

Only Ashes Remain

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Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Phoenix-X
Character:	Kronen , Sigon , Deloss
Additional Tags:	Death
Language:	English
Series:	Part 46 of STO Phoenix Compendium
Stats:	Published: 2017-08-14 Words: 1,171 Chapters: 1/1

Only Ashes Remain

by [Hawku](#)

Summary

"Gorn are weak. Except for that rock-throwing thing." - Unofficial Literary Challenge 38: In the early 25th century, Captains Sigon and Deloss deflect a pressing matter to Kronen, causing all three to arrive far too late to the Sage threat surrounding Raatooras.

Notes

Author's notes: This was written in August 2017 as part of the Star Trek Online forums Unofficial Literary Challenge #38. It's a short mash-up of my most recent KDF Captains: Sigon, Deloss and Kronen. Sigon and Deloss were last seen tangling with Dividiians in ULC 33 and Kronen was contending with his mirror self and getting a taste of god-hood with the mirror Prophets in ULC 37. Sigon quit alcoholism in ULC 28 after saving Menchez from dishonourable death. Note, in STO, Gorn and Nausicaans are absorbed into the Klingon Empire and the Jenolan Dyson Sphere is how players access the Delta Quadrant. Also, I previously mashed the Arin'Sen on Raatooras (from ENT) in ULC 17 with the Great Sages on Takar (from VOY, and who were previously missing in ULC 11).

Unofficial Literary Challenge #38: Prompt #1: Your ship receives a distress call from a distant colony that is under attack, but for reasons arrives hours or even days late. They called for you, they trusted you to come, and you got there too late. Everyone is dead. How does this affect your crew, your Captain? what will you do now, what will your report say, and how will this impact your captain's relationship with their respective high command?

Unofficial Literary Challenge #38

"Only Ashes Remain"

The *Bortasqu'*-class I.K.S. *Masamune* rotated around in space, to take aim at its vicious opponent: a *Kolasi*-class destroyer commanded by a Nausicaan named Tog.

"Your reign of terror ends here, Tog," declared Captain Deloss, the Gorn and Klingon Defense Force commander of the *Masamune*.

Tog appeared on-screen in response. *"The only terror I wish to convey is to the likes of you, Gorn! The Klingon Empire will see that we Nausicaans are the superior race, and will award us thusly!"*

"Like, what do you even think they'd do for you? Trophies? Table seating preferences at the fleet parties?" Deloss interjected, genuinely perplexed.

Captain Tog sputtered, unsure himself. *"Shut up! The point is, Gorn are weak! Except for that rock-throwing thing! That is actually quite impressive."* He disconnected and continued firing upon the *Masamune*.

"Sir, we're also getting a priority distress call from the planet Raatooras," reported Liss from operations. "Apparently it's under a global threat and risks destruction."

Deloss was taken aback. "That conquered monstrosity? I'm pretty sure Captain Sigon maintains them under his jurisdiction. Forward him the signal and we'll follow up as soon as we can." He watched as Liss nodded. "We, on the other hand, have to make a stand for humanoid-reptile-kind! Not the other kinds, though."

Meanwhile, the *Kurak*-class I.K.S. *Baetal* sat in orbit of Earth while Captain Sigon and his crew celebrated as guests within 602 Club at Starfleet Academy.

"You, you are the Klingon!" shouted a very drunk Lieutenant Commander Gozer as he put his arm around a deadpanning Sigon. "Am I right? Your wrinkled forehead iss like no other!"

Sigon released himself to visit more of his wasted crew. He was the only one sober. "Why did I quit drinking?" he questioned himself before recalling the reason. "Oh, right. All the dishonor I wrought."

"Don't forget," came Chief Engineer Poroka, who also put her arm around him. "You are the designated driver to get us all home! Also, you have such an attractive nose. There, I said it! Ha! Being on this weakling planet brings out the strangest parts of us!"

He released himself from her, as well, as a communiqué over-air rung through. "*Battlecruiser Baetal to Captain Sigon. This is Tenogh. We're getting a distress signal being relayed about Raatooras under threat. I believe a malevolent entity is attempting to annihilate its occupants.*"

"Ugh! You know, you couldn't have picked a worse time," Sigon flung his arms. "The crew is completely tossed. How are you?"

Tenogh replied, "*I had a glass of Blood Merlot before my shift. It was paired with Cheese Targ.*"

"How is everyone on my crew alcoholics? Is it the constant wars we have with pretty much everyone?? Never mind. Send it to Captain Kronen, and we will catch up. He's been all over recent events anyway, almost like it was his turn or something."

The *Birok*-class I.K.S. *Dragunov* sat, landed, on the planet Takar in the Delta Quadrant, where Captain Kronen, a Klingon Defense Force officer and Ferasan, stood before a crowd of Takarians at the ramp to his ship.

"Fellow humanoids," opened Kronen, "I am neither your Holy Sage, nor your Holy Dissident. Perhaps I'm a third thing, though? A Holy Master or Prophet of some kind? Don't hold back your suggestions."

Commander Red gave him a disapproving look. "You know, we could just go?"

"And leave these poor, helpless worshippers to no priest or cleric of some kind? We have a responsibility!" he declared, seconds before his first officer's PADD rang off a notification beep.

Red checked his device. "Captain, it appears the Jenolan Dyson Sphere has relayed a distress transmission from a planet back home. Apparently, a real Great Sage has taken possession."

"Like, the real gods from this world?? Whoa! We have to check it out— I mean, help its inhabitants and whatnot. Unfortunately, getting there will take some time, considering how far out we actually are."

The Klingon looked at him again. "I told you this Quadrant was a Quadrant of misfortune and complete absurdity."

"You said it passively, so it doesn't count!" countered Kronen. "Let's go. I'm just disappointed I will miss the fire-log thing they do. Oh, to be a figurehead of any kind."

The two ran back up the platform, retracted it, and lifted the *Dragunov* back up into the atmosphere. Several Takarians dropped their fire logs in grief and sadness of their departure.

Later— much, much later— the *Dragunov* dropped warp at the planet Raatooras where they received the deity-hail of the Sage that had taken over the planet below.

"*This is the Great Sage, merged with the form of the Arin'Sen known as Hemly,*" came a visual on the view screen from the planet below. "*This planet has been cleansed.*"

Kronen threw his hands up. "Damn! You couldn't have waited for us? We had to reroute through a Dyson Sphere. You know how many Ferengi salesmen are in that thing now? Those back-hunchers infect anywhere there's a connecting port."

"*We're late, aren't we?*" came the hail from Captain Deloss as the *Masamune* dropped warp. "*I put Gorn pride first and you Captains couldn't follow through for me? Well, it's not surprising since I once had Kagran hold a sandwich to which he then sent off to war.*"

Then the *Baetal* arrived with Captain Sigon. "*Noooooo! We had so many memories conquering this world every year!*" he cried. "*Like the time we did whilst dressed in Fair Haven attire.*"

"None of us are looking good right now," argued Kronen.

The Arin'Sen entity gaped. "*Such a dysfunctional team. You must now deal with the consequences of your inaction! That is my Sage advice— a*

natural expository of my kind, despite all disaster being caused by a Sage— me, to be specific," it declared. "Now, I must find the rest of my Sages to brag about what I've done! Sage out!" He then disappeared in a flash of energy, leaving the three Captains to their barren world.

"Well, it's not like the Empire really cared for this place," Kronen suggested. "And I got to meet another god, so there's that."

Deloss chimed in. *"How about this? We pretend this never happened."*

"I like it. Subtle. Simple. Easy to not-remember," answered Sigon. *"Like the time you and I forgot about our fight with the Devidians."*

The Gorn erupted. *"You know that's not how forgetting works! We have to purge the Klingon Empire database of this world, and possibly the Federation one too."*

"Very well, gentlemen," Kronen continued. "We work to erase any notion of Raatooras, even if it means editing it out of Memory Alpha, that pretentious, well-informed databank maintained, remotely, by basement-dwelling 30-something year olds living with their mothers. That'll be Sigon's job. Good luck!"

The two other Captains agreed and disconnected. There would be much work to be done to protect each of their secret shames forever. Secrets they would take to their graves.

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