



STAR TREK FOUNDATIONS

“Bicinium”

Story and Screenplay By

Rigil Kent

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FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TEASER

FADE IN:

We begin with a series of scenes from the previous episode.

T'POL'S VOICE

Previously, on *Foundations*...

INT. VULCAN AMBASSADORIAL BUILDING

We are at the top of the building set apart for the Vulcan consulate in San Francisco. The room is spartan in decoration with a tinted plexi-glass window that stretches almost completely around the area of the room. A single desk and chair is in the room. Through the window, we can see the UESPA Command building nearby.

Ambassador Soval stands at the window, facing the city. His hands are clasped behind his back and there is no expression on his face as he studies the city. If anything, the ambassador looks tired.

A Vulcan Aide is behind him and is offering a sealed package.

VULCAN AIDE

(in Vulcan)

[This arrived by courier minutes ago. It is date-stamped and appears to be Sub-Commander T'Pol's latest report from *Enterprise*.]

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

The primary duty rotation are in their usual places as Captain Archer paces back and forth in front of his command chair. The atmosphere on the bridge is one of excitement. Displayed on the main viewer is a swirling mass of vortex of light that is immediately recognizable as a wormhole similar to the one from Deep Space Nine. Unlike that wormhole, however, this one appears to be in a state of flux with flashes of purple and yellow light constantly rippling through the anomaly, as if it were not entirely stable.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ASTROMETRICS LAB

Captain Archer stands quietly in front of the holographic display, a look of bemused wonder on his face as he stares at the image of the wormhole. Directly across the display from the captain and wearing a similar expression is Commander Tucker. Her own features very composed, Sub-Commander T'Pol is manipulating the controls of the holo-viewer.

ARCHER

A wormhole?

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T'POL

The sensor readings remain inconclusive but, based on the data we currently have, that is the logical assumption.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

T'Pol is at her station as Captain Archer and Commander Tucker stand nearby.

ARCHER

We should be able to close to within a light-second to get better readings, right?

T'POL

I do not recommend that, Captain.

A BEEP echoes loudly from T'Pol's board, drawing the attention of pretty much everyone on the bridge. She inputs commands before responding to Archer's unspoken question.

T'POL

I am detecting a ship closing on our position.

SATO

It's Vulcan.

The main viewer changes to the image of a stern and familiar-looking Vulcan, Colonel Vanik. Archer reacts to the man, obviously recognizing him.

ARCHER

Colonel Vanik. You're a long way from Alpha Centauri.

VANIK

And you're a long way from Earth, Captain.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ENGINEERING

Ensign Sato is offering a PADD to Commander Tucker.

SATO

I was running a diagnostic for the communication array and found a power surge that I thought you should see.

From his expression, Trip thinks this is pretty small potatoes but is trying to avoid telling her that. He glances over the PADD quickly.

TUCKER

We have surges like this all the time. Mostly it's background noise-

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SATO

(interrupting)
Sir, it looks like an encrypted transmission.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Now Tucker is standing by Ensign Sato's station as she inputs commands.

TUCKER

Do you know who it was meant for?

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - T'POL'S QUARTERS

T'Pol is standing in front of her computer. She frowns slightly as the screen transforms to a blank screen. Vulcan characters begin appearing and her expression transforms into one that could only be called distressed.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

Archer is facing the porthole at the back of his office. Anger is stamped on his face and we can see Commander Tucker present. Trip is standing in an uncomfortable "at ease" stance.

ARCHER

(tight, angry)
I knew we couldn't trust her.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Trip is seated at the comm. station. The screen on the communication board snaps to life and lines of Vulcan text crawl across the screen before they begin to be translated by the computer program. We FOCUS on Commander Tucker as the light from the small screen splashes across his face while he reads. Within a BEAT, Trip's expression falls and he exhales in what appears to be surprised disgust.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIEFING ROOM

Clustered around the central viewer, the command staff of *Enterprise* listens as Sub-Commander T'Pol continues her report. Captain Archer has a sour expression on his face, due in no small part to the fact that Colonel Vanik and Sub-Commander T'Lyr are present as well with the latter wearing an insufferably superior expression. Commander Tucker appears equally unsettled, although his discontent seems mostly directed toward Archer. Lieutenant Garla, Ensign Sato and Ensign Mayweather appear to be the only ones completely focused on what T'Pol is saying.

ARCHER

Mister Tucker, I want us rigged for action in ten minutes. Travis, begin plotting a course to take us to within a light-second of the event.

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ARCHER (CONT'D)

(to T'Pol)

I want you in astrometrics to monitor the readings.

(off her look and Trip's look)

That's an order.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

An explosion of sparks rain down atop the science station as a panel abruptly explodes. Alarms begin to shriek.

ARCHER

All back full!

Ensign Mayweather is already inputting commands as Archer gives Lieutenant Garla a look that demands a status report.

GARLA

We can't make anything out! I think we're caught in the wormhole's gravity wake!

(horrified)

We're being sucked in!

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Engines now bright, *Enterprise* is facing away from the wormhole but slowly, ever so slowly, being drawn toward the event horizon.

T'POL'S VOICE

And now, on *Foundations*.

And off that, we...

FADE OUT.

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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Engines now bright, *Enterprise* is facing away from the wormhole but slowly, ever so slowly, being drawn toward the event horizon

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Alarms are shrieking and lights flash intermittently. An explosion of sparks rains down upon CAPTAIN ARCHER, forcing him to jerk away but the restraints that secure him to his command chair keep him from getting too far. Around him, we can see the other members of the bridge crew are also secured to their seats.

ARCHER

Travis!

ENSIGN MAYWEATHER is struggling with the controls on his pilot's console but, based on his tight expression, he is not having any success.

MAYWEATHER

Engines at full!

Archer quickly shoots a look at LIEUTENANT GARLA who is manning the science board and she responds to his glance with a wide-eyed look of her own.

GARLA

No change! We're still being dragged in!

The captain stabs the comm. button on the arm rest on his command chair.

ARCHER

Trip! I need more power!

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - MAIN ENGINEERING

COMMANDER TUCKER darts toward a comm. panel. As he does, we can see his engineering team looking tense and frightened as alarms continue to sound throughout the commander's domain. Junction boxes explode overhead, and Trip ducks one such explosion as he darts toward the comm. panel.

TUCKER

We're redlining now!

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INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

A dark expression on his face, Captain Archer shoots a glare at the main viewer and the massive azure anomaly.

VANIK (COMM. VOICE)

Ti'Mur to *Enterprise*. Stand by.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Seeming to roar out of nowhere, the *Ti'Mur* surges into view at the very periphery of the wormhole. Tractor beams flash out from the Vulcan craft, latching onto the primary hull of *Enterprise*. A BEAT later, *Ti'Mur's* sublight engines flare brightly as the Vulcan ship struggles against the inexorable pull from the wormhole.

INT. *TIMUR* - BRIDGE

Unlike the command deck of *Enterprise*, the bridge of the Vulcan cruiser is absent of apparent tension or fear. COLONEL VANIK, seated calmly in his command chair, studies the image of the EX-01 on the main viewer.

VANIK

Helm, maximum impulse away from the event.

The HELMSMAN manipulates his controls before looking up.

HELMSMAN

Engines at maximum. Our position is unchanged.

Vanik raises an eyebrow at that before looking toward his science officer, SUB-COMMANDER T'LYR.

T'LYR

We have stabilized *Enterprise*, but are unable to generate sufficient thrust to escape the anomaly's gravity.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Now both ships are facing away from the event horizon, engines glowing brightly as they struggle against the stellar anomaly. Both are in an almost stationary position as they fight against the inexorable pull of gravity.

And, off that, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

As before. *Enterprise* and *Ti'Mur* are facing away from the swirling vortex of the wormhole with the Vulcan ship's tractor beam locked securely upon the human craft. Multi-hued streams of color flash through the azure cloud like ribbons of lightning.

T'POL (VO)

Status report continues. Sub-Commander T'Pol reporting.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Archer is now on his feet and leaning over Ensign Mayweather's shoulder so he can see the readouts on the younger man's console. On the main viewer is a realtime image of Colonel Vanik. As we enter the scene, the Vulcan captain is already speaking.

VANIK

My chief engineer reports that we will be unable to hold this position indefinitely.

(off Archer's look)

The strain on our engines-

ARCHER

(interrupting)

Understood.

(beat, off Travis' board)

Keep an eye on those thrusters.

MAYWEATHER

(tense)

Aye, sir.

T'POL (VO)

As I have stated previously, the human drive for knowledge is, at once, both inspiring and frustrating.

The hiss of the turbolift door announces the arrival of SUB-COMMANDER T'POL and Commander Tucker. Both officers move toward their respective stations without hesitation, although Trip actually sprints while the Vulcan appears to walk almost without hurry.

ARCHER

(to Trip)

What are you doing here?

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TUCKER

Kelby has it covered right now.
(as he takes over the damage control board)
And I had an idea.

ARCHER

I hope it's a damned good idea.

Archer gives T'Pol a look as she replaces Lieutenant Garla without a word. Over the captain's shoulder, we can see that Colonel Vanik appears to be listening to something being related to him from offscreen.

TUCKER

So do I.
(off his data)
If we bring up the warp field, I think it'll let us get clear of this thing!

T'POL

We have no way of knowing that, Commander.

The Vulcan is now studying her board and is speaking to Trip without looking in his direction.

TUCKER

What?

T'POL

Your theory is based on unfounded assumptions that-

TUCKER

(interrupting)
Unfounded!

T'POL (CONT'D)

-may have exactly the reverse effect.

TUCKER

(hot)
Do you have a better idea?

ARCHER

(loud)
Enough! We don't have time for this right now!
(to Trip)
Explain.

FOUNDATIONS: “Bicinium”

TUCKER

Warp physics 101, sir.
(beat)

If we bring up the warp field, it'll give us a lower mass signature which will allow the impulse engines to carry us clear of the wormhole.

T'POL

Alternatively, the gravitational pull of the anomaly could pull us in even more quickly since the mass signature is reduced.

Trip shoots her a frustrated look and we can see Vanik observing the exchange with a raised eyebrow.

TUCKER

Why the hell would that happen?
(off her glance)

It would go against everything we know about warp physics!

The Vulcan finally looks at the engineer, giving him a flat look with an uplifted eyebrow.

T'POL

This anomaly already goes against everything we know about physics, Commander.

(beat)

Assuming that it will conform to known science is not only illogical but dangerous.

A BEAT passes as Trip glowers at her, clearly unable to counter that point.

T'POL (VO)

Equally fascinating is their ability to adapt to change at a pace that is often mistaken for irrationality.

Archer gives a quick glance around the bridge, noting the barely concealed fear on ENSIGN SATO'S face and the controlled expression on MAJOR REED'S face. Mayweather, on the other hand, is too busy focusing his attention on his controls to react to the argument. Finally, the captain nods.

ARCHER

Alright. We'll try that.
(to T'Pol)

Unless you have a better idea, Sub-Commander.
(off her look, to Vanik)

Colonel-

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INT. *TIMUR* - BRIDGE

The Vulcan colonel looks in T'Lyr's direction, his expression demanding an immediate response. He interrupts Archer with a question to his own science officer.

VANIK

(in Vulcan)

[Sub-commander, what is your assessment?]

For a BEAT, T'Lyr looks away, busying herself with the console before her as if she were examining data.

T'POL (VO)

To a Vulcan, the speed with which many humans make decisions often appears unduly reckless.

As T'Lyr's eyes move over the small monitors, we notice a flicker of emotion cross her face: discomfort. We can't help but to get the idea that she appears out of her depth.

T'LYR

(also in Vulcan)

[I...I concur with Commander] Tucker.

(off her data, more confidently)

[Extending the warp field around *Enterprise* has the highest probability of success.]

Vanik studies his science officer for a BEAT with a measuring look in his eyes before returning his attention to the viewscreen.

VANIK

(to Archer)

Captain, I propose that *Ti'Mur* move closer to your position.

Archer's surprise is as apparent as T'Lyr's.

VANIK (CONT'D)

By combining our efforts and merging our warp fields, the chance for success is increased.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

We focus on Captain Archer's expression for a BEAT as he absorbs the offer. He is clearly struggling with the idea and is openly surprised at the colonel's readiness to put his own ship into harm's way.

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T'POL (VO)

As I have discovered, however, humans are just as capable of utilizing logic in their decision-making processes as Vulcans.

Archer glances away, a conflicted expression on his face.

ARCHER

No...

(beat)

No. We don't know if this will even work and I don't want to lose two ships if it fails.

Vanik raises an eyebrow and inclines his head slightly.

VANIK

Very well.

(beat)

We will stand ready to provide assistance if possible.

(beat)

Ti'Mur out.

The screen blanks out, returning the viewer to an image of the swirling wormhole. Archer retakes his command chair and begins securing himself with the integrated restraints. As we PAN around him, we can see Commander Tucker and Sub-Commander T'Pol doing the same.

ARCHER

Hoshi, sound collision.

The ensign reacts instantly, pressing a button on her board and speaking into her comm.

SATO

All hands, brace for impact.

An alarm that we've not heard before sounds and we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - MAIN ENGINEERING

As the collision alarm sounds, the engineers are scrambling toward safety harnesses along the wall. We see LIEUTENANT KELBY as he is shouting at his people.

KELBY

(shouting)

Move it, people! Move it!

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SATO (COMM. VOICE)

Repeat, brace for impact.

Kelby begins to buckle himself into his own safety harness, his eyes riveted on the engineering team as he makes sure that all of them are in their proper places.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - SICKBAY

DOCTORS LUCAS and PHLOX are already strapped into impact seats that appear to have folded down from the wall for emergencies such as this. Unsurprisingly, the Denobulan is looking around with a smile but, oddly, Lucas looks remarkably chipper himself as he gives a glance to two enlisted med-techs who are seated and secured as well. Both of them appear more than a little worried.

SATO (COMM. VOICE)

Department heads report when ready.

LUCAS

(smirking)

Bet they never told you about this during training, huh?

One of the med-techs gives him an almost disgusted look before tightening his grip on the restraints that are holding him in place. At the look, Lucas snorts in open amusement, as Phlox reaches toward a comm. panel and depresses a button.

PHLOX

Sickbay reports ready.

Off that, we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Ensign Sato looks up from her board, eyes wide.

SATO

All departments report ready.

ARCHER

Right.

(beat, to Trip)

Bring up the warp field.

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At his command, Tucker exhales audibly and manipulates his console.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Enterprise is still being tractorized by *Ti'Mur*, and, for a BEAT, we can see the mostly transparent outline of the warp field flicker into existence. The ship is backlit by the brilliant wormhole, an indication that we wouldn't normally see this.

SUDDENLY, *Enterprise* shudders and begins sliding toward the wormhole! As we see this, we can see that *Ti'Mur*, still tethered to the EX-01 by the tractor beam, is also being drawn toward the wormhole!

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Once more, alarms are screaming as junction boxes explode. The entire bridge appears to be shaking like mad.

T'POL

(urgent)

Rate of descent is increasing! Shut down the warp field!

Commander Tucker is reacting to the command before T'Pol is even finished speaking.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

The almost transparent outline of the warp field blinks out of existence and we can see the impulse engines of *Ti'Mur* suddenly flare even brighter than before as the Vulcan cruiser struggles against the pull of gravity. As we PUSH IN toward the *Ti'Mur*, we can hear the ship's engines whining in protest.

INT. *TIMUR* - BRIDGE

As aboard *Enterprise*, alarms are sounding but, unlike the human ship, these alerts are not blaring or loud. Though they conceal it behind their masks of dispassion, the assembled bridge crew is clearly concerned; however, if the quick looks they keep shooting toward their commanding officer is any indication.

VULCAN ENGINEER (COMM. VOICE)

(in Vulcan)

[Engineering to bridge.]

An image of poise and control, the Vulcan colonel responds with no hint of concern.

VANIK

[This is Vanik.]

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VULCAN ENGINEER (COMM. VOICE)

[Colonel, reactor is now running at one hundred percent and exceeds safety parameters.]

The colonel glances toward T'Lyr who has a look of fear on her face; she appears to be trying to conceal her emotions but isn't doing a very good job right now.

VANIK

[Increase reactor output to one hundred and ten percent.]

T'LYR

[Colonel!]

(off his look)

[Deactivating the tractor beam will ease the strain on the reactor substantially! I recommend that we do so immediately!]

Vanik studies her for a BEAT.

VANIK

[Maintain tractor beam lock.]

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Those alarms are still flashing but appear to have been muted. The vibration that we saw earlier is still evident but much less pronounced now. As he unbuckles his restraints, Archer glances in Trip's direction.

ARCHER

Report!

Before Tucker can speak, the Vulcan sub-commander is answering.

T'POL

Enterprise has been drawn to zero point nine light seconds from the event threshold. We are still being drawn closer to the horizon.

(off Archer's look)

Ti'Mur is also being drawn into the event, but at a slightly slower rate.

ARCHER

(demanding)

What happened?

TUCKER

(angry)

Exactly what T'Pol warned us about.

(beat)

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TUCKER (CONT'D)

(anguished)
I've killed us.

The captain gives him a look.

ARCHER

We're not dead yet, Trip.
(to T'Pol)
How long until we reach the event threshold?

T'POL

I cannot make an accurate estimate based on sensor readings.

ARCHER

(tight)
Then give me your best guess, dammit!

The Vulcan sub-commander lifts an eyebrow at his tone but considers for a BEAT.

T'POL

Thirty-four minutes.

And, off that grim pronouncement, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

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ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

As before. *Enterprise* and *Ti'Mur* are still struggling against the wormhole. The tractor beams that are holding the human ship in place hum and flicker under the strain.

T'POL (VO)

Status report, continued.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - ASTROMETRICS LAB

Captain Archer, Commander Tucker and Sub-Commander T'Pol are clustered around the glassed-up table that dominates the center of the lab. A 3-D representation of the wormhole is within the encased table, and a pair of pulsing lights on this primitive holographic display denotes the present location of the two ships. They are dangerously deep within the wormhole's sphere of influence.

T'POL (VO)

Prior to my assignment to *Enterprise*, I labored under a number of preconceptions regarding humans.

On one of the larger monitors that dominate this room is an image of Colonel Vanik, an indication that this is another conference call.

T'POL

(indicating the holo-display)

This is our current position in relation to the mouth of the anomaly.

(beat)

I estimate less than twenty standard minutes until *Enterprise* is drawn into the event horizon.

ARCHER

(surprised)

Twenty minutes? You said thirty before!

T'POL

I was in error.

We focus on Trip's expression of abject failure.

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TUCKER

(anguished)
This is my fault.

Both Archer and T'Pol give him a look as he speaks.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

(anguished)
I'm responsible for this...

ARCHER

(tight)
It was your best guess with the information you had available.

TUCKER

(with self-disgust)
And it was wrong!

ARCHER

(with a sharp hand gesture)
That's enough!
(off Trip's look)
I made the call, Trip.

VANIK (COMM. VOICE)

And my science officer concurred with your theory, Commander. If there was an error, it was shared.

The Vulcan colonel's comment is unexpected and both humans shoot a surprised look at the monitor. Archer frowns, then turns his attention back to the holographic display.

ARCHER

Let's worry about getting out of this mess right now. We can assign blame later.
(beat, to T'Pol)
What do we have?

The Vulcan sub-commander's expression is, to put it kindly, bleak.

T'POL

Not much, Captain.
(off his frown)
Our proximity to the event horizon has allowed me to acquire more accurate scans of the anomaly but I have been unable to isolate any advantage.

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ARCHER

(hot)
Dammit, there has to be something we can do!
(beat)
What about the lifepods?

T'POL

They will not be able to escape the event's gravity.

Captain Archer exchanges a grim look with Trip as they stare at the holographic display with something akin to despair in their eyes.

ARCHER

Dammit...

A BEAT passes in silence as the four members of this conference call digest their situation.

T'POL (VO)

Foremost among these preconceptions was that humans allowed their emotions to control their actions at all times and were incapable of rational action.

Archer looks to Trip.

ARCHER

We could sure use a miracle right about now, Trip.
(beat, hopeful)
Anything you can come up with...

TUCKER

(glum)
Sorry, Cap'n, but I'm all out of tricks.
(beat, dark)
As long as this damned thing is sucking us in, I don't see what we can do.

At that, T'Pol raises an eyebrow as an idea appears to occur to her, and she begins manipulating the controls on the holo-tank, quickly zooming in onto the image of the wormhole. Both humans note this and exchange a look.

ARCHER

Sub-Commander?

T'POL

As Commander Tucker stated, we are currently unable to escape the gravity of this event.

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She inputs a command and the image with the holographic tank changes to one of a more familiar-looking hourglass shape. It is a digital representation of a wormhole (or black hole).

T'POL (CONT'D)

If, however, we can detonate sufficient explosive material at a critical point-

TUCKER

(interrupting, suddenly excited)

Of course!

T'POL (CONT'D)

-we might be able to collapse the wormhole to affect an escape.

ARCHER

(warming to the idea)

Will that work?

T'Pol gives the captain a look.

T'POL

I have no way of determining that without more data, Captain.

(beat, off his look)

This is my best...guess.

Archer frowns slightly at her comment, but Trip is clearly too focused on the holographic image to notice the captain's look.

TUCKER

(musing)

We could use the aft grapples to lower the explosive into place...

(to T'Pol)

Can we get good enough scans to figure out where it's weak?

T'POL

Unknown.

She manipulates her controls again and the hologram is again a real-time image.

T'POL

Equally important is whether the grapples have sufficient cable to lower it into place.

TUCKER

(grim)

Tensile strength of the cables could also be a problem. Can they withstand the strain?

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T'POL

Indeed. Timing of the detonation will be crucial.

As the two begin planning, Archer observes as if he were watching a tennis match. Over his shoulder, we can see that Colonel Vanik is doing the same thing.

TUCKER

Right. Malcolm can handle that.

(off her look)

Major Reed.

(brightens)

In fact, we should get him involved in the planning. He's good at blowing things up.

T'POL

(wry)

A useful talent for a security officer, I'm sure.

(beat)

We will also need to locate a delivery system capable of withstanding significant pressure.

At almost the same moment, Captain Archer and Commander Tucker exchange a look, an almost identical expression on their faces.

ARCHER & TUCKER

(simultaneously)

Shuttlepod One.

T'Pol gives them a look as we see Vanik raise an eyebrow on the monitor. As the two humans suddenly grin at one another, the sub-commander abruptly nods.

T'POL

A shuttlepod should have the capacity to hold the necessary ordnance.

ARCHER

(confident)

Good.

(to Vanik)

Anything to add, Colonel?

The Vulcan considers for a BEAT before quirking an eyebrow once more.

VANIK

I recommend that you polarize your hull armor before deploying the explosive.

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ARCHER

(nodding)

Agreed.

(to T'Pol and Tucker)

Let's make it happen.

The image of Vanik blinks out as the three *Enterprise* officers turn toward the door. With that, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - HANGAR BAY

Shuttlepod 01, still heavily damaged from the incident three episodes ago, is now swarming with action. One entire side of the 'pod has been pulled off and is currently on the deck; engineers armed with fusion welders are hard at work on this slab of hull metal. From what we can see, the inside of the 'pod already has the warheads from three of *Enterprise's* missiles wired together.

TPOL (VO)

As I have observed the crew of *Enterprise*, I have discovered that this is an exaggeration brought on by lack of understanding on our part.

Major Reed, his expression intent, enters the scene as he directs a team of six SFs who are slowly maneuvering what appears to be another warhead from a disassembled missile. 2ND LIEUTENANT COLE pulls up the rear as they slowly approach the 'pod.

REED

Let's get this thing loaded!

(louder, to the engineers)

Welders off!

At his command, the engineers deactivate their welders and move back from the 'pod, allowing the SFs to begin maneuvering the awkward-looking warhead into the back of the 'pod. From their expressions and exaggerated caution the SFs are taking, they are quite aware of that they're handling quite hazardous material.

TPOL (VO)

This lack of understanding complicates many of our daily interactions with them.

Into this scene steps Captain Archer and Commander Tucker; they exchange a look at the amount of explosives already stacked on the shuttlepod.

ARCHER

(softly)

So much for UESPA recycling anything from that 'pod.

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Trip gives him a partially amused look as Major Reed continues to direct his SFs. A BEAT later, the major is gesturing for the enlisted troopers to get clear and turns to the engineers.

REED

Seal it up! And watch those weld points!

The engineers spring into action and begin to manhandle the 'pod hull into place. Without being instructed to, the SFs dart forward to lend a hand. Archer and Tucker approach.

ARCHER

Major!
(off Reed's look)
How are we doing?

REED

Nearly done, Captain. A few more minutes, sir.

Enterprise suddenly shudders and Archer glowers.

ARCHER

We may not have a few more minutes, Major.
(beat)
Do what you can.
(beat, to Trip)
I'll be on the bridge.

He turns and walks from the scene, leaving Reed and Tucker alone. A BEAT passes as the engineers continue to reattach the hull of the shuttlepod.

REED

This was your idea?

Trip gives him a look.

TUCKER

T'Pol's actually.

REED

Then I'll have to thank her later.
(beat, with a grin)
Pity we don't have a nuke...
(off Tucker's look)
But still, this will make a very agreeable "boom".

Tucker barks out a laugh, and we...

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

The turbolift door opens and Archer strides onto the bridge. Unsurprisingly, the command chair is empty as Sub-Commander T'Pol is parked at her station and partially bent over her holo-viewer. *Enterprise* shudders again, causing the captain to quickly grab the railing to steady himself.

T'POL (VO)

And yet, despite these differences between our two species, I have found more similarities than I would have ever anticipated.

ARCHER

Hoshi, get me *Ti'Mur*.
(to T'Pol)

Time?

T'POL

Six point five three minutes.

The main viewer snaps to life and Colonel Vanik appears.

ARCHER

We're about ready, Colonel.

VANIK

Acknowledged.
(beat)

We are standing by to bring our shield system online.

Archer nods and looks to 1ST LIEUTENANT PICARD who is manning the tactical board.

ARCHER

Stand by to polarize the hull.

The lieutenant nods as Archer takes his seat and begins securing his seat restraints.

TUCKER (COMM. VOICE)

Tucker to bridge!

The captain hits the comm. button on his command chair.

ARCHER

Go ahead, Trip.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER (COMM. VOICE)

We're ready here, sir!

ARCHER

Right.

(to Hoshi)

Sound collision.

(to Picard)

Polarize the hull.

(beat)

Whenever you're ready, Trip.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CRANE CONTROL

Seated before the controls that overlook the cargo bay bearing Shuttlepod 01, Commander Tucker begins to work and, through the viewport before him, we can see the crane latch onto the shuttlepod. A BEAT later, a flashing light warns of the opening lower cargo bay door. Air can be seen quickly evacuating through the bay door and the 'pod rocks but is held steady by the secured crane. Tucker manipulates controls and the 'pod slowly begins to lower through the now open bay door.

EXT. SPACE - HULL OF *ENTERPRISE*

As the shuttlepod is lowered through the opening bay door, still secured by the cargo crane, we can see the aft grapples oriented toward it. With a flash, it fires its electromagnetic cables to latch onto the 'pod that is already locked into place by the crane.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CRANE CONTROL

Tucker is still studying his data.

T'POL (COMM. VOICE)

Grapplers are secured.

TUCKER

Copy. Releasing the crane. It's all yours...

EXT. SPACE - HULL OF *ENTERPRISE*

The cargo crane releases the 'pod and it INSTANTLY leaps out into space. Only the grapples prevent it from tumbling into the wormhole.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Tension is thick on the bridge as Archer gives T'Pol a sharp look.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

(tight)
Any time you're ready...

The Vulcan appears to ignore the captain's comment as she issues instructions.

T'POL

Beginning grapple feed.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Slowly, the shuttlepod begins to slide toward the swirling core of the wormhole as grapples are used to lower the 'pod into place. There is no slack in the cables and we can see that they are trembling with the strain.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

T'Pol is bent over her console viewer and, on the main viewscreen, we can see an image of the 'pod from an aft camera. The bridge is constantly shaking now.

T'POL

Stand by to detonate...

Every eye is on her as a BEAT passes in tense silence.

T'POL

Releasing the grapplers...

As she speaks, the sub-commander presses a button on her console.

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

Suddenly released from the grapplers, the shuttlepod begins to fall toward the event horizon, tumbling end over end.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

T'Pol's hand comes up and we see Picard tense immediately. The shot changes to one behind the lieutenant and we can see his finger poised above a red button.

T'POL

Detonate!

Picard depresses the button.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

EXT. SPACE - BEFORE THE WORMHOLE

As the 'pod tumbles, we can see that it is much farther away from *Enterprise* than expected. With a FLASH, Shuttlepod 01 explodes in a titanic fireball!

The multi-colored ribbons of light that stream through the bluish "cloud" suddenly flare up brightly, as if they were liquid fuel propellant recently ignited. A massive omni-directional shockwave races out from the exploding 'pod.

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Apart from T'Pol, all eyes are on the main viewer. At the sudden flash of light, the crew wince and glance away. The sub-commander is still bent over her viewer but bolts upright.

T'POL

Brace for impact!

EXT. SPACE - WITHIN THE COLLAPSING WORMHOLE

The shockwave races toward *Enterprise* and *Ti'Mur*, and smashes into them with crushing force!

And, off of that image, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

We resume with a shot of *Enterprise* and *Ti'Mur* in deep space. There is no sign of the wormhole. As we ZOOM IN toward *Enterprise*, we can see damage to both ships, including what appear to be several hull breaches.

T'POL (VO)

Status report, continued.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

Smoke and sparking monitors are everywhere but the atmosphere on the command deck is one of jubilation. Both Ensign Mayweather and Sato are laughing at the near death experience and, as we PAN AROUND, we can see Captain Archer leaning back in his command chair, clearly exhausted by the moment. Only Sub-Commander T'Pol appears to be indifferent to the change in circumstance.

TUCKER (COMM. VOICE)

Tucker to bridge.

The captain thumbs the comm. panel on his chair.

ARCHER

Go ahead, Trip.

TUCKER (COMM. VOICE)

Damage control parties reporting in, Cap'n. We've got some minor breaches and shipwide brownouts, but nothing major yet.

(beat)

I think we dodged a bullet, sir.

ARCHER

(relieved)

That's the best news I've heard all day, Trip.

(beat)

Get me a report as soon as you can.

TUCKER (COMM. VOICE)

Aye, sir.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

Archer begins to unbuckle his restraints as he gives a look to Ensign Sato.

ARCHER

Contact *Ti'Mur*. Let's see if they're okay.

At her nod, he then gives T'Pol a glance. For a BEAT, he says nothing and we can see him struggling with something.

ARCHER

Good work, Sub-Commander.

He turns away and we PUSH IN to focus on T'Pol's raised eyebrow.

T'POL (VO)

Among humanity's many surprising qualities is their ability to set aside anger or distrust when the situation demands it.

With that, we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ENGINEERING

Captain Archer walks toward the shot, dressed in the utility jumpsuit we've seen on engineers before but never on him. He has an almost contrite expression on his face as he reaches the doors leading to Engineering. He triggers the hatch control and steps through opening doors.

We follow him into...

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - MAIN ENGINEERING

As he enters, we can see that Commander Tucker is in the middle of a cluster of engineers and is clearing giving them instructions. Archer hesitates for a BEAT before striding toward the group.

TUCKER

(already speaking)

-want regular reports every fifteen minutes.

(beat)

If there are any questions, Chief Linquist will be coordinating all damage control teams from the bridge.

The referenced SENIOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER LINQUIST straightens and gives the assembled enlisted personnel a knowing look. In his 40s, the senior chief is at least Archer's age and has a grizzled veteran look about him.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER

Let's get to work, people!

The group quickly begins to break up, many noticing the captain's presence for the first time. Ignoring the looks of surprise from Tucker's engineers, Archer weaves his way closer to his chief engineer who is now examining a clipboard with Lieutenant Kelby at his shoulder.

TUCKER

(to Archer)

Be with you in just a second, sir.

(to Kelby)

This won't work at all. I want Rostov and Taylor on the C-Deck breach.

(offering the clipboard)

We can put the SFs on this.

KELBY

Aye, sir.

The lieutenant accepts the clipboard and heads away. Trip takes in Archer's jumpsuit with raised eyebrows.

TUCKER

Something I can do for you, sir?

ARCHER

Put me to work.

(off Trip's surprise, soft)

Look, it's my fault that repairs are even needed so...

TUCKER

(smirking)

Is this your way of saying "I was wrong, Trip?"

Archer sighs.

ARCHER

(soft)

I was wrong, Trip.

(beat)

That make you feel better?

TUCKER

(smiling slightly)

A little.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

So put me to work.

TUCKER

That I can do.

(beat, teasing)

You haven't forgotten how to use a welder, have you, sir?

The captain gives his chief engineer a mostly amused look.

ARCHER

It's been a couple of years, but I think I can manage.

Tucker nods.

TUCKER

Rostov is going to need a hand on C-Deck.

(beat)

How's the *Ti'Mur*?

ARCHER

Colonel Vanik assures me that they have no lasting damage.

TUCKER

Good.

(smirking)

And your dog?

Archer gives his chief engineer a look before sighing.

ARCHER

(glum)

My quarters have smelled better.

(beat, glum)

You'd think a space beagle would already be housebroken.

Trip laughs at that before giving the captain a look.

TUCKER

A space beagle?

ARCHER

(shrugging)

We're in space. He's a beagle. Space beagle.

The engineer smiles slightly before pinning the captain with his eyes.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER

(soft)
Have you apologized to T'Pol yet?

ARCHER

What?

TUCKER

I wasn't the only senior officer you ignored, sir.

The captain frowns as he glances away.

ARCHER

Not yet.
(beat, considering)
Have you?

At that, Tucker groans. Based on his expression, the commander had, until this moment, forgotten all about that situation.

TUCKER

(sour)
Thanks for reminding me.

And, off the commander's look, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

It's an establishing shot of the two starships, now oriented toward one another again. As we PUSH IN, we can see that repairs are ongoing. EV suited figures are crawling around on the large ring that acts as a nacelle on the *Ti'Mur*.

T'POL (VO)

It is this quality that I find most fascinating about them, despite my initial misgivings regarding this assignment.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - D-DECK CORRIDOR

The turbolift door opens, revealing Commander Tucker. Still clad in his jumpsuit and carrying what appears to be a toolbox, Trip pauses just beyond the lift access. The corridor lights flicker

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

slightly and we can hear the distinctive sound of fusion welders being used. Tucker exhales and begins walking down the corridor.

T'POL (VO)

And it is this very quality that surprises me on a daily basis.

A BEAT later, he rounds a corner to discover Sub-Commander T'Pol and a single crewman working on a power junction. Farther down the corridor and around another "corner", we can see sparks spraying out as the sound of the welder is in use.

TUCKER

Can I talk to you?

T'Pol looks back over her shoulder at Trip's comment, raising an eyebrow at the almost diffident manner in which Tucker speaks.

T'POL

Of course, Commander.

TUCKER

(with a look at the crewman)

In private, if you don't mind.

The Vulcan gives Tucker another look, before inclining her head slightly.

T'POL

(to the crewman)

Consult Senior Chief Linquist for additional instructions.

The crewman nods and heads toward the turbolift. A BEAT passes as Trip waits for the young man to get out of listening range. From her expression, the Vulcan is openly wondering about the commander's curious behavior.

TUCKER

I owe you an apology.

Once more, the eyebrow goes up.

T'POL

You were utilizing the data you had available, Commander, and offered a valid course of action based on that data.

(off Trip's look)

Bringing the warp field online should have-

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER

(interrupting)

No, no. That's not what I'm talking about.

The engineer sighs heavily as he rolls his tongue around on the inside of his mouth. He is silent for a BEAT as he runs his hands through his hair and again, T'Pol appears openly confused.

T'POL

Commander?

TUCKER

(embarrassed)

I read your letter.

T'Pol frowns slightly.

T'POL

What letter?

TUCKER

(guilty)

The one you received from *Ti'Mur*. The encrypted one.

T'POL

(flat)

I see.

(beat, flat)

I was not aware that my personal correspondence was subject to review by *Enterprise* staff.

Tucker's expression is becoming more frustrated: this is clearly not turning out like he wanted it to.

TUCKER

Look at it from my point of view! It was an unscheduled encrypted data stream buried inside a status report!

(beat, annoyed)

How is that not suspicious?

(beat)

Hoshi...Ensign Sato stumbled upon it and told me about it.

T'POL

(flat)

So, you felt it necessary to investigate.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER

I don't feel good about it!

T'POL

(flat)

I'm sure you don't.

(beat, flat)

I have other personal correspondence in my quarters. Do you want to read those as well?

TUCKER

(frustrated)

Dammit, I'm trying to apologize here. It was a mistake and I'm sorry.

(beat)

I already deleted it from the comm. buffer...no one else has read it.

T'POL

(flat)

Ensign Sato-

TUCKER

(interrupting)

Didn't read it. I'm the only one.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

The sub-commander is silent for a LONG BEAT as she studies Trip with a cold expression on her face. Her lips are tight, in an almost frown, and we can see her nostrils flaring slightly.

T'POL

(flat)

I would appreciate you not mentioning this, Commander.

(beat)

To anyone.

Before Tucker can reply, there is a hollow BOOM followed by a shriek. A crewman - the one that was evidently using the fusion welder - stumbles around the corner, one of his arms on fire!

The two commanders react instantly, with Trip darting toward an extinguisher that's hanging on a nearby bulkhead. At the same time, T'Pol rushes toward the injured crewman and begins trying to put the fire out with her uniform jacket. In the seconds before Tucker appears with the extinguisher, we can see that the Vulcan has been burned by the fire.

Trip sprays the crewman's burning sleeve, before quickly turning the extinguisher toward a power junction that is still sparking.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

T'POL

Crewman Wistrom needs immediate medical attention.

Tucker gives her a look, noting that she is cradling he left hand.

TUCKER

So do you.

(off her look)

Get him to Sickbay.

(with a nod to the smoking junction)

I'll take care of this.

The Vulcan hesitates for a BEAT, before nodding and helping the burned crewman to her feet. As the sub-commander and the crewman begin making their way toward the turbolift, we focus on Commander Tucker's expression as he watches them walk away. And, off his concerned look, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

We open with an establishing shot of the two starships as they continue to conduct repairs.

T'POL (VO)

Status report, continued.

We PUSH IN toward *Enterprise*, and...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - SICKBAY

Sub-Commander T'Pol is seated on a biobed, her burned hand outstretched for Doctor Phlox to treat it. Her expression displays no indication of any pain as the doctor applies a salve to the burns.

T'POL (VO)

It was not until this most recent crisis that I fully understood the Vulcan axiom about trust being the most important element for an effective crew.

Over Phlox's shoulder, we can see Crewman Wistrom being attended to by Doctor Lucas.

PHLOX

This should prevent any long-term scarring, Sub-Commander.
(with a smile)

Although I strongly recommend that you get some rest afterward.

T'POL

I have a great deal of work to finish, Doctor.

PHLOX

(smiling)

That work won't get done if you further damage yourself.

The Vulcan gives the Denobulan a flat look.

PHLOX (CONT'D)

And, based on these scans, you don't appear to be taking very good care of yourself.

(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

PHLOX (CONT'D)

(off her look)

It looks like you haven't eaten in some time and your neural readings indicate that you haven't slept either.

T'POL

Vulcans can go several days without sleep, Doctor.

PHLOX

Not when they're fasting at the same time.

T'Pol frowns at that, but doesn't correct him. His smile disappears and he gives her a worried look.

PHLOX

I don't know what is concerning you, Sub-Commander, but if you want to talk...

T'POL

(flat)

No.

(off his look)

Thank you for your concern, Doctor, but I'm fine.

Phlox begins to wrap her hand up with gauze and says nothing for a BEAT.

PHLOX

As you wish, Sub-Commander.

(beat)

If you change your mind, my door is always open.

(off her look)

Keep this hand clean and I want to see you again tomorrow to change the bandages.

He steps back, allowing her to slide off of the biobed. She flexes her left hand slightly before giving him a nod.

T'POL

Thank you, Doctor.

Without further comment, she heads toward the door leading from Sickbay, ignoring the Denobulan's concerned eyes that follow her out.

T'POL (VO)

Trust, after all, is not easily earned, especially when there is a history of deception between the parties involved.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

With that, we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - C-DECK CORRIDOR

A trio of jumpsuit-clad personnel are working on the corridor with fusion welders. All three of them are wearing welding goggles as they work, and, as we PUSH IN, we can recognize Captain Archer among them. PETTY OFFICER ROSTOV and ENSIGN TAYLOR are also present, with the former checking a hand-scanner.

T'POL (VO)

Yet, it is this faith in one's colleagues and their abilities that allows a human crew to work together more efficiently than any Vulcan crew that I have served with.

Into this scene strides Captain Vanik and Sub-Commander T'Lyr. Both of them draw up short at the sight of Captain Archer aiding with repairs, and they exchange a look, complete with raised eyebrows.

ROSTOV

(loud to be heard over the welder)

That should do it, sir!

Archer steps back, raising his welding goggles and giving the petty officer a look. Rostov quickly passes the hand scanner to the captain as Taylor gives the approaching Vulcans a measuring look.

ARCHER

(off the scanner data)

Good.

(beat)

What's next?

ROSTOV

Nothing here, sir. C-Deck looks clear.

(beat)

I'll check with Chief Linquist about where we go next.

The captain nods before turning toward Vanik.

ARCHER

Colonel. Sub-Commander.

VANIK

Captain Archer.

(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

VANIK (CONT'D)

Do you require additional assistance?

Archer gives the Vulcan a confused look at that.

ARCHER

Can't say that we do. As far as I know, we're ahead of schedule.

(beat)

Why do you ask?

VANIK

I am merely...surprised to find you assisting in these sorts of repairs.

ARCHER

(tight)

We all do what we can, Colonel.

Again, the two Vulcans exchange a look.

VANIK

Fascinating.

T'LYR

Captain Archer.

(off his look)

Could you direct me to Sub-Commander T'Pol?

Archer frowns as he gives the sub-commander a look.

ARCHER

She's probably in Astrometrics since Phlox released her from Sickbay.

T'LYR

(with a hint of concern)

The sub-commander was injured?

ARCHER

A minor burn according to Phlox.

T'LYR

I see.

(beat)

Can you direct me to...Astrometrics?

ARCHER

Ensign Taylor can show you the way.

FOUNDATIONS: “Bicinium”

Taylor straightens at his comment, then hefts her toolbox.

T'LYR

That would be agreeable.

The captain gives Taylor a look and she nods.

TAYLOR

This way, ma'am.

They walk from the scene, leaving an uncomfortable-looking Archer with Vanik.

ARCHER

How's your ship, Colonel?

VANIK

Repairs are ongoing. My chief engineer informs me that *Ti'Mur* will be fully operational within the hour.

(beat)

Enterprise appears more resilient than I expected.

Archer gives the Vulcan colonel a look, clearly trying to figure out whether his ship has just been insulted or complimented.

ARCHER

(with pride)

She's a tough ship.

VANIK

She?

ARCHER

Enterprise.

(off Vanik's look)

It's a human tradition, to refer to our ships as “she”. Dates back to our seafaring days.

VANIK

Fascinating.

A BEAT passes and we can see Rostov finish packing up his tools and discreetly departs in the opposite direction.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

(uncomfortable)
I'm...sorry that we put you in this situation, Colonel.

The Vulcan quirks an eyebrow.

ARCHER (CONT'D)

If you hadn't acted, *Enterprise* would have probably been lost.

VANIK

Indeed.
(off Archer's frown)
In the future, Captain, I recommend that you exercise more caution.

Archer glowers at that, and, off his expression, we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - D-DECK CORRIDOR

Now armed with a pair of tools that look suspiciously like wrenches, Commander Tucker is reattaching a power junction to the wall. At his feet, we can see a blackened junction box that is also covered in extinguisher foam.

T'POL (VO)

This unstated element is the cornerstone of human relationships, and is essential for the development of their friendships.

Stepping back, Trip studies his work and consults a hand-scanner. A BEAT passes as he studies the scanner.

REED (OS)

There you are.

Tucker looks up as Major Reed approaches. Surprisingly, the major is in a utility jumpsuit himself and, based on the dampness of his hair and the streaks of sweat on the uniform, has been working.

TUCKER

Yep. Here I am.
(beat)
Something I can do for you, Mal?

REED

Looking for you, actually.
(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

REED (CONT'D)

(with a tight smile)

I've been officially designated to complain about how you're using my SFs.

TUCKER

Excuse me?

Reed smirks.

REED

A couple of my troopers are complaining that you're using us for nothing but grunt work.

TUCKER

(grinning)

Well...you're grunts, right?

(off Reed's look, teasing)

Good for moving heavy stuff and catching bullets.

At that, the major gives the engineer a faux glare.

REED

Playing that game, are you, Commander Deckape?

(off Trip's grin)

Anything I can do to help?

TUCKER

Don't think so.

(as he steps back)

All done here.

(beat)

Don't take it personally, Mal, but your SFs really don't have the training to do anything more than "grunt work".

REED

(frowning)

I beg to differ, sir.

(beat, off Trip's look)

A lot of my troopers have extensive technical training.

Trip considers for a BEAT.

TUCKER

Tell you what. After we get my ship squared away, you and I will sit down and bash out a revised damage control schedule.

(beat)

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER (CONT'D)

(teasing)

Maybe some of your grunts might be useful after all.

(beat, smiling)

You bring the beer.

Reed returns the smile as he turns away.

REED

As long as it's not that weak stuff you Yanks call beer.

And, off Tucker's laugh, we...

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - OUTSIDE THE ASTROMETRICS LAB

Carrying his toolbox, Commander Tucker rounds a corner and walks into the scene. His attention is riveted on a PADD that is in his other hand. The sound of feminine voices speaking in Vulcan causes him to look up.

His POV: the door leading to the astrometrics lab is open and we can see T'Pol facing Sub-Commander T'Lyr. Both women are wearing almost identical expressions of subdued hostility as they face off.

There are no subtitles to translate what their conversation entails but, based on the expressions, it isn't friendly.

Back to scene: Trip hesitates for a BEAT as T'Lyr snaps something to T'Pol, something harsh-sounding. We focus on his expression as he considers. Finally, he takes several rapid steps forward, entering the astrometrics lab. His sudden appearance causes the two Vulcans to stop their conversation.

TUCKER

(to T'Pol)

There you are.

(off her look)

Are you still up for lending me a hand?

The Vulcan raises an eyebrow at the comment even as T'Lyr gives Tucker an openly annoyed look.

T'LYR

The sub-commander and I-

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

T'POL

(interrupting)
Of course, Commander.
(off T'Lyr's sudden look)
I apologize for the delay.

Once more, T'Lyr gives Tucker a look that borders on emotional.

T'LYR

(cold)
May I inquire as to the nature of these repairs?

TUCKER

Sure.

He locks eyes with her and offers the tiniest of smirks. A BEAT passes as she waits for him to comment, and her eyes narrow when he does not. She then gives T'Pol a look, noting the other Vulcan's raised eyebrow.

T'LYR

(to Tucker, annoyed)
What is the nature of these repairs?

TUCKER

(openly smirking)
Classified.

At that, we actually see T'Pol's lips quirk slightly, but neither Tucker nor T'Lyr notice.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

But if you have to know, it's some specialized EV work.

The annoyance on T'Lyr's face barely shifts and she gives T'Pol another look.

T'LYR

(sharp)
Shan-tor s'nash-hali il nar-tor mesh!

T'Pol does not respond as she heads to the doorway, and Trip offers another smirk to T'Lyr.

TUCKER

I'm sure you can find your way out.

On that, he follows T'Pol from the lab, leaving T'Lyr to, once more, give their retreating forms an almost frown.

FOUNDATIONS: “Bicinium”

And, off that, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

FOUNDATIONS: “Bicinium”

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

We open with another establishing shot of the two starships. As we PUSH IN toward *Enterprise*, we can tell that both ships are in much, much better shape than before. Repairs appear to be nearly complete.

T'POL (VO)

Status report, continued.

Instead of transitioning to an interior shot, however, we continue to PUSH IN toward *Enterprise* as a pair of EV-suited figures move along the outer hull.

EXT. SPACE - ON THE HULL OF *ENTERPRISE*

The two figures resolve into Commander Tucker and Sub-Commander T'Pol as they work on what appears to be the communication array. Flashes of light emerge from the transmitter connections as the two commanders apply what appear to be futuristic soldering guns to those connections.

T'POL (VO)

More so than any other member of *Enterprise's* crew, Commander Tucker exemplifies the necessity for personal trust. His loyalty to Captain Archer is without question, but he has demonstrated an unlikely sense of empathy for one who appears so emotionally volatile.

The sub-commander looks up from her work.

T'POL

I do not understand why you required my assistance for this, Commander.

Trip looks up, noting instantly that the sub-commander's expression is tightened in confusion.

TUCKER

Come again?

T'POL

This does not appear to be an urgent task.

The commander grins at his Vulcan counterpart.

TUCKER

It's not.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

The sub-commander digests this reply for a BEAT.

T'POL

(annoyed)
You lied.

TUCKER

I exaggerated.
(beat)
These repairs do need to be completed, but they're not a time critical problem.

The Vulcan frowns as she glances toward the distant *Ti'Mur*.

T'POL

I see.

Concern is on Trip's face.

TUCKER

You looked like you were a couple words away from blowing T'Lyr out the airlock...
(off her startled look)
...so I thought you needed a change of scenery.

He smiles, holding his arms out in an expansive gesture that encompasses the vastness of space. We can see T'Pol raise an eyebrow at the gesture.

T'POL

Your concern is...appreciated.

She returns her attention to the transmitter.

TUCKER

Is this about the letter?

The Vulcan looks up sharply to find Trip studying her.

T'POL

(tight)
Commander, I asked you not to mention that.

Trip leans forward and manipulates something in the transmitter array; instantly, the lights illuminating it from underneath go dark.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

TUCKER

No one can hear us, Sub-Commander. Not now.

He shows her a communication component and she raises an eyebrow.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

So it's just you, me and God.

(beat, smiling)

I think you can trust the two of us.

A BEAT passes as the Vulcan considers.

T'POL

Sub-Commander T'Lyr was reminding me of my duty.

TUCKER

To go home and marry this Koss guy, right?

T'POL

Yes.

Trip frowns. It's pretty obvious that he doesn't quite understand the specifics.

TUCKER

I don't get it. You love the guy, right?

T'POL

Love is an emotion, Commander.

(beat)

And I have never met Koss.

TUCKER

What?

(off her look)

How can you marry him if you've never met him?

T'POL

My mother arranged this union. I had nothing to do with it.

Commander Tucker is aghast. For a BEAT, He stares at T'Pol with wide eyes, disgust on his face, and we can see that he is trying to figure out what to say.

TUCKER

(disgusted)

That's barbaric!

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

T'Pol's expression barely changes but she doesn't appear to completely disagree with Trip.

T'POL

It is the Vulcan way.
(beat)
Vulcans must marry.

The commander digests her comments as she stares off in space for a BEAT. He's obviously struggling to keep himself from saying exactly what he wants to say.

TUCKER

Okay...
(beat)
If you don't love him, can't you marry him and then come back to *Enterprise*?

T'POL

Traditionally, newly married Vulcan couples are expected to reside together for a year.

Trip frowns at that and is silent for a BEAT.

TUCKER

So, what are you going to do?

She gives him a flat look.

T'POL

I am obligated by duty to obey my mother's arrangement.

TUCKER

(angry)
Why?

The Vulcan raises an eyebrow at his tone.

T'POL

It is my duty.

TUCKER

(angry)
It's wrong! Why the hell should you be expected to marry some guy you've never met?
(beat, angry)
And I thought the Orion slavers were bad.

At that, the sub-commander frowns.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

T'POL

(tight)

Criticizing the traditions of my people is unnecessary, Commander.

TUCKER

Not when they don't make any sense!

(beat, hotter)

You're being treated like a piece of property! There's no logic in that!

T'Pol starts to turn away.

T'POL

This is accomplishing nothing.

(beat)

I must inform Captain Archer about my intent to resign. *Ti'Mur* can return me to Vulcan.

TUCKER

T'Pol.

She stops, looks at him.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

What do you want to do?

T'POL

My personal desires are irrelevant. I have a duty to my heritage and my family.

TUCKER

You've also got an obligation to yourself.

(off her look)

Where's the logic in marrying some guy you've never met?

T'POL

You don't understand.

TUCKER

I understand that you don't want to do this.

(off her look)

Seems to me that your heart is already made up.

The Vulcan is silent, her eyes now locked on the distant *Ti'Mur*.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

So the question is, what do you want to do?

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

We PUSH IN and focus on T'Pol's face as she considers his words.

T'POL (VO)

Despite his simplistic human-centric view on matters that he does not fully comprehend, Mister Tucker's comments regarding my situation were remarkably insightful.

CUT TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - CAPTAIN ARCHER'S QUARTERS

As we PAN AROUND the captain's cabin, we can hear the distinct sound of a shower running. The as yet unnamed beagle is curled up in the middle of twin-sized bed and lifts his head in interest at the sound of the shower ending. The dog stares in the direction of the bathroom with ears perked and, a BEAT later, Captain Archer emerges, a towel wrapped around his waist. He is drying his hair with another towel.

T'POL (VO)

And it forced me to acknowledge that he was correct: I did not wish to return to Vulcan aboard the *Ti'Mur*.

The chirp of a door announcer draws his and the dog's attention, and Archer gives the cabin a once-over.

ARCHER

Enter!

The door slides open, revealing Commander Tucker. The engineer takes two steps forward before recoiling with a look of disgust on his face.

TUCKER

God, what's that smell?

Archer gives the dog an irked look as the beagle eyes Trip warily.

ARCHER

Porthos here apparently doesn't like cheese.

TUCKER

Porthos? You named him?

The captain smiles as he sits down on the bed and scratches the beagle's ears.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

It was Hoshi's idea.

(beat, amused)

And it annoyed Lieutenant Picard for some reason so I went with it.

Trip smiles as he hands a clipboard to the captain.

TUCKER

Repairs are mostly complete, Cap'n. We're ready to get underway again.

The captain flips through several pages of the clipboard as he nods.

ARCHER

Good work, Trip.

TUCKER

Don't thank me, sir. Thank my team. They did the work.

Archer smiles as he sets the clipboard aside. He looks up at Trip, noting the distracted air around the commander.

ARCHER

Something else, Trip?

TUCKER

(hesitant)

Have you...

(beat)

Have you talked to T'Pol?

The captain's smile hardens and he glances away.

ARCHER

I haven't had the chance to apologize to her, if that's what you mean.

TUCKER

No, that's not what I'm talking about.

(beat)

She hasn't said anything to you?

ARCHER

About what?

Trip rolls his tongue inside his mouth and looks really uncomfortable.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

Is something going on that I need to know about?

Once more, Trip is silent for a BEAT.

TUCKER

No, sir.

(off Archer's look)

It's personal.

The light of understanding appears to flicker with the captain's eyes.

ARCHER

(knowing)

The letter.

(off Trip's nod)

What was that about anyway?

TUCKER

(frowning)

It's personal, Cap'n.

ARCHER

(almost teasing)

I could make it an order.

From his expression, the commander isn't amused.

TUCKER

Don't.

(off Archer's surprise)

Please, sir. Let it go.

Archer is silent for a BEAT, open curiosity on his face. Finally, he nods.

ARCHER

Okay. But only because you asked me to.

The comm. system prevents Tucker from replying.

SATO (COMM. VOICE)

Bridge to Captain Archer.

The captain stands and quickly approaches the comm. panel, quickly depressing the transmit button.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

ARCHER

This is Archer.

SATO (COMM. VOICE)

Sir, *Ti'Mur* is getting ready to leave. You wanted me to remind you...

ARCHER

Right. Thank you, Ensign. I'll be up in five minutes.

Trip is heading toward the door as Archer releases the button.

TUCKER

I'll wait outside while you get dressed, sir.

Off Archer's nod, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - BRIDGE

The turbolift door opens, allowing Captain Archer and Commander Tucker to emerge onto the bridge. We can't help but to note that Tucker's eyes immediately seek out the science station, and that he smiles slightly at the presence of Sub-Commander T'Pol. The Vulcan gives the two men a look, but returns her attention to her console without comment.

T'POL (VO)

It is a curious thing, allowing one's personal desires to dictate momentous decisions.

Archer strides to the command chair and gives his communications officer a nod. Behind him, Trip slows to a stop beside the science station.

ARCHER

Open a channel to *Ti'Mur*, Ensign.

SATO

Aye, sir.

A BEAT passes as she manipulates her controls.

SATO

Ti'Mur, this is *Enterprise*.

The main viewer suddenly snaps into an image of Colonel Vanik. As before, the Vulcan colonel appears calm and resolute.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

VANIK

Captain Archer.

ARCHER

Colonel.

(beat)

I understand you're heading out.

The colonel lifts an eyebrow at the statement, perhaps puzzling out the human phrasing.

VANIK

Ti'Mur's presence is required elsewhere, Captain.

ARCHER

Duty calls.

(beat, tight)

Once again, thank you for your assistance.

The Vulcan colonel nods slightly.

VANIK

Ti'Mur out.

The transmission blinks out and is replaced with an image of the Vulcan ship. With a flash of light, the cruiser makes the jump to warp and disappears.

T'POL (VO)

But more surprising was the realization that, despite my initial misgivings about this assignment, I am more at home among the humans than I have been with my own people for many years.

Exhaling heavily, Archer lowers himself into his command chair. It appears that the tension that has been riding his shoulders has lifted somewhat.

ARCHER

Let's get out there and see what we can see.

(to T'Pol)

Where does Command want us to go next?

T'POL

A possible trinary system six point three five light years from our present position.

ARCHER

Travis, set a course, warp factor four. Get us out of here.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

MAYWEATHER

Warp four, aye.

The hum of *Enterprise's* engines spikes. A BEAT later, Sub-Commander T'Pol straightens at her station.

T'POL

Captain.

(off his look)

With your permission, I would like to return to Astrometrics to begin analysis of the data we acquired.

ARCHER

Granted.

(to Trip, teasing)

Get off my bridge, Commander.

(off Tucker's look)

Go get some sleep.

Trip grins as he starts toward the turbolift.

TUCKER

(mocking)

Aye, aye, Cap'n.

We follow the two commanders into...

INT. *ENTERPRISE* - TURBOLIFT

The door closes on them and Trip immediately glances to his Vulcan colleague.

TUCKER

You stayed.

T'POL

(wry)

Obviously.

TUCKER

Well, I'm glad.

(off her look)

It just wouldn't be the same without you.

We focus on T'Pol's expression as she digests this comment, clearly trying to determine if he has just insulted her or not. From the glint in his eyes, Tucker is quite aware of her dilemma over his words.

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

T'POL

I shall endeavor to not be insulted by that comment, Commander.

The lift begins to slow.

TUCKER

Trip.

(off her look)

My friends call me Trip.

The door slides open and the sub-commander steps through it, pausing only long enough to reply.

T'POL

(wry)

I'll try to keep that in mind.

We focus on Trip's sudden grin at her words before the lift door slides shut on him. On that, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VULCAN AMBASSADORIAL BUILDING

We're once more in the ambassadorial office as he looks out over the city. In the distance, it appears that the sun is rising, an indication that he has been standing here all night. Atop the desk is T'Pol's report, removed from the package and placed within a playback machine.

AMBASSADOR SOVAL stands at the window, facing the city. Once more, his hands are clasped behind his back. During this final monologue from the playback machine, the ambassador does not move.

T'POL (VO)

I accepted this assignment because it was my duty to obey. Unexpectedly, I find myself eager to venture into the unknown.

(beat, amused)

Perhaps the enthusiasm of my human colleagues is contagious.

(beat, somber)

Or perhaps I am simply learning to live again.

(beat)

Status report ends.

As the playback machine chirps and ends, we focus on Soval's face. He grunts slightly as his lips tighten. It is impossible to determine if he is pleased or upset.

FOUNDATIONS: “Bicinium”

And, off that, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

FOUNDATIONS: "Bicinium"

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