



# STAR TREK FOUNDATIONS

"A Coming of Age"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. UNKNOWN ALIEN COCKPIT

We’re focused on a row of lit buttons that take up our entire view. The writing upon their surface is in some alien language preventing us from ascertaining their purpose. Our focus is taken off of the writing as a finger suddenly comes into view and depresses the button farthest to the left. Its light goes out as we PULL BACK and PAN to reveal a cramped alien cockpit.

PILOT 1

(in an unknown alien language)

[Injector assemblies reading 95%...we’re showing green to begin final reactor start up procedures.]

(beat)

[Countdown commencing.]

The cockpit is crammed with equipment. Consoles with blinking lights that don’t seem to have any purpose other than to take up space, read outs that constantly display positional updates and core readings, and three seats occupied by “people” excited to be there but wishing they had just a little more wiggle room. One display located directly in front of PILOT 1 has come to life and begins the countdown mentioned. At least it appears to be a countdown as the numbers are just as alien as the writing.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – BRIDGE

The alien display has been replaced by a tactical readout on *Enterprise* that shows the human ship in pursuit of some unknown vessel. We PULL BACK to MAJOR REED analyzing the readout and reporting his findings to CAPTAIN ARCHER.

REED

Captain, if they’ve got weapons, they aren’t armed...yet.

(beat, confident)

Even if they did sir, I doubt they would pose anything more than a nuisance.

Archer glances at the major but otherwise doesn’t take his stare off the view screen.

ARCHER

Hoshi, send a message to the nearest UEM ship.

(beat)

Let them know that we’ve caught up with one of the freighters, and that we will be holding them until they can arrive.

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On the other side of the bridge ENSIGN SATO goes to work sending out the requested message to anyone willing to listen. At the same time, SUB-COMMANDER T’POL is hard at work herself. She turns and looks into the small viewing device at her station. After a BEAT, she rises and turns to address Archer.

T’POL

Captain, the system ahead is under the protection of the Vulcan High Command.

(beat)

It has been designated as off-limits to all unauthorized vessels. I recommend that we halt our pursuit immediately.

We can see Archer flinch ever so slightly at the voice of “his” first officer. It’s obvious before he even speaks that he has no intention of following T’Pol’s “recommendation”.

ARCHER

We have been ordered to apprehend this rogue freighter. I have every intention of following that order.

(beat, smug)

Besides, if the High Command doesn’t want us in there, I doubt they’d want that ship in there either.

She has no counterpoint to provide, her only response is to raise her eyebrow at the captain, who is still staring at the boomer ship on the screen. We focus in on the viewscreen until the image of the ship fills our view.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOMER SHIP – BRIDGE

It’s the same shot but the image on the viewscreen has been replaced with that of *Enterprise*. We PULL BACK yet again and PAN to reveal the small five person bridge of the Boomer ship. Their captain sits on the edge of his seat for a BEAT before he jumps up and moves over to the helm station.

CAPTAIN

(worried)

They still following us?

HELMSMAN

(snide)

I’ll let you know the moment they decide to veer off, sir.

The captain doesn’t bother to respond to the helmsman’s sarcasm as everyone on the bridge looks too tired to care at this point.

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CAPTAIN

That system ahead, does it look like a good place to rest a spell?

FIRST OFFICER

We might be able to lose them in there.

(beat)

Not like we have a choice anyway. Can't keep running the engines like this for much longer.

The captain sighs quietly in defeat, clearly dissatisfied with his options. From the exhausted expressions of the crew, it is obvious they have been running for days, and from the constant blare of alarms it is apparent that the aging ship cannot run any farther.

CAPTAIN

We're decided then. Prepare to drop us out of warp.

(beat)

Pick out a planet with a nice big magnetic field to hide us...maybe we can lose them that way. Be sure to drop us out as close as you can get us.

The helmsman taps at his controls, almost nervously, as he prepares to carry out the orders.

HELMSMAN

Aye sir...preparing to drop out of warp.

CUT TO:

INT. ALIEN COCKPIT

The countdown timer seems to be winding down at the front of the cockpit. The aliens continue to work the controls of the unknown vessel, preparing for whatever voyage might be before them. The commander of the ship speaks up.

COMMANDER

[This is it, all systems go...let's make some history!]

He flips up a protective cover over a switch and watches the timer intently. When it reaches the end he throws the switch. Time seems to slow down within the cockpit as the control activates. The engines begin to roar as they build up their burst of energy.

EXT. PLANET – ORBIT

A small ship, the one we were just on, orbits a large Earth-like planet. Oddly shaped warp nacelles, which are nearly twice as long as the body of the ship itself, jut out from the middle of the strange craft. Their coils start to pulsate with energy as they prepare for their flight of faster-than-light speeds.

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We PAN slightly, bringing into view a portion of the blackness of space while keeping the ship in our sights. Without warning, a FLASH can be seen in the distance as the cargo ship drops out of warp. The massive ship is unable to turn away from the small warp vessel in time and slams into it with a spectacular crash! The much smaller craft spins out of control, spewing green gases from a damaged nacelle. The boomer ship moves off at impulse power.

CUT TO:

INT. ALIEN COCKPIT

The pilots are pinned against their chairs as it continues to spin out of control. Looks of horror are on their faces as they wonder if they'll survive...and wonder what they just witnessed slam into their ship. On their expressions we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. PLANET – ORBIT

*Enterprise* orbits the unknown world; we ZOOM in to the hanger area of the ship and see a small section of the alien ship being pulled in by grappling cables. The section appears to be the cockpit of the vessel, most likely having been jettisoned from the main body.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – CORRIDOR

Captain Archer doesn't look happy as he walks hurriedly through the winding corridor. His pace gives a sense of urgency as does his expression. We PAN around to his back as he approaches the sickbay door.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – SICKBAY

We're focused on the door as it opens up to allow Archer in to sickbay. We can hear the flurry of activity as nurses and medics rush to the aid of the alien crew occupying the biobeds. Archer keeps his distance near the door and watches DOCTORS PHLOX and LUCAS as they work to save the alien lives.

PHLOX

He's not stabilizing! I need five CCs of metrazine now!

A nurse comes in to view and quickly hands him the loaded hypospray, which Phlox applies to the patient in front of him. He looks up at the readout above the bed and sees no change in the patient's status.

LUCAS

You can't stabilize him, move on!

(beat, urgent)

I need help here, move on!

Phlox ignores the other doctor's demands and continues to focus on his dying patient. He grabs another hypospray already prepared on a nearby tray; he checks it to make sure it's what he wants before injecting the patient with it. Whatever he was expecting it to do...it has the opposite affect. His vitals drop steadily as a loud continuous beep emanates from the readout.

CUT TO:

INT. ALIEN NEWS ROOM

The room is dark with a bright spot light centered on a large oval desk in front of a wall-sized black screen. An alien, of the same race as that aboard the space craft, sits behind the desk with a

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look of seriousness on his face. We soon realize that this is a news studio as an odd camera-like device moves into view.

The view changes to one as if we were watching the program on an alien viewscreen. Words now scroll across the bottom in the same language as before, and images flash on the black screen behind the news anchor.

ANCHOR

[Breaking news coming in from the Department of Space in regards to the failed FTL flight test just minutes ago.]

The image behind the man changes to a blurry shot of some sort of ship. As we examine the image closer we realize that it is of the *Enterprise* orbiting the planet.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

[After monitoring stations witnessed an explosion in high orbit over the planet, it was believed that a reactor failure had caused the destruction of the test flight.]

(beat)

[New photographic evidence now suggests that there may have been more...unbelievable circumstances involved. With us now we have the director of the flight to discuss what this unknown object may be...and how it may have caused the failure of this historic mission.]

Again the image changes, this time to a woman sitting in front of a large blue curtain with some type of symbol behind her, possibly denoting the Department of Space mentioned by the Anchor. He turns in his chair to face the woman as our view on the screen pans to bring them both in to view.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

[Thank you, Madame Director, for joining us.]

DIRECTOR

[Despite the circumstances...it's a pleasure to be on your show.]

BEAT.

ANCHOR

[Madame Director, there is rumor already going around in government circles that this severely blurred image could be our first glimpse at an actual alien object, perhaps even a ship, orbiting our planet. What does your department have to say in regards to these rumors?]

The Director doesn't look comfortable with the question, as if she doesn't want to answer it for fear of what might result.

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DIRECTOR

(apprehensive)

[We aren't quite ready to make any definite statements in regard to that, but...the possibility is there.]

ANCHOR

[The possibility?]

DIRECTOR

(nervous)

[Yes, we can't say for sure what it is. However, we believe it to be...what you suggest.]

Her response seems to be what the anchor was looking for.

ANCHOR

[If it does turn out to be alien in origin, what does this mean for our planet?]

DIRECTOR

[That is certainly not a question I can answer. My personal belief on the matter is that our world could have achieved one of its greatest goals without even having to leave our system!]

The anchor's attitude changes to a sour one at this statement, indicating that it may not have been the “ratings booster” he was looking for.

ANCHOR

[A debatable assumption that only time will bear out, Madame Director.]

(beat)

[Unfortunately, we must cut to a break at this time. Thank you for joining us, Madame Director; we will hopefully be speaking with you more as the story develops.]

The Director nods and the image winks off and changes back to that of the *Enterprise* in orbit.

ANCHOR

[Stay tuned after the break as we continue to cover this story...have we encountered aliens? If so, are they responsible for the destruction of our first FTL test craft? What do they want? All of this after the break!]

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – SICKBAY

Archer is still standing in sickbay near the door. He's signing a clipboard handed to him by a crewman, an indication that he has been there for some time. The crewman takes the clipboard

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back and leaves sickbay as Phlox walks up to Archer. The weary doctor removes bloodied gloves and hands them to a nurse. His expression is sullen as he delivers the news to Archer.

PHLOX

Doctor Lucas and I have managed to stabilize four of the patients...we weren't able to save the fifth.

(beat, frowning)

I don't know how long we can keep them like this, Captain; I recommend we find a way to get them to a suitable medical facility.

Archer doesn't take the news well and briefly turns away from the doctor in frustration.

ARCHER

I wish it were that simple, Phlox.

(beat, defensive)

We don't even know these people, and as much as I hate to say it, we can't just show up on their doorstep.

PHLOX

It's my job as a doctor to tell you what needs to be done to save them. Beyond that I can't tell you what to do.

(beat)

However, Captain, from my experience...anyone capable of building what they were in is probably already aware of our presence.

Archer gives a small smile at the doctor's observation, Phlox returns it if only for a brief moment. Apparently, even he can't maintain his optimism in a situation like this.

ARCHER

Thank you, Doctor.

(beat)

I'll see what I can do.

He pats the Denobulan on the shoulder before turning to leave sickbay. As the doors open Ensign Sato steps in, stopping just before colliding with Archer.

SATO

Reporting as ordered, Captain.

Archer stops to consider the young officer who nearly ran in to him.

ARCHER

Good timing, Ensign. Phlox has managed to stabilize our guests.

(beat, indicating biobeds)

Talk to him about reviving one of them and then see what you can find out. I'll be in my office if you make any progress.

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She nods and steps to his side, off to talk with Phlox and figure out this new mystery. Archer pauses in the doorway a moment, looking back at the aliens lying on the beds before heading out. When he leaves, we turn our attention to Sato who quietly approaches Phlox.

SATO

Doctor.

He turns to face the bright officer and manages a smile.

PHLOX

Ensign...I assume you're here to "speak" with our guests.

She glances over his shoulder at the unconscious aliens.

SATO

I'm here to try.  
(beat, hesitant)  
If that's okay.

PHLOX

I'm not entirely comfortable with reviving one of them so soon, but I see no other alternative.

Sato looks at the unconscious bodies again and becomes nervous at the prospect of possibly making matters worse.

PHLOX

(off Sato's expression)  
Don't worry, Ensign. If I had any concern they might not survive reviving, I wouldn't attempt it.

SATO

You can't know for sure.

Sato's concern brings Phlox out of the dreariness that had over taken him. His usual attitude managing to break through to the surface.

PHLOX

(grinning widely)  
Optimism, Ensign!

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INT. *ENTERPRISE* – MESS HALL

We see Captain Archer enter the Mess Hall, looking hungry, if preoccupied. He approaches the window separating the dining area and kitchen. When he stops in front of it, the window opens to reveal the always jovial senior chef MARCUS LAFAYETTE. He’s holding a large pot and is stirring the contents within it as he greets Archer.

LAFAYETTE

I thought I heard a hungry captain come wandering through my doors.

(beat)

I got a good lunch cooking today.

Archer sniffs the air, taking in the mingling aromas of ingredients coming from the kitchen beyond.

ARCHER

What’s in the pot?

LAFAYETTE

Tomato soup!

ARCHER

Doesn’t sound too...exotic.

Lafayette laughs at the doubt in Archer’s voice.

LAFAYETTE

Now don’t go criticizing until you’ve tried it.

He puts the pot down and grabs a bowl out of view, pouring a ladle full of soup into the bowl he hands it over to Archer. The captain eyes the rich red liquid before looking back at the chef.

ARCHER

Thanks, Midas.

LAFAYETTE

Anytime, Captain.

Archer turns to head for his private dining area, before Marcus calls out to him, stopping him in his tracks.

LAFAYETTE

Hold it there...something must be up.

(beat)

You never eat in there alone.

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ARCHER

(with a slight smile)

Can't get much past you. I might need to ship you off somewhere or you'll be letting everyone know how to spot my weaknesses.

Lafayette puts the pot down again and looks over his shoulder at someone out of view.

LAFAYETTE

I'm taking a quick break. Try not to overcook anything while I'm gone!

He closes the window and immediately appears through the door next to it before pointing to an empty table away from the majority of the lunch-time crowd. The two men walk to that table and take a seat. Before Marcus starts up with questions, he points to the soup, a clear indication that he wants the captain to take a taste. Archer reluctantly picks up the spoon and dips it into the soup, then quickly brings it to his mouth and downs the hot liquid.

ARCHER

Okay. I shouldn't have doubted you.

LAFAYETTE

You're right: you shouldn't have.

(beat)

Now what's eatin' at you? Must be pretty bad if you haven't even talked with Commander Tucker about it.

BEAT.

ARCHER

I have a mess on my hands, Midas, and I have a feeling that it's only going to get worse.

LAFAYETTE

I imagine it has something to do with these aliens we rescued.

Archer takes another spoonful of soup.

ARCHER

(nodding)

It does. I don't know what to do about them. We can't leave them in sickbay to die...but I can't just go down to that planet and hand them over.

LAFAYETTE

Why not?

Archer looks at the man as if he's gone mad.

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ARCHER

What do you mean “why not”?

(beat)

I can't contaminate a culture without even knowing what they call themselves.

Lafayette grins as he prepares his next statement.

LAFAYETTE

You sound like a Vulcan, Jon.

(beat, off Archer's incredulous look)

The way I see it, they've already been contaminated...so there's no sense in letting them die because you're afraid of what might happen. Besides, who better to make first contact with them?

(beat, teasing)

Or are you gonna leave it up to the Vulcans to clean up after those Boomers?

The chef looks Archer straight in the eyes, digging deep into his soul. His eyes flash as he comes to a realization that he was wrong in his judgment of Archer's mood.

LAFAYETTE (CONT'D)

No...that's not right. Something else is getting to you isn't it?

(beat)

You already know that it's too late to worry about “contamination” so what is it really, Jon?

Archer looks up from his soup and stares down the chef for a BEAT. The captain puts the spoon down as he breaks eye contact and looks down at the bowl for another silent BEAT. He pushes away from the table and stands.

ARCHER

Thanks for the soup.

(beat, reluctantly)

And the talk.

Archer walks out of the mess hall, leaving Marcus there to pick up the bowl and get back to work feeding the hungry crew.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – ARCHER'S OFFICE

Archer is behind his desk looking through the small viewport, gazing at the planet below as it slowly turns, taking one land mass out of view and bringing another in. The door to his office opens, admitting COMMANDER TUCKER and Sub-Commander T'Pol into the room. We PAN to see them standing in front of the door until Archer gestures for them to sit.

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ARCHER

I’ve asked you here to discuss the situation with the aliens we have aboard.

T’POL

Since the system was already under “Protected” status, a Vulcan science vessel should be positioned in a nearby system.

(beat)

It is standard procedure for all known developing worlds to be placed under observation in order to prevent tampering from outside sources.

(beat)

I recommend that we attempt to conta-

ARCHER

(interrupting)

We’re going down there.

T’Pol stops mid-sentence and sits in silence, showing no emotion as usual even though she has once again been given the cold shoulder by Archer. Tucker, on the other hand, moves to the edge of his seat, visibly eager.

TUCKER

How soon are we going?

ARCHER

We aren’t. I want the two of you to stay on *Enterprise* and find those Boomers.

(beat)

Hoshi made some progress with the translation and managed to get a likely landing site from one of our guests, so she’ll be going with me, along with the SF’s that I’m sure Major Reed will insist on.

The engineer leans back in the chair, not happy with his orders.

ARCHER (CONT’D)

(off Tucker’s expression)

Sorry, Trip, but we have to fix this mess before it becomes worse, and we still have to find that ship.

(beat, reluctant)

Sub-Commander, you’ll be in command while I’m planetside.

T’POL

(insistent)

I believe it would be wise to await the arrival of a Vulcan ship to properly handle this, Captain.

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ARCHER

(snapping)

We don't have that kind of time...we don't even know if they're out there!

(beat, softer)

We can't always rely on the Vulcans to pull our asses out of the fire. We'll eventually have to learn how to do this on our own.

T'POL

Captain, I cannot support this course of action.

He glares at her from across his desk, meeting her eye to eye, taking on her cold Vulcan exterior.

ARCHER

Fortunately you don't have to support it. You're staying here...

Silence falls on the room as he waits for either of them to say something. When no reply comes, he stands from behind the desk, which both of them take as an unspoken cue to stand themselves.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

Okay then, you're dismissed.

As the two of them leave the room, Archer turns back to the viewport. We ZOOM IN on the port until it's gone and we see nothing but the planet below. With this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

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ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. NEWS ROOM

We're back in the alien news room. The setting is different this time as there is now a table with several occupied chairs. The people sitting in the chairs seem to range from government officials to military personnel. Next to the table is the desk from the previous news room scene with the same anchor behind it. He clears his throat as we switch to a similar view as from the previous scene, as if we are watching it through some viewscreen.

ANCHOR

(stunned)

[This is an unbelievable moment in the history of our world...aliens have landed at the capital.]

(beat)

[We will be showing you an exclusive live feed from the capital, as these visitors from another world are greeted.]

The screen behind him changes to a camera feed from a capital city on the planet. In the foreground are several ground vehicles and nearly a hundred people gathered around Shuttlepod One in the background. The camera changes to a closer view as the side door to the pod opens and two SF's step out, guns lowered but ready. Following them is Archer, who pauses at the threshold before stepping down behind the two officers. A female news reporter on the scene comes into view and speaks into the camera.

REPORTER

(frantic)

[The aliens seem to be armed, but we aren't sure if their intentions are hostile or not.]

(beat)

[Here come soldiers to escort them to the main building. At least that is what we believe will be done.]

One of the soldiers breaks off and approaches the camera.

SOLDIER

[Ma'am, you'll have to turn off that camera.]

He reaches his hand out and covers the lens. The image abruptly cuts out behind the Anchor as we...

CUT TO:

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EXT. PLANET - GOVERNMENT BUILDING

We're at the site we just saw on the alien transmission. The survivors from the FTL ship are being hauled out of a second shuttlepod as the crew is being escorted to a building a short distance away. Archer, Sato, Reed, and a few SF's are being pushed at gunpoint as Sato desperately works on translating their friendly intentions.

ARCHER

(tightly)

Hoshi, now would be a good time.

SATO

(nervous)

I'm trying, Captain. It doesn't help to have a gun pointed at me though.

REED

I could point one back, but I don't know how kindly they'd take to that.

Archer looks around at the alien faces, the stern yet frightened faces of their escorts.

ARCHER

Let's not find out...

(beat)

It's strange, though, that they haven't taken our weapons yet.

REED

Maybe they're afraid to.

SATO

They aren't the only ones afraid right now.

ARCHER

(calming)

Just keep working ensign, we won't let anything happen.

Ensign Sato works furiously with the translating device while they continue toward the building. Luckily, the soldiers are talking amongst themselves, their words inaudible to us but not to Sato. After a BEAT, her head pops up.

SATO

Got it!

ARCHER

Good...now tell them why we're here.

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Sato checks the translator one more time before speaking.

SATO

[We mean harm no.]  
(beat)  
[We bring pilots back.]

The soldiers look at her oddly. After a moment they simply look at each other and then ahead again.

Sato looks confused, not understanding why they don't seem interested in what she had to say.

ARCHER

Ensign?

SATO

I don't know, Captain. Maybe I said it wrong.

ARCHER

Keep trying.

Sato works on her translation device again as we

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – BRIDGE

T'Pol has taken the captain's chair and Tucker sits at Damage Control. He doesn't look entirely comfortable with T'Pol in command, or being left behind.

TUCKER

(mumbling)  
I'd rather be in Engineering. I have better things to do.

T'Pol's ears perk up at his hushed comment. She turns to address him quietly.

T'POL

I could replace you if you wish, Commander.

He looks up from the console, unsure whether to be insulted or not.

TUCKER

(coolly)  
No need to go that far, Sub-Commander. I'll just deal with it.

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T’POL

I simply meant that if it were a problem-

She is cut off by the beeping of the Science station; LIEUTENANT RAKEE GARLA, who is manning that station, checks one of the monitors.

GARLA

Sir, I’m picking up a faint reading one million kilometers off our port stern.

(beat)

It could be the freighter.

TUCKER

Looks like those sensor modifications are really coming in handy.

T’POL

Helm, set an intercept course at maximum impulse.

MAYWEATHER

Course plotted. We’ll be on them in three minutes.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET – GOVERNMENT BUILDING

The landing party has come to the steps of the government building. Their escorts move to the side as a man walks up under heavy guard. He carries himself like a person with great power over those around him, except for these newcomers. The man stops a few steps short of Archer and looks the captain over curiously, clearly examining the differences in physiology. Unlike the others, he doesn’t show his apprehension as noticeably, though it is still there. This is PRESIDENT MELTAK.

MELTAK

[Who are you?]

The question is very straightforward, which works out for Sato in her attempts to translate.

SATO

[We are] humans.

MELTAK

[Fascinating.]

(beat)

[Why are you here? More importantly, why did you destroy our ship?]

ARCHER

What is he saying Hoshi?

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SATO

He wants to know why we destroyed their ship.

ARCHER

Tell him it wasn't us. Tell him that the only thing we did was rescue their pilots.

SATO

[We not destroy ship, others did. We bring you pilots we save, they need help.]

At that the man looks off to the side at the pilots, four of them, on stretchers. He turns his head and says something to someone behind him. Immediately people come up and take the injured pilots.

CUT TO:

INT. PLANET – PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

Archer and Sato are seated in Meltak's office, while Reed and his two SFs lounge near the door, next to a trio of native guards that look like Marines. It's a moderately sized room with a strange alien décor of dark purple and green, with a large glass (or glass-like) desk near the back. Meltak sits behind the desk, a grin on his face from the prospect of conversing further with these peculiar aliens.

Meltak addresses Archer while Sato translates for both.

MELTAK

[Captain] Archer [is it?]

ARCHER

Yes.

MELTAK

[Ah, good. I believe you were going to explain the situation that led to the destruction of our vessel.]

ARCHER

We were chasing a rogue ship; it was that vessel that collided with yours. We arrived in time to rescue most of the crew. Right now, I have *Enterprise* searching for the rogues.

MELTAK

[Quite the story. Unfortunately we only managed to see your ship after the explosion and nothing before.]

Archer eyes him, attempting to determine what the president's intentions are by that statement.

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ARCHER

I can assure you that is what happened.

(beat)

I only wish we could have stopped them in time, to save us from this terrible situation, so we could possibly have a proper first contact.

MELTAK

(grinning)

[I don't think it is too late for that. You are all heroes in my opinion, and soon even the opinion of our people!]

(beat)

[We are honored to have you here, regardless of how you arrived.]

Reed leans in to talk to one of his troopers.

REED

(whispering)

Hope all of our first contact missions go this smoothly.

She nods silently in agreement.

ARCHER

I'm glad to hear that. I was worried this might turn out badly.

Meltak's grin wavers slightly.

MELTAK

[I'm sure everything will be fine...once you are introduced to the Governing Congress of Peace.]

(beat, reassuring)

[Nothing to worry about though, I'm certain they will be as thrilled as I am. Just a necessity you see, since the FTL test was an international effort, they are required to be involved.]

Archer can't help but smile at the indication of the level of cooperation among the people of this world.

ARCHER

I look forward to it.

(beat)

Sounds like we have a few things in common.

MELTAK

[With quite a few things not, things that I shall enjoy learning about.]

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ARCHER

As will I.

(beat)

First thing...you never told us what you call yourselves.

Meltak can't help but laugh gently at the realization.

MELTAK

[I imagine it would be helpful.]

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – BRIDGE

T'Pol's eyebrow is raised in its typical manner as she looks at a box shaped object on the viewscreen.

T'POL

Fascinating.

GARLA

It looks like they jettisoned one of their cargo pods to throw off our sensors.

TUCKER

Damned clever.

T'POL

Then we shall continue our search.

GARLA

I'll start looking for likely places they'd run to.

At the Tactical station, LIEUTENANT PICARD is transfixed on one of the monitors, which displays a layout of D deck. Within this layout are dozens of blue dots of various sizes, some are moving while others are stationary. Off to his side, an unnamed ensign speaks up about the situation to no one in particular.

ENSIGN

Sounds like we'll be doing this for a while.

Picard responds to the ensign's complaints without looking away from his screen.

PICARD

Gives me time to solve the mystery blip.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ENSIGN

(confused)  
The what?

PICARD

Ever since we docked with those Boomer ships, we've been picking up a strange reading on the internal sensors.

(beat)  
Most of Alpha Team has been tracking the damned thing, but no luck. I'm hoping to figure out what it is before the major gets back.

ENSIGN

(sarcastic)  
Right. Let me know if you find anything.

Not picking up on the sarcasm, Picard nods in acknowledgment.

PICARD

Will do, Ensign.

The ensign moves towards a nearby crewman and lowers his voice considerably.

ENSIGN

Sometimes those UEM types seem a little too paranoid.

CREWMAN

(partially joking)  
Careful. He might hear you.

EXT. SPACE

*Enterprise* sits a few kilometers from the cargo pod as it spins lazily in space. In moments, the engines of the *Enterprise* come to life and slowly push the ship in a new direction, away from the pod. We PAN slowly, bringing into view the blue world, contrasted against a deep green nebula in the background behind it.

INT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING – MEETING ROOM

The entire landing party is in a large meeting room. They've set up what equipment they brought with them and are taking some time to relax. Sato and Reed are talking in a corner, surrounded by the SF's who carry on their own conversation. Archer stands next to the opposite wall with his communicator in hand.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ARCHER

(enthusiastically)

Everything went surprisingly smoothly, right from the moment we landed.

(beat)

Definitely not what I had imagined.

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

(mock jealousy)

Rub it in that I didn't get to go, why don't ya?

Archer's expression turns somewhat serious, as if he's only just now remembered why his friend isn't with him.

ARCHER

Speaking of, once you apprehend the Boomer ship...I want you to come down to the surface.

(beat)

I told President Meltak that I would introduce you to him. He says their scientists would be eager to talk with you about warp theory.

Though we can't see it, we can tell that Tucker isn't too sure about what the captain has suggested.

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

You want me to help them on their engines?

ARCHER

You could put it that way. After all, we have a great opportunity here to help these people grow further, faster.

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

If you say so, Cap'n. Just sounds like an awful big step to be taking so soon.

Archer's face reddens slightly at the doubt in Tucker's voice.

ARCHER

We aren't Vulcans, Trip. If we help these people, we can keep them from losing more good people and wasting valuable time.

There's an awkward BEAT between the two.

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

(dubious)

I guess so, sir.

Archer decides it best to change the subject.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ARCHER

How is the search going for the Boomer ship?

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

Well, they've been hiding pretty well so far, but I'm sure it won't be long before we find them.

(beat)

Those sensor modifications of T'Pol's seem to be doing the job, but even with them, it's tough going.

ARCHER

Keep at it, Trip. We can't let them get away...not after what happened.

TUCKER (COMM VOICE)

Understood, Cap'n.

ARCHER

Archer out.

He closes the communicator and walks over to the group still talking in the corner. Reed is the first to break the conversation to address the captain.

REED

What's the word, sir?

ARCHER

(frowning)

They haven't caught them yet, but Commander Tucker says they're hot on the trail.

Sato is about to say something when the door to the room opens, Meltak walks in a smile on his face.

MELTAK

[Good news! The Congress will be holding an emergency session in one hour to meet with you.]

ARCHER

That's great.

(beat)

I have a few things I'd like to propose, such as establishing long term diplomatic relations with your planet, maybe even establish an embassy. I'm also going to talk with my superiors about sending engineering teams to share our technology.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

MELTAK

[Wonderful!]

(beat)

[I'll go and inform the Speaker of what you wish to discuss with them.]

ARCHER

Thank you...I guess I better get ready.

Meltak bows his head and leaves the room. We focus in on Archer's face; a shadow has come over it similar to before. Once again, he seems to doubt himself in this situation. On this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE

We're in the main gathering area of the Congress of Peace, which is reminiscent of the UN on Earth. There are hundreds of seats, most of them filled, arranged like stadium seating all along the walls of the hemispherical room. Archer and Sato come in through the front entrance, walking slowly and cautiously as they are eyed by hundreds of aliens ... or rather, hundreds of natives since they are the aliens here.

They continue to walk slowly until they reach a section designated for guests, where President Meltak is waiting for them. All three of them take a seat, and wait for the speaker to appear.

ARCHER

(to Sato)

Don't tell anyone, Ensign, but I haven't been this nervous since grade school.

SATO

(smiling)

Your secret is safe with me, Captain.

(beat, joking)

Though I can't guarantee how lon-

She is cut off by a loud bell that signifies the arrival of the speaker. Its ringing reverberates throughout the room and silences the mass of people. Archer's head snaps around to witness a short man enter at the podium in front of them. The man takes his seat and addresses the crowd.

SPEAKER

[I ask that we all bow our head in a moment of silence to honor those brave souls lost today.]

Sato looks at Archer and indicates for him to bow his head, which he does once he realizes that is what everyone else is doing. Everyone bows their head for a LONG BEAT.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

[Thank you.]

(beat)

[Now we shall begin the 101<sup>st</sup> gathering of the Governing Congress of Peace. I would like to note in the record that this is an emergency meeting called by the nation of Calthan.]

(beat, pressing a control)

[The Speaker recognizes President Meltak of Calthan.]

Meltak stands to address the crowd. Sato continues to quietly translate off her small device.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

MELTAK

[As you all know today has been a day of tragedy with the loss of our first FTL ship and one of her crew.]

(beat)

[However, today has also been one of great importance. For today, we have accomplished that which we had hoped to do with that ship...we have made contact with alien life.]

Archer briefly smiles at being referred to as alien by an alien. His attention, however, is caught by a light flashing on the podium.

SPEAKER

[My apologies, President Meltak, but Representative Gresht of Lont wishes to speak.]

MELTAK

(bowing his head)

[Of course.]

Archer turns his head slightly to try and spot the man the speaker referred to. Surprisingly, he is right behind them, already standing to speak.

GRESHT

[It is not debatable that this is a great moment in our history, but how we act in this moment certainly is.]

(beat, angry)

[These aliens arrive at our planet, claim that another group of aliens destroyed our ship, and now are being heralded as saviors by the people of Calthan.]

He pauses a BEAT for effect.

GRESHT (CONT'D)

[Am I the only one that sees the issue here?]

(beat)

[A Calthanian did not die in the collision...a Lontian did, and what has been done about it? Nothing! Instead, these aliens kiss the ground Meltak and his people walk on, offering all kinds of things. All the while, they do nothing for us, the people hurt most by this tragedy!]

Out of turn, Meltak whips around to address the disgruntled man.

MELTAK

(sharp)

[What are you trying to say, Representative?]

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

Meltak glares openly, but Gresht has taken on a more composed demeanor.

GRESHT

(calmly)

[What I am saying, and no offense to our guests, is that the nation of Calthan is being showered with undue favoritism.]

(beat)

[Need I remind you that this was an international effort? And as such, it is unjust that Calthan be the ones so heavily rewarded!]

Understanding the language better than Archer, Sato is the first to realize that this could end in a bad way. She is nervous about what will come next, but is doing her best to keep translating for Archer, even as she is hampered by the quickened pace of the conversation.

MELTAK

[Why do you think we’re here?]

GRESHT

(dead serious)

[To put on a show of cooperation. When your real intention is to “keep” them to yourselves.]

The room erupts into undistinguishable babble, causing Sato to give up on translating entirely. She sighs heavily, clearly flustered. Archer sits at her side, looking around and clearly confused with what is happening. Noticing the captain’s confusion, Sato leans in to speak to him.

SATO

This isn’t good, Captain.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWS ROOM

Once again we are in the news studio; the now familiar anchor is at his desk as always. Behind him the screen is already active with the image of Representative Gresht from the previous scene.

ANCHOR

[Representative Gresht of Lont is with us via satellite from the headquarters of the Governing Congress of Peace.]

(beat)

[Good evening, Representative.]

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

GRESHT

[Good evening.]

The news anchor adjusts the papers in his hands.

ANCHOR

[Mr. Representative, we have only heard a handful of reports about the emergency session and none of them sound good.]

(beat)

[Is it true that things became so out of control that the Speaker was forced to call a three hour recess?]

GRESHT

(faux shame)

[Those reports are indeed true.]

ANCHOR

[Mr. Representative...Gresht if I may, what happened?]

GRESHT

[I'll tell you what happened...greed happened.]

(beat)

[The nation of Calthan was hoping to horde the information, the friendship of these newcomers. They say that they are interested in cooperation but at every turn, they do what they can to further themselves, leaving poorer nations behind.]

ANCHOR

[Certainly your claims seem hard to believe by the populace. The Calthanian government was the one to establish the Governing Congress of Peace nearly twenty years ago.]

Gresht seems to laugh to himself at the statement.

GRESHT

[Just because they established the Congress doesn't mean they fully believe in it or are willing to participate in it.]

The anchor clears his throat and shifts slightly.

ANCHOR

[On a similar subject, what are your thoughts on the aliens?]

Gresht considers his words carefully.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

GRESHT

[They seem to be people worthy of our friendship; I only hope it to be an international relationship that we choose to have with them. One with every nation, rich and poor, participating.]

ANCHOR

[Indeed, Mr. Representative.]

CUT TO:

INT. PLANET – CALTHANIAN PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

Archer, Sato, and Meltak are in the presidential office once more. Meltak is pacing furiously behind his desk and, once again, Ensign Sato is providing a running translation.

MELTAK

[Gresht didn't mean a damned thing he said!]  
(beat, ashamed)  
[Pardon my language.]

ARCHER

No problem.

MELTAK

[The man is insane; if he's not careful he could start another war!]

This gets Archer's attention.

ARCHER

(curious)  
Another war?

Meltak stops his pacing long enough to look at the two Humans; he's worried by Archer's tone.

MELTAK

(apprehensive)  
[Yes...there was a world encompassing conflict that ended nearly twenty years ago.]  
(beat, frowning)  
[Since then the major powers have maintained an uneasy peace through the Congress.]

Archer sees the concern in Meltak's new stance. The politician stops pacing and clasps his hands together nervously.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

ARCHER

(reassuring)

Sounds a lot like what my world went through just under a century ago.

(beat, smiling)

If you were to ask our “allies,” they’d be happy to confirm the long history my people have had when it comes to war.

Meltak visibly relaxes.

MELTAK

[Yes, I suppose it is something all worlds must go through.]

(beat, dark again)

[I have spent my entire career trying to maintain this peace...]

Meltak begins to pace again, keeping his hands clasped behind his back.

ARCHER

What exactly does he hope to accomplish?

MELTAK

[Who can say for sure? My best guess would be that he hopes to win over the people of Lont; their elections are coming up soon. Going on about how poor they are, and how they are treated because of it would go a long way in the election.]

(beat, worried)

[He might even be hoping to gain support from other smaller countries to attack Calthan. Lont was our main enemy during the war.]

ARCHER

Sounds like a worst case scenario. I wouldn’t worry too much about it.

(beat)

If he's anything like the politicians back on Earth, he’s probably just looking to raise an issue that could get him his votes.

MELTAK

[I hope that is all it is.]

(beat, glancing at a clock)

[We better head back and get started on smoothing over this mess.]

The three of them stand and start to leave the room as we...

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

Everyone has gathered again within the massive meeting place. Larger groups of representatives are talking amongst themselves, probably about what took place earlier, but they silence as the bell again rings.

SPEAKER

[President Meltak has requested that the alien visitors be allowed to speak.]

(beat)

[At this time, our honored guests shall be allowed to do so.]

He gestures for Archer to stand, he does so with Sato following his lead. As he begins to speak, she rapidly translates, a lot faster than one would expect for someone so new to the language.

ARCHER

I would like to address the points raised by Representative Gresht earlier.

(beat)

Namely, we are not showing favoritism.

Archer pauses for a BEAT. He manages to hold his nervousness in check and starts to work his diplomatic magic.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

It is understandable how it could appear that way. After all we did contact the Calthanians first.

(beat, as he assesses his audience)

But you have to look at it from our perspective. We know nothing about your world's politics. When one of the injured pilots from your test ship gave us these coordinates, we had no choice but to use them.

(beat, sympathetic)

It's unfortunate that the nation of Lont lost someone in this tragedy, but that is part of exploration. We've lost our fair share in the months since we began our own mission. I would hate for those deaths, from both of our people, to have been for nothing. I would hate for them to have died in the name of exploration, and then have their accomplishments torn down due to a simple misunderstanding.

Again a light flashes at the podium. Archer stops speaking, hoping that he hasn't caused offense to these people. He exchanges a look with Sato, but she doesn't appear to know anymore than he does.

SPEAKER

[The speaker recognizes representative Fontret of Nildat.]

FONTRET

[Nildat must agree with Lont on this issue. Though it is understandable that the aliens wouldn't be familiar with world politics, it is still undeniable that favoritism has been shown to the Calthanians.]

(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

FONTRET (CONT'D)

[During our lengthy recess, the aliens did not take the opportunity to speak with Lont or other nations about the issue. Instead, they spent the entirety of their time with President Meltak.]

As Sato finishes the translation, Archer is taken slightly aback.

ARCHER

My apologies, but I felt it would be better to address all issues here in front of all nations.

Though Fontret’s argument is weak, Archer’s statements seem to be falling on deaf ears.

SPEAKER

[The speaker recognizes Gresht of Lont.]

GRESHT

[That is a noble sentiment, but if I were being accused of showing favoritism, I certainly wouldn’t spend all of my time with those I was accused of showing it to.]

There is a hushed murmur among the crowd.

ARCHER

I see your point.

GRESHT

[Do you?]

Archer’s best neutral expression falters slightly, the edges of his lips turning downwards. This is obviously going to be a long discussion.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING – MEETING ROOM

The room is darkly lit, as Archer and Sato sit at the table going through a stack of files. We PAN around and see the looks of exhaustion on both of their faces. After a BEAT Archer throws down a thick stack of bound papers.

ARCHER

(exasperated)  
This is ridiculous.

SATO

Maybe you should take a break, Captain.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ARCHER

Oh, I'm going to. Maybe even steal the shuttlepod and get the hell away from here.

Ensign Sato eyes him curiously, not used to seeing her Captain like this.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

(off Sato)

Sorry, I just need a breather. I just haven't seen this much bickering since, well...Alpha Centauri.

Sato doesn't appear to be entirely convinced. She seems to have picked up on what he was going through earlier, before they ever left the ship when he was talking with Midas.

SATO

Something else wrong, Captain?

ARCHER

(lying poorly)

No, Ensign. I'm just tired.

(beat)

At this point, I'd gladly turn things over to the Vulcans...if it wouldn't prove them right.

SATO

Prove them right, sir?

ARCHER

It would prove to them that we aren't capable of handling this. That we're just as incompetent as they say we are.

Ensign Sato gives Captain Archer a skeptical look.

SATO

I don't believe that. I bet they'd have just as much trouble with this as we are.

ARCHER

(smiling)

Thanks, Ensign.

(beat)

Just imagine how many times they'd raise their eyebrows; it'd probably get stuck that way.

The young woman laughs softly at the thought.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ARCHER

(uncomfortable)

You know what? Let's just call it a night.

(beat)

Won't be meeting until zero nine-hundred tomorrow anyway.

SATO

It sounds like an idea to me, sir.

Archer smiles as she gets up and leaves the room. He remains seated for a LONG BEAT, thinking to himself. Exhausted, he leans back in the chair and runs his hands through his hair.

ARCHER

(to himself)

Just don't screw this up Jon...don't let them be right.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – D-DECK CORRIDOR

Lieutenant Picard, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS SAKHAROV, and PRIVATE WARREN are creeping along the corridor, pistols drawn. They silently approach a small alcove leading to a maintenance tube. Picard pulls out a scanner and takes some readings of the area. After a BEAT, he puts the scanner away and signals for Warren to open the tube. As Warren approaches, Picard and Sakharov get in position in front of and on the other side of the hatch.

Warren jerks open the hatch and Sakharov immediately trains his pistol at the entrance, ready to fire at anything that moves. There is nothing there, so Picard motions for Sakharov to enter.

Sakharov slowly moves forward, entering the tube he looks around. We remain outside in the corridor with Picard and Warren.

PICARD

(whispering)

Spot anything, Private?

SAKHAROV

(whispering)

Negative.

(beat)

Wait.

There's silence except for the sound of Sakharov's footsteps in the tube.

PICARD

Report.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

Picard tenses when Sakharov doesn't immediately reply. After a BEAT, we finally hear the Private's reply.

SAKHAROV

I saw something, but it moved away really fast.

(beat)

Whatever it is sir, it's definitely alive...and it has a tail.

PICARD

A tail?

Sakharov comes out of the tube, startling Picard slightly.

SAKHAROV

Yes sir. A tail.

Based on their expressions, all three are thinking of far too many monster movies, all of which begin with scenarios eerily similar to this one. Before Picard can issue further orders T'Pol's voice comes over the intercom.

T'POL (COMM VOICE)

Bridge to Lieutenant Picard.

Picard moves over to a nearby wall unit and presses the response control.

PICARD

Picard here.

T'POL (COMM VOICE)

Lieutenant, report to the bridge.

(beat)

We are approaching the next set of coordinates.

PICARD

Yes ma'am. Picard out.

(to Sakharov)

Private, you and Warren keep looking. I want this thing found, and I want it found now.

SAKHAROV

Yes sir!

Picard turns away and heads off down the corridor as Warren approaches the tube as we...

FADE OUT.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

END OF ACT THREE

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING

The sun has just started to creep above the alien horizon. Its brilliant golden rays cast a warm gentle light on the city, giving us our first clear view of the capitol. There are hundreds of buildings, most of them well over twenty stories tall that surround the expansive grounds of the government building.

We move through the trees of the front lawn and push into a second story window, into the meeting room from before.

INT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING – MEETING ROOM

The entire landing party has been gathered in the room, and all are involved in a discussion about the current situation. Archer paces in front of the table, still looking exhausted but doing his best regardless of his fatigue.

ARCHER

The bottom of the line is this: they will not be happy unless everyone is getting something out of this.

(beat)

Granted, they will be in the long run, but they want to see something now...not ten years from now.

Archer looks among his officers to see their reactions for a BEAT before continuing.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

Ensign Sato and I have been going over the main historical events from the past twenty years. Ranging from minor disputes, to ones that nearly ended in war.

(beat)

From what we can gather, this planet has always been just one word away from hostilities breaking out.

REED

Sounds like a bad situation, Captain.

ARCHER

You have no idea, Major.

(beat, defeated)

I honestly don't think there is anything I can do to help this situation. It seems to me like they want conflict.

There's a silence in the room, Major Reed glances at his people and then back at Archer.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

REED

Captain, we'll be ready to get you out of here with a fight if we have to.

ARCHER

Thanks, Major, but I hope it doesn't come to that.

Archer plops down into the chair behind him. He leans in over the table to continue his thoughts on the current situation when the door to the room opens. An unknown woman walks in; she looks nervous and speaks with a quiet voice.

AIDE

[President Meltak requests your presence it's an...emergency]

She doesn't wait for an answer from Archer through Sato but instead turns and leaves immediately.

ARCHER

(to Sato)

Ensign, you're with me.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE – HALL

Meltak, Archer, and Sato are walking hurriedly down a hall of the Governing Congress of Peace. Meltak is speaking quickly, with Sato translating as fast as she can.

MELTAK

[I'm terribly sorry you had to get involved in any of this, Captain.]

(beat)

[I almost wish you had never shown up. This entire situation is embarrassing.]

ARCHER

Don't worry about it, Mister President.

They round a corner and enter the main chamber.

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE – MAIN CHAMBER

All the nations' representatives have gathered again in the room but this time there is a dead silence among them. The situation has just become much worse.

ARCHER

(to himself)

This can't be good.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

They take their seats up front as before to discover that the Speaker is already sitting at the podium.

SPEAKER

[It seems that a new situation has developed.]  
(beat, bitterly)  
[Representative Gresht, you may speak.]

Gresht moves out from behind his area and into the small walkway between sections.

GRESHT

[The nation of Lont, as well as the nations of Nildat and Congrel, wish to formally declare our intention to secede from the Governing Congress of Peace.]  
(beat)  
[We feel that there is no longer a place for us here, this organization that claims to work towards unity yet does nothing for it.]

Ensign Sato has stopped translating in the middle of Gresht’s statement.

ARCHER

What did he say, Hoshi?

Sato collects herself for a BEAT.

SATO

They are seceding, sir.

Archer looks over to Meltak, and sees a look of horror on the President’s face. We immediately...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – BRIDGE

Picard has arrived on the bridge and taken his post. T’Pol and Tucker are still at their posts as the *Enterprise* speeds along at warp. We PAN to see the viewscreen, which displays the image of the Boomer freighter. We move back and focus on T’Pol as she issues orders.

T’POL

Hail the freighter.

The image of the freighter captain appears on the screen. He looks even more ragged than before.

T’POL

You are ordered to disengage your warp engines and surrender your ship.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

CAPTAIN

I won't do that...I won't turn over my ship and my crew!

T'POL

You cannot outrun *Enterprise*, Captain. Attempting to do so serves no logical purpose.

The captain laughs nervously from the stress.

CAPTAIN

I don't want to go to prison, and I'm not going to send my crew to that fate either!

We briefly focus on Travis as he witnesses again the desperation of his “people”, before turning back to the emotionless image that is T'Pol.

T'POL

Cooperation will likely mitigate the length of your sentence, Captain. If you are imprisoned, it is not likely to be a lengthy sentence.

CAPTAIN

Maybe before, but not now. Not after we hit that ship.

T'POL

It is not too late. If you surrender now.

The Boomer captain seems to consider this for a BEAT, clearly torn.

CAPTAIN

(with a hint of despair)

I can't.

He closes the channel abruptly. T'Pol considers her options for a BEAT.

T'POL

Helm, move us to a position in front of the vessel.

(beat)

Tactical, prepare to fire on their warp engines. Plasma cannons only.

In the background we can see the somewhat surprised expression of Tucker.

PICARD

Yes, ma'am.

(beat)

Plasma cannons charged and locked.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

EXT. SPACE – *ENTERPRISE* AT WARP

The *Enterprise* is at warp with the Boomer ship not far ahead of it. In one graceful and seemingly dangerous move, the *Enterprise* increases speed to pass above the Boomers. She moves out a distance ahead of them before settling in her new location.

Having anticipated their next move, the Boomers open fire on the *Enterprise* with what limited weaponry they have. The weak plasma blasts impact harmlessly on *Enterprise's* hull, doing little to no damage. Moments later the *Enterprise* returns the favor, firing several of her aft facing plasma cannons. The bolts of energy slam into the warp engines of the old freighter, causing them to flicker briefly.

Another barrage from the *Enterprise* does the job, as the Boomer ship suddenly slips out of view. We watch the *Enterprise* continue along for several seconds before we...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE – BOOMER SHIP

The Boomer ship is now slowing to a virtual stand still in space, no longer at warp. Its impulse engines fire up but ultimately fail under the strain. She is no longer able to run from the *Enterprise*. At that moment, the EX-01 drops out of warp and slows to a stop just kilometers away from her prey.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

T'Pol sits on the edge of the command chair. She turns to the communications station.

T'POL

Hail them again.

The channel opens, this time to an image of the First Officer.

FIRST OFFICER

We surrender! Just stop firing!

T'POL

I had no intention of continuing the attack.

(beat)

Remain at your current location. *Enterprise* out.

The channel closes and we focus in on Tucker, who is still a little frazzled at what he just witnessed.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

TUCKER

(sarcastically)

Great. The cap’n will probably have me out on the hull painting over any scorch marks thanks to you.

(beat, half joking)

I ought to make you do it.

T’POL

(wryly)

I apologize for any inconvenience I may have caused, Commander.

TUCKER

Uh huh. Sure you do, Sub-Commander.

Tucker gives T’Pol a smirk, but she ignores him.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE – GUEST AREA

Archer, Meltak, and Sato are in a small guest area isolated from the main lobby of the GCP building. Once again Meltak is pacing the room. Archer stands off to the side, giving the man plenty of room.

MELTAK

(to himself)

[Gods why?]

(beat)

[I need to alert my government. We need to prepare in case they plan to launch an attack.]

Sato’s eyes widen at the mention of attack but, in a sign of her professionalism, she translates without missing a beat.

ARCHER

I don’t think we’re to that point yet.

Meltak stops pacing for a BEAT. He turns to face Archer.

MELTAK

[Maybe we aren’t, but I can’t hesitate. If they attack, I can’t be caught off guard, too many would die.]

ARCHER

Then we need to give them a reason not to attack.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

MELTAK

[What could keep them from doing that?]

ARCHER

(dead serious)

Fear.

Both Sato and Meltak look at the captain with curiosity and concern as we

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE – MAIN CHAMBER

Captain Archer stands in front of the podium where the Speaker sits; he is there to address everyone gathered as a whole.

ARCHER

Over the last few hours, my people have familiarized ourselves as best we can with your most recent history...and it tells us something.

(beat)

It tells us that you, as a people, are much like we were at one time, seemingly always on the brink of global conflict. Sometimes, even going to war with a massive loss of life as a result.

He pauses for a BEAT to see what visual cues he can gather from the audience as to how they are reacting to his words so far.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

Our arrival here seems to have caused a flare up in past disagreements and rivalries...and I won't leave until it is settled to some degree. I will not be the cause of your destruction.

(beat)

You see, over a century ago my people were along the same development as you, and the disagreements between the nations of my world reached a head. In the resulting war six hundred million people were killed, with millions more wounded and left without hope of survival.

(beat, looking down)

We got lucky though, because not long after we nearly annihilated ourselves, a race of beings called the Vulcans showed up. They helped us in what ways they were willing to, and because of their help, we survived. Sure, they could have done more in my opinion, but what they did was enough to ensure our survival.

He stops, waiting for a reaction from the crowd. It comes from Gresht.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

GRESHT

(snidely)

[What does this have to do with us, Captain? I believe we are allowed to make our own decisions.]

Archer is taken slightly aback, concerned that perhaps something was lost in translation.

ARCHER

You are, by all means do. We aren't here to tell you how to live.

(beat)

The point is that we are here now, and I can't guarantee that we will be here after you destroy yourselves. Because if you go to war, and if millions die as a result...we aren't capable of helping you the way we can now. It's much easier to help a world grow when they have a functioning society than it is to help them rebuild from the ground up.

This seems to strike a chord with the representatives present.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

But really, do what you want. We just won't be here when you finish, and you'll be on your own, alone and shattered. Whereas now, we are here willing to help, willing to show you the galaxy.

Gresht frowns in defeat and falls into his chair as those around him stand and clap. Not a loud victorious cheer, but a respectful applause at the efforts of this alien man. Archer quietly walks back to his seat next to Sato; he sits down and looks straight ahead.

ARCHER

Hope that wasn't too hard, Ensign.

SATO

I just hope I translated it right, sir.

Archer thinks about that for a BEAT, but it's clear that he has confidence in the young linguist.

ARCHER

I think the applause is an indication of your skill. Good job, Hoshi.

Sato smiles as we

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNING CONGRESS OF PEACE BUILDING

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

The crowd from the main chamber is gathered outside, with hundreds more gathered from the city. Archer and Meltak stand near the center of this mass, with Sato nearby, faithfully translating.

MELTAK

[Thank you Captain] Archer.

ARCHER

(smiling)

You're welcome.

(beat)

When I return to my ship, I'll contact my people about sending representatives. Your world has a bright future ahead of it, but only if you can maintain the peace.

MELTAK

[I'll try.]

(beat)

[I hope you and your crew will stay for a little while longer though. You haven't been able to enjoy what my people have to offer.]

Archer considers the man's offer for a moment.

ARCHER

I'm afraid we can't. Once my ship arrives I'll be leaving.

(beat, smiling broader)

That doesn't mean I won't be back...maybe when I get some shore leave.

MELTAK

[I look forward to it.]

(beat, to Hoshi)

[I hope you come back as well, Ensign.]

SATO

[I have to, sir. He can't speak language.]

Meltak laughs and Hoshi smiles at her small joke. Archer stands there confused, not being able to understand the transaction.

ARCHER

Should I be offended, Ensign?

Sato gives him a playful smile.

SATO

I...don't think so, sir.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

ARCHER

I'll take your word for it.

On Sato's childish grin and Archer's still confused expression we slowly PULL BACK to see the crowd as a whole. We slowly PAN UP to the sky bringing the bright star into view. With this we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – BRIDGE

The bridge remains unchanged as *Enterprise* cruises back to the planet to pick up the landing party. An ensign at communications breaks the silence on the bridge.

ENSIGN

The *UEM Banshee* reports that they have arrived at the location of the freighter.

T'POL

Acknowledge receipt of message, Ensign.

Picard is looking at a schematic of D deck on one of the Tactical station's monitor's again. He turns suddenly to face T'Pol, clearly anxious about something.

PICARD

Permission to leave the bridge, Sub-Commander.

T'Pol is a little confused by his sudden request, quirking an eyebrow.

T'POL

Granted.

Picard glances at his station quickly before standing and leaving the bridge.

The bridge is once again silent as everyone goes about their work, except for Tucker. He eyes the Vulcan Sub-Commander a BEAT before addressing her.

TUCKER

(wryly)

So, "prepare to fire", huh?

T'Pol turns to face Tucker, giving him a completely blank expression.

T'POL

I do not understand your question, Commander.

Tucker appears to be enjoying himself. He gives T'Pol a smirk.

TUCKER

That's pretty ...

(beat, teasing)

"overtly aggressive", don't you think?

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

T’POL

Vulcans prefer not to use force. However, it is sometimes necessary.

TUCKER

Necessary?

T’Pol pauses for a BEAT, as if considering whether to elaborate further.

T’POL

Before serving in the Ministry of Science, I was a member of the Ministry of Defense. I understand the necessity of force in certain situations.

TUCKER

(surprised)

Really?

She raises her eyebrow at the curious tone in Trip’s voice.

T’POL

Yes. Unlike the United Earth Military, the Ministry of Defense teaches when to use force.

(beat)

There is a time and place for force; Vulcans have come to understand this over the centuries.

For a BEAT, Trip seems satisfied by her answer of why she was so quick to fire and gives her a long, appraising look. Then he suddenly grins and decides to take it further.

TUCKER

Over the centuries? Just how old are you, Sub-Commander?

She turns to address him when the Science station begins beeping.

GARLA

Ma’am, sensors are picking something up in orbit of the planet.

(beat, analyzing)

It’s... Vulcan.

Tucker shoots T’Pol a look as she turns to face the viewscreen.

T’POL

On screen.

The view changes, and indeed there is a Vulcan ship in orbit. The planet is still far away, but it is easy to spot the distinctive warp ring that dominates the design of most Vulcan ships.



FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

SHALIV

We will contact you again then.

(beat)

*Rek'mal* out.

The Vulcan commander disappears from the screen, replaced by the previous view of the planet. Again the bridge falls into silence.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST ROOM

Archer is in a small but comfortable-looking guest room within one of the many buildings of the city. He is holding his communicator, listening to T'Pol's report of what took place just moments ago.

T'POL (COMM VOICE)

It would appear, Captain, that the Vulcan ship has been monitoring your situation on the planet.

ARCHER

Did they say anything else about it?

T'POL (COMM VOICE)

Only that it had...subsided.

ARCHER

I see.

(beat, with a roll of his eyes)

Thank you for the report. Prepare to receive the shuttlepods once you're in orbit.

T'POL (COMM VOICE)

Understood. *Enterprise* out.

The channel closes and he closes the communicator, setting it down on the table he goes off to gather his things. He gets out of view only for a second before the communicator beeps. Archer comes back into view and gives the device a sideways look before reluctantly picking it up and answering the call.

ARCHER

Archer here.

To his surprise the voice of the Vulcan commander comes over the speaker.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

Captain Archer, this is Commander Shaliv of the *Rek'mal*.

Taken off guard, Archer simply stands silently for a BEAT.

ARCHER

Hello, Commander. I wasn't expecting to hear from you.

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

You are aware of the circumstances regarding our presence?

ARCHER

Yes. Sub-Commander T'Pol just told me about it a minute ago.

There is a pause on Shaliv's end for a BEAT

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

It is unfortunate that this happened, Captain.

This gets Archer's attention.

ARCHER

Unfortunate that what happened exactly?

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

It is unfortunate that you were required to make this first contact.

(beat)

High Command was hopeful that this mission would be carried out by Vulcan.

Archer is about to reply, but he stops himself and reconsiders his words for a BEAT. It's pretty obvious that he couldn't care less what the Vulcan High Command was “hopeful” about.

ARCHER

(sarcastic)

That is unfortunate.

Though they are not ones to show emotion themselves, Vulcans can be masters at picking up on it from others and, from Shaliv's voice, she does exactly that.

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

I mean no offense, Captain, but it was a great risk for you to perform this duty.

(beat)

We do not yet believe you to be ready for such responsibilities.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

ARCHER

(bristling)  
I’m sorry you feel that way.

Archer’s tone lets us know that he’s anything but “sorry”.

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

It is not an unjustified belief. This situation very nearly ended in conflict. One that could have wiped out a significant portion of the population.

ARCHER

I did my best to keep that from happening. I wasn’t about to let them destroy themselves.

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

That is a noble intent, but it does not justify your actions.

(beat)

You should have waited for our arrival. Instead, you did what is typical of your species...you were impatient and made a hasty contact without careful consideration.

ARCHER

(defensively)

I was very careful in my consideration, Commander.

(beat, calming)

I believed that if we waited too long, it would only make the situation more difficult when contact was finally made.

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

Your justifications are not necessary, for the action has already been taken. I only hope that you learn patience from this experience.

(beat)

Your race has made progress since we first made contact with you, but not enough for you to make contact with less developed worlds.

Archer is holding back under the negative jabs at the Human race, the constant treatment by the Vulcans as if Humans are children.

ARCHER

(tightly)

The damage has been done.

(beat)

So since it has, what is your conclusion in the matter, Commander?

Apparently Shaliv has to consider this for a BEAT.

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

SHALIV (COMM VOICE)

The outcome was...adequate.

(beat)

Live long and prosper, Captain. *Rek'mal* out.

Archer closes the communicator a second time; his face is rigid with frustration.

ARCHER

(sarcastically)

I'll take that as a compliment.

EXT. PLANET – SHUTTLEPOD LANDING SITE

The landing party has gathered at the shuttlepods, only a small group of the planetary natives are present at this time. Among them is President Meltak and a news reporter. Meltak approaches Archer, who is standing at the open hatch of the pod with Sato nearby.

MELTAK

[I hate to see you leave so soon.]

(beat)

[Your ship and crew are welcome here anytime, Captain.]

ARCHER

Like I said, I might just come back on shore leave.

Archer extends his hand. Meltak is unsure what to do until Sato explains to him.

SATO

[It is a custom of friendship. You take his hand.]

Meltak does so, and the two shake hands as the reporter snaps “photographs” of the event.

ARCHER

Good-bye, Mister President.

MELTAK

[Good-bye.]

Archer and Sato board the pod.

INT. SHUTTLEPOD

Aboard the pod, they are the last two to take their seats. Archer sets a bag down next to his chair. Reed notices this and glances at the captain.

FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

REED

What have you got there, sir?

ARCHER

(looking at the bag)

Oh this?

(beat, grinning)

Just something for Midas. I owe him.

REED

What is it?

ARCHER

(smiling)

I have no idea.

SATO

From how they described it...I think it's kind of like squash.

Reed looks mildly concerned.

REED

Knowing Chief Lafayette, we'll find out soon enough.

The pod rocks slightly as the engines power up and push it off the ground.

EXT. SPACE

We watch as the shuttlepod exits the planet's atmosphere and glides toward *Enterprise*.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* – CORRIDOR

We again find Lieutenant Picard, Sakharov, and Warren creeping along a corridor. Picard has his scanner out while the other two keep their eyes peeled for any sudden movement. The lieutenant suddenly motions for them to stop, something on the scanner.

PICARD

(whispering)

Ten meters...that way.

He gestures down a short section of the corridor leading to the decon. room. They continue along silently, reaching the door and entering the room.



FOUNDATIONS: "A Coming of Age"

We pan and focus in on the scared little creature; this isn't a hostile alien monster bent on murder...but just a dog. A beagle to be precise. Archer turns his head and looks down at the dog.

PICARD

Captain, please move aside.

Archer looks up at the lieutenant as if he is crazy.

ARCHER

Lieutenant, it's just a dog.

He bends down and picks up the cowering animal. The dog doesn't run when Archer reaches down towards him; instead, the beagle straightens up from his cower and allows the captain to pick him up. It's still shaking though.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

A scared little guy at that.

The dog looks up at Archer and immediately proceeds to lick his chin.

REED

What do you want us to do with it, Captain?

ARCHER

Do with it?

(beat, laughing)

Well, once he stops licking the skin off my face...I intend to keep him.

REED

Keeping him, sir?

Archer gives Reed a wry smile while the beagle continues to lick his face.

ARCHER

If he can evade your SF's for weeks, I think he deserves something for that.

Reed harrumphs at the comment, and glowers at Picard.

REED

I can see your point, Captain.

(beat)

And for his little evasion I think my people deserve a little extra training time.

What do you say, Lieutenant?

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

PICARD

(grumpy)  
Yes sir.

Archer laughs at the exchange and turns away, still carrying the small dog that is still trying to lick the skin off his face.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE THE PLANET

The *Enterprise* is moving away from the planet, when suddenly her engines flash and she jumps off to warp. We hold on the empty space for a BEAT before we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

FOUNDATIONS: “A Coming of Age”

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