

Jello Cubes

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Jello Cubes

by [Hawku](#)

Summary

"I say, bah!" - Episode 1B: In the late 24th century, the U.S.S. Phoenix-X supports the defence of a back-up, back-up Borg cube assault.

Notes

Author's notes: The original of this was done sometime in 1996, as an edited RP chat. The first few episodes used to be short enough each to compile as two-in-ones. This rewrite was done in December 2020.

Star Trek: Phoenix-X

"Jello Cubes"

Way out in the distant vacuum of emptiness and horror, the *Sovereign*-class U.S.S. *Enterprise-E* trekked itself blissfully through space. Picard took a seat on the Bridge next to Riker.

"Well, it surely is a relief to have defeated the Borg's second attempt at assimilating Earth last year. I'm glad they didn't send their backup, backup cube, as per Collective Protocol," the Captain posited.

Riker adjusted his uniform. "Zombies in space is always an adventure, Captain! But what is this backup, backup cube thing you've just nonchalantly referenced for the first time ever?"

"Oh. You know how the Borg are just glorified computer systems operating for a master user, the Queen, right? Well, systems need redundancies and double backup protocols," Picard connected before the tactical alert console went off. "Anyway, me mentioning it now surely can't be relevant."

Later, the *Prometheus*-class U.S.S. *Phoenix-X* sped through transwarp as Captain Daniel entered the Bridge.

"Alright, guys," he began. "I know I don't have a last name, therefore all Holiday gift cards should include service numbers. Also, we should be meeting up with the *Enterprise* soon to collect their failed transwarp coils which I think we could use as table legs."

Soon after, Commander Gotens entered through the turbolift doors. "Captain. Reporting for duty."

"Great to have you aboard," Daniel enthused.

Ensign Dan entered from another side. "Captain. Reporting for duty."

"Great. You're relieved!" Daniel snapped before getting back to his command chair.

As the grumbling Ensign left, Gotens took a position next to him. "Do I, uh, get a chair? Is this a one-chair Bridge?"

"No time for that," Daniel dismissed, getting up. "I want you to tell me when we reach that sleek, movie-level assault cruiser. You have the Bridge. NO ONE sits on my tush-cush."

After he left, Gotens hovered around the chair hesitantly.

Later, the *Phoenix-X* dropped transwarp and approached a horrifically damaged *Enterprise-E*. The screen clicked on for a disheveled Picard and Riker.

"*Phoenix-X to the Enterprise. Are you okay?*" Daniel expressed in genuine concern for the legacy ship. "*You look smudgey.*"

The bald Captain adjusted his uniform. "We have been attacked by a Borg backup cube. They are on their way to the Sol system, but our systems will be back online any minute."

"*That's a relief,*" Daniel breathed. "*I thought, for a second, you had been assimilated.*"

Picard smirked. "Captain, I have! In fact, I should've heard them coming, but their double-backup support-nature facilitates bare-bones transmission and operation. They veered off from us when they recognized me."

"*We'll prepare a fleet and begin an intercept defensive,*" Daniel established. "*What ships do you want to work with? Are you still friends with the Defiant, or are they still miffed at you for that whole leaving-them-adrift thing?*"

Sometime after, the *Phoenix-X* and *Enterprise-E* dropped out of light-speeds into normal space, rendezvousing with a task force of Starfleet ships outside the Trunkola system as an intercept on the Borg's way to the Sol system.

"The Borg's transwarp has been disrupted using the transwarp coils in their direct path," Armond reported from tactical.

Daniel nodded. "See? Broken things have a use. I want those things prepped as table legs as soon as we're done."

"Sir! The cube has entered the system and is heading right for us!" Lieutenant Rock reported as said-cube began to loom before the task force. "Also, I'm getting the elated battle chills. The Doctor says they will pass."

Standing, the Captain began orders, "Right! Raise shields! Return fire! Bring us about, mark 20 by 626!" With red alert blaring, all Starfleet ships began firing phasers and photon torpedoes into the giant machinated square heap. "Literal chills."

The U.S.S. *Enterprise-E* dropped warp and began their rotation of quantum torpedo launches.

"The *Valiant's* losing life support," Riker reported from his chair console. "But they refuse to respond to anything?"

Picard turned. "What is going on with those *Defiant*-class escorts? Bridge to Transporter Room 3, beam the *Valiant* survivors aboard."

"They're refusing. Also, the Admiral's ship has been destroyed," Riker added. "Not Admiral Hayes. Admiral Mayes. He was Hayes' brother."

The French officer with a British accent gritted his teeth. "What is the status of the backup cube?"

"I am reading fluctuations in their power grid," Data reported from his control panel. "It is pulsating to the beat of the Bee Gees' *Stayin' Alive.*"

Picard nodded. "That's how you know. Number One, open a channel to the fleet." And then, "This is Captain Picard. I am taking command of the fleet. Target all your weapons onto the following coordinates."

"Sir," Data checked. "The coordinates you have indicated are for the same non-vital-appearing system you indicated before. In fact, everyone was already firing at it."

The Captain took a second look. "Oh. Then do these coordinates. I refuse to be command-usurped by past me!"

The *Phoenix-X* initiated multi-vector attack mode and split into three with Gotens commanding the Beta section, and Armond, the Gamma section.

"Keep firing on the spot that shiny-headed Human mentioned," Daniel ordered to the other vectors. "Let me know how those alt-Bridges are too. Are they better than this one?"

Gotens replied over comms, as his vector rained fire on the Borg. "*This one has that new car smell. And all the tags are still plastic-tied to every device.*"

"Mine has a homeless Romulan living in it," Armond observed. "I think he has a knife? Should I wake him?"

Daniel shook his head. "No. That's just Romy. He's cool."

The *Galaxy*-class U.S.S. *Xena* swooped around and took aim at the Borg cube as ordered.

"This relentless attack on the Federation from the Dominion, the Borg and so on is really getting on my nerves," Aeris gritted. "But we do have that third nacelle Picard described from his alternate future."

Onegera perked from tactical as she kept fast-tapping the fire button. "It's not like it's doing anything, though. In fact, it takes 0.47 seconds longer to initiate the warp field."

"All worth it for the double-takes," Aeris affirmed.

The *Phoenix-X* reintegrated, mid-battle, to optimize repair, as Gotens and Armond returned to the Main Bridge. The viewscreen displayed the scatter of Starfleet ships swarming the cube.

"These machine hybrids bring upon the kind of fear death would, only in an eternally-alive way," Gotens observed. "I say, bah!"

Daniel nodded. "Agreed. We live with never-die mindsets all our lives, never thinking about the end, but here come the Borg to make that a reality in their own twisted way."

"Still not sure what Riker was thinking when he said he wanted to live forever during his private conversation with Picard after the *Enterprise-D* crashed," Gotens contemplated. "It's treason of the highest order!"

The Captain squinted in disagreement. "It was adorable and witty."

"Sirs, the Borg have stopped firing!" Armond exclaimed milliseconds before the backup cube exploded, smattering a deluge of massive metal hulks and flaming plasma out from its insides.

The *Phoenix-X* was rocked violently, throwing several crew from exploding consoles and to the floor with all the debris. Several other ships were caught in the wake and sent spinning in flames.

"Oh no, BOB!" the Commander exclaimed. "Are you alright?"

Daniel pulled himself up as several downed people were scattered throughout. "There's a BOB on our ship?"

"Looks like our Ensign Rob and Lieutenant Wang are dead," BOB looked around trying to help.

Gotens nodded as he went about. "Lieutenant Rock, too."

"Yeah, but we have a BOB??" Daniel started. "It really is arbitrary who gets to defeat the annals of death. Never mind. I want medical in action and Engineering on systems. You know the usual. An *Enterprise* Combo #47."

The Commander saluted before delving into work. "Order up!"

The *Xena* stopped itself from spinning and the crew got up off the floor.

"Ma'am, ships from all over are reporting systems down from the shockwave," Onegera reported from tactical. "Casualties as well."

Aeris clenched her fist. "The Borg did it again, and they were only a backup of a backup. Can we confirm their second backups don't have tertiary backups?"

"We can't even confirm if they're just as scary in the Delta Quadrant as they are in the Alpha Quadrant," Kuri explained. "Probably not, though. Like, probably wayyyy not."

The Captain nodded. "Agreed. Well, as Starfleet has engineered additional medical facilities to our ship, defaulting us the 'healer' of all and every team-up, we must tend to the fleet!"

"We've collected all our experience points, so we should be good to go," Tekari added.

Aeris stood. "Engage healing powers, now!"

With the *Xena* helping every ship get back on their feet with preparations to rendezvous at Deep Space 9, and the Borg debris burning away, the crew of the *Phoenix-X* found themselves at a loss for a cohesive story.

"Well, that's a victory, eh?" Captain Daniel book-ended before taking notice of Ensign Dan. "You again? You're relieved!" Then he took a therapeutic breath. "Oh, that felt good."

Gotens pondered. "Perhaps some inter-personal conflict, or classic Borg betrayals are on dock for next time?"

"No, this was a light one," Daniel disputed. "We should appreciate the simplicity as an ease-in, for surely future outings will be an actual something, with thinking and depth and some kind of social justice message."

The Commander hesitated. "Now that you mention it, this is preferable. No work, right?"

"Right!" the Captain connected. "In fact, it's making me space-out a little. I think I need to sit down." He then looked to see that he was already sitting. "Way ahead of the game. You guys lucked out with your old Captain."

Gotens interrupted. "Again, where do I sit?"

"No, we're getting that worked out," Daniel answered, unconvincingly. "Yeah, the chair installers are on Alpha Centauri. Yeah. That's the ticket. Anyway, on to other stuff!"

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