

Star Beagle Adventures Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

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Star Beagle Adventures Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

by [LordRobertBruceScott](#)

Notes

Throughout this episode, snippets of lyrics are quoted. These are from the song, "Heart of the Sunrise" by Jon Anderson, Chris Squire, and Bill Bruford. The song first appeared as track 9 on FRAGILE (1971, Atlantic Records), the fourth album by the progressive rock band, YES.

SBA Episode 11, Scene 1: The Coming Darkness

Chapter Summary

Sharp distance...
How can the wind with its arms all around me?



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 1: The Coming Darkness

11.1 The Coming Darkness

“No! Rhonda! Stop!! Mev!!”

Only one voice had the power to stop Captain Rhonda Carter in her tracks, particularly when her blood was up. Until this moment, she had not realized anyone had such power over her. But over the past several months, her admiration for and friendship with the ancient klingon general had only grown.

She turned on General Krank in a rage, his bat’leth, which she had swiped from the scabbard on his back, raised high above her head in preparation for attack. The weapon was almost as big as she was, but Krank had no doubt that it was more dangerous in her hands than in the hands of the mightiest of klingon warriors. The small, slight, blue-haired captain of the U.S.S. Escort emitted a roar of anger and frustration. Shaking the purloined klingon sword over her head in rage. She could not have been more klingon if her skull had ridges.

“No!” General Krank continued. “It would not be honorable! This is not your way!”

“These things controlled us! They used us! Used me!! I have had enough of weird, alien creatures taking control of my crew!” Rhonda Carter’s face was bright pink with rage. “Taking control of me!”

“You cannot exact your vengeance this way!” Krank continued. “A warrior does not attack from behind. Can’t you see that they are already engaged in combat with another enemy?”

General Krank, Captain Rhonda Carter and nine of the vaguely ant-like holy landers were standing on a cliff on an alien planet, looking out over a dark and violent sea. The sky was dark, but the top of the cliff and the cliff face were illuminated by a weird, ghostly light coming from what appeared to be gigantic, tree-sized, bioluminescent mushrooms.

The nine holy warriors had formed a semi-circle, each standing with two of their arms and all four legs firmly planted on the ground. Their stingers, located at the back of their abdomens, were firmly planted in the ground. The ghostly light from the glowing mushrooms pulsed, cycling from white to amber to green and back.

The holy landers turned their faces to the sky, their eyes fixed, the third, compound eye in the middle of their foreheads reflecting the pulsing light so brightly that they seemed to glow from within. Their three antennae, two at the front of their heads and the third coming up from the back, erect, rigid, vibrating tightly.

“Engaged in combat with what? Engaged how?” Carter asked.

In response, Krank turned and pointed to the darkened sky over the violent waves.

A chill ran up Rhonda Carter’s spine as she realized that within the darkness was a form of impenetrable darkness. There was something primal about it. A fear that was written so deep into her DNA that she had no hope of defining it. It was the monster in the closet. It was the thing hiding under the bed. And it left those nascent horrors only barely awakened. Those things were its progeny. Its servants. Its food.

And in some bizarre way, nine strange, vaguely ant-like aliens had engaged it in battle.



SBA Episode 11, Scene 2: Galaxy in a Jar

Chapter Summary

Lose one on to the heart of the sunrise



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 2: Galaxy in a Jar

11.2

Galaxy in a Jar

“That is the second holy lander ship we’ve seen follow the Escort into the vortex.”

Commander Jason Bates had served as Commodore Yui Song’s first officer for the past 8 years. Straight through the Dominion War. They weren’t friends or close in any way, unlike most top command teams. But they knew each others’ strengths and abilities and were comfortable with each other.

Commodore Yui was well aware that Bates was prodding her. He had a number of limitations that were not optimal for an executive officer. An extreme introvert, he rarely spent time with the crew and was almost never seen outside of working hours. Nor was he a particularly hard worker. But he had no lack of courage and was a reliable commander in a fight. Bates wanted the Mako to follow the U.S.S. Escort and the holy landers into an unpredictable vortex.

Yui Song wanted to go to support Escort’s crew as well. But she was not about to until she had evidence she could bring her own crew back out again.

“Any telemetry from our probes?”

“No, Commodore,” Bates replied. “We lost all contact with each probe the moment they entered the vortex...”

The entire bridge crew sat staring uncomfortably at the vortex on the screen. It was hard to look at. It looked like an entire galaxy in a jar and on speed. It was evolving the way galaxies evolve... But at a breakneck rate. Miniature solar systems came to light, expanded, exploded and evaporated in a matter of minutes.

Then, even more jarringly, it would jolt to a stop and devolve - or evolve - in reverse...

A bolian officer, standing at the tactical communication station at the rear of the bridge, reported, “Bluebird is hailing, Commodore.”

“Put them through, Ensign Broras,” Yui Song ordered, without looking back.

The U.S.S. Mako’s South African 4th officer was displayed on the viewer: “Mako, this is U.S.S. Bluebird, Gabisile Natal commanding.”

“Go ahead, Gabby,” Yui responded.

“Sir, we’re picking up an escape pod from one of those holy lander destroyers,” Lt. Cmdr Natal reported. “It seems to have ejected while cloaked and remained under cloak until their ships went into the vortex. Reading one life sign - a purple. She appears to be unconscious. We’re not reading any weapons or explosives. Life support is minimal. I’m requesting permission to dock and retrieve.”

Yui Song turned to her first officer. “Commander, your recommendation?”

Jason Bates took a breath. “Beam the survivor into medical stasis and evaluate. Do not dock with the unit. Use a robot to open the pod remotely and explore it to determine potential threat. Once verified safe, grapple, retrieve and dissect so we understand their technology

better.”

Yui smiled. “You heard the commander, Lieutenant Commander. So ordered. Jason, reach out to Lucian to beam our new guest over and ask Pel to report to Medical to evaluate and give us recommendations for first contact. Mako out.”

“Aye sir,” Lt. Cmdr. Natal replied. “Bluebird out.”

As Commander Bates was relaying the commodore’s orders, the bolian ensign at communications spoke up again: “Now being hailed by the U.S.S. Beagle. They are on approach.”

“Put them through, Ensign,” Commodore Yui ordered.

“Mako, this is the U.S.S. Beagle, Skip Howard commanding.” Captain Howard was lounging on the far-too-regal appearing command throne on the vulcan-built Beagle’s bridge. Turquoise nail polish and matching eye shadow, Yui observed. Suggesting the Beagle’s captain was in a curious mood and did not want to appear aggressive at this moment.

“Beagle, this is U.S.S. Mako, Yui Song commanding. Glad to see you have resolved your engine imbalance. How is Gregg?”

Skip Howard smiled: “He took the Puppy on a fishing trip. They should be along in about 17 hours. Apparently he has some story about a big one that got away...”

SBA Episode 11, Scene 3: A Crowded Room

Chapter Summary

Lost in their eyes as you hurry by...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 3: A Crowded Room

11.3 A Crowded Room

A female purple sat on the edge of a biobed in the U.S.S. Mako's medical bay. She had not answered repeated questions, even though the universal translators were clearly programmed with her language. Readings from the biobed monitors indicated that her brain was processing and understanding the questions.

But from her thousand-yard stare, it seemed, at the moment, she just didn't have any answers. No answer to who she was, where she was from, or how or why she had ended up occupying an escape pod that had been rigged with a primitive, but, for the craft it had to cover, effective cloaking device. From the examination of that pod, it was evident she had spent well over a week in it, occasionally breaching it to manually exchange the atmosphere instead of activating the pod's life support system.

Pel and Dr. Moorman had stopped asking her questions and were engaged in conversation as they both observed the purple-furred alien. Her skin was a purple so dark that it generally registered as black.

Lucian Moorman was an unusually handsome, middle-aged man with thick, dark hair, dark skin and unusually dark eyes. A native of Grenada on the southern tip of Spain, he was of such mixed heritage it was impossible to place him as African, European, or Middle Eastern - he was the optimal blend of all three. Three solid pips on his blue uniform, indicated that he carried the rank of commander.

Pel had long befriended the U.S.S. Mako's chief medical officer. He was quiet, thoughtful and slow to form conclusions.

"I don't think 2 weeks surviving in an escape pod did that to her," Pel opined.

"I have learned a lot about their physiology over the past month," said Dr. Lucian Moorman. "But I don't know enough about the psychology of their species to rule that out."

Pel nodded her head at that. "Perhaps, but I'm thinking it's whatever drove her into that pod..."

Dr. Moorman nodded. "Perhaps. I don't mind saying that I am very far out of my depth here. This is a job for a psychiatrist and this ship does not have one. Dr. Uto and his team will be better prepared to help her. Betazoid medical training does not separate out psychiatry and psychology as separate disciplines. The health of the mind is blended into every health system and discipline. More than occasionally, I envy them that training."

"Have you thought about availing yourself of it?" Pel asked.

"I read their papers," Moorman responded. "But I don't qualify for their training programs. I'm not telepathic. I'm stuck in here." He rapped his head lightly with his knuckles.

It was at this moment that Dr. Tentis Uto walked in. Lucian Moorman and Pel both started laughing. "You chose just the moment to walk in. You must have heard us..."

The bald betazoid doctor managed a look of complete innocence. "Were you talking about me? I've been practicing inner silence. Premiere T'Eln is helping me get off the sog."

Uto dragged up a chair and sat next to Pel, looking at the female purple sitting on the edge of a biobed. She had not moved and her focus had

not changed.

“Has she said anything? Do you have any idea who she is?” Uto asked.

Both Moorman and Pel shook their heads. A glass with traces of water sat next to a small pile of what appeared to be crackers and meat cubes on a table next to the bed. “I got her to drink a glass of water when she first sat up, but she hasn’t eaten anything,” Moorman said. “She hasn’t said anything, although the biobed readouts indicate she is successfully processing our speech. She understands what we’re saying.”

Uto turned his large, dark eyes on the small, purple-furred patient. “Hello. I am Doctor Tentis Uto. I am not going to reach into your mind. I’m just listening to your surface thoughts. I have to actively shut them out when I don’t want to hear them. Can you tell me who you are?”

For a brief moment, the small, black-skinned alien made eye contact with the U.S.S. Beagle’s chief medical officer, then returned to staring into the distance.

Uto’s eyebrows went up and his eyes widened. He turned to his colleague and to the minuscule ferengi who had become so widely trusted within the task force.

“Wow are there a lot of people in there...”

SBA Episode 11, Scene 4: Gateway

Chapter Summary

Love comes to you and you follow...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 4: Gateway

Love comes to you and you follow...

11.4 Gateway

“We’re not picking up any telemetry from Whisky 4 either.”

Captain Skip Howard was presiding over the U.S.S. Beagle’s faculty in the Beagle’s conference room. Commodore Yui Song and Commander Jason Bates were participating from the U.S.S. Mako’s bridge. Lt. Commander Gabisile Natal was participating from the bridge of the U.S.S. Bluebird. Dr. Tentis Uto, Dr. Lucian Moorman and Pel were participating from the U.S.S. Mako’s medical conference room.

“My decision remains unchanged,” said Commodore Yui. “If telemetry can’t get back out of that galaxy in a jar, our ships can’t get back out either. We don’t go until we get a signal back.”

Lt. Cmdr. Natal asked the question on everyone’s mind. “Are we giving up on the Escort, then?”

“We may be able to help them from here,” offered Commander Dutch Holland, the Beagle’s masked engineering director.

Everyone focused on the masked luchador. Legitimately focused on him instead of stealing glimpses, as people often did with someone so unusual sharing their space...

Holland, in turn, turned toward the ancient director of the Beagle’s astrophysics and stellar cartography department, T’Eln, who, in turn, gestured toward her protege, Falok, the astrophysics team leader.

“Let’s assume, for the sake of understanding, that the point of view from which we are viewing the Jar Galaxy, is the gateway between that reality and ours,” said Falok. “We do not have evidence of this, but I would advocate for a test and, in advance of that test, to operate under the assumption that the way in is also the way out.”

“That seems intuitive enough,” Yui Song responded.

“Sufficiently intuitive that I would recommend we broadcast a strong tracking signal directly into that gateway until we can complete construction of a beacon buoy to sit on this side of the gateway and broadcast that signal,” opined Dutch Holland. “As powerful a beacon as we are able to build.”

Falok brought up a holographic model of the Jar Galaxy, spinning, evolving and devolving in its jar. “The gateway is, apparently, stable on our side. But looking through that keyhole, from the perspective of the Jar Galaxy, that gateway is moving at an indeterminate speed with relation to that galaxy. If that is the case, Escort, and, for that matter, our probes, have no hope of finding the gateway. But if we can push a really strong tracking beacon through, they can track it and predict when it will be close enough to them and plan to intersect its course.”

The top two officers for the United States Marines contingent for the task force had both remained silent until this point. Both women took a breath as if to speak. Captain Osollaa sh’Zhiathis gestured to her superior officer. Major Janet Carter had the attention of all participants:

“The drawback to this plan is the potential that someone else will notice. So we need to prepare for whatever might respond to our beacon and come out of that jar. It might not be friendly...”

SBA Episode 11, Scene 5: Escort's Wake

Chapter Summary

Long last treatment of the telling that relates to all the words sung...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 5: Escort's Wake

11.5

Escort's Wake

Different subcommittees were reviewing the sensor readings from the U.S.S. Mako of the U.S.S. Escort entering the Jar Galaxy. Neither the Mako nor any of its probes had been close enough for optical telemetry - all the readings were from subspace sensors marking the warp wake of Escort through subspace.

Lt. Cmdr. Gregg Clark, the U.S.S. Mako's science officer, joined the U.S.S. Beagle's Astrophysics and Stellar Cartography department, along with Beagle's Dean of Ship, Sakura Nakamura Holland. The two recuperating escapees of the U.S.S. Escort, chief engineer Lt. Ki Kresid and Lt. Cmdr. Vranran zh'Kathar, were also present.

"What I want to know is how Escort made it this far without Mako catching up," said the Beagle's Dean of Ship. "The Escort class ships are tough fighters, but they're not exceptionally fast. Even the newest ones flank out at about warp 8.3. Mako was traveling 9.87 at flank speed. Escort would have to have sustained at minimum warp 9.2 to arrive at the time recorded."

The Escort's normally reticent roylan chief engineer, Lt. Ki Kresid, spoke up. "There were two holy warriors on board. They were singing separate songs. One of them was singing to the crew. The other was singing to the ship. Most of the crew couldn't hear them. I could, and it was interfering with my balance. I knew there was no way for me to shut them up and my condition was getting worse. There were two vulcans and one andorian on board. I'm not sure if the vulcans would be affected by the singing, but I knew it had to be poison for Vranran."

"And you weren't able to rescue the vulcans..." Sakura prodded.

"I have been reviewing the readings Beagle took of the songs of the holy warriors," Kresid continued. "They can only target one species at a time, so the one singing for the crew had modulated his song to affect humans. Vulcans would be mildly irritated, but both the vulcans aboard Escort have human heritage. Our first officer is bolian. Well... biology is not my speciality."

"Engineering is," opined Lt. Cmdr. Vranran zh'Kathar. "Although I'm grateful you knew enough about exobiology to get me off that ship. I was completely incapacitated within minutes of the holy warriors setting foot on Escort."

"The one singing to the engines was strengthening the structural integrity fields, which impacts both the ship's ability to stand up to high warp travel and the combustion chamber's ability to produce power. Apparently it was also shaping the warp envelope by affecting the nacelles," Kresid continued. "I'm working on a paper. If we could create these vibrations within the necessary areas without affecting other systems, we could dramatically improve performance across the board for all Star Fleet vessels..."

"I would be happy to forward such a paper to Professor Crumar at the Daystrom Institute," Sakura said.

"Is there any hope of realizing such improvements with this task force?" asked zh'Kathar, only to see a room full of serious vulcans, humans and her own roylan chief engineer shaking their heads.

"Any such attempt would be unwise," intoned Falok, the astrophysics team leader.

"Not without research, scheduled trials, and layers upon layers of peer review," added Lt. Cmdr. Gregg Clark, the Mako's science officer.

Dean Sakura Nakamura Holland lightly tapped the table with an immaculately manicured fingernail, gathering everyone's attention. "Escort would never have made it this far at flank speed. Mako is still undergoing repairs to their warp core from trying to catch them." She turned her

attention back to the U.S.S. Escort's diminutive roylan chief engineer. "Lieutenant Kresid, based on what you have learned so far about the holy warrior's impact on Escort's systems, what would you estimate the condition of Escort's warp core and structural integrity after running so much above their engineering specifications?"

Lt. Kresid considered for a moment. "They will be low on deuterium. Escort's Bussard collectors are not very efficient. But considering the holy warrior's ability to sustain structural integrity, the ship should take minimal damage from traveling at high warp, even so far above its rating."

Sakura was taken aback. "Based on what we learned from the wrecked holy warrior ship, we had estimated its flank speed to be no more than warp 4.5. We may need to significantly revise that upward based on their ability to affect warp fields with their singing."

"And their shields and structural integrity," Lt. Cmdr Clark observed.

"Um, okay... So if their singing can juice up their warp engines, structural integrity and shields, what about their weapons?" asked Lt. Cmdr. zh'Kathar.

SBA Episode 11, Scene 6:String of Fire

Chapter Summary

Dreamer easy in the chair that really fits you...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 6: String of Fire

Dreamer easy in the chair that really fits you...

11.6 String of Fire

Two giant red suns were eating each other, connected by an arching string of fire. The shortest distance between two points would be a straight line, but in the massive gravity field of two suns that were sharing their coronas across a distance of nearly a million kilometers, a straight line was anything but straight when observed from a distance. That straight line was an arch.

The arch was surprisingly stable due to the rotation of the suns as they danced around each other, the congress of their union itself so massive that space and time curved around the fiery chain as well. The explosive consummation of their union was swiftly approaching - in a few hundred short years these supergiants would collide, explode, implode and leave in their wake a massive bubble of destruction, some of it escaping the massive gravity field, the rest slowly falling back into a newly formed black hole.

There really was no such thing as a “Goldilocks Zone” in orbit of these waltzing giant balls of superhot exploding and imploding nuclei. But a single planet had an extremely elliptical orbit. It would spend nearly a hundred years at a distance that left its massive oceans frozen solid except during its perihelion.

During that relatively brief period, about 8 Earth days, the oceans would thaw, life, in the form of strange, bioluminescent mushrooms, would spring forth and grow to enormous size before emitting spores, then the oceans would start to boil, the heat killing everything but the spores, and the newly lifeless oceans would cool and freeze over. Snowfall would cover the ground and envelope the spores, which would begin their long wait for the chance to explode anew into brief, but amazingly colorful life.

The U.S.S. Escort and two holy lander ships used extremely elliptical orbits to shelter in the shadow of this planet, only briefly exposing their hulls to the massive solar wind from the twin suns. Viewed from this particular location, the string of fire connecting the two giant suns seemed to form a “V” under the twin globes, their relative positions creating the illusion of a massive valentine rising over the planet.

Escort’s bolian first officer, Lt. Commander Zizira Gross, contemplated this from the captain’s chair. Captain Rhonda Carter and General Krank had beamed down to the surface over her objections, to stand with their strange new allies. The Escort’s captain had agreed to use the ship’s transporters to transport a total of nine holy warriors to the surface. She and Krank were determined to see this through and while Carter could be influenced, she could not be controlled.

Gross understood what was happening here better than anyone else. She had explained it to Carter and to Krank. She had explained it to Escort’s crew. She did not understand why not even the vulcans aboard could hear the lyrics. She was the only one who could.

Nine was the magic number. Nine voices. No more. No fewer. Nine.

On the planet below, the prisoner was awakening. No one knew if it could become strong enough during the planet’s brief thaw to summon all of its strength and terrible intelligence. Strong enough to escape the planet and contaminate other worlds - to begin again its long reign of terror...

Lt. Cmdr. Gross sat in the captain’s chair, ruminating on this long, epic enmity between the holy warriors and the enemy they simply referred to as the darkness. No one remembered how long ago the dark one had been imprisoned on this planet and for all that time, the holy warriors had been tasked to keep it there. The stories of the enemy’s depredations had faded into legend, into myth, until all that was left was a genetic

memory.

Escort had helped this time, bringing the holy warriors to this place and using the transporter to ensure their safe and immediate passage to the surface. Gross and her bridge crew sat in comfortable assurance of the rightness of their cause.

And just to the right of the captain's chair stood a holy warrior...

Singing.

SBA Episode 11, Scene 7: The Dreamer

Chapter Summary

Lost on a wave that you're dreaming...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 7: The Dreamer

11.7

The Dreamer

“Am I a prisoner?”

The term was medical confinement under psychological advice. Meaning that while the patient needed medical and/or psychological assistance, her reactions and attitude from one minute to the next were unpredictable and she might at any moment and without warning become a danger to herself or to others.

While she was a small, female purple, not much larger than a terrestrial gibbon (and rather similar in build and physical ability), Dr. Uto’s evaluation of the person now identifying herself as Shadow, made it clear that of the many personalities resident inside this creature, Shadow was by far the most dangerous. A skilled assassin who had killed at least a dozen of her own kind and at least one holy warrior in order to protect herself and to escape.

“These people are concerned that you might hurt yourself. Or one of them,” Pel responded

Pel had spent several hours talking to Shadow and had met some of her other personalities. Shadow acted as a control and as she became increasingly confident that she was safe and would not be returned to her home planet, she had allowed first the writer and social critic, Ben Urri Urri, then the crippled loadmaster, Spun Verz Nasqua, then at last and only briefly, the disgraced gathering virgin, servant to the holy ones, Sheeux Vosq Nala, to emerge for a conversation with Pel.

But the appearance of these personalities was closely controlled and timed by Shadow, the only one who seemed aware of the existence of all the others. Each of the others, introduced to the new situation, panicked immediately and had to be reassured by Pel that they were safe.

“I will not be kept prisoner,” Shadow replied. “I’ve never seen anything like the field around my bed, but I won’t be kept prisoner.”

“You are an escaped prisoner, of a sort. At least some of your personalities...” Pel trailed off in mild confusion.

“I killed to escape. They would have killed me. Were going to kill me that very night,” Shadow mused.

Pel found herself quite disturbed by Shadow’s implied threat. She did not know the purple’s capabilities, but other creatures had the ability to escape from force fields in various ways.

“You were a religious prisoner,” said Pel. “You could ask these people for asylum. If you appear stable... I mean, it seems like you’re in control of your various personalities... You should be able to negotiate some sort of living arrangement...” Pel paused again. Shadow was watching her intently.

“Well,” Pel started again... “That’s what I did. It’s been complicated. Unsettling. I’m not one of these people. But they have kind of... Well... Sort of adopted me.”

“What would I have that I could negotiate with?” asked Shadow.

“Information,” Pel replied. “They have been reading the collected works of Ben Urri Urri. I don’t think it has registered with them that Ben Urri Urri is right here with them now. There is so much context that Urri assumed his readers understood that these people don’t understand. And they need that information now. They’ve lost an entire starship and crew. You could really help them... Well... you might be able to help them out a lot...”

SBA Episode 11, Scene 8: Crouching Tiger

Chapter Summary

Counting the broken ties, they decide...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 8: Crouching Tiger

11.8

Crouching Tiger

“Escort, this is Captain Carter. Please beam me and General Krank up immediately.”

“This is the U.S.S. Escort, Zizira Gross commanding. Rhonda, you told me they wanted you down there with them. You and the general.”

Captain Rhonda Carter was even more exasperated than she had been when Krank had required her to return his bat’leth an hour earlier. They had observed the holy warriors and the occasionally visible foe in the sky the warriors were doing battle with, apparently by singing at it.

Carter and Krank had discussed their options.

And had agreed to simply leave. This wasn’t their fight.

But they would have to take Escort back, eject the two holy warriors still on the ship, and deal with Carter’s befuddled crew. Including her stiff-necked, stick-in-the-mud, bolian first officer. Most of the time, Lt. Cmdr. Gross’ adherence to protocol was a useful check on Carter’s cavalier command style.

But with Gross under the control of a holy warrior, simply getting back to Escort and taking control would be a challenge. Especially considering that the moment Rhonda and Krank were aboard, they would hear the holy warrior’s song and fall back under their spell.

“They want us up there, now,” Carter replied. “They need orbital support and have given me instructions.”

“Then pass the instructions along to me,” Gross replied.

“Lieutenant Commander Gross, this information is too sensitive to relay electronically,” Carter responded. “I am giving you a direct order. You must bring me and General Krank aboard, or all the efforts of our allies down here will be in vain! Do it now!”

Carter could only hope that her command tone was strong enough to cut through the buzz of the holy warrior aboard. It would have no reason to reject her re-boarding, considering that the moment she and Krank arrived, they would fall under its control.

It was time to take care of that now.

Krank had been practicing with a rock while she registered his force with her tricorder. He had to commit two different amounts of force to muscle memory.

“I hope to crap this works...” Carter muttered as Krank took his stance in front of her. The elderly klingon cupped his hands, then clapped them to her ears with tremendous, stunning force, bursting her eardrums and deafening her.

Without a second’s hesitation, he did the same to himself with far greater force.

Carter had braced herself against the shock and the pain. Even so, they threatened to overwhelm her. She never heard the whine of the

transporter. But she could feel it...

Even as Carter and Krank resolved onto the transporter pad, Krank was in motion, leaping across the room and shattering Transporter Chief Eva Mendez's jaw with a right hook. The tiny El Salvadoran woman collapsed to the deck, unconscious, her nervous system incapable of handling the sudden shock of pain.

Carter had considered the probability that she and Krank might have to incapacitate her crew. Chief Mendez was alive, but along with the shattered jaw, she probably had suffered life-threatening spinal damage. Carter could only hope her crew member would survive. There was no time for first aid.

Carter quickly reprogrammed the transporter, locked on to the two holy warriors, one on the bridge and one in engineering, and beamed them to the planet's surface. She entered a series of codes that locked down nearly every compartment and locked off the bridge controls, and brought up Escort's shields.

There were three engineers in Engineering. Carter waited until Krank took his place in the door, then beamed the three engineers into the transporter room and locked off the transporter. While the engineers were trying to figure out what had happened to them, Carter and Krank made good their escape.

Internal communications were down. Nearly every compartment was locked. Carter and Krank had been beamed into Transporter Room 1, which was closer to the bridge than TR2. As the ship's captain and the ancient klingon general made their way to Engineering, bulkheads slammed shut behind them. Force fields kicked into place.

On entering Engineering, Rhonda Carter now used her command codes to lock down the entire ship. Escort's shields were up - Carter had enacted that from the transporter room.

Now in Engineering, she enacted a program that only she had been aware of and took full control of the ship.

Escort leapt to warp and fled the system.

SBA Episode 11, Scene 9: Shadow Reflections

Chapter Summary

Straight light searching all the meanings of the song...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 9: Shadow Reflection

11.9 Shadow Reflection

Under Pel's guidance, Shadow had gradually been given increasing freedom of movement within the U.S.S. Mako, although usually accompanied by Pel. Pel had also moved Shadow into her own quarters. Pel was small, even for a ferengi female. Shadow was only slightly larger. She, too, was rather small for a female of her kind. Her species seemed to have no single name for themselves, but always referred to their largely divided, but still genetically unified species as the blue or the purple, depending on the color of their fur.

During these few weeks, while the U.S.S. Mako and the U.S.S. Beagle remained becalmed, station keeping just outside the entrance to the Jar Galaxy, into which the U.S.S. Escort had plunged, there to be followed by two holy warrior scarab-like destroyers, Commodore Yui and the rest of the task force had come to appreciate the wealth of knowledge Shadow brought.

They had been studying the books of Ben Urri Urri, which included superb, highly detailed bibliographies. But the task force did not have access to any of those books and other resources. So there was a tremendous amount of information they needed that only Shadow, in the person of Ben Urri Urri, could provide.

Ben Urri Urri was a spellbinding orator. Occasionally, the demure and charming Sheeux Vosq Nala would provide some direct evidence. She turned out to be nearly as well educated as her bombastic male counter-part. But whenever the storytelling was done for the day or for the moment, the animation of these powerful, charismatic personalities would fade from the face of the small purple, to be replaced by the quiet, ever watchful Shadow.

It might have been Pel's imagination, but it seemed to her that even the unflappable, ancient, former premiere of the Vulcan Science Academy, T'Eln, found the transformation back to Shadow and Shadow's quiet, almost predatory watchfulness, unsettling.

In the darkness of her quarters, Pel tossed and turned, gradually waking from a quite disturbing nightmare to a far more creepy waking reality. It was dark, but her quarters were dimly lit by both the stars and, somewhat more brightly, by the running lights of the Mako's nacelles, visible through the aft windows of her quarters. This dim lighting glittered off the eyes of a creature perched on a chair near her bed.

It took Pel a moment to realize she actually was wide awake and another to put down the surge of terror looking into the eyes of some sort of nocturnal predator that had been watching her while she slept.

"Shadow?" Pel had a hard time keeping the terror out of her voice.

"Yes, Pel?" responded the purple, her white teeth briefly visible in the dim light coming from the windows.

"Is something wrong?"

"No."

Pel was trying with great difficulty to put down the primal fear that was threatening to overwhelm her. "Why are you watching me while I sleep?"

Shadow's voice was quiet, calm, almost soothing. Almost too soothing. "You watched me while I slept."

Pel couldn't argue with that logic, no matter how much she didn't like being watched in her own sleep. She mulled over the time she had spent in the Mako's infirmary, observing the sleeping purple. In those first days, Shadow had spent most of her time asleep. Often clearly gripped by some powerful nightmare. Pel had refrained from waking Shadow at those times at the urging of Dr. Uto, who believed that dreaming, including experiencing nightmares, was necessary, particularly for people recovering from deep trauma.

"I was curious about you. And I was a little worried. It seemed like you were so..." Pel sat up, wrapping her sheets about her. "Computer, slight increase in illumination. Half night-time standard." This brought the lights up just enough that Pel could see Shadow's body, perched on all fours on the chair. It was the first time she had observed the purple without clothing. Somehow the purple fur made her look like a wild animal. There was no hint of self-consciousness in her behavior.

"It seemed like I was so, what?" Shadow asked. She appeared calm, curious, thoughtful. A cool intellectualism that contrasted weirdly with her alien posture and the sense she projected of a powerful, wild animal.

"So... lost," Pel responded. "I have recently found myself having to completely re-invent myself. Trying to figure out who I am. Who I really am. I was so lost. But nowhere near as lost as you were."

"It is very unusual to feel that someone actually cares about me," Shadow replied. "I was created for a purpose. To infiltrate the holy compound under deep cover and expose their secrets. At some point I realized that my creators never intended for me to escape and survive, even though they gave me the abilities to do so. They did that to make sure they could retrieve secrets from me if I did get out."

Somehow, the purple seemed to settle down, changing to a more relaxed posture. "They were afraid of me. I knew they felt I had served my purpose. There is no place for me in that world."

Pel felt a lot of the tension in her back and shoulders gradually easing. "Were you standing watch over me?"

"Standing watch?"

"Like a guardian..."

Shadow took a moment. "I don't know. I just have so many thoughts. Trying to figure out who I really am. I want to know that I can do what you did. I..." The purple alien paused, building the courage to be vulnerable. "I want to be accepted by these people. Like you have been."

Pel moved over. "These beds are very large. It makes them a little difficult to sleep in," she said. "Would you feel more calm sleeping here with me?"

The sight of Shadow stepping off of the chair and unfolding her body was comforting to Pel. Shadow was odd, wild and furry. But she was also a biped and seeing her walk as one made Pel feel more comfortable about her. She laid down, facing Pel. Then gradually rolled over and slid backward. Pel tentatively wrapped an arm around the strange alien. Laid her head against the soft fur of Shadow's back. A contact that was oddly comforting to both of them.

It was the deepest either of them had slept in a very long time.

SBA Episode 11, Scene 10: The Hearing



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: [Heart of the Sunrise](#)

Scene 10: [The Hearing](#)

11.10 [The Hearing](#)

Captain Rhonda Carter had held it together for nearly 20 minutes, but Krank could tell the concussion that came with the ear-clap that had deafened her was catching up with her. They were communicating through the control panel.

Rhonda was aware she was losing it and transferred her command codes to Krank. She sagged into a chair. Krank took to occasionally tugging her hair to keep her conscious. Eventually, he began releasing codes to allow the crew to move around the Escort. They would be needed and Rhonda's experience was that the spell of the song of the holy warriors wore off after 10 minutes.

He kept the bridge, the forward torpedo loading room, and one of the cabins locked off because he wasn't certain vulcans or the ship's bolian first officer would recover so quickly. Fortunately, the medical technician who served as the ship's medical officer was human, Chief Kara Garrity from Trantor, the capital of the artificial planet, Cun Ling. Krank dispatched her first to look after Transporter Chief Eva Mendez, whose jaw he had deliberately shattered, then to look after Captain Carter, whose eardrums he had deliberately burst.

Not that he could hear anything either - he had burst his own eardrums to protect himself from the song of the holy warrior. A song that he was ashamed that he, too, had succumbed to.

Chief Garrity was clearly afraid of Krank. She thought she had gotten to know the ancient klingon. She knew klingons were capable of tremendous violence, but she never imagined her crew would be the targets of it. Even with Krank's explanation - Mendez had been under the spell of the holy warrior and had to be rendered unconscious. Krank had done that efficiently and effectively. He had deafened Carter and himself to protect them from that same song.

"Typical klingon..." Garrity mused nervously. "Efficient, but brutal."

"Most klingons see that as a point of pride," Krank responded. "I do regret hurting Chief Mendez. There are not many ways to immediately and reliably render a human unconscious that are not life threatening. Can you repair her jaw?"

Garrity jumped. "I thought you were deaf..."

"I read lips," Krank replied. "I collect useful skills. How is Rhonda?"

"I have the captain stabilized," said Garrity. "I'll do what I can, but I'm no doctor and we don't have much of an infirmary. As for Eva, I'll keep her unconscious while I'm knitting her bones. It's going to be a delicate operation. You didn't leave me much to work with. When do you plan to release our bridge crew? And our vulcan crew members?"

"I trust my ability to evaluate a bolian," said Krank. "I will release the bridge. Have Lieutenant Commander Gross brought to me. I should be able to tell if the song has worn off. As for the vulcans, I prefer to give them an entire day to recover. It is possible for a vulcan to successfully lie to me. Especially since I can no longer hear."

"We will have to do something about that very soon," said Garrity. "If you and the Captain remain deaf for too long, your ability to distinguish sounds will atrophy. I'm going to have to do some research and maybe see if anyone else on the crew knows anything. At the moment I really don't have any idea how to repair your ear drums. It's a simple operation with the correct equipment, which we don't have and I don't know if I can replicate it. Even if I could, I'm far from qualified for such an operation."

General Krank gently squeezed Chief Garrity's shoulder. She flinched, still quite terrified of him after seeing the damage he had caused to her friend and to her captain. And to himself.

“One thing we learned about you humans long ago,” said the elderly general. “You are exceptional at adapting to new and difficult situations. I have every confidence you will manage, Chief Garrity.”

11.10

SBA Episode 11, Scene 11: The Nexus

Chapter Summary

Dream on, on to the heart of the sunrise...



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: Heart of the Sunrise

Scene 11: The Nexus

11.11

The Nexus

“Your communication systems are very sophisticated. It took some time for me to learn how to retrieve the library resources I had reserved while concealing the source of the request.”

Oddly, this time it wasn't the brilliant, charismatic Ben Urri Urri who was holding forth in the U.S.S. Beagle's large conference room. It was the demure, sweet natured, but evidently equally brilliant Sheeux Vosq Nala. Instead of Urri's simple, loose clothing, which Shadow also preferred, Vosq had chosen to replicate an elegant purple gown, the same color as her fur.

Vosq had very carefully preened her fur instead of deliberately fluffing it out in the more masculine style of Ben Urri Urri. Shadow deliberately denormalized her fur to provide sort of natural camouflage. “When I was researching how to find Urri, I built a secret database of the library materials that he was accessing, including most of the works in his bibliography. I don't know how closely those resources are being monitored. They're beyond the control of the Anointed and their followers. But the secret police are everywhere. And they watch everything. I don't want them to find me.”

“What you call the Jar Galaxy is referred to by the Anointed as the Great Wheel,” Vosq continued. “According to their mythology, it connects many, many galaxies and is not the home galaxy of the Anointed. It is joined to both their home galaxy and ours. And, according to them, countless other galaxies as well.”

Commodore Yui Song was clearly disconcerted by this news. “A wormhole to the Gamma Quadrant of our own galaxy proved deadly enough to lead to the deaths of hundreds of millions, not counting well over a billion cardassian victims. Now there's a connection to untold galaxies? How long has this thing been here?”

“According to our explorers, the other end of the Great Wheel was discovered a little more than 200 of your years ago,” Vosq replied. “We first encountered the Anointed a few years after that. Their colony on my world was their first in this galaxy. Now they have colonies on five of our worlds. Our other worlds have resisted them and they are apparently uninterested in worlds that do not have intelligent bipeds that they can exploit.”

“Your species inhabits 9 worlds in 7 star systems?” asked Dean Sakura Nakamura Holland.

“Counting our homeworld, which you apparently already visited,” Vosq confirmed. “But there are also large populations in our space stations and on a few moons. Where the Anointed have inhabited our worlds, they have left our space stations and moon bases alone. Apparently, if a world does not have an atmosphere, they are not interested...”

Lt. Commander Senek's voice came into the conference room over the comm system and his image was displayed on one of the large screens around the room: “Please pardon the intrusion, but we have just received signal from our beacon. It is coming from a location in interstellar space 14.679 light years from our current location.”

Captain Skip Howard looked up from the table at the image of the stunningly beautiful vulcan displayed on one of the screens. Lt. Cmdr. Senek was seated primly on the U.S.S. Beagle's command throne. “Please elaborate, Senek.”

Senek's expression remained deadpan. As did his voice. Totally vulcan. "The signal that our beacon has been broadcasting into the Jar Galaxy for the past 19 days, 21 hours and 13 minutes has just been detected emanating from an otherwise unremarkable location in interstellar space located 14.679 light years from here."

Major Janet Carter made eye contact with Captain Howard. Howard spoke first: "Janet, please identify and re-task our nearest probe."

"Aye sir," Carter replied. She was entering information into the panel in front of her even as she responded. "Re-tasking Echo 2."

"That would be the exit from the Great Wheel," said Vosq. "It is not easy to locate because there is nothing to see except when something is entering our galaxy from the Great Wheel. At least that is what our scientists theorized. They had never found it. But then, I don't think they thought about setting up a beacon to transmit a high energy signal."

Captain Howard turned his attention back to the vulcan whose image was coming in from the Beagle's bridge. "Senek, assuming subspace works the same way in the Jar Galaxy as it works here, how far would the back door have to be from the front door for our signal to take just under 20 days to cross that distance?"

"68,841 light years," Lt. Cmdr. Senek responded.

"That is a very long distance for Escort to travel to get back home," Sakura observed.

"More than 200 years at warp 7," said the Escort's chief engineer, Lt. Ki Kresid. The tiny, grey roylan took a deep breath. "Assuming they could maintain warp 7..."

Commodore Yui turned her attention to another screen that displayed the bridge of the U.S.S. Mako. She addressed her first officer, Commander Jason Bates, who was relaxing in the center seat: "Jason, it appears we've been broadcasting into the in door, which is, apparently not the way out. There is another door, which Escort will need to identify and exit by. Please alter the signal our beacon is sending to give Escort as much of this information as possible."

"Aye Commodore," Bates replied.

At nearly the same moment, Lt. Cmdr. Senek, speaking from Beagle's bridge, said, "We are now reading 5 holy lander destroyers approaching at warp 7 at long range. They will be here in 21.24 days."

"What do you think they want?" Sakura asked. Her question was addressed to Sheeux Vosq Nala. But the demure former servant of the anointed was no longer there. In her place was the silent, observant, oddly disturbing Shadow, who had become the controlling and default personality of the small, female purple.

Before Shadow could attempt to answer, Lt. Cmdr. Senek broke into the conversation yet again: "We are now picking up a distress signal coming from the same location as our beacon signal." The beautiful vulcan turned to address someone on his left. "Please confirm that."

From offscreen, everyone in the conference room and on the call could hear the voice of the U.S. Marine Lieutenant Jim Whitesand: "Confirmed sir."

Senek managed to look mildly surprised. "Please be advised, the signal indicates that it is coming from the U.S.S. Escort. From these readings, I am estimating a 97.98 percentage probability that this identification is correct."

"Never rains, but it pours," Captain Howard opined.

Commodore Yui Song stood up from the table. "Gregg, Pel, and Shadow with me. Lieutenant Commander zh'Kathar, Lieutenant Kresid, please join us as well." She turned to the monitor that displayed the Mako's bridge. "Jason, before I get there, I want the U.S.S. Bluebird and the U.S.S. Arizona docked in our shuttlebay. Lay in a course for Escort's signal, warp 9.8. Once we're all aboard, don't wait for me to get to the bridge." She paused at the door as Escort's 2nd officer, Lt. Cmdr. Vranran zh'Kathar was exiting the room, along with Mako's 2nd officer Lt. Cmdr Gregg Clark.

"Skip, I want you to load the U.S.S. Puppy and follow us at best speed. Leave a probe here to monitor our beacon and the Jar Galaxy."

Yui Song was already following Lt. Ki Kresid, Pel, and Shadow out of the conference room as Skip Howard replied, "Aye Commodore."

Howard turned toward the image of his 2nd officer on the bridge. "Senek..."

SBA Episode 11, Scene 12: Emergence

Chapter Summary

I feel lost in the city...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)



The Star Beagle Adventures

Episode 11: [Heart of the Sunrise](#)

Scene 12: [Emergence](#)

11.12

Emergence

“Holy lander, heading directly toward us, warp 7.5. We will intersect in 34 minutes,” reported Lt. Cmdr. Senek.

Captain Howard turned toward the starboard bow wall-sized viewer on the U.S.S. Beagle’s triangular bridge. “Sakura, hail Mako, please.”

“Channel open, Skip,” the lovely Japanese woman replied.

Howard had taken a moment to change his nail polish and eye-shadow from turquoise to his more customary glossy black and Bavarian forest green. “Mako, this is the U.S.S. Beagle, Ronald Howard, XIV commanding.”

A moment later, the image of Commodore Yui Song appeared on the screen. She had evidently just walked from her Captain’s lounge onto the bridge of her flagship. “Beagle, this is U.S.S. Mako, Yui Song commanding. I suspect you’re calling about a destroyer headed at flank speed in your direction. They were just here.”

“What’s their mood?” Howard asked.

“They’re in a hurry,” Yui Song replied. “They popped out of nowhere, right about where our beacon signal seems to be emanating, called us idiots and a few other words which, I’m assuming were rarely used expletives since the universal translator couldn’t handle them. They rushed off in your direction at flank speed.”

“Do you think they’re after me?” Howard asked.

“I think if you stay out of their way and give them a wide berth, they’ll ignore you as if you weren’t even there,” Commodore Yui replied. “They might cuss at you.”

“I think we’ll hail them and raise shields if they don’t respond,” Howard replied.

Commodore Yui nodded. “By the book, Skip. By the book.”

“By the book, Song,” Howard confirmed. “Beagle out.”

“See you here in a few hours.” Yui Song’s image vanished from the view screen.

“Sakura, please hail our 9-legged friends.” Captain Howard leaned back and sprawled all over the overly ornate command throne.

“Channel open.”

“Unidentified vessel, this is the U.S.S. Beagle, Ronald Howard, XIV commanding. Our intentions are peaceful and we are making way for you. Please advise your intentions.”

Almost instantly, a garishly decorated female holy lander appeared on the screen. Until that moment, the idea that these oddly ant-like aliens

might wear makeup of any sort had never crossed Skip Howard's mind. Or anyone else's. They really weren't quite certain how to interpret the facial expressions of these aliens, but from her body language, she appeared to be quite agitated. An impression that was strengthened by the sound of her voice:

"You zzhokhrhlthbattn holtzenszlackten idiots!!! Turn it off!!! Turn it off!!!"

Just as suddenly as she had appeared on the screen, her image vanished.

"Copy that," Skip Howard said quietly, then: "Sakura, get Mako back."

Yui Song was sitting in the command chair on her bridge. "What is it, Skip?"

"Song, I think you'd better turn our beacon off. I think our three-eyed friends are about to blow it to smithereens. I don't know what they're so terrified of and I'd really rather not find out."

"I'd rather leave it on until Escort arrives," Yui replied. "As soon as I see Escort, we'll shut it off."

"Understood," Howard replied. "Although our friends might blow it up first. I'm going to recall the Whisky 1 probe. No sense letting them blow that up as well. We'll put it on a course that will allow it to keep eyes on the beacon as long as possible."

"Approved. See you in a few. Mako out." Yui responded, before vanishing from the screen again.

"Senek..."

The disturbingly beautiful vulcan responded before Howard could finish his thought. "I have instructed Major Carter to retrieve Whisky 1 and program its course to maintain telemetry while keeping distance from the holy lander ships."

Nearly 4 hours later, the Beagle joined the Mako. Both the U.S.S. Arizona and the U.S.S. Bluebird had been deployed.

"Deploy the Puppy," Howard ordered. "We may need to defend this space."

Dean Sakura Nakamura Holland turned to face the captain. "Mako is calling."

"On screen."

Commodore Yui Song appeared on the screen again. "Escort's signal is getting stronger. We may need to defend this space until she arrives. We're sending you coordinates for the location from which that holy lander destroyer emerged..."

"Captain, on screen," came Lt. Cmdr. Senek's voice. "I have focused sensors on the identified location..."

Howard turned his command throne to see a ship emerging from, apparently, nowhere.

"It's another holy lander destroyer," Howard said, quite unnecessarily. Everyone could see it.

The alien vessel didn't pause, but tore off at warp in the direction the Beagle had come from.

"And they're heading toward the beacon," Sakura observed.

"Another ship coming through," Senek announced. "It is the U.S.S. Escort."

Captain Skip Howard and Dean Sakura Nakamura Holland both stood up slowly, their eyes widening, expressions tightening with mingled concern and wonder...

On the bridge of the U.S.S. Mako, Commander Jason Bates and Commodore Yui Song got to their feet equally slowly. Both veteran officers drew a slow breath.

"Gods below," said Bates, quietly, his voice husky, almost a whisper, his head slowly shaking:

“What happened to her?”

Heart of the Sunrise

Chapter End Notes

This is the final scene for Episode 11.

The adventure will continue in Episode 12: Close to the Edge part I: The Solid Time of Change.

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