

Convergencies

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Convergencies

by [Hawku](#)

Summary

"Remind me again why we're going towards the danger?" -- Chapter 5: In the late 24th century, an interdimensional attack by an entity known as the Hiss causes the Unreliable to traverse from the year 2365 of their timeline to 2393 of the U.S.S. Phoenix-X's timeline.

Notes

This was a collaborative crossover episode that I was approached by STEU user 0Devoid to take part in. It mashes up his series The Unreliable's Light with mine and was written by him, his series writing partner Fateweaver, and myself. Had a ton of fun with this approach. 0Devoid's version frames/starts-ends with his ship in 2365 of the Unreliable's timeline, while mine frames/starts-ends with mine (below) in 2393 of the Phoenix-X's timeline. This was written in April-May 2024.

Convergencies, Part I

Star Trek: Phoenix-X / The Unreliable's Light

“Convergencies, Part I”

Out, in the vast void of nearly endless interstellar space, the *Prometheus*-class U.S.S. *Phoenix-X* dropped out of transwarp to check that its engines were presentable. Commander Seifer sat at the edge of his chair on the Bridge.

“Commander's log, Stardate 70074.94. The *Phoenix-X* is en route to the Antares Shipyards to do final checks on their U.S.S. *Excelsior*, which has been outfitted with a new-type of transwarp—”

But Lieutenant Commander Tong perked from tactical. “Hold on. That's the fifth *Excelsior*-ship in the past century and they don't get the letter-affix to their name? We ran through twenty-four *Phoenix*-ships for ours?”

“Oh, they're one of those upper-class, horsewhip vessels that exist outside convention. Same deal with the *Stargazer*. Also, I'm recording a Commander's log here, Tong? It's to replay over me while I contemplate things later. Please don't interrupt. As I was saying, Antares Shipyards has been in rivalry with the Beta Antares Shipyards for years, prompting terrible—”

But Lieutenant Hachi turned from the helm this time. “Wait! You know it's nearly impossible for ships to shade against the brightness of their binary star system, right? It's so sensor-damaging, no vessels ever want to go there, nor be legitimately built there?”

“Ugh. Admiral Cloud may have oversold me with inflated compliments of the *Phoenix-X*'s over-poweredness, admittedly. Can we put packing tape over our sensors or something? Like, the see-through kind, but with a tint?” Seifer queried.

An out-of-breath Chief Engineer Gewdeque entered the Bridge with some minor distress. “It's worse than that, sir. Transwarp seems to have been disabled in this part of space for unknown reasons. I can find no issues with our instruments.”

“Commander! There's also something strange on sensors about 2000 kilometres off the forward bow?” Lieutenant Commander Veker reported from his science station. “It's some kind of a crack, in space?”

Seifer walked over. “Seriously? You're some-kind-of-ing? My last Science officer did that to no end, so I relieved him of duty.”

“Ensign Dan. That's why he was never promoted,” Veker realised.

The Commander nodded while looking at the console. “Hold on, the crack is emitting some kind of dark energy quantum-phased, chronometric field? Like, a temporal-dimensional portal?” Then, realising, “Ah! I said the thing.”

“Should we get closer?” Hachi enquired. “And, if so, do you want us U.S.S. *Bozeman*-temporal-loop close, or Worf-parallel-shifting close?”

Seifer pondered. “Hmm. Is there a Devidian-synchronic-Mark Twain option? Wouldn't mind a hokey 19th century San Francisco horse and carriage chase through dirt roads.”

“I'll see what I can do,” Hachi acquiesced as he brought the *Phoenix-X* closer to the phenomenon which then appeared to be leaking chroniton particles into normal space. But, before more analysis could be done, a *Miranda*-class starship came frantically skidding out of the rift until it slowed its momentum to a stop.

Tong blinked. “Never thought I'd see a starship do that? I mean, I heard an alternate *Voyager* went snow skidding once, but space skidding is something else.” He then scanned the vessel. “I'm reading an NCC-11130. The U.S.S.— Wait, no. It's just called the *Unreliable*?”

Seifer looked momentarily perplexed. “Fascinating. Why would a potentially alternate Starfleet name a ship that? Like they can't be relied upon? Anyway, hail them. Perhaps we can get some answers, or at least some skidding tips.” He took a seat.

“Bit late for that, sir,” Lieutenant Briggs uttered, manning comms. “They're hailing *us*, but the signal seems different from other Starfleet ships?” His eyes looked frantically across the console, seeing the message appear as if the other ship was expecting this.

“That's odd. I guess that crew is more forward than others. Put it through,” Seifer ordered, sitting up and trying to look formal for this mysterious *Unreliable*.

The viewscreen cut to the bridge of the *Unreliable*, which looked significantly more retro. A variety of people were dotted around the bridge, all looking rather shaken up. A black woman with orange eyes, a tied-back afro and a light purple tank top stood up from what appeared to be the captain's chair. “*This is Captain Breezie McKormic of the Unreliable, would you mind telling me where... and when we are?*” The woman said, having paused to gaze at the uniforms of the *Phoenix-X* crew.

“Greetings, Captain. I'm Commander Night Seifer of the Federation *Starship Phoenix-X*. It's 2393 and you're in Federation space. Our sensors also suggest a temporal and dimensional element to the rift you just came out of.”

Breezie leaned on a railing, thinking. “*Perhaps that's the case. Our sensors are going nuts as despite being Federation space, it seems to think of it as new territory,*” she replied. “*Maybe we could discuss it on your ship? I'd offer mine up but—*” Breezie was about to explain when the science console exploded. “*Yeah, mine is in a bit of a poor shape right now. Especially after coming through that rift.*”

“Agreed, and please allow us to send over support staff and medical, should you require it?” Seifer suggested.

“We’ll only need engineers. Our doctor can heal us up on the way there. I’ll see you in the shuttle bay,” Breezie said before Seifer nodded and the transmission ended.

—

After meeting in the Shuttle bay (and watching as some of the crew members scanned the Type 4 shuttle they arrived in), Seifer led Breezie and a few of her crew members up to the Conference room, where a few other senior staff joined.

“Guess you want me to explain how the hell my ship, crew and I got here, huh?” Breezie said, looking at Seifer. “I mean, you said something about dimensional elements so... It’s likely nothing you’ve seen on your voyages.”

“I wouldn’t be so sure, Captain,” Andy replied, looking at his captain as he and some other crew members entered the Conference room. “I’ve heard some weird talk around here. I guess to them visitors from the past and future aren’t anything new.”

Seifer nodded. “Actually, my non-com special counsellor is time-displaced from seven years in the future. His name is BOB.” The Commander gestured to a seemingly random Ferengi, standing nearby. “He’s been banned from any more time travel. Anyway, that shouldn’t diminish what has happened to you. Hopefully, we can help if you need it, and maybe send you home, tying up all loose ends, easy-peesy, Captain Breezie.”

“I don’t think getting us home is the issue. If we ignore the issue at hand, nothing will survive,” Devoid said, grimly.

“He’s right. We didn’t choose to come into your time, Commander. We were forced,” Breezie explained, her expression stern. “Forced by something we only know... as the Hiss.”

Seifer furrowed his brow in concern. “The Hiss?”

“I guess I should explain. The Hiss is... How do I say this?” Breezie said before thinking for a moment. “The Hiss is a... humanoid that not only holds a lot of power, not only has seemingly infinite golden tentacles, but has an entire race worshipping her like a god, and she probably is. She wears very formally, has orange hair, and two horns that are the same shade of gold as the pupils in her hollow, soulless eyes... and she was trying to kill us for opposing her. In my mind, a rather crap deity.”

The Commander’s eyes went wide. “That does not sound good in the slightest, especially if she’s tearing through dimensional barriers. What did you mean when you said nothing will survive? What is she trying to do?”

“If nobody takes action, the Hiss will destroy everything. Every world, every galaxy, every timeline... If we sit around and do nothing, then we’re all doomed,” Devoid explained, looking at Commander Seifer. “Perhaps you could help? I doubt our ship can take on the Hiss on our own, even with the modifications.”

“We barely escaped with our lives earlier. Our tactical officer in particular is incapacitated thanks to her attack. She’s completely ruthless,” Breezie stated, a sense of panic in her voice.

The Kelpien, Lieutenant Commander Veker placed his PADD on the table in mid-calculation. “Commander, Captain, I may have something to say to that. You see, our deep scans of the interdimensional-temporal tear of the Hiss, as you know, show a quantum-phased dark energy with a residual chroniton emission.”

“And, just before, being in said area of such a tear neutralised the *Phoenix-X*’s transwarp capabilities because our subspace/tachyon resonant frequencies were no longer relevant to this now modified space,” Gewdeque continued.

Veker nodded. “We are certain, based on our past chroniton research, that by adjusting the subspace field/tachyon pulses to a higher resonant frequency, intermixed with a modulated chroniton supply, will neutralise the quantum-phased dark energy by this Hiss.”

“We launch it out of our deflector dishes,” Seifer realised. “So, we need to equip the *Unreliable* with a transwarp coil, make the modifications, and load up on chroniton particles.”

The Kelpien eyed everyone. “A lot of chroniton particles.”

“There’s an unspoken supply at Starbase 55,” the Trill, Seifer, recalled. “And I’m certain they have transwarp coils.” He turned to Breezie. “We go there, get prepared, and the *Phoenix-X* will join you against this multi-tentacled Hiss. What do you think?”

“We’ll have to bring our other science officer aboard once we get there. We only have two and one of them is our Doctor, who’s already aboard. Otherwise, I believe we should set a course for Starbase 55,” Breezie said, getting up from her chair. “Come along,” Breezie commanded, with Devoid and Andy getting up from their chairs and leaving the Conference room.

—

Not long after, the *Phoenix-X* and the *Unreliable* dropped warp back into normal space and approached Starbase 55. The modified *Miranda*-class starship was temporarily brought inside the large starship hangar as both crews and engineers from the starbase worked together.

Seifer and Breezie were next met with Admiral Cloud in the starbase's Officer's Lounge, next to the large window overseeing the indoor hangar and *Unreliable* therein. "Commander, I can't say I'm particularly excited about you abandoning the *Excelsior* launch to steal one of our experimental transwarp coils, but it sounds like this threat is larger than any misgivings I or anyone may have about anything," Cloud said, sipping a scotch.

"Yeahhhh, about that. We're also going to need to syphon whatever experiment you have going with those chronitons. We need all of them," Seifer said, awkwardly.

Cloud did a double-take before nearly exploding with a, "How did you even—!?" But he calmed himself for the greater good. "Never mind. I don't want to know. Just take it." He downed the rest of his scotch and left.

Suddenly, a voice came from Breezie's combadge. "*Alex to Breezie,*" it said.

Breezie tapped her combadge and spoke, wondering what her first officer wanted. "I'm here. What's up, Alex?" Breezie said as she leaned against a pillar.

"*Seifer wasn't kidding about the amount of chronitons around here. Our sensors are detecting a good few cubic metres of the stuff.*" Alex spoke, reading off sensor information from the science console. "*More than enough to stop The Hiss, at least according to what Veker proposed.*"

"Fascinating. I suppose you've got a shuttle prepared for the Doctor and Wally?" Breezie asked, her hands on her hips as she inquired.

"*It left only seconds ago, the science team on the Phoenix-X should be expecting them shortly, if not right now,*" Alex answered.

"Good to know, I hope they keep us updated, Breezie out." Breezie concluded, tapping her combadge once again. Breezie looked at Seifer, who seemed baffled.

He arched his brow. "You only have two science officers? One of them being your doctor?"

"They've worked well for me thus far," Breezie responded, shrugging. "I just hope your team helps them."

Seifer looked to the side for a moment, thinking carefully before turning back to her. "Captain, if you don't mind me asking, but why are you the *Unreliable*? What happens in your timeline?"

Breezie sighed, looking at Seifer. "I saw a lot of high praise for an idiot. That's how I knew something was different." Breezie answered, vaguely. "But about the name... It's because of the graffiti on the hull. You see that big red *N*? That was there when I saw that old thing abandoned, and decided to keep it as... Well, it has charm. She isn't the fastest or the strongest or the toughest ship around... But the *Unreliable* is mine. And that is what matters."

Seifer smiled, appreciating the sentiment before parroting, "High praise for an idiot?"

Breezie seemed angry as she answered. "Kirk! That idiot lost his ship when dealing with the Tholians! He couldn't accept that the *Defiant* was unsavable and tried to pull it out of interphase, only to dump the *Enterprise* into it like a total jackass! I don't know why people see him as a legend, when he managed to do that!" Breezie then sighed, trying to keep calm.

"The loss of the *Enterprise* must have had drastic ramifications to your timeline," Seifer realised, staring away at the notion. "Sometimes I wonder if we could have handled the Borg differently, or the destruction of Romulus, or somehow pre-empted the Synth attack on Mars. Even my own Captain being forced out of Starfleet."

Breezie looked at Seifer, confused out of her mind. "What? None of what you said makes sense. What even is this 'Borg' among many other things?"

"Another nightmare, like the Hiss," Seifer continued, gazing out, past the *Unreliable* in echoes of recalled terror. "Let's put an end to these nightmares."

"Agreed. I just hope it'll be as easy to deal with using your plan. Otherwise, we'll have to use brute force, like with the parasite on the NX-02," Breezie explained, looking at her ship.

—

Meanwhile, in the *Phoenix-X*'s Engineering, Gewdeque and her team welcomed the science officers from the *Unreliable*.

"Looks like the coil refits are just about done on your ship," she said while checking a status screen. "It exited the starbase bay. We can use your data and expertise to refine the chroniton modifications for both vessels."

"If they can handle it, I don't particularly wish for our ships to be stripped down to the bulkheads if this all goes south," the *Unreliable*'s EMH said, now in a late 2360s uniform, looking at the data with a slight bit of concern. "I suggest we run some tests prior."

"Do you think we have time to do so? We have no idea when the Hiss will strike again," Wally replied, sitting down on a nearby chair. "She could appear in the middle of our test and blow our ships up from the chroniton usage."

“Only one way to find out. Begin contacting Engineering on the *Unreliable*,” Gewdeque ordered to Belm, who was near the comms console.

A small screen appeared next to the console the EMH was near, showing Gary with Fiora in the back helping prepare the *Unreliable*. “*I assume we’re ready to begin testing the chroniton burst?*” Gary asked, looking to see if the energy flow was stable.

“We’re ready on our end,” Gewdeque confirmed, checking another status console.

“*Alright, readying a controlled burst. We’ll fire on your mark,*” Fiora said, preparing the ‘attack’.

Tension rang high between both ships, with all hoping it wouldn’t damage them. “Mark,” Gewdeque seared through it.

The *Unreliable* fired the burst first, followed by the *Phoenix-X*, initially causing a bit of shaking between both ships, as if a sonic boom ripped through space.

“Status report! Is everything stable?” the *Unreliable*’s EMH asked both ships as the shaking began to subside.

“*Nothing’s gone quite wrong over here, Doc,*” Gary responded. “*Though, Commander Seifer has just arrived in the shuttle bay. I assume Breezie is over on the Phoenix-X then.*”

“Yep, she’s just beamed in using the station’s transporter. I just hope she isn’t badly malformed from the experiment,” Wally replied.

Gewdeque checked Veker and Brigg’s remote monitors too. “We’re stable on the *Phoenix-X* as well. I think it works.” Her eyes began to light up.

—

In the *Unreliable*’s Engineering, Seifer arrived looking around at the rather small room. “I assume the experiment was a success?” Seifer asked, sitting down on a nearby chair.

Gary looked at Seifer, a confident grin appearing. “You bet. Everything seems stable. All we have to do is figure out if this can work against the Hiss.”

Fiora looked up from her console and towards Seifer, continuing on from Gary’s statement. “Everything seems fine on paper, we just have to put it to the test.”

“That makes sense. I suppose we should try and find another one of those cracks to see if it works,” Seifer said, getting up from his chair.

“*It’s a reasonable test, Commander. It could work to help confirm the theory fully,*” Gewdeque replied through the monitor.

Seifer tapped his combadge. “Seifer to *Phoenix-X* Bridge. Can you locate any more of those dark energy-quantum tears?”

“*Sir, you’re not going to believe this, but two of them have appeared in sector space,*” came Tong’s over-air reply. “*Now three..? Oh no.*”

The Commander glanced at the Engineering crew of the *Unreliable* in shared hesitation. “Hachi, set a course. Breezie, are you getting this?”

“*Yeah, I’m on your bridge as we speak. Gary, get Andy to follow the Phoenix-X. Science team, report to the Phoenix-X’s bridge immediately,*” Breezie spoke through Gary’s combadge.

—

Seifer entered the Bridge of the *Unreliable* as everyone was fast at work.

“I’ll just come out and say it. This ship is chock-full of classic late 23rd century nostalgia and it really gets you,” he conveyed as appreciation to Breezie’s crew while tapping his heart. “Oh, and it’s also a very addictive class for maniacal Shakespearean Augments.”

The modified *Miranda*-class ship dropped warp to a view of the *Prometheus*-class *Phoenix-X* sitting before a large, energetic rip in the fabric of the Multiverse. Another began opening a few hundred metres back.

“Although the frequency of these things has unexpectedly increased, it may be all the more reason for us to run our anti-Hiss bursts,” Seifer objectified. “Breezie, let’s do it.”

The *Unreliable* positioned itself in front of the other rip and both the *Phoenix-X* and *Unreliable* blasted bursts of tachyon-modified chroniton pulses into each target, seemingly beginning to cause the energy of both cracks to be eaten away like an eraser removing a sketch. Each intrusion began to disintegrate in a highly charged burn from reality before their very eyes.

But then... more began opening up at an increasingly rapid pace. More than the two ships could handle. “*The hell?! What’s happening, I thought we were stopping them!*” Breezie yelled.

“We were! But they seem to be getting stronger, the timeline’s beginning to destabilise! If we stay here, we might get erased!” Devoid replied through the network.

“Commander, what can we do? They're multiplying at a way too rapid rate to control!” Sally yelled to Seifer, concerned.

Both Commander Seifer and Breezie hesitated as the gravitational stresses rattled both ships. Seifer turned. “Helms, set course for the tears. We have to bypass what it's doing to our timeline so we can live to attack the source. Breezie, do you concur?”

“*I think so too, we have to escape. One of those tears should lead to my timeline... It's likely the best place we could go,*” Breezie stated, her tone solemn and serious.

Veker kicked in over the same comm. “*I've isolated the tear the Unreliable is from based on their quantum signatures. It's that big one, starboard!*”

“Helm, refine your course!” Seifer ordered Andy who was quick to act.

Both commanding officers stabilised themselves in the increasingly loud, chaotic anarchy as the *Phoenix-X* and *Unreliable* gained speed and dodged a sudden long-tear into the fabric of space to the right of them! Then another, and another. A sign of the timeline quickly destabilising. They pushed on, faster, when one last long tear struck quickly from above, just metres in front of them, forcing them to split around it, the *Phoenix-X* to the left, the *Unreliable* to the right, until they reached the terrifying precipice of their intended tear.

TO BE CONTINUED

Convergencies, Part II

Star Trek: Phoenix-X / The Unreliable's Light

“Convergencies, Part II”

Both the *Prometheus*-class U.S.S. *Phoenix-X* and the *Miranda*-class *Unreliable* came skidding out into the normal space of the *Unreliable's* timeline and time period of origin, kicking in thrusters to steady themselves. The crew of each vessel slowly got themselves off the floor.

“We did it,” Tong realised from his tactical station. “We did the skid thing! Also, detecting no immediate dangers.”

Veker pulled himself off the floor. “Also, we’re alive. Veker to Commander Seifer. Are you okay over there? I’m sorry to say, your Ready Room fish may have fallen over.”

“We’re good here,” Seifer reported. “And those fish can take care of themselves. Now, let’s get our statuses and our bearings. Captain McKormic, are you okay? That Hiss really packs a punch. Let’s regroup, either your ship or mine.”

“I’m ready to get back to my ship, it seems to have suffered the least from passing through... I’m just happy to be back in familiar territory,” Breezie stated, looking at the *Unreliable* from the *Phoenix-X's* viewscreen, sighing in relief slightly at the fact they managed to escape. “Right then, I’ll be there sharply. Same with the others, I hope.”

Hachi turned from the helm console. “Well, it was nice to have a Captain again on the Bridge, even if they aren’t in uniform. Don’t tell Commander Seifer I said that.”

“I’m still on comms, Hachi,” Seifer deadpanned over air. “Never mind. I get it. I’m two years into the first three years of pre-Captain Sisko and I have yet to punch out a Q. I’m working on it.”

—

Later, Captain Breezie McKormic, Commander Seifer and several staff from both crews met in the *Unreliable's* Conference room, all with readied reports.

“Ugh. I do not like the feeling that our timeline is on the brink of destruction,” Tong commented. “But, is it? It seemed like it was only that section we were in, so far?”

BOB arched a brow. “It’s possible she slowed her attack after we left, since it was obvious we were her primary targets. Being that I’m from the future and I’m still here, it’s likely the timeline is okay. Depending on your paradox of choice.”

“The actions of the Hiss against us as well as our practical applications solidifies our threat to her,” Seifer surmised. “The science checks out. As long as we don’t have any more setbacks, we should be on track.”

Gewdeque raised a pointer finger. “Uh, you wanted us to remind you when you were speaking too soon, sir? Well, that is a full-time job and, I’m sorry to report, passing through that interdimensional rift nearly depleted the chroniton supply for both our ships.”

“Yeah, that’s not good,” said Sally. “I’m still having crack flashbacks from the first one.”

“I’m just glad that’s the only bit of damage between our ships, I can’t handle another repair session,” Devoid replied, looking at Sally.

Gary then spoke up after snapping his fingers in realisation. “Actually, I may have something for this. You see, there is a fantastical temporal nebula called the Amaranthine in our timeline, not many people know about, in the Eta Serpentis Sector, chock-full of chronitons. I came across it once.”

“We could harvest the material from that nebula,” Breezie realized, catching on and building up hope again. “Possibly enough to attract her once more, on purpose, and defeat her.”

Seifer latched on to the momentum. “Yes, that’s right. She’ll attack again, but from our scans of all those tears we passed by, we did find that one of them matched the quantum signature of the highly charged dark energy source. It has to be her original timeline.”

“This is a maths problem now,” Veker snapped his fingers. “We can calculate how many chronitons are to be depleted when passing through those rifts, as well as what’s needed for an attack. We collect enough for both if not more.”

The Commander looked to Breezie. “Surely, this has to work. Does this plan at least supersede your previous encounters with this thing? How did you originally come across her?”

“Well, it’s a funny story. The Hiss were worshipped by people who thought she was harmless, on a voyage to discover what’s in the universe. Like Starfleet, in a sense but in order to study the creatures, they had themselves becoming them. But before I get off topic, the Hiss seemed to have more... hostile intentions. Thankfully, with the help of these shape-shifters. We managed to push her back... until now,” Breezie explained.

Seifer nodded in solemn understanding. "I see. Then, like that success through teamwork, we should overcome our latest setbacks the same, albeit with our abilities being Starfleet ingenuity. I'm not sure how your crew feels about our kind after what just happened, and I know I'm not a Captain by rank of my own people, but our drive to make a difference must not waiver." He looked at everyone. "Let's set a course, repair our ships on the way, and prepare for anything."

Soon, both ships were at standard warp to the Eta Serpentis Sector. Devoid, Tong, Gewdeque, Wally, Veker and the *Unreliable's* EMH were sitting in the *Phoenix-X's* conference room alone, preparing a plan to present to Breezie and Commander Seifer.

"Alright, so what have we got so far? We know that the Hiss is drawn to ships holding chronitons, but how could we attack without further damaging the timelines?" Devoid asks, leaning on the conference table.

Tong started. "What about dampening fields around the containment chambers? We could isolate field drops when we extract from the source."

"Everything about this entity suggests an extradimensional sensory aspect," Veker gathered. "I suspect they would supersede the field."

Gewdeque was in deep thought before she tapped the table to get her out of it. "There have been cases where interphase devices have reconfigured chronitons to modify normal matter into an interphasic/cloaked state. Geordi and Ro in our timeline's *Enterprise-D*, for example. Perhaps we could modify the chronitons themselves so they're not detectable."

Devoid looked to the side briefly and sighed. "I don't think those modifications could work. Plus, according to what I've read on your computers, the transporter caused that and ours has been kaput for a good while. Also, we don't know what the Hiss can and can't detect. It's practically like playing a deadly game of Minesweeper."

"Even then, a direct confrontation is deadly. Before we went through the crack that led to your timeline, we were being ripped to shreds like it was Azati Prime all over again," Wally stated, sounding like he'd rather not remember what had happened.

Gewdeque crossed her arms and squinted the other crew. "If she's undefeatable, then please just come out and say so."

"Seifer to Gewdeque. We've reached the Amaranthine. We should begin preparations to harvest the nebula."

She tapped her combadge. "Sir, Devoid suggests the procurement of chronitons on starships is the cause of Hiss attacks. We seek methods of aggression divergent from annihilation."

"Hm. It's possible, although she did not attack until we started the testbed offensive. Have your team prepare the bussard ramscoop for now, and please let me know if you guys come up with any solutions. In the meantime, I will confer with Captain McKormic. Seifer out."

—

Breezie sat in her ready room, drinking some coffee to keep her focused as she was thinking of a plan. In the middle of thinking of such a task, the computer terminal on her desk began making beeps. Commander Seifer was calling. Breezie hit a button and the call went through. "Seifer, I assume you're ready to collect the chronitons from this nebula?" she asked, sipping at her coffee.

"Yes. I assume your crew is also ready to collect what we need in order to deal with the Hiss?" Seifer queried, appearing to be in his own ready room.

"Sally says we'll be starting to collect them shortly, just need to get the ramscoops online. We rarely use the damn things so they're taking a while," Breezie replied.

The Commander nodded. *"Understood. Keeping our heads in the game, despite a setback like this, is important not only to the success of the mission but to what Starfleet stands for."* He paused. *"Sorry, I didn't mean that to sound as lecture-y as it did. Perhaps it's the uncertainty of an attacker that does not show itself in person is what I find somewhat unsettling. Anyway, let me know if you need any engineers."*

—

After the screen cut out in his Ready Room, Commander Seifer entered the Bridge of the *Phoenix-X* to view the angles of the collectors taking in the chronitons. Tong entered as well and took over tactical.

"Everything is nominal, sir," he reported before wincing for just a moment. "That was weird. I just had this extrasensory kinesthetic feeling of something. Permission to revise my *nominal* to *ostensible*?"

Seifer walked over to the human. "Then I would have to look those words up and you know the computer catalogues all our inquiries. Besides, this is about your Esper sensitivities, right? Considering we're shifting quantum realities, sitting right next to a temporal-based nebula, this could be anything. I recommend caution."

"Yes, Commander," Tong nodded before an alert went off. "Speaking of the nebula, the *Unreliable* has begun their harvesting as well."

Turning to the viewscreen, Seifer nodded. "So far, so good. It appears that just having the material hasn't set off the Hiss just yet. That being said, considering our last encounter, we may only get one chance for an attack."

“Do you think she’ll make the hiss sound? Probably what I’m most curious about, next to the assured safety of the Prime timeline,” Veker added.

But, suddenly, four cruiser-sized drone vessels dropped warp and began syphoning the chroniton supply from the nebula. Two of them neared the *Phoenix-X* and the *Unreliable* and shot beams to intercept their chroniton collecting.

“Commander! They’re taking our stuff! They register themselves as just *Sentinels*,” Tong reported. “Simple, yet effective. Oh, and our chroniton reserves are being depleted as well.”

Seifer gritted his teeth. “Damn! Hail them.” He looked to Tong, who shook his head indicating a no response. “Fire a warning phaser off their port side.” As he saw no change to the sentinel’s activities, he added, “Hit them!”

“Aye, sir,” Tong replied, firing phasers and knocking *Sentinel-1* off-axis. But it just so happened that it had completed its syphon of the *Phoenix-X*. “We’ve got no reserves, Commander. The nebula is nearly depleted of them as well.”

Suddenly, the *Phoenix-X* shook from an attack. *Sentinel-3* flew around and fired energy pulses into them, covering *Sentinel-1*’s escape warp. The *Phoenix-X* increased its phaser magnitude and knocked *Sentinel-3* off its momentum until it shook itself back to its senses and flew into an escape warp as well.

“Seifer to McKormic. I’m going after them before we lose their warp trails,” the Commander alerted through communications. “Yours may perform the same actions, but we can’t afford to lose our only weapon against the Hiss.”

After a shared nod with Hachi at the helm, Hachi shot the *Phoenix-X* off into matching warp speeds and they soon found themselves opening phaser fire on the two sentinels at high warp. Pieces of the enemy’s hull shattered out from hits, past the *Phoenix-X* and into normal space, but the sentinels just readjusted their stability and unwaveringly pushed on while returning pulse fire.

—

The *Unreliable* soon followed as fast as the warp engines could carry the *Miranda*-class, going in guns blazing. “Keep hitting anything until we find a weak spot. There’s got to be a vulnerability somewhere on those sentinels,” Breezie commanded, firmly sitting in the captain’s chair.

“I can’t get a lock on scanners... It’s like the ships don’t want to be acknowledged by other ships,” Wally stated as the science console only received corrupted scans.

“Brute force it, Wally. It’ll have to work sometime!” Breezie said, turning to Wally.

“They appear to have a stability field powered by chronitons... Perhaps if we syphon from them, we’ll drain it and cause their warp core to destabilise!” Devoid proposed.

“That sounds like a plan! Sally, relay it to Commander Seifer ASAP,” Breezie stated.

Sally copied her plan over to the *Phoenix-X*, with it successfully getting to the other ship. “It’s through. Wally, prepare ramscoops to syphon from the closest sentinel stability field,” Sally commanded.

Breezie went wide-eyed briefly as Sally commanded, only to see the plan actually beginning to work! As she saw on the viewscreen, the closest of the two sentinels began failing, the lights flickering and the ship slowing down from warp. “It works! Continue getting closer to the *Phoenix-X*, we can’t risk losing them around these sentinels!” Breezie yelled.

As *Sentinel-1* began dropping from warp, the *Unreliable* began catching up to the *Phoenix-X*.

—

Aboard the *Phoenix-X*, Seifer and his crew watched as their own syphon of *Sentinel-3*’s stability field began. Their own reserves began to refill.

“The *Unreliable* was right!” Briggs observed from his monitoring console. “Maybe they are reliable?”

But, suddenly, the drone ship appeared to start their warp drop early, before their field was completely destabilised.

“Mr. Hachi, match their speed. Briggs, continue the syphon,” the Commander surveyed, studying the screen as the warp field dissipated and normal space came back into view behind *Sentinel-3*. “One thing’s for sure, reliability is relative.”

Sentinel-3 quickly fired another pulse on the *Phoenix-X*, knocking it back and out of syphoning range. Seifer observed as it ceased hostilities and moved off toward what appeared to be a large, frenetic portal in space. “Should we return fire?” Tong asked in hopes of winning combat.

“Hold on a second,” Seifer halted, watching the sentinel impulse into a position next to the portal while the *Unreliable* dropped warp right above the *Phoenix-X* to see the same thing. “These vessels are guards?”

Tong’s proximity alert suddenly went off next. “I’m detecting the other two sentinels approaching.” Both the *Unreliable* and *Phoenix-X* watched as *Sentinel-2* and *Sentinel-4* dropped warp nearby and continued on, ignoring them, to take positions next to the portal as well.

“They must have enough chronitons to secure whatever it is they’re securing here,” BOB suggested. “They’re protecting something.”

Gewdeque entered the Bridge. “Well, whatever they’re doing, we should let them. We need the breathing room to continue ship repairs sustained from both our initial entry into this alternate universe as well as the compromising pulses they hit us with.”

“Perhaps you’re right,” Seifer conceded. “Since we’re in the *Unreliable*’s universe, I wonder if there is any more light they could shed on these things. Continue repairs, Lieutenant Commander.”

She nodded and left again. BOB looked at Seifer. “Do you think Romulan ale is legal in this timeline?”

—

Later, aboard the *Unreliable*, the viewscreen displayed the portal in front of the two ships. The tear appeared as if the dark void of space was torn like paper to show the iridescent, fluctuating realm of this unknown realm.

“Wally, scan it, see what’s going on. I don’t think the sentinels intended to harm us,” Breezie commanded.

Wally nodded and scanned the tear, just as Seifer and Briggs walked onto the bridge. “Any idea what this might be? I’ve seen nothing like it in my timeline,” Seifer asked, looking at the tear on the viewscreen.

“It’s the same quantum-phased dark energy rip as the other tears, but more massive in output, with a fiercely unresolvable quantum signature,” Wally observed. “It’s another Universe, but nothing that our instruments can make sense of. What we can get is that any light within is artificial. No natural light is in there.”

Seifer squinted at several sentinel beams going into the tear. “It looks like they’re feeding chronitons into it? Are they keeping it from expanding fully?”

“Ohhh, no,” Briggs halted when saw the looks in both Seifer and Breezie’s eyes. “You guys are thinking about going through it, aren’t you?”

The Commander tapped his chin. “What’s the status of our chroniton reserves?”

“Well, sure. Both ships have enough to get through with some left over, but I believe Gewdeque would agree that we’d have to reinforce our structural integrity at least twice what it is now,” Briggs stated.

“Well, what are we waiting for? The solution seems to be hiding in there, so maybe we should start reinforcing it if we’d like to investigate,” Breezie proposed.

“Are you two nuts?” Briggs asked bluntly, looking at the two commanding officers as if they had suggested suicide as a plan.

“Get used to it, Briggs. Breezie is like a wild card when it comes to commanding a ship,” Devoid said, looking over from the tactical console.

Briggs sighed, the Silver Blood rubbing his fingers into his temples. “I should’ve morphed into a Warp 10 salamander.”

“Perhaps we can feed the chronitons to our shields? It could make us look like more sentinels to any sensor,” Devoid suggested, getting up from the chair.

“What makes you think that?” Seifer asked, thinking how such a plan might work.

“Well, as we know, their stability fields are powered by chronitons, so perhaps their regular shields are made up of the stuff too?” Devoid explained.

The commanding officers thought, Breezie sitting down on the captain’s chair. “I’m willing to check. Wally, could you get a scan of any of the sentinels’ shields? Particularly what they’re made of,” Breezie commanded, looking at Wally who was sitting at the science console, his black and gold coat draped onto the back of it revealing his colourful suspenders.

“I’ll give it a shot, Breezie. Hopefully I’ll get something usable,” Wally said, starting a scan on *Sentinel-3*’s shields discreetly so as not to alert the sentinel.

Briggs looked around at the bridge crew, all waiting for the results of the scan. “This is certainly a unique crew,” he observed. “By the way, is Romulan Ale legal here? Asking for a friend.”

Breezie looked at him with an expression that could best be described as a hybrid of confusion and disgust. “Oh, why would that rubbish be legalised? It’s a poor product anyway. I don’t drink much alcohol, but Gary who does says it isn’t worth the hype. We have something much better. You ever heard of Andorian Cider?” Breezie stated.

“Andorian Cider? No, I don’t think I have,” Briggs stated, as if he’s hearing about a drink of legends.

“Gary says only about half a glass of the stuff can get even a Klingon totally wasted. He’s got some bottles aboard, I can negotiate sending one over if you’d like,” Breezie offered.

Briggs nodded. "Make it so."

"Dude. You know only commanding officers get to say that catchphrase," Seifer criticised. "Oh, never mind. It's an alternate timeline. Go nuts."

TO BE CONTINUED

Convergencies, Part III

Star Trek: Phoenix-X / The Unreliable's Light

“Convergencies, Part III”

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Commander Tong was busy assisting with repairs on the *Phoenix-X*, running systems-correcting commands from the Bridge. He stopped tapping at the side console when the strangest voice echoed from out of nowhere.

“She is relentless... She is of the lost... She is of the void.....”

Noticing Tong’s disturbed lack of focus, Elly walked over. “Hey, man. You look like a Nagilum’s death experiment.”

“Yeah, it’s that kinesthetic feeling from earlier.” Tong shook his head out of it. “It’s becoming voices now. I think I’m hearing someone, or many someones from the other side of that portal.”

The Orion shook her head. “I do not envy you for having that Galactic Barrier/Esper augmentation. Except for the increased combat skills.”

“Not worth it,” the human of Chinese descent deadpanned. “It’s a mixed bag on which abilities become more prominent than others, and the telepathic one is not my strong suit.” He clenched his fist, momentarily energizing it. “On the other hand, give me something to punch.”

She nodded. “You’re the tactical officer. I’m the security chief. Whatever this is, we’ll handle it together. I’ll take your station if need be.”

“Thank you, Lieutenant,” Tong nodded to her. “I should report this to Commander Seifer and Captain McKormic. Oh, and the tactical access code is Delta Marco Polo.” He looked at her perplexed expression. “It’s not a history thing. I was into Archer-level water sports at one point.”

—

A few decks below in a Jefferies tube junction, Devoid and Fiora were analysing a problem that had developed in one of the *Phoenix-X*’s nacelles. “Yknow, it’s good to know that despite all the fancy features a ship gets, it’s still the same parts powering it.” Fiora says as she opens a panel, finding a burnt out warp coil.

“Yep... Just seems to get easier to break such parts. I swear, what is this, a warp coil or an oven coil?” Devoid replied, looking at the rather charred warp coil.

Fiora laughed, carefully extracting the charred warp coil as the two heard something faintly, as if something was whispering in the rooms nearby.

“Your efforts are pointless... The void will break you... She will break you...”

Devoid & Fiora looked around, confused. “You hear that?” Devoid asked, baffled out of his mind.

“That’s weird... I heard that same voice in a dream,” Fiora uttered, seeming astounded. “I don’t remember what it said... But it wasn’t that.”

Devoid’s face became one of concern as he tapped his combadge. “Devoid to Alex, have there been any cases of hearing weird voices on the Unreliable? Me and Fiora heard something whisper and Fiora seemed to recognise it.” Devoid asks as Fiora finishes extracting the burnt out warp coil.

“Hm... Sally, Andy and a few of our guests from the Phoenix-X have mentioned hearing something out of nowhere. I’ll look into it, see what’s going on,” Alex said through Devoid’s combadge.

“Keep me updated, Devoid out,” Devoid replied, tapping his combadge again.

“Perhaps it’s from the tear?” Fiora asked.

“We can run a scan once we put this new warp coil in,” Devoid answered, holding the new warp coil.

—

Alex sat there in the captain’s chair. His blindfold wrapped around his head ever still... how long has it been... how long has it been on? 6 years? 7? Yeah, 7 years. It’s been quite a ride so far... He had replaced some of the fabric over the years... to hide his eyes or lack thereof. He looked up for a moment, looking into the distance. He slumped a bit after a moment...

“You know you cannot win, child of flesh... It be wise you start ru—”

“From the name of Azathoth’s consciousness, I rebuke thee from these passages of steel, to back whence you came.”

“Oh, SHI—”

Alex smiled... he may have limited power... but sometimes it’s not psychic or cosmic, but sorcery and eldridge.

“Grand-nephew would be proud. If he gave a shit about the things that inhabit his world, and if the others woke up already... not you father, you are fine. Sleep well.” Alex thought to himself before getting up and looking around the rather barren bridge. “How do I prove who I think this voice is?” Alex said, walking around. He brushed his hand against the many consoles nonchalantly before stopping and looking at the science console. Wally wasn’t there, he was helping the rest of the crew down in Engineering. “It’s worth a shot,” Alex said to himself, sitting down and beginning to scan for where this voice might be coming from. Alex took a deep breath and began scanning.

-Scan started...
--ERROR: Signal not identified
-Expanding signal radius...
--Expanding to 20%
--Expanding to 50%

Alex was initially frustrated with the lack of any results, but thought he could find something if he kept expanding the range.

-Expanding to 80%
-Expanding to 100%
--Rerouting 90% of main power power to signal scanner
--Reroute successful

As power was rerouted to the sensors, the ship began to shake. 100% Range still wasn’t enough. Alex wasn’t going to give up now and began pushing the sensors further. He had to find something. He just had to find the source of this voice!

-Expanding to 105%
-Expanding to 115%
-Expanding to 130%
--Starting reserve power usage - 100%

The range expanded well beyond 100%, pushing the sensors closer and closer to their limits. Consoles began exploding and the lights around the bridge began flickering. Alex didn’t care though, he had to find the source, no matter what it took. One explosion was so close it knocked Alex off the chair and to the floor.

-Expanding to 145%
-Expanding to 149%
-Expanding to 150%

Suddenly, the shaking stopped... All seemed peaceful as if no damage had occurred minus a small bit of smoke that would soon disappear from the bridge within minutes. Alex lifted himself up, looking at the console he was once using.

-Scan: Successful
-ERROR: Could not find signal source

“Shit... Wait a minute,” Alex said to himself before looking a bit below the error message.

-Alternative directive = Pinpoint pulses detected from signal to create route/approximate location
-Alternate Directive: Active
-Sending data of recent signal pulse to all consoles
-Send data to nearby allied ship? Y/N

Alex typed in a ‘Y’ and hit ‘SEND’, sending the data of the scans to the *Phoenix-X* before promptly sighing in relief.

—

Back on the *Phoenix-X*, Seifer found himself in a turbolift with his chief engineer, Gewdeque, who was seemingly distracted.

“The voices?” Seifer queried. “I started getting them too. Spilled a raktajino into someone’s Vulcan mocha and caused an eruption likened to a clash of brains-versus-bronze.”

Gewdeque sighed. “I’ve done that, but it’s not just the voices. The stress of the whole situation at hand has given me hesitation. I’m balancing focus and impartiality but the terrain gets more treacherous as we go. Kugo wouldn’t have flinched.”

“She was an excellent chief engineer but, even under her command, you proved yourself ten times over, and with a flexibility no one else had,” Seifer reaffirmed. “Hesitation is your jumping-off point to certainty and we’ll all be right there jumping with you.”

The human of French-Canadian descent nodded in realization. “Thank you, sir,” she replied, now with confidence, as the turbolift doors opened and they both exited to the Bridge. Then, in an official tone for everyone, she reported the work that had been completed just prior to this, “Commander! Both the *Unreliable* and the *Phoenix-X* are now reinforced to handle the transition through that portal.”

“Oh, phew,” Seifer relieved. “Because I was not opposed to harvesting ship parts from other aliens. Just throwing that out there.”

Veker turned from science. “The *Unreliable*’s confirmation and scans of the sentinel’s chroniton shielding has yielded replicated converters

now installed on both our vessels.”

“Translation, we can feed a layer of our chroniton reserves over our own shields so we come off as sentinels too,” Briggs explained as he took operations. “We’ll be like sheep in wolf’s clothing.”

Seifer looked at him. “No. Why are we the sheep? Stop it.”

“Commander, we’re receiving a payload of data from the *Unreliable*,” Tong reported as an alert went off from tactical. “There are signal pulses, on the level of brainwaves, coming from the portal. The voices?” He read on. “The Lost Void.”

The Commander nodded. “Yeah. I heard that term in one of those moments of mind-bending, room-spinning madness. Amazing work. Seifer to Breezie.” He tapped his combadge. “Very impressive with the data crunch by your crew. If we weren’t sure before, we certainly are now. The *Phoenix-X* is ready to enter the portal with our shield modifications. We should both go in, slow, together. How are things on your end? Do you concur?”

—

Breezie was confused. “I don’t think you should thank me, Alex was the only one on the bridge. I was down in Engineering helping with the modifications to our shields.” She stated, leaning on a chair in Engineering.

“Oh. Well, I’ll tell Alex thanks once I’m done talking to you. Do you concur though?” Seifer replied.

“Yeah, I do. We’ll get to the bridge ASAP. Breezie out,” Breezie said, tapping her combadge to terminate the connection.

“We sent out data about that tear?” Sally asked, confused.

“That might explain the shaking. I thought it was the chronitons threatening to rip the ship fresh off the bulkheads!” Devoid replied.

“Apparently Alex got the data... I must congratulate him on it when we get to the bridge,” Breezie stated.

As most of the crew went from Engineering to the bridge (except for Fiora who went to get another Vulcan Mocha in the mess hall after someone spilled a raktajino into it), they spotted Alex by the science console, who looked like he had seen better days.

“Alex, I see you managed to get some data on the tear and likely those voices considering those have gone quiet... What was it?” Breezie said.

“I think it might be the Hiss, using a sort of Neural Transmitter in order to send her voice into our brains. Thankfully I managed to scare her off.” Alex explained based on the minimal information he got.

“Well, I guess we’re ready to go in. Everyone, at your stations. May the wind be at our backs.” Breezie commanded the crew to go to their respective stations with Alex moving to the navigation side of the helm console so Wally can sit at the science station.

Sally hailed the *Phoenix-X*, with the hail going through only seconds later.

“*Unreliable* to *Phoenix-X*. Are you ready?” Breezie asked, a sense of confidence in her voice.

—

On the Bridge of the *Phoenix-X*, Seifer glanced to a nodding crew before replying, “Ready.” He looked to his Coridanite helmsmen who was momentarily entranced by the viewscreen. “Hachi, get us closer and then slow to half impulse.” Seifer turned to Briggs and Gewdeque. “Engage the camouflage.”

“Chroniton overcoat and adjustable hoodie in place,” Gewdeque confirmed as both the *Phoenix-X* and *Unreliable* moved toward the Lost Void portal, guarded by the remaining three cruiser-sized sentinel drones. “By the way, who turned the tensity up?”

Seifer smirked. “Tension is Starfleet standard, Lieutenant Commander. It can’t be modulated.”

“Nearing the portal now, Commander,” Hachi reported as the massive void grew bigger on the screen, which the sentinels had been occasionally snapping stabilisation beams into the sides of. “Remind me again why we’re going towards the danger?”

The Commander nodded. “To do what we always do, Lieutenant. We don’t run.” He paused. “I mean, we may hesitate *Discovery*-style, but only for humanization purposes.”

—

Both the *Unreliable* and the *Phoenix-X* reached the threshold of sentinels, so far, but not certain, undetected as threats. The two ships left normal space and entered the Lost Void.

The area was a pitch-black place, but everything had a white outline. Structures, streets, areas of land, all repeated into and out of themselves, infinitely. Beasts made of something pure black swam through the skies, sounds of communication and pain echoed through this land... the natives were like the beasts, coming in so many shapes and sizes that it would be too hard to describe them all in a finite length of time. All of them either worked until they were weak, or they were going to their next task... knowing that she was watching.

“We’re in, Breezie,” Wally said after the two ships passed through the tear.

“OK, we best keep going until we find the Hiss. Tell the *Phoenix-X* to keep close, I wouldn’t want an ambush happening. This place stinks of despair,” Breezie replied.

As the two ships traversed this unknown realm, a sense of dread seemed to be creeping up their backs.

“Any luck spotting the Hiss?” Alex asked, looking at Wally.

“I’m trying, but nothing seems to work,” Wally replied, a tad frustrated. “Have they got anything on the *Phoenix-X*?”

“I’ll send a message to ask,” Sally said, sending a message to the *Phoenix-X* to ask if they’ve found anything relating to the Hiss.

“*We haven’t gotten anything on our end either, whoever this Hiss is, she’s certainly rather elusive,*” Commander Seifer answered.

“She’s a damn pain in the ass too…” Breezie muttered, clearly getting tired of the Hiss’ shenanigans.

“Perhaps the route I got from the scans could help, it might lead us to her?” Alex suggested to Andy.

“It’s worth a shot…” Andy replied, adjusting the course to match the one obtained by the scans.

“Continue following, *Phoenix-X*, this should lead us to the Hiss,” Sally said, informing the *Prometheus*-class ship.

—

As the *Phoenix-X* moved slowly over an outlined, sombre, hint of land, passing creature after creature along Andy’s route, the crew found themselves agape at the desolate and foreboding murk incepted from outside to their very cells. Tong tensed up at tactical.

“Oh, she’s here,” he said in equal parts fear and anticipation as beads of sweat opened up. “Also, I’m going to need a face cloth or handkerchief?”

Elly, standing next to him, promptly handed one over. “I got you, bro.”

“This realm matches the dark energy/quantum signatures we detected when we first encountered those tears,” Veker reported. “These lifeforms are complex, made up of various types of biochemistries. I can’t make heads or tails of them.”

Seifer gritted. “Ugh. Hold on to your carbon.” He then noticed Briggs’ deadpan. “Oh, and your biomimetic deuterium, for those of you that applies to.”

“Commander, what the hell is that??” Hachi pointed from helm as they appeared to be nearing a large, pulsating red amorphous biomass with flinging tentacles, squirming on the ground. “It’s whipping those other creatures?”

Everyone watched as the shapeshifting form was surprisingly organized in its management of the dark creatures all around him, forcing them to mine and carry various types of hybrid-dark matter mass around. “Ah, slavery. You don’t not-recognize it in any form, in any Universe,” Seifer observed.

“I have so many questions,” the Ferengi, BOB blinked as he entered the Bridge to a crew who had no idea where he had been this whole time. “Oh. I was sampling that Andorian Cider from the *Unreliable*? Soooo good. Doctor Xyrenia hyposprayed me back to normal.”

Seifer nodded. “Nice. Can’t go wrong with Starfleet ingenuity. It’s gotten us out of so many scrapes. The Borg, the time-travelling Borg, the human-avatar Borg, the transwarp-hubbed Borg. Wow. I’m only now realizing how over-Borg’d we ever got. Computer, make note to divert all encounters to the *Enterprise* and *Voyager*.”

—

Suddenly, the tentacles from the large bulbous, red polymorphic creature flung out as both starships neared, phasing through their shields and gripping around their hulls. Red alert switched on as the *Unreliable* and *Phoenix-X* were held, stopped, in realm space in an apparent stand-off.

TO BE CONCLUDED

Convergencies, Part IV

Star Trek: Phoenix-X / The Unreliable's Light

“Convergencies, Part IV”

The creature shifted into the form Breezie mentioned when she first brought up the Hiss. “*Oh, you’re here... I see you’ve brought a little friend. Too bad this is where you’ll both die—*” The Hiss teased before getting blasted by a shot from one of the *Unreliable’s* railguns, making both sets of tentacles recoil from the ships due to the shot blasting through many of them.

“Devoid, I hope you’ve got a good trigger finger, we’re gonna have to be quick with this! I don’t particularly want the ship to be stabbed with those tentacles! Andy, evasive manoeuvres, pattern omega twelve,” Breezie stated, looking over at the hedgehog.

“You don’t need to tell me twice! Let’s see how the Hiss likes torpedoes to the face!” Devoid replied, firing four torpedoes right in the face of the Hiss as the ship began evading the tentacles attempting to stab them.

—

The Hiss was so focused on the *Unreliable*, that it gave the *Phoenix-X* a chance to devise a quick plan.

“Commander, it’s rare for me to suggest this, but I believe our only way of defeating the Hiss might be to split the ship. We could overwhelm it with a four-way attack before the chroniton beams,” Tong offered, clenching his energized fists.

Hachi turned from the chaos unravelling on the viewscreen. “It does make sense. We’d be practically doubling our forces.”

“Right!” Seifer snapped. “All hands, prepare to initiate multi-vector assault mode. Tong, you have Vector Beta. Briggs, Vector Gamma. Oh, and get me some badass rock music while we do it.”

Veker checked the database. “All we have are Beastie Boys. Nothing but Beastie Boys!”

“Damn. Forgot about that Starfleet mandate. Please submit Refutation Forms 4.47 for AC/DC and Crush 40 and have them notarized.” He sat up as the crew also reconfigured and the passing *Phoenix-X* split into three vectors, swarming the Hiss. “By the way, how great is it that we found her so fast? For a second, I thought we’d be liberating creatures left and right. Freedom is tricky, apparently.”

The Hiss turned her head, taking notice of each *Phoenix-X* vector, careening around and firing phasers and torpedoes into her. She flung a tentacle and hit *Phoenix-X* Vector Gamma, before Vector Alpha passed on another trajectory and vapourized the appendage.

“She is reading as the source for the same high-level dark energy intensity that scans show as being woven through the creatures themselves,” Veker reported, mid-combat. “It is likely said-assault could affect everything here as we see it now, perhaps freeing them.”

Seifer nodded. “So, we possibly have stakes at both microcosm and macrocosm levels? Nice. In that case, prepare all deflectors with chroniton beams! I mean, we were already going to do that, but now there’s that extra *umph*.”

—

As they revved up, *Phoenix-X* Vector Alpha ducked a tentacle whilst firing into the darkened ground. Dark chunks of environmental material shot up from her feet, momentarily obscuring her vision while both *Phoenix-X* Vectors Beta and Gamma used the disorientation for clear chroniton beam hits against her.

The *Unreliable* craned around, noticing the Hiss get weaker before she clenched her fists and reconstituted the forced temporal energies into, instead, giving her strength.

“What in the blue hell is she doing?!” Breezie said, astounded at the Hiss’ actions.

“I don’t know, but this feeding off our chroniton attacks seems to lower her defences. If we’re gonna get hits in, we can do it now while her guard is down,” Alex suggested.

“Devoid, fire everything,” Breezie commanded, standing up.

“Did you say everything?” Devoid asked, a bit confused.

“EVERYTHING!” Breezie shouted, turning to the hedgehog.

Devoid briefly got scared of the captain, pressing everything he could on the tactical console.

The *Unreliable* began firing all its weaponry, phasers, torpedoes, railguns, all pointed at the unguarded Hiss, causing quite a bit of damage... and she didn’t like that.

The Hiss turned to the *Unreliable*, clenching one of her hands into a fist and attempting to smash the ship into the ground.

“Andy, full reverse! Now!” Breezie yelled to her helmsman.

Andy made the *Unreliable* reverse away from the incoming fist just in time, the edge of the saucer mere inches away from impact.

Sally thought briefly. “Yknow, if the Hiss is gaining power from the energy, perhaps we could overload her? Like how a balloon pops if you put too much air in.”

The rest of the *Unreliable*'s crew turned to Sally, mixed emotions on their faces.

“Is this toon logic or something?” Alex asked, confused.

“There is always such a thing as too much... I just hope this works. Relay the plan to the *Phoenix-X*,” Breezie said.

—

Meanwhile, Seifer dropped to his knees upon the Bridge of *Phoenix-X* Vector Alpha at the sight of the Hiss gaining an advantage from their deflector dish attacks. He gripped his sweaty face, Commodore Matt Decker style.

“Nnnnnooooo! All our Starfleet miracle-working, principles and using science and reason for the survival of our species and, for what? Misstep? Temporary lapse? Momentary oversight?!” He continued to grip his face until he was carried up to his feet by Veker.

The Kelpien deadpanned him. “If you’re doing a Decker thing, you should know his status as a hero has always been precarious. Also, the *Unreliable* suggests we overload the Hiss with chronitons and firepower, as it is likely there is a containment threshold.”

“Wow. I try to have a pure character moment of learning and all I get is criticism and judgement,” Seifer countered. “Very well. Seifer to Tong and Briggs, up the fire and chroniton intensity and match our attacks!”

Tong replied over comms from Vector Beta. “*Like putting too much air in a celebratory rubbery containment oval.*”

“Yup. That’s one of the officially approved analogies,” Seifer confirmed, checking a PADD. “What is this transwarp one about a bullet in a bullet and a horse? Do better, Starfleet.”

—

All three *Phoenix-X* vectors coordinated around with the *Unreliable* and opened beams onto the abnormally large Hiss. She took wave after wave of pulsating white beams, from all angles, illuminating her entire transformative matrix until she began sending painful antichroniton particle light rays out of her eyes and mouth.

The fantastical and strange enslaved dark creatures nearby then saw what was happening and began piling their own attacks at her... but not without notice.

“The natives of the Lost Void... They’re starting to rebel!” Wally stated, looking at the science console.

“She must’ve had some sort of mind control thing on them... And we just broke it. Perhaps we’ve almost got her!” Alex proposed.

“No time to celebrate just yet. Let’s keep fighting. Devoid, fire a spread of torpedoes right in her face! It’ll likely disrupt the rays,” Breezie commanded.

The *Unreliable* launched a spread of torpedoes right in the Hiss’ face, causing it to scream in unearthly agony.

The Hiss’ flesh began to rip open as light shone through, her body trying to hold the energy. The Voidlings began to run, fear running through their veins. She looked at the ships around her, and smiled deviously. She looked at the *Unreliable*...

We’ll meet soon, Alex Noll Brine.

... and exploded in a cacophony of heat, energy, and flesh. The Hiss was gone... and the Voidlings come out, fearful and shivering. They looked at the ships with stress in their eyes.

“Are they... scared?” Andy asked, turning to the captain.

“Perhaps we should go down and meet them,” Devoid suggested, looking at both Andy and Breezie.

“Sounds like a plan. Contact the *Phoenix-X*. I guess it’s time for first contact,” Breezie responded, getting up and heading to the shuttle bay.

—

Two shuttles, a Type 7 from the *Unreliable* named *Terrell* and a Type 9 from the recently reintegrated *Phoenix-X* named *Dracon*, left their respective ships and touched down on the ground, making sure not to harm any Voidlings, all of them running away and hiding when they started coming their way.

The commanding officers of both ships left their respective shuttles, looking at the Voidlings hiding behind objects. “Do you really think we

should be doing this? We don't know if they've developed warp yet?" Seifer asked.

"They've seen us, it's common decency that they should know us. Plus, it might give us a way out and you a way back home," Breezie said before turning to the hiding Voidlings. "Hello. I'm Captain McKormic of the *Unreliable*, a representative of the United Federation of Planets. We bring you no harm."

One of the hiding groups sent an ambassador out, and when I say that I mean they push him out of hiding while they make a run for it. This Voidling looked like a child, albeit with simple shapes and designs. His glowing eyes spread down to tear streaks as he looked at the two officers, shivering in fear... still and motionless otherwise.

Commander Seifer crouched down and held out his hand, hoping the Voidling would shake it. But the small void creature backed away, even more scared as it hunched in a kind of fetal position.

Devoid and Briggs exited their respective shuttles, looking at the afraid Voidling. "I don't think he's ready to be an ambassador," Briggs stated, looking at the afraid Voidling.

Sally exited the *Terrell* shuttle and got to the group. "Oh come on folks, he's like a wild animal right now. He's so freaked out because he thinks we are here to hurt him. Here, let me show you how ya should do this." She approached the Voidling, it covered its head and curled up more to protect itself. Sally tenderly reached out to the Voidling, not as a handshake, but as an offer. Her palm up, and cupped slightly. The Voidling looked at it still in a defensive stance but a bit more calm now. It reached out its own hand, and held Sally's. She didn't grip or squeeze, she let it do that.

The Voidling looked at everyone around it, as others came to peek their heads out, some brave enough to come out of hiding. It sent an image to the minds of all the crew members there, an image of the two different combadge styles with a scribble between both.

"What is that? Did they put a thought into my head?" Commander Seifer asked, confused beyond all belief.

"I got it too... What does this mean?" Sally asked.

"Perhaps they're trying to ask a question? This might be how they communicate." Devoid proposed.

"Maybe so. Perhaps they're confused about who we are?" Briggs asked.

Another image from the Voidling comes, an image of everyone there all connected by another scribble.

"That might explain it. They are confused," Commander Seifer stated.

"Alright, I'll handle this," Devoid responded, cracking his knuckles and dusting off to look somewhat presentable. "We are part of an interplanetary union who's only goals are to discover the great unknowns of the galaxy. We mean no harm and we certainly won't kill needlessly. If you see that symbol on someone, you can trust them not to harm you. If someone does, then they don't stand for what it means. We are here to discover and keep peace throughout the galaxy, not to conquer needlessly and exploit what we find."

The Voidling backed up again, and sent an image to Devoid. Images of the Hiss, enslaving and ripping apart Voidlings connected to the image of a combadge by a scribble.

"That... Thing isn't of us. We wouldn't dare have a part in such a horrid creature. That's why we destroyed her. The Federation exists to spread peace, not despair," Devoid responded with disgust.

Other Voidlings approached, not all of them humanoid, but they came with curiosity. They touch, poke, and feel the crew. They do not know who these strangers are, or why they do not attack... this is fascinating to them. One, a rabbit humanoid, walks up to Seifer with a curious look. He touched the commander's thigh, for he wasn't tall, but small in comparison to most of the others.

"This is... odd," Briggs stated, looking at the Voidlings touching him and the others.

"Maybe this is how they find out who new visitors are? These are some rather eager beavers!" Sally responds, looking at the Voidlings.

"Well, we should be getting to our home Universe. We could interdimension some *Cali*-class ships here for some classic Second Contact shenanigans. Wait. How do we even leave this place?" Commander Seifer queried.

The Child Voidling looked to the distance. A few minutes passed, and a contraption began to be used, a harpoon reached onto two sides of the ever repeating landscape before attempting to pull everything together. The consequence of it being two rips in time space. The Void Child looked at the crews before sending them two images. One, if both ships enter different rips to their own house structures, the rips indicated by shape. The second, was a ship with one of the crew's on board coming through a rift, highlighted by a scribble.

"They seem to indicate that we'll be led back home due to them... and likely a desire for us to come back," Breezie said, tapping her combadge. "Breezie to Alex, could you check the energy signatures of the rips to show what one leads where?"

"*On it, wouldn't want to end up in the wrong timeline. That Borg sounds like a nightmare!*" Alex said, initiating a scan of the rips.

"He's not wrong. The nightmares they induce give my nightmares nightmares. Not to mention, those nightmares being prone to assimilation," Briggs suggested.

As the *Unreliable* scanned the rips, Breezie turned to Seifer. “So, I guess this is goodbye then. You get to go back home and do... whatever it was you were doing. Hope you get that extra pip on your collar too. I just hope Section 31 doesn’t decide to pry into my timeline, or I’ll be having a few words with them,” Breezie stated.

“How do you know about that? All data relating to Section 31 is heavily restricted?” Seifer blinked.

“A good captain always finds a way,” Breezie joked, tapping the side of her nose.

“*Alex to Breezie, I’ve identified which is which. The one on the right is ours. The Phoenix-X is ready to head back to where they came from,*” Alex spoke from Breezie’s combadge.

“You best get going, Commander. Home awaits,” Breezie said, smiling. “We’ll make sure to return to this place, just keep a tear open for us.”

“Sounds good, Captain,” Seifer conceded. “Thank you for the exhibition of ingenuity and collaboration outside the exclusivity of Starfleet-uniformed crews. The form in which a group assembles is not as important as who they are together. A lesson, I’m confident, this civilization will also aggregate.”

He nodded to Breezie and then the Child Voidling before heading into the *Dracon* with Briggs. The Type 9 shuttle lifted up and flew back into the *Phoenix-X* as the starship was turning for the rift.

Breezie, Devoid and Sally watched as the *Prometheus*-class starship disappeared from view into the tear. “Good luck out there,” Breezie said as the ship flew away.

—

The *Phoenix-X* returned to normal space with a faint flash, right at the doorstep of Starbase 55 as if no interdimensional cracks ever happened.

“Phew! It’s good to be home,” Seifer exhaled in relief. “Now I get *Voyager*. Their whole struggle. The entire seven-year arc in just a few days. But, just to be sure— This isn’t some third, identical Universe of lens flares, Scotty side quests and adrenaline-running corridors on bulbous brewery-Engineered starships?”

Veker completed a submolecular scan of the space station. “The quantum signature checks out, as well the chronometer displays Stardate 70074.9. Also, there’s a Borg cube failing to assimilate a gormagander in the next sector.”

“Ohhh, yeah,” Seifer exhaled a second time, now truly relaxed. “That’s the stuff.” The crew watched as the data graphic displayed several gormagander icons teaming up and wrecking the Borg icon in retaliation.

Elly put her arm over Tong’s shoulder and leaned in whilst addressing the crew. “So, any supplementary lessons beyond Starfleeeting and teamwork? Perhaps observational impressions of the Multiverse?”

“Yes,” BOB cut in. “The regular overcoming of existential threats should not facilitate complacency. Perhaps our Universe is a balance for interdimensional peril. Are we a police Universe, or some kind of backwater Sheriff Universe?”

Seifer tapped his chin. “Nahh. It should be something about giant amorphable transrealmable villains with incredibly large apparel. Like, what are their motivations? Or, where do they come from?” He pondered to a blinking crew, emanating beams of too-lateness at him. “Yeah, I may have missed a lot stuff for this one.”

“*Engineering to Bridge. I’ve done a shipwide scan and everything we left with is accounted for. Well, everything, except for one disqualifying thing,*” came Gewdeque’s call through-air. “*We seem to have acquired a Type 4 shuttle and lost one of our Chaffee-types. It appears the Edward was lost.*”

Tong looked at Seifer, who appeared to generate new Matt Decker style drops of sweat again. “Commander, I think we might know where *Edward* is. It’s on the *Unreliable!*”

“Yeah. No, that makes sense,” Seifer wide-eyed conceded out into the unending multiverse, somewhere where alternate versions of everyone existed. “Thanks, Breezie.”

THE END

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