereby relinquish command of the Enterprise NCC 1701-E to my first officer, Commander William T. Riker."

No smiles were exchanged, only faces of sorrow at the idea that the one of the greatest captains in Starfleet was leaving them.

Picard walked up to Riker, "Congratulations, Will. The Enterprise is your ship now, take care of her."

"Of course, Sir.

As Picard left the bridge, Riker said from behind, "Captain," Picard turned to face Riker, "she'll be here when you get back."

Picard smiled and walked off the bridge and into the turbolift. He turned down a corridor and into the transporter room. With one little word, "Energize." he left the Enterprise and dissolved into the shadows.

DS9, BAJORAN SECTOR

JUNE 23, 2380

Kira walked through the promenade, looking at the wormhole out the window. It was a beautiful sight, the wormhole opened and closed, in brilliant flashes of blue light, almost rhythmically. It had been just one year since the Allied force had taken Cardassia Prime from the Dominion. At that moment she thought of the friends who had left her, O'Brien was back on Earth, Odo was with his fellow shapeshifters, and Captain Sisko had disappeared in the fire caves on Bajor. Then she saw and heard the red alert sounds, as the wormhole opened and spewed ships, ships, and more ships. Kira ran swiftly to the bridge.

Kira walked through the lift, and onto the bridge. "What is going on?" she asked.

"We are reading over 300 Jem'Hadar ships coming through the wormhole." Ezri Dax replied.

"How is that possible!" Kira replied.

As she said this, the bridge erupted in flames. Sparks shot out of computer consoles all over the place.

"Shields are down," Worf said.

"Give the evacuation code signal," Kira said.

All of the people on the station crowded into the small runabouts and the Defiant. They all made it to the docking ring. Kira walked onto the Defiant, and closed the door behind her. As the ship separated from the station, other Dominion ships were docking. Then the Defiant zipped away and in a brilliant flash of light, it was gone. The Defiant traveled through space and left the ruins of DS9 behind it. She headed for Earth, the planet where she had come to be. She was a shining beacon, all alone in the night.

STARFLEET COMMAND, PARIS

JUNE 23, 2380

Picard walked into the temporary Starfleet Command Headquarters, in Paris, France. Paris had been chosen because it was voted the safest city on Earth in a poll done last week. Picard walked into the courtyard, where he was about to be given the oath of office. He walked quietly up to his chair on the

stage and sat down. He was extremely nervous right now, he couldn't believe it, he was about to be sworn in as President.

Admiral West began the ceremony, "Greetings. We have chosen Jean-Luc Picard as our new President. I believe we have chosen very well. Hopefully, together Jean-Luc and I can rebuild some of what we lost. I call now the podium Jean-Luc Picard."

Picard got up of his chair, and walked to podium in the middle of the stage.

West began the oath, "Raise your right hand, do you swear to uphold Federation law, keep this galaxy at peace, and work for the preservation of all races?"

"I do." came Picard's reply.

"Do you swear to put the safety of the Federation above your own? Do you swear never to let power deter you from doing what is morally right."

"I do."

" People of the Federation, I now give you the new President of the United Federation of Planets, Jean-Luc Picard."

Picard came to podium, "June 22, 2380 is a day that will live in the hearts and minds of all of us. For that was the day that the city of San Francisco was ruthlessly attacked and destroyed. I do not know how to ease the pain of this, I only know that hope will survive. For over 500 years, the people of this world have fought. In all those years of fighting, some people thought that life would end, but each time we survived. All the world wars, the Romulan wars, even the

Borg threats; through each somehow we have survived. This is no different, we will survive this as well, and one day the Federation shall rise again. I have worked my life to protect the Federation, and after over 200 years, I will fight until my very last breath."

The cheers he got were heartfelt, but he didn't want cheers, not at this time anyway. He walked swiftly off the stage and went to his new office. There was so much to do and so little time to do it.

STARFLEET COMMAND, PARIS

JUNE 24, 2380

It was hard being President, much more difficult than being Captain. Before this he was responsible for the lives of his crew, but now his was responsible for an entire planet, and sometimes even the entire quadrant. It had been only two days since that terrible day, when everything changed. When the city of San Francisco was destroyed.

His Secretary walked in, "Major Kira here to see you, Sir."

"Send her in."

Major Kira; Captain of the Defiant, and Commander of Deep Space Nine, at least after the disappearance of Captain Sisko; walked in seconds later.

"Good morning, Mr. President." Kira began.

Mr. President, Picard would have to get used to that one. "Major, come in, sit down." Replied Picard.

"I have very bad news. Deep Space Nine has been taken over by a fleet of Jem'Hadar warships."

"Jem'Hadar? How is that possible? Have you heard anything from Odo?" said Picard.

"Nothing yet, Sir. It still doesn't change the facts." said Kira.

"No it doesn't. Thank you, Major. That will be all for now." Picard replied.

She turned to walk out, "Sir, will you-. I mean shouldn't we-"

"Major you can be assured that the Jem'Hadar will pay for this, and you will have your station back. Unfortunately, now is not the time. With the destruction of San Francisco, other governments are skeptical if the Federation will survive. We need all the help we can here, and we need it now."

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, PARIS

JUNE 24, 2380

Picard was talking to the Vulcan Representative Solok. He was trying to ally the skeptical leaders of Vulcan. He wanted to place a call to arms and take back Deep Space Nine from the Dominion. The Vulcans, however, were purely logical and wanted no part of illogical decisions.

"Solok, we can take back DS9. That's the key, without it the Dominion has no way to bring reinforcements from the Gamma Quadrant." said Picard.

"Mr. President, with the weakened condition of the Klingons, the Romulans, and the Federation, a full assault on the Dominion is suicide. Suicide is not logical."

"Solok, you must have hope for the future. Together we can defeat them. The Federation can be saved, but its up to us to try and hold it together."

"Mr. President, the collapse of the Federation is inevitable. The Federation cannot hold. Hope is not logical."

With that her image winked out. Picard knew what she said was true, the Federation was dying. After more than 200 years, that unprecedented assemblage of united worlds had finally met an enemy it could not overcome: Itself. It had tripped over itself to many times, and now stood on the verge of total annihilation.

CHAPTER 6: ASSAULT

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, PARIS

JUNE 25, 2380

Picard sat in office, waiting for the leaders of Starfleet Command to come. Everything recently had all happened so fast, he thought that he needed a vacation. He looked at his clock, 0900 hours; they should have been here by now. Where were they? Had something happened to them? No, he shook his head, he was being insane. But his feelings had been right so far, and these were insane times. Then, at 0901 hours the Fleet Admirals walked in, thank god he thought. Now, however, came the really tough part, convincing them that they should attack DS9.

As Admiral West sat down, he said, "So Jean-Luc how do you like your new position? It suits you well, I think."

Picard replied, "I takes some-some, getting used to, Admiral. But I think eventually I will have it down."

"Excellent! I knew you were the right person for the job."

Picard started his speech, "As all of you know, Deep Space Nine was overtaken yesterday by the Dominion. I light of the weakened states of the Klingons, the Romulans, and now the Federation; some are skeptical if we can stop the Dominion. Over a year ago, I myself asked the same question, can we stop the Dominion. After a long fought war, we gained victory against the Dominion. I believe we can stop them again, with the help of this."

Instantly the viewscreen flickered on, showing the planet Earth in all its beautiful glory. The screen magnified to show a ship, silver, glistening and shining against the darkness of space. There was a look of awe on the faces of the Admirals, who had no idea what they were looking at.

Picard continued, "This is our secret weapon, the prototype for the most advanced warship that has ever been created. A new joint space venture between the Klingons, the Romulans, and the Federation. Using the best technology of each race, we have created a powerful ship. It is capable of speeds up to warp eleven, and is equipped with the new Romulan phase cloak which allows it to pass through planets, rocks, bases, ships that sort of thing. It can even fire when cloaked, making it virtually invincible. Now gentlemen, if you would like we will give you a demonstration."

Heads nodded from all around the table, and they all turned to watch the viewscreen. The ship executed a slight starboard turn, taking it away from the planet. It targeted a piece of space garbage, and fired its main weapons. The beams shot forward from the bridge section, and sliced into the debris, blowing it to pieces. The ship then executed a port turn, and slowly began to vanish into the darkness. With the new phase cloak, the ship went straight through the planet of Earth, and uncloaked on the other side. The viewscreen had followed the ship, and emerged on the far side of the planet.

West spoke, "Very impressive, Mr. President. Why wasn't I aware of this?"

Picard replied, "My predecessor kept many things secret from Starfleet. Rest assured, Admiral, in time you will learn all there is to know."

"Have any real tests been done on this ship?" asked Admiral Shantee.

"We have been testing this ship for months, it has proved very impressive." replied Picard.

"Excellent! I think we should use it." said West.

Heads nodded all around the table, but Sheridan spoke up, "How will you gather a fleet, Mr. President? I mean one ship, no matter how advanced can't stop the entire Dominion."

"Admiral, the Klingons and Romulans have already agreed to send fleets, all we have to do is join them. And if I may say, with our new ship, the Victory, hope is on our side."

“Very well, Mr. President, you shall have the fleet you ask.” exclaimed West.

Picard watched as the Admirals got up and left. Now, at last they were ready, in less than one day they would strike back at the Dominion. They now had a secret weapon, the Victory, which he hoped would give them the advantage they sought. Perhaps they should call on the Furies again, they seemed to have handled the Borg quite well. He sat quietly, alone in his office, thinking about all the decisions that he would have to make. Some that would eventually cost him, and cost him dearly.

VICTORY, EARTH ORBIT

JUNE 25, 2380

Picard walked onto the bridge of the newly christened Victory. Looking around, he was amazed at the technology that was behind this magnificent battleship. He turned and noticed the command chair, his chair, directly in the center of the bridge.

An Ensign turned to him, “Welcome aboard the Victory, Mr. President.”

Picard was too much in awe to reply. “What? Oh- thank you, Ensign.”

He continued his tour around the bridge and ended up at the viewscreen. It was huge! At least four times bigger than that of the Enterprise. He stared at the screen, seeing ship after ship after ship. Klingon ships, Romulan ships, Federation ships, and then right in front of his very eyes, the Enterprise. She looked magnificent, shining, gleaming against Earth’s sun.

“Ensign,” he said turning to the young Ensign in front of him, “Hail the Enterprise.”

“Aye, Sir.” came the reply.

In seconds he was staring into the face, the rather large face on this screen, of Will Riker.

“Mr. President.” greeted Riker.

“Captain Riker, I think its time we get our fleet under way.” ordered Picard.

“Of course, Sir.”

The Victory turned slightly, and engaged its new warp engines. In a flash of blue light it was gone. The Enterprise warped away right behind, along with every remaining ship in the fleet. The Romulans went next, ship after ship went into warp. The Klingons were last to leave, and when the last ship had finally gone to warp, over ten minutes had passed. They headed for the wormhole to take back DS9. The entire fleet settled in and set course for what was to be the last battle. Either the Dominion would survive or they would, it was that simple.

JEM'HADAR FLEET, DS9

JUNE 26, 2380

Jo'hor sat in his chair, thinking about everything. Starfleet thought that Valdus' assassination, the Klingon civil war, and the destruction of San Francisco was a plan by the Dominion. When in reality it was a plan by the Furies.

Starfleet had no idea what they were up against. They thought that they were fighting the Dominion, but no they were fighting the Dominion and the Furies.

The Fury planning had given them the perfect opportunity to strike, and the Dominion could not pass up a chance for revenge. His thinking was interrupted when he heard the blaring alarms. He walked directly to the bridge.

As soon as he was out of the doors he said, "What is going on?"

"Hundreds of Klingon ships, Romulan ships, and Federation ships have come out of warp and attacked us, Sir." Said one Jem'Hadar.

"That is impossible! There is no Federation, nor no Klingons, nor no Romulans! Attack them back!"

The station shook and rocked as the weapons found their marks. Jem'Hadar fighters came pouring out of the wormhole, opening fire on anything and everything. The fleet now started to move back, for the Jem'Hadar ships were getting torn apart.

The Jem'Hadar said, "Sir! This is not possible!"

Jo'hor walked over to his console, "What is it?!"

"I am not understanding this, but look." he pointed to the screen right in front of him.

The screen showed the Jem'Hadar fleet getting ripped apart, but the Federation fleet had backed off. The red dots of phaser fire appeared to be coming from nowhere.

The view on the Victory was unbelievable; the Jem'Hadar ships didn't know what hit them. Victory dodged in between ships, firing as she went. The Jem'Hadar fleet seemed to be looking for who was attacking them, but they found nothing.

Jo'hor was amazed to see this; the Dominion was getting ripped apart by nothing. Just then the station shook with the force of fire.

“Lock on, and fire!” ordered Jo'hor.

“I have nothing to lock on to, Sir.” replied The Jem'Hadar officer.

The station shook again and again, consoles exploded, sparks flew.

Another Jem'Hadar exclaimed, “Sir, Shields are down, we have to evacuate!”

Transporters were activated on every Federation ship, as the fleet moved in for the kill. Jem'Hadar ships limped away in utter defeat.

Jean-Luc Picard materialized in Ops. He stood staring into the face of the Vorta, named Jo'hor.

“Greetings, Captain. Its been a long time, hasn't it?” said Jo'hor.

“That's Mr. President to you.”

“Indeed, well, we're moving up in the world, aren't we?” replied Jo'hor.

Jo'hor turned to beam aboard his ship, but Picard stopped him, “I want you to see the reason we were able to defeat you.”

He pointed up to the screen, where out of the darkness a strange ship emerged.

“Very Impressive! Unfortunately, I have to go.” Before Picard could act, Jo'hor was already on the bridge of his ship, heading for the wormhole and thus to the Jem'Hadar homeworld.

JEM'HADAR HOMEWORLD

JUNE 26, 2380

Jo'hor walked angrily into his office at the Jem'Hadar homeworld. He sat roughly down in his chair. His assistant was in the room at this time.

"I can't believe it! Defeat! All because the Federation had a new ship that could fire while cloaked." he yelled.

"Sir, there's a comm channel for you." said his assistant.

"Yes. That will be all."

The assistant hurried out the door, as Jo'hor activated his comm unit. The face came to him in no time, it was Zutegre.

"Jo'hor, I am displeased with the way the battle turned out."

"It could not be avoided, the Federation had a new weapon, a ship that could fire when cloaked."

"I do not care! I will forgive you, this time! No more foul-ups.

"Thank you, Emperor."

"I will rendezvous with you in one day." said Zutegre.

"You're coming here!" exclaimed Jo'hor the sound of fear rushing through his voice.

"Yes, I have a little unfinished business to attend to, then you shall have your revenge. Zutegre out."

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, EARTH

JUNE 27, 2380

Picard walked into his office to find the door had been opened. He continued walking toward his chair. Someone was in here he thought, and then his chair turned and he saw the face.

He was stunned, "Who are you?" he asked.

The voice that replied was cold, and evil, "You must be President Jean-Luc Picard. Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Zutegre. I am Emperor of the Furies."

Picard understood, all of this had been a plan by the Furies not the by Dominion. "What do you want?" he asked.

"I understand that you have just defeated the Jem'Hadar."

"Yes, it was a great victory for us."

"You will find that a victory is not always a victory and a defeat is not always a defeat. You see the Jem'Hadar are now under our control, we have all the ketracel white, and the Jem'Hadar are our allies."

It hit Picard instantly; the bad just got a whole lot worse. The Jem'Hadar and Furies allied with each other. Mar'tok was right, the darkness had come.

CHAPTER 6: DARKNESS FALLS

PARIS, EARTH

JUNE 28, 2380

Picard quickly sat up in his bed, had it been a dream. He went to the window and looked out. No, it was a nightmare; the picture in the window said it

all. Outside his cabin, Fury foot soldiers were everywhere. Buildings were on fire, the city of Paris was in ruins. Fury ships glowed from space, where the entire Fury fleet was orbiting the planet. He thought of all that had happened recently. The Romulan, the Klingons, the Federation, all of them had been overridden by the Furies. The past President had been wrong to give the Furies those six ships, but at the time it was the only thing that could have been done. Those six ships led to the downfall of every major power in the Quadrant.

Picard's Chief-of-Staff Michael Lawrence came in just then, "Sir, its time to go."

Picard knew that now was the time to leave, the Furies would soon be looking for him. Quickly and quietly he got dressed, and together they left the city of Paris. They went to the Paris transfer station, where Fury soldiers were walking around, because no one without authorization was allowed in or out of Paris. Lawrence was on top of the situation, he had made fake authorization reports before they left. Picard reached into his pocket, pulling out one of the reports saying that they were two technicians headings duty on the Tradeship Victory. Despite the technology that the Furies had, they still had yet to discover the Starship Victory. The Fury soldiers looked carefully at the report, then at Picard. After w while he waved them through. They boarded the ship as it soared into the dark Paris sky.

In one hour they got off the ship, and boarded a cloaked starship Victory. The Victory left its orbit and warped away to join the rest of Starfleet at Deep Space Nine.

PARIS, EARTH

JUNE 28, 2380

Zutegre walked into his new office, it was nice, he thought. Today was a good day, they were on the verge of victory and gaining back their home that was taken from them.

A fellow Fury walked in, "Emperor, there's a human here to see you."

"A human? To see me? What does he want?" replied Zutegre.

"I don't know, Sir. He just says it's important."

"Very well, send him in." Zutegre said as he relaxed in his chair.

The other Fury left quickly, and seconds later a tall, thin, and dark human walked in and sat down.

"Emperor, allow me to introduce myself. I am Benjamin Garrett. I have been requested by the people of Earth to talk to you."

Zutegre replied, "Very well. I will listen to what you have to say."

"Emperor, as you know Starfleet has eluded you so far."

Zutegre got angry, "Starfleet! Starfleet is gone! It has been replaced by a new order! Do you forget who you are talking to!"

"I'm sorry, Sir."

Zutegre was calm again, "please, continued."

"Of course. Well without protection from the Federation, Earth is falling into chaos. We ask you, beg you, to let us elect a leader for Earth."

“Hhmm. A leader of Earth? An interesting proposition. I will consider it, but first you must do something for me.”

“Like what?” asked Garret.

A smile crossed Zutegre’s face; perhaps, Garret thought, he had gotten in over his head. Only time would tell.

PARIS, EARTH

JUNE 29, 2380

Zutegre waited in his office, where in minutes he would give the results of the election. The people wanted to chose their own President, but he would never let that happen. He had already made his choice, if the people didn’t like it, he could eliminate every last one of them. Another Fury came in, and nodded his head. That was it, everything was ready, it was time.

He spoke in calm and collective manner, “People of Earth, yesterday you came to me and begged for a leader. You asked if you could choose someone for that position. Although I cannot allow you to choose, I have chosen a leader for you. I think you will agree his is fit for the job. I have chosen Benjamin Garrett.

Benjamin Garrett then stepped to the podium and said, “It is time for a new order. The Federation is dying, taking with it planet after planet. The Federation is old and its time for change. As leader, it is my duty to protect the citizens of Earth. So I am going to do something that has never been done before. I formally request that Earth secede from the Federation. I also ask

other worlds to join me. The Federation is dying, its time to get out well we still can.”

DEEP SPACE NINE, BAJOR

JUNE 29, 2380

“The entire Federation was stunned today, when newly appointed President Lawrence, formally seceded Earth from the Federation. He also asked other worlds to secede as well.”

Kira was watching the screen; every news show on had something about the succession of Earth. Then the screen went dark, and then came on again, but the face that of Zutegre, leader of the Furies.

He spoke in a cold voice, “Since Earth has seceded from the Federation, I will offer a prospect for peace. I will offer a nonaggression pact with any world that secedes from the Federation. You will not attack us, and we will not attack you. We do not want the Federation; we only want our home back. You get us that and we will not bother anyone.

PARIS, EARTH

JUNE 30, 2380

Zutegre sat in his chair as Jo’hor and a Jem’Hadar soldier walked in. They were having their morning briefing.

“Gentleman, please sit down.” Said Zutegre.

Jo'hor spoke first, "Emperor, I understand that you have offered a nonaggression pact with any world who secedes from the Federation."

"I have."

"Why?" asked Jo'hor.

"Because the destruction of the Federation is not our goal. Our only goal is take back what was taken from us long before you were born."

"I ask you reconsider, destruction of the Federation is our goal. If you do not reconsider, the consequences could be most unfortunate." Replied Jo'hor.

"Are you threatening me?" asked Zutegre.

"Of course."

"Do you forget who you're talking to? I am Emperor of the Furies. I wiped out the Borg completely. I can wipe you out as well."

PARIS NEWS

JUNE 31, 2380

"The Federation was stunned again today, as Rigel 7 became the thirty-seventh world to secede from the Federation. The Furies have offered a nonaggression pact with any separated world. President Garrett signed it minutes ago. Earth is now officially out of the war. Other worlds continue to secede from the Federation, as support for Starfleet is falling."

SAN FRANCISCO NEWS

JULY 1, 2380

“The Federation was ended today, as Vulcan became the last world to secede from the Federation. Just minutes ago the nonaggression pact was signed, putting Vulcan out of the war. Starfleet now stands alone against the Furies.

VICTORY, DEEP SPACE

JULY 1, 2380

The Federation had been ended; it was on every major new show in the Quadrant. Picard sat and thought of what might have been, of what he would be doing if he were President of Earth, certainly not seceding from the Federation. A voice came then, “Captain Picard to the bridge.”

He walked quickly out onto the bridge of the most advanced ship in the fleet. They were out in deep space, trying to evade Fury warships.

“What’s going on?” he asked.

“Signal from Starfleet, Sir. It’s coming from DS9.” Replied Michael Lawrence.

“Put it through.”

“We are under attack by Fury and Jem’Hadar warships. We can’t escape, they have too much power---“

“Hold on, we’re on our way!” Yelled Picard.

It had begun, the Furies had attacked Starfleet, and Starfleet stood alone. The Victory warped away, heading for the chaos that was DS9.

DEEP SPACE NINE, BAJOR

JULY 1, 2380

The Victory cloaked and moved in for an attack run. Picard looked at the screen, it was unbelievable. Ship after ship was getting torn and ripped apart. He looked closer and saw terrible truths; DS9 was gone, only floating debris was left of the once mighty and proud space station. The screen magnified to show the little Defiant evading and fighting at the same time. Where was the Enterprise? Had she already been destroyed? Was he too late? Then, he saw it; swooping out of the darkness like a bird-of-prey, she targeted a Jem'Hadar fighter and firing, blew it completely away. The Victory moved in closer, the Jem'Hadar fleet was getting pounded, but the Fury fleet was hardly breaking a sweat. The Fury ships executed breathtaking maneuvers, blowing one starship after another into pieces. Picard knew they had to retreat, this was not working, and these ships would be needed for another day. The retreat order was given; the Victory led the way, plowing through the darkness. The Enterprise and the Defiant quickly followed. About twenty other ships followed behind, all that remained of the once great fleet. The ships zipped away from the ruins of DS9, and warped off toward the sun. Each hoping one day to find a way to return, home.

FURY FLEET, EARTH

JULY 2, 2380

Zutegre talked to his people, "I congratulate you all on a job well done. The Alpha Quadrant is ours for the talking. Today we have gained victory, we have gained back that which was taken from us those days so long ago."

CHAPTER 8: SHADOWS OF FEAR

ZUTEGRE'S OFFICE, EARTH

JULY 2, 2380

Zutegre sat comfortably in his office. He and his people were home at last. Thousands of years ago an ancient race had come and driven them from their home, exiled them to the other side of the galaxy. But they had fought back, and now were home after thousands of years of exile. He had made a mistake, an unholy, untrustworthy alliance with the Jem'Hadar. He had promised the Jem'Hadar revenge, and that Vorta, Jo'hor, the entire Bajoran Sector. He must have known by now that he wasn't getting any sector, and the Jem'Hadar weren't getting revenge.

He called to his personal assistant, "Zennor, get me Jo'hor on the comm. Link immediately."

"I sir." Came the reply.

They had gained victory, and now it was time to end the alliance.

JEM'HADAR FLEET, MOONS OF BAJOR

JULY 2, 2380

Jo'hor sat in his chair in his personal quarters, thinking of what was. The Furies had promised victory, and had delivered that promise. They had promised him revenge, and had given him that as well. The deal was impressive, he was to get the Jem'Hadar to help them, which was simple because he had gotten his hands on all the ketracel white in the Gamma Quadrant. In return he would get to have the entire Bajoran Sector. That was where they had lied, they did not mean to give him any sector, and he knew that now. He was in trouble, and he knew it, for to defy the Furies would be certain death. Soon Zutegre would call him, putting an end to alliance, and then not long after the Furies would attack and dispose of their once valued allies. He hoped that day was far, far in the future. He needed time prepare his ships and troops for war.

A Jem'Hadar officer walked in, "Comm link for you, Sir. It's Emperor Zutegre."

His face showed disbelief, apparently, time was one thing he didn't have. "Put it on screen."

The screen in front of him lit up, and soon showed the face of Fury, Zutegre.

Zutegre spoke slowly, and softly, "Jo'hor, I believe it is time to go our separate ways."

"Why?"

"We have gained victory, and thus do not need each other any longer."

Jo'hor had no choice but to agree, "Very well, I will sign the documents."

“Excellent, I will send you a five ship convoy, they will bring you the documents so that you may sign them. Oh, Jo’hor, it has been a pleasure doing business with you.”

His image winked out as quickly as it had come. Those five ships were on their way right now, but what Zutegre hadn’t told him, he could feel it, was that an entire fleet followed those five ships. A fleet with one goal total destruction. He had to run. No, he had no place to go. The Founders wouldn’t take him back; they would shun him. All those Jem’Hadar that would easily give their lives to protect something, he couldn’t help. All of them, including him, would die; nothing could stop that from happening. As he sat at his desk, he was all alone in an insane world.

ZUTEGRE’S OFFICE

JULY 2, 2380

Zutegre sat and thought about the story passed on to him by his father. The story of how they came to be exiled. He remembered it well.

Over 5,000 years ago, we were banished to the other side of the galaxy, after losing a great battle. We were left with nothing, no supplies, no technology, and no science. Millions died in the first decades. Whole races became extinct. The civilization fell, and primal barbarism replaced it. There were plagues, and wars fought over who was to blame. Soon a belief arose of home space, somewhere where we were meant to be. Soon it became a common belief, and we united. We had no proof of this belief, only legends, words passed on.

Science, technology, and society grew again. Century after century a shadow passed over us, making our unity stronger with every pass. Our scientists discovered out what it was, the same machine that had sent us exile. What for eons had been a symbol of evil and doom, turned out to be a tool for our future. We found that it used time as a dimension, and thus allowed for interdimensional travel, and time travel. We found out how to activate it, and used it to come back to the place that was ours.

Ah, how he loved that story as a child, now it was true. They were home, suddenly; he wished his parents were there to share in his delightful glory. No one would dare oppose the Furies now.

JEM'HADAR FLEET, MOONS OF BAJOR

JULY 3, 2380

Jo'hor walked to the command post on the seventh moon of Bajor. The convoy was due to arrive in less than an hour.

A Jem'Hadar soldier said, "Sir, five Fury ships are approaching, and requesting permission to dock."

Jo'hor was cautious, "Are there any other ships out there?"

"No, Sir."

"Are you sure?" asked Jo'hor.

"Positive, Sir."

"Very well, allow them permission to dock. I'll meet the delegates in docking bay five."

He walked swiftly out of the command area, turned down the hall to docking bay five. He entered the doors, and saw five Fury ships sitting there. Good, he relaxed; Zutegre would not destroy the outpost with his own people sitting right in the hanger. Then he saw, he heard, four of the Fury ships were taking off. *No!* He thought. They had not met with him. He wondered what to do, why hadn't the other Fury ship taken off? He ran to the comm. Channel, tried to get through, to tell the fleet to stop those four ships, but it was dead. He heard something else, a rumble. He looked up and saw why the fifth Fury ship hadn't taken off, a bomb. The Fury ship blew to pieces as he watched; nothing could save him. He stood in the corner and faced the shadows.

The Jem'Hadar, seeing that four Fury ships were leaving, simply thought that the fifth one was below signing the documents. The four Fury ships flew for home without a care in the world. Deep inside the base, the fire was spreading fast and furious. It hit the power core of the station, blowing the station off of the moon. The shockwave continued for what seemed like forever, hitting and destroying every single Jem'Hadar ship in its path. When it was finally over, the base was only floating debris, as was the Jem'Hadar fleet, and half the moon was gone.

USS VICTORY, DEEP SPACE

JULY 3, 2380

The Victory traveled through the blackness of space. She was looking, searching for anyone, anything that would help her in her quest for freedom. The

people aboard her were wishing, hoping, and praying to find someone to help them return home. They were somewhere in the Beta Quadrant, far, far away from anything remotely resembling home.

The Ensign manning Ops turned to Picard saying, "Sir, I have an energy surge coming from the outer rim."

"An energy surge? What kind?" Replied Picard.

"I'm not sure, Sir. I need to get closer."

"Very well, plot an intercept course. Engage" said Picard.

The Victory slid silently forward, and began to explore the unknown. When closer, they could see what it looked like on the screen. It was unreal, and seemed to be taking up all of space itself, just floating there. It was a dark, shadowy, grayish-black, with strange writing all over it.

The ensign spoke, "Sir, if I'm reading this correctly, the artifact we're looking at is over 5,000 years old."

"What! How is that possible?" Replied Picard.

Someone else broke the conversation, "Ah, Sir, something's happening!"

Picard turned his head to the screen, seeing it in utter disbelief. Lights all over the artifact were shimmering and shinning to life. The lights started going on and off, as the front began to glow bright blue. A blue hole opened in the middle, like a gateway. The gateway opened wide to expose a huge fleet of ships. This was part of a never-ending cycle, Picard thought to himself. Another fleet of unknown ships sitting at their doorstep, this had to stop. One way or another, the cycle would end, here and now.

CHAPTER 9: ECHOES OF THE PAST

USS VICTORY, DEEP SPACE

JULY 3, 2380

The view on the screen was incredible to behold, ship after ship slid through the giant gateway. The crew gazing in awe at the sight they were now beholding.

Picard spoke first, "Ensign, do we have anything on those ships?"

"They are of an unknown design, Sir, nothing in our database comes close. Power source unknown, weapons unknown as well, Sir."

"What about that artifact?" asked Picard.

"Also of unknown design, power source unknown."

What Picard needed was Data, he would be able to uncover the secrets of this artifact, but the Enterprise like all of the other ships was off looking for anyone that would be able to help them.

"Mr. President," the Ensign's voice came again filled now with disbelief and horror, "The lead ship is hailing us."

"On screen," replied Picard.

The screen came on to show the view of the unknown bridge. The shape was unusual, linear instead of circular. Then, a figure came out of darkness, and stood in the middle of the bridge. He looked almost like a Fury, but he had dark

hair instead of horns, and dark bluish skin. He spoke in a calm, curious manner, "Greetings, Allow me to introduce myself, I am Ga'kor of the Unclean."

"I am President Jean-Luc Picard, of the-," he stopped wondering what he was going to say, there was no Federation, "-of the resistance. What is your business here?"

"You have problems at your home, yes?"

"Yes, how did you-?" asked Picard.

Ga'kor nodded, "That is what my vision predicted."

"Vision?"

"Yes, perhaps we can continue this conversation in private? May I come aboard your ship?" asked Ga'kor.

"Yes, of course. We can use the conference room."

"Excellent. I will meet you there in five minutes. We have many things we need to discuss."

Picard waited in the conference room for Ga'kor. After a few more minutes, Ga'kor walked in.

"Greetings, Picard." he said. "I sure you wish to know why I am here."

"Yes, please sit down."

Ga'kor sat in the chair, "I will tell you the whole story.

Picard got up and got himself a cup of Earl Gray tea; he asked Ga'kor if he wanted anything, Ga'kor had politely declined. "Very well, tell your story." said Picard.

Ga'kor started his story, "Yes, as I told you before we are called Unclean. We did not know that our mistake could cause so much death and pain. You see, over 5,000 years ago we lived in another galaxy. After hundreds of years living there, our scientists discovered that our sun was about to supernova. So for many years we put all our technology, all our resources into building what we now call the gateway. It is a device that can open a hole into another dimension and allow travel to other galaxies. After years of work it was finally completed, and we packed up our entire culture, entire civilization and left. We followed the gateway that brought us to this space. We thought it would be heaven, a place where we could finally be at peace. It was not to be, for instead of opening the gates to heaven, we opened the gates to hell. When we came out of the gateway, thousands of ships lie before our eyes. They called themselves the Furies. A few of the Fury ships got jumpy and fired, after that there was no stopping it. We tried, we told them we came in peace, begged them for peace, but they would not hear us, said something about why had we come to take their space. We did not come to take anyone's space; we are good people who made a mistake. After years of fighting, we gained victory and banished them that was our mistake, a mistake that millions have now paid for. We thought we had to banish them, it was the quickest way to get rid of them. Centuries later our people had visions, dreams, nightmares of the Furies returning for a final reckoning. And if our dreams can come true, then what of our nightmares? After centuries of nightmares, it was decided to build another gateway, and so we ran from fear. I am here now, because I had a vision, a vision of chaos and

destruction. I know you need help; I am here to give it to you. My people stand ready to die for one purpose, the good of all. My fleet stands ready to do what we should have done those days so long ago.”

When he was finally done, Picard sat thinking for a few moments, the victors of that great battle so long ago had finally revealed themselves. Now they had a fleet ready to help him, and finish what they had started over 5,000 years ago.

Ga’kor broke the silence, “So tell me, Picard, how is Emperor Zutegre?”

Picard was stunned by the question; it was not possible that Ga’kor and Zutegre had ever met. “How-?” Picard asked very softly.

“Ah. Picard, you think in such three dimensional terms, we will have to work on that.”

ZUTEGRE’S OFFICE, EARTH

JULY 4, 2380

Zutegre sat in his office, after centuries the Furies were home, and everything was as it should be. He probably should get some sleep, he thought to himself, he had an early meeting tomorrow with the leaders of the newly independent worlds. They wanted to talk to him about how the newly independent worlds would now function with the Federation gone.

His personal assistant, Zennor, walked in just then. “Sir, I think we have a problem, a lone ship is trying to enter the terran system.”

“Can you identify it?” asked Zutegre.

Zennor looked down at his personal hand computer, "It looks to be of Starfleet design."

"Starfleet! Starfleet is gone, it died, a new order has replaced it."

"Ship type verified, Sir. Starfleet registry number NX-23784; Sir, it's the Victory."

"Indeed. Well, we shall destroy it in a grand show of force, to show that no one should dare oppose the Furies." said Zutegre.

"Yes, Sir."

"Prepare my ship, and assemble the fleet, we attack in four hours." ordered Zutegre.

Zennor nodded his head, and walked swiftly out the door. Zutegre leaned back in his chair, the meeting would have to wait, everyone would soon not to mess with the Furies. Little did Zutegre know that one order would eventually be the greatest mistake he ever made.

FURY FLEET, TERRAN SYSTEM

JULY 4, 2380

On Zutegre's command ship, the screen showed the beautiful silhouette of the Victory. He wanted to blast that ship out of the stars, but that wouldn't be right. First things first, he had to try communication. Whether he liked it or not, he had an Empire to run and humans were part of that Empire. If he killed humans in cold blood, than humans would retaliate, more so now because they respected Picard. He would have to turn Picard into the bad guy.

“Hail them, Ensign.” ordered Zutegre.

“I, Sir.”

The screen changed from the Victory, to the image of Jean-Luc Picard in the center of his bridge.

Zutegre spoke first, “Picard. Why are you here? With the Federation gone, you have no jurisdiction here. I am the leader, Earth has its own President. Why are you here?”

“For freedom!!!” yelled Picard.

“Freedom, a quaint word. My entire fleet stands ready to blow you out of the stars. So I ask you leave now or be destroyed.”

“Emperor, I believe I have someone here who wishes to speak with you.” Picard said stepping aside.

Zutegre was puzzled, and then saw the face, an all too familiar face. A face of the shadows, and echo of the darkness that once was. He finally managed to say, “It can’t be.”

“Oh, but Zutegre, I assure you, it can. We have come back to do what we should have done centuries ago. Now I ask you to leave, or you will be destroyed,” replied Ga’kor.

“Never! You took our home, sent us into exile, we shall never forget that! One of us will stand today, the other will die, here, now!”

“Very well, Zutegre. We shall see who will stand. Attack!” replied Ga’kor.

“Attack!” ordered Zutegre.

The two fleets moved toward each other, guns blazing. Two ancient races locked in 5,000 years of warfare. One race driven mad by exile, the other standing for a chance at redemption. Each declaring victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, for without victory there is no survival. When the two fleets finally met, the sounds of war were all around them. A war that was an echo of the past, and was now in the middle of the present.

CHAPTER 10: SACRIFICES

FURY FLEET, TERRAN SYSTEM

JULY 4, 2380

Picard looked out from the bridge of the Victory, and saw the incredible scene that lay before him. It was unbelievable, two races locked in thousands of years of warfare. He stood there and thought about what Ga'kor had said earlier that his people were ready to die for one purpose, the good of all. There were only two possible outcomes to this, the final battle. Either the Furies would win, and the darkness would return, or the Unclean would prevail, and the future would be saved. He suddenly remembered what day it was, July 4, Independence Day. Six hundred years ago, the United States of America cried out in one voice against oppression. Now, six hundred years later, the entire galaxy cried out in one voice against annihilation. He turned his view back to the site that lay before him. Picard decided it was time to call in the cavalry.

Turning to the officer at tactical, he said, "Ensign, get me Captain Riker on the Enterprise."

"I sir." Came the reply.

A second later he stared into the face of William Riker. Riker looked a lot different than the last time Picard had seen him. His beard had now gotten a little grayer. He took a guess that he looked quiet different himself. All of them had been through so much recently, that they're age was starting to show.

Picard looked at his former first officer, and now captain of the Enterprise. "Will, " Picard asked. "Where are you?"

"We're on our way, Sir. We're just about to pass by the Mars perimeter."

"Excellent. Get here as soon as possible." Replied Picard.

"We will, sir. How goes the battle?" asked Riker.

"I'm not sure...." Picard explained. "But there's one way to find out."

Picard cut the transmission, and stared back out to the battle before him. The Fury ships were flipping up and around, blasting their bright blue phasers toward the Preserver ships. The Preserver ships kept dodging the weapons fire, flowing in the night. Neither fleet was gaining much ground on the other.

As Picard watched this, he said to the helm officer, "Helm, take us in."

"Sir?????" the Helmsman replied.

"Engage cloaking device. Prepare to attack. Pattern delta."

"I sir."

The Victory moved silently toward the Fury fleet, a silent killer. Her blue phasers tried to tear through the Fury-made hull. The Fury ships tried to locate the Victory, but their weapons fire couldn't get close.

USS ENTERPRISE, PASSING MARS

JULY 4, 2380

The Enterprise warped its way toward Earth. She made a slight port turn as she passed the Mars Perimeter. Captain Riker paced the bridge of his ship. He didn't think he would ever get used to that, his ship. Somehow, someday, the Enterprise would always belong to Jean-Luc Picard.

"Faster..." Riker muttered under his breath.

"This is as fast as I can go," he heard Ensign Ro reply back to him.

The Enterprise finally arrived at her destination, and slowed to impulse power. She swung around to get a full view of the battle. Riker looked in awe at the sight he and his crew were now beholding. He strained his eyes to see the Victory. It was nowhere to be found. Had she already been destroyed? Then he saw blue streaks of light that appeared to be coming from nowhere. Of course, she had cloaked. He turned his attention to the Fury fleet, swooping out of the darkness. Their fleet hardly looked damaged at all. He decided to check on the Preserver fleet. He looked closely, but could not see the fleet. Wait, there they were, but, no, it could not be. The Preserver fleet was in shambles. The victors of the great battle long ago had been defeated, and with them the future would fall into darkness.

He made his decision. "Attack!!!!!!!!!!!" he ordered.

The Enterprise swept out of the darkness, and locked on to the lead Fury ship. The blue phasers caught the side of the Fury ship, but didn't put a dent in it. The Fury ship flipped upside down, and fired its own phasers. The blue beams tore at the aft section of the Enterprise, and started pulling it apart.

"Evasive maneuvers!" called Riker.

"I sir." Came the reply.

"Aft view." Ordered Riker.

The viewscreen shifted to an aft view of the Enterprise. It showed the horrible truth that Riker had feared. The entire aft section lie severely disabled. The Fury ship was about to come at them for another pass, but it stopped just short. Riker soon saw why, blue phaser blasts appeared to be coming for nowhere. Of course, it was the Victory, Riker thought. The phasers weren't doing much damage to the Fury ship. It was, however, giving Riker exactly what he needed, time.

"Helm, get us out of here! Best speed. Engineering, damage report."

Ordered Riker.

"I Sir." Came the reply from all over the bridge.

"Captain, warp drive is off-line. We have partial impulse power." Replied Geordi from Engineering.

Data spoke up, "Sir, the shields are gone. Which means-."

"I know Data, we can't survive another hit." Explained Riker.

GA'KOR'S SHIP, PRESERVER FLEET

JULY 4, 2380

Ga'kor paced across the linear style bridge of his ship. He glanced out toward the viewscreen, but only saw remains, the remains of his fleet, his people. They had all sacrificed themselves for the good of all, and now only he and his crew were left. He looked at the screen again. He noticed the Enterprise limping away, but very slowly, and the whole Fury fleet chasing it. There was only one thing left to do, and he knew exactly what that was.

Turning to his first officer, he ordered, "Da'an, prepare to active the Gateway."

"At once Sir." Replied Da'an.

His ship turned toward the Fury fleet, which were gaining on the Enterprise. His ship started to glow bright blue. Then, as if summoned magically, a magnificent wormhole opened up before them. The ship moved in closer. Suddenly, it was torn apart in a giant ball of flames, and thrown into the shadows. The wormhole began to gather strength from the blast, until it eventually surrounded the entire Fury fleet. As ship after ship disappeared into the shadows, all hell broke lose.

FURY FLEET, WORMHOLE

JULY 4, 2380

Zutegre looked around the bridge of his command ship, searching for answers about what was happening. One minute the fleet was chasing after the Enterprise and the next minute they were lost in darkness. He glanced toward the viewscreen, and saw only darkness around them. There were no stars anywhere to be seen.

“What happened?” he asked to everyone on the bridge, expecting someone to answer him.

“Unknown.” Came the same reply from multiple people.

He remembered seeing Ga’kor’s ship directly in front of them. Suddenly he realized what had happened. Ga’kor had activated the Gateway. They were now stuck in the middle of the abyss.

“Emperor, something’s happening.” Came a voice from behind him.

He turned to look at the screen. The abyss seemed to be collapsing on itself. He watched in horror as his entire fleet disappeared in seconds.

He said very quietly, “Ah, Ga’kor, you may have won this battle, but the war is far from over.”

An evil smile came across his face, as he disappeared into nothingness.

