



STAR TREK FOUNDATIONS

“Flashpoint”

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TEASER

FADE IN:

We begin with a series of scenes from the pilot and the previous episode:

TUCKER'S VOICE

Previously on *Star Trek: Foundations*...

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CAPTAIN'S PRIVATE DINING ROOM

Captain Archer faces a monitor; displayed on the screen are two familiar faces: Admirals Forrest and Narsu.

NARSU

Alpha Centauri has rebelled and declared its independence.

Archer's features grow concerned.

INT. ALPHA CENTAURI CAPITOL BUILDING – LOBBY

Titus Cheet levels his weapon at Governor Franklin. He swallows hard and starts to look like he might be on the verge of tears.

CHEET

There's something else you can give me that's far more valuable than your life.

(beat, off Governor Franklin's confusion)

Your office. Make me the leader of this colony, so I can give it what it needs to survive now.

(beat)

Vulcan mediators are on their way now, but they can't help us unless the official government requests it.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ARCHER'S OFFICE

Archer sits in his office chair, dressed in a UESPA screenprinted t-shirt with matching sweatpants, trying to stay as relaxed as he possibly can. He faces his monitor, talking to someone. We pan around to see that it's Admiral Forrest.

FORREST

To make matters even more complicated, the Vulcan Alliance has officially recognized Alpha Centauri as an independent power.

ARCHER

(shocked)

What?

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FORREST

A diplomatic envoy is being sent to mediate our ... dispute over Alpha Centauri's independence.

EXT. ALPHA CENTAURI - CAPITOL CITY - PUBLIC SQUARE

Standing before a Vulcan shuttle, the newly appointed Governor Titus Cheet faces a robed figure, both surrounded by figures. The robed figure reaches up and pulls the hood from his head, revealing himself to be Ambassador Skon. His hand goes up in the tradition Vulcan salute.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

Captain Archer, wearing his dress uniform faces the image of Admiral Forrest as displayed on his computer monitor.

FORREST

Vanderbilt's pissed, Jon.

ARCHER

What are my orders, sir?

FORREST

Sit tight and don't promise anything.

(beat, off of Archer's slightly disgruntled expression)

I know you've got the training to handle it, Jon, but the president wants this handled his way.

INT. UNITED EARTH MILITARY COMMAND - WAR ROOM

An absolutely furious expression on his face, PRESIDENT VANDERBILT speaks loudly as a dozen high-ranking military officers, a number of whom we've see before, sit at the table as well as several impeccably dressed civilians. Aides and junior officers clutter the room even further.

VANDERBILT

(angry but cold)

The Vulcan Alliance does not dictate Earth policy and has clearly interfered with an internal matter. General Petrov-

Straightening in his seat, the addressed general awaits his instructions.

VANDERBILT

I want you to draw up a plan of battle that keeps our best interests in mind.

(beat, on the general's eager nod)

Retake Alpha Centauri.

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INT. *LEXINGTON* - GENERAL BERNARD'S OFFICE

Standing with her arms crossed, the general looks out the viewport with an expression on her face that could only be called troubled. A buzz sounds and she turns to the nearby communications Panel.

BRIDGE OFFICER (COMM VOICE)

General, we have emergency flash traffic incoming from Earth.

A soft whir can be heard from the desk and a letter-sized strip of paper slides from a slot on the top. Bernard picks it up and quickly scans it, her frown deepening with each second.

BERNARD

Recall General Petrov's team at once.

(beat, with a glance at the viewport)

And sound battle stations.

Dropping the paper onto her desk, she strides toward the hatch as a loud alarm begins to sound. We focus on the paper as she exits through the hatch. It bears a number of unintelligible numbers and digits that clearly mean something to someone trained in their meaning. The most important aspect, however, is a line of text sandwiched between those symbols:

CEASE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ACENT AND STAND BY FOR COMBOPS. MORE TO FOLLOW.

As we fade to black:

TUCKER'S VOICE

And now, on *Star Trek: Foundations*...

FADE OUT:

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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

We fade in to a starscape, before which is an impressive sight. The formation of United Earth Military warships, arrayed in what could only be a battle formation, are entering a clearly aggressive stance. Warp nacelles are retracting into their protective casing and, as we pan by the ships, we can see gun ports being opened and turrets beginning to move. Closer we push to one of the ships and a now-familiar line of text crawls across the screen:

UEM Lexington, CH-24
United Earth Military Task Force Command Ship

As before, we push into the ship through a viewport (that is now being sealed off by a retractable armored plate). An officer bearing the rank of Lieutenant opens a hatch and we follow the lieutenant into:

INT. *LEXINGTON* – CORRIDOR

A scene of controlled chaos. Crewmen and officers, some wearing combat armor but many more in simple uniforms, rush to bring the mighty warship to a combat footing. Muted alarms echo throughout and a red light pulses intermittently. As we follow the lieutenant down the corridor, a shipwide announcement sounds.

BRIDGE OFFICER (COMM VOICE)
All hands, weapon systems are active. I say again, weapon systems are active.
Gunnery crews stand by.

The lieutenant arrives at another hatchway - this one guarded by two armored Marines who watch him as he opens the hatch. We follow him into:

INT. *LEXINGTON* - COMMAND DECK

Her expression grim and resolute, MAJOR GENERAL APRIL BERNARD stands before the main viewer, her hands at her back. On the viewer is the image of AMBASSADOR SKON, his stoic features tainted by a hint of worried concern lurking in his eyes. From the tense expressions on the faces of the command crew, this conversation has been going on for a few moments.

SKON
I urge you to reconsider this course of action, General. Conducting a military operation only legitimizes the Alpha Centauri position regarding their independence from Earth.

BERNARD
Ambassador-

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SKON

(continuing over the general)

And it is not the policy of the Vulcan Alliance to retreat in the face of intimidation.

(beat, cold)

Aggressive action will be met with force.

The general's eyes narrow.

BERNARD

Was that a threat?

Ambassador Skon raises an eyebrow.

SKON

Vulcans do not make threats, General.

The general frowns.

BERNARD

My orders come directly from Earth and they are explicit. You have twelve hours to withdraw from Alpha Centauri.

(beat, firm)

Failure to comply will be seen as an act of aggression against United Earth.

And off her grim expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

Still encased in the massive dry dock orbiting the planet, *Enterprise* is again crawling with activity. As we take in the impressive sight, a repetitive pulsing of light draws the focus of the camera and ZOOM toward the light, focusing in on Shuttlepod One on approach vector with the stationary EX-01. Through the viewport we pass until we are

INT. SHUTTLEPOD 01

Seated in the seat nearest the port hatch, CAPTAIN ARCHER is silent; his face creased in a frown as he studies the data PADD that he holds in one hand. A clipboard rests on his leg and two other PADDs are on the seat beside him. Seated directly across from the captain is MAJOR REED and the UEM officer is discreetly observing his commanding officer while listening in on the conversation currently taking place between ENSIGNS MAYWEATHER and SATO. Travis, at the pilot's station, is speaking softly to a white-knuckled Hoshi Sato as he points out the various controls and their functions.

MAYWEATHER

(softly)

And the green light indicates that the ALS has control so we're mostly hands-off for the rest of the approach.

SATO

ALS?

MAYWEATHER

Automated Landing System. It's kind of like an autopilot only for shuttlepod landings. Most of our landings are done that way for safety. In emergencies-

The buzz of an incoming communication message interrupts Travis' lesson and he hits the “Receive” button on the panel in an almost instinctive gesture.

MAYWEATHER

This is Shuttlepod One.

TSIEN (COMM VOICE)

Emergency traffic for the captain. Priority one.

At that, Archer takes notice and lowers the PADD.

ARCHER

This is Archer. Send it.

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The computer chirps and a display on the flight panel springs to life; unbuckling his safety harness, the captain quickly climbs to his feet and takes a couple of steps forward. Leaning over Travis' shoulder, he studies the incoming data for a BEAT. Almost instantly, his eyes widen in shocked surprise.

ARCHER

Oh my God.

(beat, louder)

Archer to *Enterprise*. Sound General Quarters. Command staff meeting upon my arrival. Archer out.

(beat, to Mayweather)

Travis, we don't have time for normal landing procedures.

The ensign's eyes widen momentarily and he grins briefly as Archer returns to his seat. As Travis reaches for the comm. panel, Reed speaks.

REED

Trouble, sir?

The captain nods grimly as he re-secures his safety harness.

MAYWEATHER

Enterprise, this is Shuttlepod One. Stand by for hands on approach.

Briefly, we focus on Hoshi as she closes her eyes and clutches her safety harness tightly. Around, the ambient hum of the shuttlepod spikes.

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

As the shuttlepod begins to accelerate toward the drydock, we ZOOM toward the hull of the EX-01 and in a camera trick, PUSH through a viewport to:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIEFING ROOM

SUB-COMMANDER T'POL and COMMANDER TUCKER, dressed in their EV-suits, stand in front of the large monitor as it broadcasts a news feed; on the screen, two immaculately dressed men with plastic features shout loudly at each other as they "discuss" the President's recent belligerent comments regarding Alpha Centauri; Trip appears monumentally uncomfortable as he watches this and keeps giving arrested glances at the Vulcan. At the far end of the table, already seated, DOCTOR PHLOX waits patiently, fiddling with an unfamiliar-looking tool or object as he occasionally glances up at the two commanders.

The door slides open, revealing a bleak-faced Archer, followed by Major Reed and an almost white Hoshi Sato. At a glance, the captain takes in the news feed and Trip's expression.

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ARCHER

You've heard?

TUCKER

Yeah.

(beat, with a nod to the screen)

According to them, we're about to go to war.

The captain frowns as he and the newcomers take their seats, leaving only the two EV-suited officers to stand.

ARCHER

That's not far from the truth.

(beat, off of the reactions of his command staff)

According to the information I've received, President Vanderbilt has instructed General Bernard to begin combat operations to recover Alpha Centauri.

The reactions of the crew are telling. Both Hoshi and Trip frown, obviously not comfortable with military operations, while Reed's expression has the barest hint of approval. Phlox's normally jovial expression darkens slightly. Unsurprisingly, T'Pol is nearly impossible to read.

ARCHER

I cannot, in good conscience, stand by and allow this to happen without at least trying to stop it.

(beat)

I need options, people.

TUCKER

Options? Don't we have orders to stay out of this?

ARCHER

The orders I received are vague and open to interpretation.

(beat, off of Trip's unconvinced expression)

How is this in the best interests of Earth?

A tense silence fills the room for a LONG BEAT. Finally...

T'POL

Captain...

(beat, off his glance in her direction)

Have you spoken with Ambassador Skon?

Archer visibly balks at the idea of going to a Vulcan for assistance.

ARCHER

This is a human matter, Sub-Commander, and should be dealt with by humans.

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The Vulcan raises an eyebrow and gives the news feed a telling look to emphasize her point.

T'POL

Perhaps that is the problem, Captain. This situation is about to be resolved the human way.

As if on cue, the news feed displays stock footage of the *Lexington* in action while the two talking heads continue to pontificate. Archer bristles at her comments but bites his tongue; Trip, however, does no such thing.

TUCKER

There wouldn't even be a situation if you Vulcans hadn't gotten involved!

T'POL

Of course there wouldn't.

(beat, off his surprise)

Troops would have been landed by now.

(off of Tucker's outraged expression)

Martial law, military tribunals and executions would surely have followed.

Trip takes a step toward her, his expression furious.

TUCKER

(hot)

Listen, you Vulcan bit-

ARCHER

That's enough!

(beat)

Do you have a point to make, Sub-Commander, or are you just insulting us?

The Vulcan turns her eyes to Archer, ignoring the angry glare that the chief engineer is giving her.

T'POL

I was not attempting to insult you, Captain.

(beat, off his unconvinced expression)

Based on human history, that is simply the most likely scenario to have occurred without Vulcan intervention.

Every one of the humans in the room is now giving her sullen if not openly hostile looks while Phlox looks on, interest on his face. The Denobulan's expression makes it appear that he would - if it wasn't tacky - be taking extensive notes on this Human/Vulcan interaction.

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ARCHER

(stiff)

We'd like to think that we've evolved beyond that.

T'Pol's expression shifts to that of a teacher about to make a point; it's a look that every student, regardless of species, has seen many times.

T'POL

Then prove it.

(beat, into the awkward silence)

Ambassador Skon has a well documented reputation for fairness and impartiality. As neither he nor the Vulcan Alliance serves to benefit with the resolution of this incident, he will work with both parties to negotiate a settlement that is agreeable to all involved.

Another awkward silence fills the room for a LONG BEAT as the humans digest her comments.

ARCHER

(slowly, cautiously)

I'll take that under advisement, Sub-Commander.

(beat, to Reed as T'Pol nods)

Major, you know the general's reputation better than any of us. Will she pull the trigger?

REED

Without hesitation, sir.

That is not what Archer wanted to hear and he glowers at the table.

REED

With all due respect, sir, why is this an issue?

(beat, off Archer's look)

If the general has orders from the president, then isn't it our duty to obey those orders?

ARCHER

(soft)

Not when they're wrong.

(beat, stronger)

You mentioned duty. What about the duty toward our fellow human beings?

(beat, off of Reed's slight frown)

I may not be military, Major, but I swore an oath to always act in the best interests of Earth.

(beat)

Going to war with the Vulcans over Alpha Centauri is not in our best interests.

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He pauses for a BEAT, looking each of his officers briefly in the eye. Finally...

ARCHER

Trip, I need you to focus on getting us able to maneuver again. If a shooting war does break out, I don't want *Enterprise* to still be moored to the drydock.

TUCKER

Aye, sir.

ARCHER

Sub-Commander, Major, I need both of you on the bridge in case this blows up in our faces.

The two officers acknowledge the order with nods, no hint of approval or disapproval on their faces.

ARCHER

Hoshi, contact the *Lexington*. Maybe I can talk some sense into General Bernard this time.

From his tone, he doesn't sound hopeful.

ARCHER

Dismissed.

As the officers file from the conference room, we can see the captain's face and it's clear that he's nowhere near as confident as he made out moments ago. We follow his POV and focus on the news feed as it displays another image of the *Lexington*.

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

The screen dissolves into a starfield and we find ourselves looking at the actual *Lexington* instead of a digital image. Pushing in, we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *LEXINGTON* - CORRIDOR

Dressed in combat armor, BRIGADIER GENERAL PETROV follows a UEM SERGEANT through the corridor. The general blinks in surprise when the sergeant stops and opens the hatch leading to General Bernard's office. Off of Petrov's look, the sergeant speaks.

UEM SERGEANT

General Bernard's orders, sir.

Shrugging, Petrov walks through the open hatch and into

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INT. *LEXINGTON* - GENERAL BERNARD'S OFFICE

With the confidence of someone who has been in this office many times, Petrov walks to the desk, taking in his surroundings with a quick glance. A smile comes to his face.

His POV: A flat image of three young UEM lieutenants in various states of inebriation rests on Bernard's desk. Two of the lieutenants are recognizable as a very young April Bernard and even younger Petrov.

The sound of the hatch opening draws Petrov's attention and he turns to face the entering General Bernard, still smiling.

BERNARD

(furious)

You stupid sonuvabitch.

(beat, off Petrov's sudden surprise)

What the hell were you thinking?

Petrov's smile fades as the hatch closes and Bernard glares at him. Her hands clenched tightly in fists, she begins to pace.

BERNARD

No, don't answer that. You weren't thinking, were you?

(beat, angrier)

No, you were too damned busy thinking about getting that next star!

PETROV

April...

General Bernard whirls on him.

BERNARD

No! Don't you dare try to weasel your way out this! In fact, stand there and shut up!

Petrov recoils from the fury in her voice.

BERNARD

In ten hours and forty-two minutes, we're probably going to be at war with the Vulcans because you had to pressure Vanderbilt into letting you handle the talks with Cheet.

PETROV

(tightly)

I did what I thought was best for Earth...

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BERNARD

No! You did what you thought was best for Gregory Petrov!

(beat, furious)

How is going to war with the Vulcans in Earth's best interests?

PETROV

(confidently)

The Vulcans will back down.

Bernard stares at him for a BEAT, an incredulous expression on her face.

BERNARD

No, they won't.

(beat, with a sigh)

If you had done your damned research, you'd know that the Vulcans have a reputation for not backing down during mediations.

Dropping heavily into her chair behind the desk, General Bernard glares at Petrov for another BEAT before turning her attention to her computer monitor.

In that moment, an expression of remorse briefly flickers across Petrov's face. A LONG BEAT of silence fills the office before a beep sounds; Bernard activates the comm. panel on her desk.

BERNARD

Bernard.

BRIDGE OFFICER (COMM VOICE)

Ma'am, *Enterprise* is calling again.

Petrov frowns as Bernard sighs.

BERNARD

Inform *Enterprise* that I will return their call in ten minutes. Bernard out.

PETROV

(cautiously)

What does Archer want?

Bernard shoots him another glare.

BERNARD

The same thing I want: a way out of the mess you caused.

(beat)

I should have your ass thrown in the brig.

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Petrov starts to smile as if she were joking but thinks better of it when he realizes that she is deadly serious.

PETROV

What are you going to do?

Bernard looks up, pinning him with a cold but furious look.

BERNARD

What do you think I'm going to do?

(beat, disgusted and sad)

I'm going follow orders and start an interstellar war.

And off of Petrov's look of surprise, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

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ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

Crawling with activity, the EX-01 is still encased within the drydock. Dozens of EV-Suited figures can be seen scurrying atop the *Enterprise's* hull. For a moment, we pause before pushing in toward a viewport.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ARCHER'S OFFICE

Seated before his desk computer, Captain Archer looks harried and tense. His previously clean desk is now littered with clipboards and PADDs, and his attention is focused entirely upon the monitor before him. As we PAN around him, we can see he is speaking with a UEM officer.

UEM LIEUTENANT

I'm sorry, Captain. General Bernard is currently unavailable. I will pass on your message as soon as possible. *Lexington* out.

The screen display goes blank as the connection ends and Archer looks like he wants to hit something. The chime of his door announcer sounds and he glances up.

ARCHER

Enter.

The door slides open and Sub-Commander T'Pol enters, bearing another stack of clipboards. At sight of her, Archer's expression sours slightly but he does his best to hide it. He's only marginally successful.

T'POL

The status reports you wanted, Captain.

He gestures to a mostly clean spot on the desk and she places the stack there.

T'POL

Commander Tucker reports that his teams are operating behind schedule due to ongoing difficulty with station facilities.

ARCHER

(sourly)

How much behind schedule?

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T'POL

Three hours was his estimate.

ARCHER

Dammit.

(beat, glancing toward the viewport)

In three hours, we could be at war.

(beat)

Tell Trip I want to talk to him as soon as possible.

The Vulcan raises an eyebrow but nods in acknowledgement of the order.

ARCHER

Was there anything else, Sub-Commander?

T'POL

Yes, Captain.

(beat, off his poorly concealed irritation)

I have been monitoring the communications taking place between the Vulcan fleet...

Archer's eyes widen at that; it's obvious that he's surprised that she would reveal something like this.

T'POL

And Colonel Vanik has received instructions from the Vulcan High Command to assume the highest level of fleet readiness.

The captain sighs and, for a moment, appears to be absolutely defeated.

ARCHER

I can't believe this ... we're going to go to war over this stupid chunk of rock.

For a BEAT, there is only silence.

T'POL

Captain...

(beat, off his glance up)

I again recommend that you contact Ambassador Skon.

(off his frown)

The Vulcan Alliance does not wish war, Captain, and the ambassador is eager to prevent such an event. He would be an excellent ally to acquire.

Archer looks away and stares at the picture viewer containing the images of his parents. As if on cue, the viewer selection shifts to Henry Archer receiving the Nobel Prize again.

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ARCHER

Well, nothing else has worked so far.

(beat)

Set it up, Sub-Commander.

She acknowledges this with the slightest of nods before turning to depart.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALPHA CENTAURI CAPITOL BUILDING

Once more, the streets outside this impressive structure are vacant and empty. The complete lack of activity lends the image of desolation, We push in toward the building and

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Standing quietly before an immense window, TITUS CHEET stares at the seemingly abandoned city with an expression of despair on his face. He appears to be on the brink of an emotional collapse.

Seated in a chair in front of the massive desk, Ambassador Skon appears outwardly stoic as he studies his human companion.

CHEET

I never thought it would come to this...

Turning slowly, he looks at the Vulcan ambassador and sighs.

CHEET

It was supposed to be easy ... a peaceful demonstration without real violence.

(beat)

And now more human blood will be on my hands...

SKON

Surak said: Change is inevitable. Lead by example.

(beat, off of Cheet's frown)

This ... confrontation has been building for some time, Governor. It is the inevitable conflict between parent and child or mentor and student.

Cheet drops into his chair behind the desk heavily.

CHEET

(sullen)

Do you have a saying by Surak for every situation?

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SKON

Yes.

There is a BEAT of silence before Cheet cracks a smile. Before he can respond, the chirp of a comm. panel interrupts them.

AIDE (COMM VOICE)

I have Captain Archer from *Enterprise* calling for Ambassador Skon. He insists that it's urgent.

Cheet nods to Skon who stands and faces the wall monitor.

SKON

Connect me, please.

The monitor snaps to life, quickly resolving into an image of Archer.

ARCHER

Ambassador. I hope I didn't catch you at a bad time.

The Vulcan raises an eyebrow.

SKON

Of course not, Captain. How may I be of assistance?

Archer inhales, visibly uncomfortable.

ARCHER

It's in regards to our current problem, Ambassador. In...

(off a sideways glance)

Eight hours and fourteen minutes, we're going to be at war and I'm trying to prevent that.

SKON

(surprised)

By contacting me?

(beat)

I must admit to some ... surprise. Your vocal dislike of my species is well known, Captain.

(beat)

I would have thought that you of all people would have welcomed a war with Vulcan.

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ARCHER

(tight)

Then you thought wrong, Ambassador.

(beat)

I'll do whatever I have to do to prevent a war.

To one side and out of Archer's visual range, Cheet looks at the *Enterprise* captain with a surprised and even hopeful expression on his face.

ARCHER

Sub-Commander T'Pol believes that you might be able to help me stop this war before it starts and right now, I need all the help I can get.

SKON

The Vulcan fleet in orbit is not under my command, Captain. I cannot order them to stand down if that is what you wanted to ask of me.

(beat)

Nor would I do so if they were under my authority. Mediation under threat of violence is no mediation at all.

ARCHER

(desperate)

But there must be something you can do!

SKON

I am not authorized to do more than arbitrate.

(beat, off of Archer's disconsolate expression)

Or advise.

Archer glances away, then back to the screen.

ARCHER

If I can somehow convince General Bernard to extend her deadline, could you speak to your government?

SKON

Yes.

(beat)

The ideal solution, Captain, would be to remand this entire situation to diplomats.

ARCHER

I know.

(beat)

I'll be in touch with you as soon as I speak with Bernard again.

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SKON

And I shall be standing by.

The screen goes blank as the connection is terminated.

CHEET

Do you think he has any chance?

The governor of Alpha Centauri sounds and looks hopeful.

SKON

Perhaps.

(beat)

We have a saying on my world: one man can summon the future. Perhaps Captain Archer is that man.

And, off of Cheet's expression, we

FADE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - AIRLOCK ACCESS

Dressed in an EV-Suit, Commander Tucker exits the airlock and enters the ship itself. He busies himself with removing the helmet as he walks down the hall corridor toward a familiar-looking door. Instead of pressing the announce button, however, he bangs on the door itself several times.

ARCHER'S VOICE

Enter.

The door slides open and we follow Trip into

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ARCHER'S OFFICE

The captain looks up at Tucker's entrance but the engineer speaks first.

TUCKER

You wanted to see me, sir?

Archer takes in the engineer's annoyed expression with a glance.

ARCHER

Yes.

(beat, as he gestures with a PADD)

Three hours, Trip?

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Frustration is clear on Trip's face.

TUCKER

Sir, I've got my people running ragged. If I push them any harder, there's gonna be mistakes. And mistakes will lead to injuries.

Archer looks down for a BEAT before glancing up.

ARCHER

(softly)

I need you to push them, Trip.

(beat)

The warhawks back home just pushed the deadline up to twelve hundred hours Earth Standard.

Trip is aghast.

TUCKER

That's not even two hours away!

ARCHER

I know.

(beat)

So push them, Trip. As hard as you can.

(beat, off of the engineer's grim nod)

How long?

Trip pauses for a BEAT as he considers.

TUCKER

Two hours.

(off of Archer's dark frown)

One if you give me T'Pol.

ARCHER

(surprised)

T'Pol?

TUCKER

Yeah. She may piss me off but she knows what she's doing.

(beat, annoyed)

Which is more than I can say about most of these new recruits.

ARCHER

You have her.

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Trip turns to leave but hesitates.

TUCKER

Any progress?

The captain's face is bleak.

ARCHER

No. We're going to go to war because nobody is listening!

(beat, soft)

I don't know what to do, Trip.

TUCKER

Make 'em listen, sir.

ARCHER

(frustrated)

And how do I do that exactly?

TUCKER

You'll think of something, sir.

Archer smiles.

ARCHER

Wish I had your confidence, Trip.

As he exits the office, Trip speaks over his shoulder.

TUCKER

It's not confidence, Cap'n. It's faith.

We focus on Archer's smile as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *LEXINGTON* - GENERAL BERNARD'S OFFICE

Harried and tired-looking, General Bernard faces the wall monitor, a frown on her face. Displayed upon the monitor is the grizzled GENERAL SUTHERLAND, a bleak expression on his own face. Every few seconds, the screen flickers or freezes up as the lines of communication between Earth and the venerable warship are not perfect.

SUTHERLAND

I'm sorry, April. The president's made his decision.

(beat)

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SUTHERLAND (CONT'D)

(sourly)

And he's no longer listening to me.

BERNARD

But, sir, there has to be something you can do!

Sutherland shakes his head in weary resignation.

SUTHERLAND

Believe me, I've tried. This has turned into a nightmare for the president and he's afraid that if he backs down, his opponents will use that against him in the coming elections.

(beat, disgusted)

The politicians are in charge now.

Both grimace at the thought of a war waged by politicians instead of soldiers.

SUTHERLAND

I'll keep you updated of any changes but until then, your previous orders stand.

(beat, sympathetic)

Good luck.

The image of Sutherland vanishes and Bernard turns back to her desk. Prominently displayed upon the computer monitor is what appears to be a tactical assessment of the Vulcan cruisers in orbit around Alpha Centauri. Bernard studies the readouts for a BEAT, clearly attempting to determine weak points in their defenses. The chirp of her comm. panel echoes loudly in the otherwise empty room.

BERNARD

This is Bernard.

BRIDGE OFFICER (COMM VOICE)

Ma'am, I have Captain Archer of *Enterprise* calling again.

Bernard sighs.

BERNARD

Patch him through.

She turns in her seat to face the wall monitor again as Captain Archer's face appears on the display; there is no interference in the transmission this time.

BERNARD

(sarcastic)

Captain Archer. What a surprise.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

Archer frowns briefly at her sarcasm.

ARCHER

General.

(beat, diplomatic)

I'm calling in hopes that you have good news from Earth.

Bernard narrows her eyes at the implication that Archer is aware of her communication with Sutherland.

BERNARD

No.

(beat, off his look)

Until informed otherwise, my previous orders stand.

Archer exhales heavily, as if the weight of the world is suddenly dropped on his shoulders.

ARCHER

General...

BERNARD

Don't start, Archer. I don't like these orders any more than you do but they are lawful and they have been authenticated.

(beat)

In just under forty minutes, my strike group will move on Alpha Centauri. Any ships that provide resistance will be considered hostile and treated accordingly.

Now, it is Bernard who sighs heavily.

BERNARD

(soft, sad)

In just under forty minutes, we go to war.

And off of Archer's expression, we

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

As we have before, we open with a shot of the EX-01 encased within the drydock; like previous shots, it is crawling with activity. This time, however, we press in and focus on a group of EV-suited figures hard at work. As we close in, we can see that the four of them are working to free a large chunk of armor plating that has been severely warped from weapons fire. One of the figures - Commander Tucker – is operating the drydock crane with a hand-portable remote control while the other three figures work with vacuum torches or high-tech versions of a crowbar. Among the other three, we recognize Sub-Commander T'Pol and SENIOR CHIEF LINQUIST as they work on the warped armor plate.

As we draw closer, we can hear comm. chatter taking place. Most of it involves status reports being broadcast and much of that is indecipherable (as it utilizes foreign acronyms and phrases). One voice, however, is clear and distinct.

DISGRUNTLED CREWMAN (COMM VOICE)

...cking Vulcans. We wouldn't even be in this damned situation if it weren't for them.

Tucker frowns and shoots a glance at T'Pol. There is no indication of her reaction to the comments being broadcast on an open channel.

DISGRUNTLED CREWMAN (COMM VOICE, CONT'D)

We should just let the military do their damned jobs and-

Tucker interrupts: he's had enough.

TUCKER

Masaro!

DISGRUNTLED CREWMAN (COMM VOICE)

Sir?

TUCKER

(hard)

Shut up and go back to work.

The three figures working on the plate in front of Tucker step back a BEAT later.

LINQUIST

Cable secured, sir.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

As he speaks, we can see three cables from the mini-crane wrapped around hard-points on the armor plate. The fourth figure - CREWMAN MENDOZA - steps slowly away from the plate, his movements exaggerated in the null-gravity of space.

TUCKER

Good. Everyone get clear...

Trip waits until all four have moved a sufficient distance from the plate; both Mendoza and T'Pol move closer to Tucker. All three - including T'Pol - give Tucker a thumbs-up signal and he begins working the crane remote. The cables become taut immediately and the heavy armor plate shifts slightly but refuses to come free; the damage it took during their battle in the mini-series has clearly wedged the plate in far too firmly. For a BEAT, the crane cables and the plate struggle against one another.

Focus on T'Pol: Through her EV Suit helmet, we can see her frowning.

Her POV: As the cables from the crane struggle against the damaged plate, we can see the slab of metal slowly giving, the side farthest from Tucker obviously coming loose first. The plate buckles and one of the cables quivers...

Back to scene: Her eyes wide, T'Pol reaches for Tucker JUST as the plate is torn free at the same moment that one of the quivering cables breaks. The Vulcan's timing is impeccable: she seizes Trip's EV-suit and pulls him hard toward her. Over the comm., we can hear his startled squawk even as the slab of armor narrowly misses him; the flying cable, however, slices across Crewman Mendoza's chest with brutal force, lifting him up off of the hull and sending him into a tumbling spin.

LINQUIST

Mendoza!

Even as T'Pol is releasing her grip on Tucker's EV-suit, Chief Linquist is springing toward the spinning crewman in a high, bounding jump - a jump that would only be possible in zero-gee. Mini-thrusters, integrated into the senior chief's suit, propel him farther and faster than would be normally possible and he quickly grabs the tumbling crewman. The hiss of escaping oxygen from Mendoza's suit is bad enough but the gaping slash in the protective gear is even worse.

LINQUIST

I need a sealer!

Bounding forward in that impossible jump, Tucker covers the distance in a matter of seconds, already carrying a cylindrical tube in one hand. At once, the commander begins to apply the sealer upon the gash - at first, it brings to mind a huge tube of toothpaste but the "paste" hardens almost at once and the hiss of escaping oxygen begins to fade. As he works, Trip speaks, his eyes never leaving the gash that he is sealing up.

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

TUCKER

How is he?

LINQUIST

Unconscious.

(beat, as he studies the crewman's face)

Still breathing though.

TUCKER

Thank God for that...

Behind them in the distance, we can see T'Pol work the crane remote, directing the loose armor plate to a large stockpile of other pulled plates. At the same time, she is speaking over the comm.

T'POL

(resolutely calm)

T'Pol to *Enterprise*. Medical emergency. Have trauma team standing by at airlock...

TUCKER

(picking up on her minute pause)

Airlock C-4.

T'POL

C-4.

Tucker finishes the sealing job and glances up at Linquist.

TUCKER

Let's go...

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AIRLOCK

Captain Archer runs through the mostly empty corridor as a soft alarm - different from the battle stations alarm – echoes around them. He rounds the corner and comes to a stop, noting the impatient expression on Doctor Phlox's face as the Denobulan waits outside the airlock door. Two other crewmen are nearby, both wearing the scrubs of medical assistants; they are rapidly assembling a stretcher.

The airlock door cycles open and two suited figures enter, carrying a third. Behind them, a smaller figure follows. Phlox moves forward at once, running a handheld scanner over the limp figure of Crewman Mendoza. His expressive face is grim.

PHLOX

Stretcher.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

The two medical assistants are there in a flash, the assembled stretcher at the ready. Moving as carefully as they can, the two suited figures place the unmoving crewman on the stretcher.

ARCHER

Doctor?

PHLOX

He has several broken ribs but I haven't detected any internal bleeding.

(beat)

I will know more when I get him to sickbay.

As the doctor nods to the two med-techs, we can see the three suited figures removing their helmets in the background of the scene. An expression of surprise flashes across the captain's face at their identities.

ARCHER

(to Phlox)

Let me know the moment you know something, Doctor.

(beat, to Trip)

What happened?

TUCKER

Not sure, sir. Everything happened so fast...

(beat, to T'Pol in a voice completely devoid of the usual disdain)

Thank you.

The Vulcan nods to him, ignoring the captain's curious glance.

T'POL

(to Archer)

One of the crane cables was deficient and gave under the stress.

Quietly, Linquist gives Tucker a look and Trip nods to him, dismissing him from duty without speaking a word. The senior chief immediately heads in the direction that Phlox took.

ARCHER

Wonderful.

(beat)

I take it this is the sort of mistake you were talking about?

TUCKER

(grim)

Yes sir.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ARCHER

Dammit.

(beat)

Do what you have to, Trip. We're running out of time.

Archer turns away and we

FADE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Despite the situation, the command deck of the EX-01 is strangely devoid of significant activity. Major Reed and Ensign Sato are at their stations in addition to a number of crewmen attending to their duties; there is no one at the Helm board. Displayed on the main viewer is a news feed in which the journalist is on the launch deck of a UEM ship. The atmosphere on the bridge is tense.

ARCHER (COMM VOICE)

Archer to bridge. Stand down from medical emergency.

(beat)

Ensign Sato, contact Ambassador Skon.

As Reed inputs a command on his board to silence the alarm, Hoshi touches her earpiece.

SATO

Aye, sir.

Silence again descends on the bridge for a LONG BEAT as Hoshi inputs a few commands. Finally...

SATO

(hesitant)

Major?

Reed glances up.

SATO (CONT'D)

What sort of weapons are on the *Lexington*?

The major looks momentarily surprised before responding, reciting statistics from memory.

REED

Four Mark Twelve twin-barreled railguns capable of firing one 26 centimeter round per second with an unlimited effective range. Three Mark Thirty-Six laser cannons, two fore, one aft. Four Mark Nineteen missile racks, and a close-in weapon systems.

With each additional weapon system named, Hoshi winces. Reed cannot help but to notice this.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

SATO

What about the Vulcan ships? How do they compare?

The major frowns.

REED

I don't know, Ensign. That information is classified.

Hoshi suddenly looks sad.

SATO

I suppose we're going to find out though...

REED

Yes, I suppose we will.

A hint of concern lurks in the major's eyes as the ensign returns to her duties. Off his expression we

CUT TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Once again standing before the wall monitor, Ambassador Skon and Governor Cheet face the image of Captain Archer. As he did the last time that he interacted with Cheet, Archer appears frustrated. We enter this scene with it already in progress, the indication clear that this "discussion" has been going on for several minutes.

CHEET

-is essential to any agreement that Alpha Centauri be recognized as an independent entity and not a colony of Earth!

ARCHER

Mister Cheet-

CHEET

Governor.

ARCHER

(through clenched teeth)

Mister Cheet, you have to recognize Earth's stake in this! Earth has interests in Alpha Centauri and won't just give them up.

(beat)

Compromises will have to be made.

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

CHEET

Not at the expense of Centauri liberty!

(beat, angry)

Right now, Earth is a foreign power that is keeping us subjugated under their boot!

Skon looks askance at the governor, inclining an eyebrow and speaking before Archer can.

SKON

Hyperbole and exaggeration do not advance your cause, Governor.

(beat, to Archer)

Is not the United Earth charter predicated on the right of self-governance?

ARCHER

(wary)

It is...but Governor Cheet seized power in a military coup. United Earth will not recognize a change of power by those methods nor will it recognize the chief architect of that illegal rebellion as the legitimate head of government.

CHEET

(loud)

We had to take steps! Earth-

Skon raises a hand to forestall the governor's diatribe and Cheet clamps his mouth shut, still glaring at Archer.

SKON

A logical precaution, Captain. Armed insurrections rarely end well-

(with a telling glance to Cheet)

Regardless of the intentions behind them.

Again, Cheet glowers at Archer, as if it was the captain's fault that he had just been taken to task by the Vulcan ambassador.

SKON

What compromises do you propose, Captain?

Archer hesitates for a BEAT, glancing down at a clipboard that he brings into view.

ARCHER

The Senate begins the process to recognize Alpha Centauri as an official commonwealth of United Earth. The current government is dissolved and replaced with a provisional government made up of citizens that are agreed upon by both Centauri and Earth.

(beat, off of Cheet's frown)

No military tribunals, but the current illegal government has to be dissolved.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

A BEAT passes before Cheet speaks. It's obvious that he's at least considering Archer's proposal.

CHEET

Independence is not debatable.

(off of Archer's frown)

Too many people have died already for us to give that up. Everything else we've discussed...

(beat, with a sour look)

Everything else is up for discussion.

Captain Archer is silent for a LONG BEAT. Finally

ARCHER

I can't officially speak for Earth, Governor-

It is the first time that Archer uses the title without malice or rancor.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

-but if there is a chance that we can resolve this without any needless deaths, then I'm willing to listen to your ideas.

The two humans study one another for a BEAT.

SKON

Then let us discuss this further. Our time is limited.

And with that, we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CORRIDOR

A PADD in hand, Hoshi Sato approaches the familiar door leading to Archer's office. As she reaches up to press the "Announce" button, the door slides open, revealing the captain who is exiting. He stops abruptly, startled at her presence.

ARCHER

Ensign.

She offers him the PADD.

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

SATO

Status report, sir.

(beat, as he takes it from her)

Commander Tucker reports that all damage control teams will be back aboard in five minutes and we'll be ready to break mooring.

ARCHER

(muttering)

Just in time.

(beat, louder)

Did either *Lexington* or Earth respond to that proposal I sent?

Hoshi shakes her head.

SATO

No, sir.

(beat, off his frown)

Captain...

(off his look)

What happens next?

Archer is grim.

ARCHER

That depends on-

REED (COMM VOICE)

(interrupting)

Bridge to Captain Archer!

The captain turns to the nearest comm. panel and presses the “Talk” button.

ARCHER

Archer here.

REED (COMM VOICE)

Sir, the *Lexington* strike group is maneuvering.

ARCHER

(soft, frustrated)

Dammit.

(louder)

Sound Battle Stations and prepare to cast off moorings.

And, with the shrill blare of the alarm, we...

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

As before, we open with a shot of the EX-01 encased within the spindly arms of the drydock. Movement can be seen and, as we PUSH IN closer, we can see that the motion is slowly retracting catwalks and station umbilicals. With a muted growl, the sublight engines of *Enterprise* ignite with a flash and the UESPA ship begins to creep forward.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Seated in his command chair and wearing a tense expression, Captain Archer watches quietly as Ensign Mayweather slowly feeds additional power to the engines; the ensign is wearing what appears to be part of an EV Suit sans the bulky chest piece and helmet, a clear indication that he was assisting Commander Tucker's team.

With a hiss, the turbolift door slides open and Sub-Commander T'Pol emerges, followed closely by Commander Tucker. Both are wearing the same pressure suit that Travis is currently wearing. Tucker makes a beeline for the Damage Control station while T'Pol wordlessly ejects the officer manning the Science station.

ARCHER

Status?

REED

Still having problems bringing some of the hull polarizers online, sir.

At that, Trip changes course and takes a look at the major's tactical board, a frown on his face. Without asking permission, the engineer begins pressing buttons, earning him an annoyed glare from Reed.

ARCHER

How long until we clear the drydock, Mister Mayweather?

MAYWEATHER

One minute, thirty seconds, sir.

Archer glances in T'Pol's direction and she seems to recognize her cue, even though her attention is focused on the viewer before her.

T'POL

Lexington strike group maneuvering into attack formation.

(beat as she hits several keys)

All Vulcan ships beginning defensive maneuvers.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

Archer frowns.

ARCHER

How long until they're in firing range?

T'POL

At their current speed, four minutes, forty seconds.

TUCKER

Cap'n...

(off of Archer's look)

We've still got a couple of hull breaches on the starboard side...that's preventin' the polarization emitters from functionin' properly.

ARCHER

(with a frown)

Do what you can.

(beat, to Mayweather)

Travis?

MAYWEATHER

Thirty seconds, sir.

SATO

Sir, *Lexington* is broadcasting a comm. signal. I think it's meant for everyone.

ARCHER

Let's see it.

The viewscreen coalesces into an image of Bernard in mid-sentence.

BERNARD

-order of the President of United Earth. Any vessel that attempts to interfere with these lawful orders will be considered hostile and treated accordingly.

T'POL

Lexington strike group will be within firing range in three minutes, fifty seconds.

REED

Sir, should I charge weapons?

For a BEAT, Archer appears completely overwhelmed by the situation. He glances to his right and Major Reed, then to his left and the stoic Sub-Commander, before returning his eyes to the viewscreen.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

SATO

Vulcan ship *Ti'Mur* responding, sir; all frequencies.

MAYWEATHER

We've cleared moorings...

The image on the viewscreen splits to reveal COLONEL VANIK, a stern and fierce-looking patrician of a Vulcan.

VANIK

Alpha Centauri is under the protection of the Vulcan Alliance. Attempts to land military troops will be met with force.

Again, we focus on Archer as he struggles with an impossible decision.

T'POL

Lexington strike group will be within firing range in three minutes.

REED

Captain? The weapons?

Archer glances once to Trip, whose attention is now entirely focused on his Damage Control board, and then to Hoshi, who is staring at the viewscreen with wide and frightened eyes. The captain blinks and it's as if a newfound resolve comes over him.

ARCHER

Negative on the weapons, Major.
(to Mayweather)
Travis, take us in, one-half impulse.

Several eyes turn to Archer in surprise.

MAYWEATHER

What heading, sir?

ARCHER

(confident)
Put us between them.

Even T'Pol displays a bit of surprise at that.

REED

Sir!

Archer shoots the major a quelling glance.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ARCHER

No weapons, Major. We are not going to shoot at our allies.

(beat)

Period.

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

Sublight engines burning bright, *Enterprise* rapidly closes the distance and enters the space between the two maneuvering fleets.

INT. *LEXINGTON* - COMMAND DECK

A perplexed expression on her face, General Bernard stares at the image of *Enterprise* entering the combat engagement zone. Petrov, who is standing nearby, looks almost apoplectic.

PETROV

What the hell is that idiot doing?

BERNARD

I don't know.

(beat, to an officer)

Communications. Get me *Enterprise*.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

The atmosphere on the bridge is almost tangible. Archer is now pacing back and forth behind Ensign Mayweather, his eyes riveted on the viewscreen.

REED

Multiple target locks...sir, we've got to do something!

ARCHER

We are doing something, Major.

Reed shoots a quick glare at the captain before glancing back down at his console; the frustration in his expression is understandable: he's not being allowed to do anything. At the same time, we can see T'Pol study Archer with a curious expression.

SATO

Incoming transmission, sir.

(beat, off of new information on her panel)

It's the *Lexington*!

Archer nods.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ARCHER

Onscreen.

General Bernard's image appears on the viewscreen.

BERNARD

Captain Archer, mind telling me what you're doing?

ARCHER

(off her glare)

Trying to prevent a war.

The general's expression darkens even further.

BERNARD

(annoyed)

We've been over this before, Archer. Remove-

ARCHER

(interrupting)

No, we haven't!

(off her glare)

Think this through, General! If you give the order and shots are fired, we will be at war. Not with pirates or marauders or renegades...

(beat, with passion)

But with the Vulcans.

(with more passion)

Our allies!

T'POL

Firing range in one minute.

ARCHER

Humans will kill Vulcans and Vulcans will kill humans.

(frustrated)

Over a piece of real estate!

INT. *LEXINGTON* - COMMAND DECK

Bernard is motionless as she listens to and stares at Archer's image.

ARCHER

Hundreds have already died over this planet! How many more have to die?

UEM LIEUTENANT (OS)

Firing range achieved.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ARCHER

(continuing over the lieutenant)

Thousands? Hundreds of thousands?

(beat, soft and intense)

Millions?

General Petrov takes a half step toward Bernard and lowers his voice.

PETROV

(soft)

April, we have firing range.

She nods absently.

BERNARD

I want firing solutions.

On the viewer, Archer's expression is tense.

ARCHER

General-

BERNARD

(interrupting)

Enough!

(off his sudden silence)

I am a soldier, Captain, and I do not have the luxury of questioning my orders.

ARCHER

(intense)

A good soldier knows when to obey orders and when to question them.

(beat, off her expression of surprise)

You said that two years ago after you redirected a convoy headed to Denobula because your instincts warned you of danger.

(beat)

I've read the reports. Your hunch paid off and the convoy avoided a Nausicaan raiding party lurking in ambush. Thousands were saved because you obeyed the intent of your orders but not the letter of them.

BERNARD

(soft)

That was different...

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

As if sensing a weakness, Archer presses on. Around him, the bridge crew watches in silence.

ARCHER

Was it? You followed your instincts then and they were right.

(beat, off her conflicted expression)

What are your instincts saying right now?

From her expression, it's pretty clear what the answer to that question is.

ARCHER

If you order the fleet to attack, this time thousands will die. Humans and Vulcans.

(beat)

And all because the president doesn't have the full picture.

An almost sneer on his face, General Petrov enters the image.

PETROV

(contemptuous)

And I suppose you do?

ARCHER

No.

(beat)

But I at least have a slightly clearer picture than you did, General Petrov.

(off his look, to Bernard)

Please, General...don't do this.

INT. *LEXINGTON* - COMMAND DECK

Still an image of indecision, General Bernard glances around the bridge of the *Lexington*, studying the crew awaiting her orders. All of them are young and many still bear injuries from the engagements in the mini-series.

UEM LIEUTENANT

Firing solutions are plotted and programmed, General. Fleet is standing by for your instructions.

Bernard nods and swallows visibly.

BERNARD

Status of Vulcan ships?

SENSOR OPERATOR

Holding steady at five thousand kilometers.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

ARCHER
Don't do this, General...

PETROV
(angry)
Shut up, Archer!
(beat, to comm. officer)
End transmission!

Bernard shoots Petrov a glare.

BERNARD
(to comm. officer)
Belay that order.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

A hopeful glint can be briefly seen in Archer's expression.

ARCHER
(diplomatic)
Thank you.

She gives him a disgruntled look.

BERNARD
Don't.
(glancing to something off screen)
Weapon status!

UEM LIEUTENANT (OS)
One hundred percent, ma'am!

The hopeful glint disappears from Archer's face.

ARCHER
(soft)
How many more have to die over this planet?

Bernard glances away, as if she is about to give a command and Archer speaks quickly.

ARCHER
(passionate)
I've seen the end result of that sort of madness, General. It's a dead planet, filled with nothing more than corpses and ghosts of a long forgotten world.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

Bernard pauses as he continues. We can see the uncertainty in her eyes.

ARCHER

(growing even more passionate)

It's a planetary graveyard that no one remembers. A world so utterly ruined that nothing could survive on its surface a thousand years later. A world that was home to a species completely forgotten by history.

The silence is nearly deafening.

ARCHER

How many dead worlds will we leave in our wake? Will Earth be one of them? Or Vulcan?

(beat)

Or Mars?

She reacts slightly to that although it is barely perceptible. Instead of pressing the point, Archer stands quietly, his expression intent.

INT. *LEXINGTON* - COMMAND DECK

The bridge of the warship is eerily silent, broken only by the distant hum of the main drive and the sounds of computer operations. Bernard frowns as she again glances over the too young faces of her bridge crew. Finally...

BERNARD

Captain Vanik.

The viewer split-screens, revealing an image of the stern looking Vulcan.

BERNARD

Lexington will be entering a standard orbit above Alpha Centauri.

(beat)

We do not have hostile intent.

With a nearly indecipherable expression on her face, she glances to the communications officer.

BERNARD

(to comm officer)

From fleet commander to all ships:

(beat)

Stand down from Battle Stations.

And from that, we...

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE ALPHA CENTAURI A

We open with a curious sight: ten Vulcan ringships orbit the planet, each logically placed to provide maximum protection for the planet. At the same time, the *Lexington* strike group cruises silently in orbit, each ship a precise distance from their Vulcan counterpart. We PUSH toward the planet and

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALPHA CENTAURI - CAPITOL BUILDING - DUSK

Unlike the previous instances where this building and the surrounding streets appeared to be deserted, the Capitol is swarming with activity. Groundspeeders and wheeled vehicles pack the avenues outside the large building, and the sky is filled with aerial flyers. We PUSH IN toward a third-story balcony and the figure of Captain Archer standing there, overlooking the street.

Wearing his dress uniform, Archer looks tired but no longer as stressed as before. He silently watches the busy streets for a LONG BEAT.

BERNARD’S (OS)

Thought I'd find you out here.

Archer turns as General Bernard, also in a dress uniform, emerges through the doorway. Beyond, we can see what appears to be a diplomatic party of some sort taking place in the Capitol building.

ARCHER

Needed some air.

The general offers a slight smile.

BERNARD

It was getting rather ... thick in there.

Archer returns the smile before turning his attention back to the street below them. Silently, the general takes a place next to him and, for a LONG BEAT, they stare at the slowly sinking sun. Finally...

BERNARD

Petrov and I have been ordered back to Earth to answer some questions.

Archer frowns at that and glances at her.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

BERNARD (CONT'D)

For what it's worth, I think we did the right thing.

(beat, with a half smile)

Might mean our careers are over but at least no one died.

Archer's frown turns into a smile.

ARCHER

When do you leave?

BERNARD

Tomorrow morning. Flag has already been transferred to the *Thermopylae* and Colonel Dill has command of the fleet in my absence.

She offers Archer her hand and he takes it without hesitation.

BERNARD

Whatever happens, it's been an honor knowing you, Captain.

ARCHER

And you, General. Good luck.

And off her nod of thanks, we PAN UP into the darkening sky and

FADE TO:

EXT. EARTH - GENEVA

PANNING DOWN from the night sky, we focus briefly on the busy streets of Geneva before PUSHING IN toward the UEM Command building.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNITED EARTH MILITARY COMMAND - WAR ROOM

Once more, this room is packed with military officers and high-ranking government officials. A scene of not-so controlled chaos reigns as arguments rage unabated. PRESIDENT VANDERBILT sits quietly in his chair, observing the various gripes taking place without comment. There is no hint as to what he is thinking. Finally, after a LONG BEAT of back-and-forth between the various factions, he raises a hand for silence.

VANDERBILT

Admiral Forrest-

(off the addressed admiral's look)

You have the floor.

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

The admiral stands, glances around the room for a BEAT, before speaking.

FORREST

Mister President, UESPA Command has authorized me to issue an official apology for Captain Archer's actions at Alpha Centauri.

UESPA ADMIRAL NARSU glowers at the table but says nothing.

FORREST (CONT'D)

Archer acted without our sanction in this matter and his actions do not reflect the official policy of the Agency.

Now, a number of UEM generals are glowering slightly.

FORREST (CONT'D)

However-

(beat)

UESPA fully backs his decision to act to prevent unnecessary death.

The war room erupts into chaos. UEM officers begin to shout at the UESPA detachment present and the UESPA personnel quickly respond. In seconds, only three people present aren't involved in shouting matches: Admiral Forrest (who has retaken his seat), President Vanderbilt and, surprisingly, General Sutherland. Vanderbilt notices this and, once again, lifts his hand for silence.

VANDERBILT

(hard)

The next person who opens their mouth without my express permission will be out of a job.

He pauses for a BEAT, as if he were daring someone to speak. Finally, he turns his attention to Forrest again.

VANDERBILT

This is the second time that Archer has stepped into it, Admiral. He brought the Andorians to Alpha Centauri-

FORREST

(interrupting)

With your permission, Mister President.

Vanderbilt glares briefly as he continues.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

VANDERBILT

-and now he interfered in a United Earth operation.

(beat)

That's not a very good track record, Admiral.

FORREST

Captain Archer's proposal was a good one, Mister President.

(off the hostile looks of several UEM officer)

It kept us from getting into a war with the Vulcans and back into negotiations.

A BEAT of silence passes and we can see several of the UEM officers - and Admiral Narsu as well - struggling to keep from responding. Vanderbilt looks to Sutherland, his expression tacit permission to speak.

SUTHERLAND

I agree with Admiral Forrest.

There is absolute silence as nearly everyone in the war room looks at the senior-most general in the UEM with surprise.

SUTHERLAND

Alpha Centauri has been a problem since before I joined the service, sir.

(to Vanderbilt)

Maybe it's time we let it be someone else's problem for a while.

The president leans back in his chair, clearly surprised.

VANDERBILT

And Archer?

SUTHERLAND

If he were an officer of mine, I'd give him a stern reprimand for putting his ship into unnecessary danger.

(beat, with a slight smile)

And a commendation for creative thinking.

Again, the president looks startled...although Admiral Forrest looks doubly so.

VANDERBILT

A commendation? For this?

SUTHERLAND

Absolutely, Mister President. It wasn't exactly the brightest idea to put *Enterprise* into harm's way like he did, but he was desperate.

(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

SUTHERLAND (CONT'D)

(slightly darker)

To be honest, sir, I'm more than happy to not know how a D'Kyr-class cruiser would stand up against a ship like the *Lexington*.

The president is silent for a LONG BEAT before nodding and turning his attention to Forrest.

VANDERBILT

All right, Admiral. This is what you're going to do...

We FOCUS tight on Forrest and -

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ARCHER'S OFFICE

- then PULL BACK, revealing that the admiral's face is now a digital image broadcast on the wall viewer in Captain Archer's office. From the stiff way that the captain is standing, we get the feeling that this has been going on for a couple of minutes now.

FORREST

And if you ever pull a stunt like this again, I will personally order you to be thrown in the brig and bust you down to Able Crewman!

(beat, off Archer's expression)

Am I understood?

ARCHER

Yes sir!

The admiral nods and the grim expression on his face lessens somewhat.

FORREST

You were lucky, Jon. This could have blown up in your face and caused even bigger problems.

(beat)

Did you think about what would happen if Bernard had ordered her ships to open fire?

Archer nods.

ARCHER

Yes sir.

(beat)

I did what I thought best given the situation, sir.

FORREST

Well, somehow, you impressed General Sutherland. He went to bat for you with the president.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

That's a surprise to Archer and it shows in his face.

FORREST

But you're still walking a fine line here, Jon. Don't do anything stupid for a while.

From Forrest's expression, we can tell he's not entirely sure if Archer is capable of that.

ARCHER

What are my orders, sir?

FORREST

First, get *Enterprise* back to a hundred percent.

(beat, with a smile)

And then get back out there to 'boldly go'.

Archer returns the smile.

ARCHER

Yes sir!

We FOCUS on the captain's smile and then –

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CAPTAIN'S MESS

- PULL BACK to reveal that we've changed to a dinner between the captain and his two senior-most officers. Both Archer and Tucker are having steak while the Vulcan Sub-Commander is eating a salad. T'Pol has a vague sense of discomfort as she eats.

Trip pauses as he swallows his food and leans back

TUCKER

Damn. That's a good steak.

Archer nods in agreement but continues to chew.

TUCKER

And how about you, Sub-Commander? Good salad?

The emphasis on the word "salad" tells us all we need to know about Trip's opinion toward vegetables.

T'POL

It is ... acceptable.

Trip shoots a quick smirk at Archer.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

TUCKER

Acceptable, huh? We should make sure to pass that on.

T'Pol merely inclines an eyebrow briefly in response as she slowly saws into a breadstick with her utensils. Trip watches for a BEAT, amusement growing with each second that passes.

TUCKER

You know, it'd be easier if you just picked it up.

Archer glances up from his plate just in time to see the brief look of disdain that T'Pol gives the engineer.

T'POL

Vulcans do not use their fingers to eat.

Trip is honestly curious about that and it shows on his face.

TUCKER

Too sloppy?

T'POL

(blandly)
Too uncivilized.

In response, Tucker dips his bread into the gravy that drenches what's left of his mashed potatoes and pops it into his mouth, licking his fingers clean as he does so. T'Pol crinkles her nose slightly as if in disgust. As soon as he swallows the bite, Trip turns his attention to Archer.

TUCKER

You know, Cap'n, it's a good thing that Starfleet didn't kick you out.

ARCHER

Oh?

From the captain's expression, he's aware of the teasing tone in Trip's voice and actually looking forward to the punch line.

TUCKER

Yeah. I'd have had to resign in protest.

He smirks.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Never woulda lived that down either.

FOUNDATIONS: "Flashpoint"

The two friends share a grin.

T'POL

Captain...

Archer's grin dissolves and he gives the Vulcan a sour look.

T'POL (CONT'D)

Ambassador Skon requested that I relate his appreciation for your ... unique resolution.

ARCHER

Unique?

He's obviously not sure what to think about that.

T'POL

Indeed. According to the ambassador, it was an admirable outcome despite the ... outlandish methods utilized.

(beat)

He has already forwarded a positive report to the Vulcan High Command.

Archer and Tucker are silent for a LONG BEAT, clearly unsure whether they are comfortable with a Vulcan being impressed with any actions that they take.

ARCHER

(muttering)

At least something good came out of this.

It is said with another brief yet still sour glance directed in T'Pol's direction. A flicker of emotion appears briefly in the Vulcan's eyes but is suppressed quickly as she returns her full attention to her meal. From her posture, we can gather that she is at least partially insulted by the captain's comment.

Surprisingly, Trip's good cheer dwindles somewhat as well and he looks down at his plate, clearly not comfortable himself with the captain's comment.

ARCHER

One other thing, Trip.

Tucker looks up.

ARCHER

This Governor Cheet...

He pauses for a BEAT, twisting his mouth around the title with obvious dislike.

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

ARCHER

The interim governor has agreed to free up the repair personnel in the drydock. Starting at zero nine hundred local, *Enterprise* will be getting the treatment she deserves.

Tucker grins broadly at that.

TUCKER

Gimme four or five days, Cap'n, and she'll be as good as new.

ARCHER

You'll have those days, Commander.

TUCKER

What then?

Archer smiles.

ARCHER

Then we get back out there to explore new worlds and seek out new life.
(grinning)
That sort of stuff.

Trip hoists a wine glass while T'Pol silently watches the two men interact.

TUCKER

Here's to exploring!

Archer raises his own glass.

ARCHER

And here's to seeking!

They clink the glasses together in an impromptu toast and, with that we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

FOUNDATIONS: “Flashpoint”

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