

Intrepid and Klingon Decal Notes

Carolyn's Story - Parts 1 & 2

Part One

In an office in the sprawling complex of Starfleet Headquarters in San Francisco, two women were finishing up a long look at display screens and PADDs full of starship diagrams and data, pausing occasionally to view the sunset through tall windows. Carolyn Hagey had recently completed advanced courses in Starfleet and Threat force resource acquisition and movement analysis, a mouthful of terms that described something she was very good at, seeing patterns that the Office of Starfleet Intelligence AI systems sometimes missed. Her new OSI superior, Dr. Marjorie Capello, was a veteran analyst well known for her part in making sure Starfleet had what it needed in numerous theaters in the Milky Way. And that included starships, shuttles, propellants, weapons, and crews. Everything.

"Computer, this is Capello, OSI 564, accepting preliminary visual examination of the *Intrepid* class operational summary," she said.

"Computer, this is Hagey, SFA 132. Initiating hand-carry file transfer," responded Carolyn, tapping a few PADD icons.

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History

The *Intrepid* class of Starfleet ships were proposed and approved on July 4 2361 by Admiral Nobouo Imagawa as a group of smaller, faster "troubleshooter" vessels capable of quick responses in sectors of the Milky Way known for conflicts between the Federation and adversary cultures, as well as scientific research and aid missions. After a lengthy design process, seven ships were scheduled in October 2367 for production. Hardware refinements continued through April 2368 and construction began at the Utopia Planitia Yards around Mars, with final system installations and checkouts at Earth Station McKinley. The U.S.S. *Intrepid* NCC-74600 and U.S.S. *Bellerophon* NCC-74705 launched in October 2370. U.S.S. *Voyager* NCC-74656 launched January 14 2371, Stardate 48038.5.

While *Voyager* was assigned to its first patrol segment on SD 48183.5, the four additional class ships were undergoing final systems installations and tests with their AeroShuttles. *Voyager* was not outfitted with a final AeroShuttle spacecraft but retained a warp flow simulation body and mass. The final four ships were:

Name	Registry	Final Checks	Launched
U.S.S. <i>Bedford</i>	NCC-74815	SD 48277.3	SD 48418.1
U.S.S. <i>Austin</i>	NCC-74587	SD 48364.8	SD 48402.6
U.S.S. <i>Wells</i>	NCC-74728	SD 48453.2	SD 48498.4
U.S.S. <i>Bennett</i>	NCC-74719	SD 48538.7	SD 48578.7

Each of the *Intrepid* class vessels moved throughout occasionally overlapping sectors in the Alpha and Beta galactic quadrants, conducting single missions as well as joint operations with multi-ship Starfleet groups. One ship, the U.S.S. *Bedford*, was lost in an exchange of weapons fire with a rogue

Klingon Bird of Prey on SD 57552.8 near the Federation colony world of Tenigthal on the outskirts of UFP territory; the *Bedford* was replaced with a partially completed eighth test hull still at the Utopia Planitia Yards construction site and once again given the name.

As was well documented, with the help of intermittent data transfers using alien and Starfleet subspace radio assets late in its journey, *Voyager* was lost in the Badlands near Cardassia, dragged into the Delta Quadrant beginning on SD 48315.6. The crew accomplished a return to Sector 001 on SD 54973.4 following a final encounter with the Borg. *Voyager* underwent thirteen months of hardware and systems checks, repairs, and upgrades, and returned to limited mission operations. All *Intrepid* class ships continued with their assignments through SD 58253.7 when active class ops slowed down and came to an end. *Voyager* was installed in the Starfleet Museum on Luna; the remaining six vessels were sent to a secure Starfleet holding facility at Chryse Planitia on Mars.

Four years later, on SD 62845.7 – eight years after *Voyager* returned home – orders came down from Starfleet Headquarters to move *Voyager* back to Utopia Planitia to participate in a warp flight research program. As vessels no longer on the front lines, the *Intrepid* class could contribute to ongoing science and engineering studies. Over the next eight months, *Voyager* would receive increased deuterium and antimatter tankage, an upgraded dilithium swirl chamber warp core, and would lose its nacelle pylon hinges. The previous need to bend warp fields and lower maximum warp factors, designed to prevent damage to the continuum, was totally eliminated with a combination of new matter/antimatter plasma frequency shaping, nacelle injector sequencing, and warp coil alloy layering. All of these factors were studied and ground tested while *Voyager* was on its long journey home. The improved *Voyager* finally lifted off from the sands of Mars and put its systems to work with a reduced crew of forty-six. Three weeks into warp excursions out to a distance of 6.5 light-years, *Voyager* settled back onto Utopia Planitia and was moved into a large underground work area.

Orders from Starfleet HQ were then passed to the Mars Engineering Directorate to move the other *Intrepid* class ships to join *Voyager*. On SD 63502.9, the *Intrepid* Extended Mission Research section of the underground work area was partitioned off and closed to unauthorized personnel, and ship upgrade and operation progress reports normally shared with Starfleet and Federation entities were held back until those reports could be screened by OSI security specialists.

Of the seven vessels originally dispatched, three returned under their own power following their last assignments. They were *Voyager*, *Powers*, and *Sanborn*. The *Scheidt* and the *Zelle* required major repairs and tractor assistance to return to Federation territory. According to accessible records the *Segouin* and the *Germain* both went silent on SD 69482.8 with no indication of distress and following three years of search operations have been listed as missing.

Addendum

Seven additional ship names were added to the ASDB database on SD 62963.4; however, as of this date it has not been confirmed to this writer if those names were part of the previous OSI renaming scheme and simply not used, or if there were other hulls in work at Utopia Planitia. See future editions of this report for any clarification. Those names were *Aragones*, *Chapel*, *Abelour*, *Kovalic*, *Jameson*, *Varnath*, and *Philips*.

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Once the interim report was transferred to the OSI computer, Carolyn tapped her PADD channel closed. She regarded her new boss, who was signing off on the transfer. “Specialist Hagey,” Dr. Capello said, “I look forward to working with you. We will have many stories to tell. Eventually.” Carolyn nodded; she understood the importance of protecting the information that swirled about the OSI, Starfleet, and the Federation. They walked toward the shuttle dock, where Carolyn would get a ride back up to the starbase that would be her home for the next three weeks.

“Dr. Capello, do we know what happened to the *Segouin* and the *Germain*?” Carolyn asked, almost hesitating. Capello turned. Carolyn couldn’t tell from Capello’s expression if, as a new analyst team member, she had just crossed a line. Capello closed her eyes for a moment and seemed to smile. Sadly? Carolyn couldn’t tell.

“That part of the story will have to wait until your clearance upgrade comes through. Soon.”





































Part Two

Office of Starfleet Intelligence Specialist Carolyn Hagey settled into her temporary quarters aboard Starbase *Nechayev* rather easily after arriving by shuttle from Starfleet Headquarters. *Nechayev* hung motionless in the sky over 122.41° W longitude while at GEO, a bright but slightly irregular blue-gray star when viewed with the naked eye from the ground. Smaller points of light, starships and shuttles, regularly docked and departed, transferring the personnel and equipment not already moving up and down by transporter. As to why Carolyn was working an OSI problem on the starbase and not back at Starfleet HQ was made clear by her new superior, veteran analyst Dr. Marjorie Capello. Carolyn might be required to join a starship crew at any moment and move out at high warp. Even after three years of investigating the disappearance of two stealth *Intrepid* class ships, something troubling was happening on the far side of Klingon space that OSI felt she could help resolve.

Carolyn spent the first full day getting familiar with the base, making sure the onboard AI knew her and where she went and processed her secure communications quickly. She met up with six of her planetside OSI colleagues who were also called up to orbit. Jonas Thorne and Azumi Hamasaki were classmates from Starfleet Academy eight years ago in 2387, the other four had graduated from the primary program a few years earlier in 2384.

Hagey, Carolyn R.; SFA 132 Civilian; Specialist, Threat Force Resource Acquisition & Movement
Hamasaki, Azumi; SFA 155 Lieutenant; Specialist, Crew Habitability
Mendez, Roberto L.; SFA 156 Chief Petty Officer; Specialist, Propulsion Systems
Moreno, Nora G.; SFA 156 Civilian; Specialist, Defensive Weaponry
O’Connor, Deirdre T.; SFA 170 Lieutenant Commander; Specialist, High Energy Systems
Reyes, Jeremy S.; SFA 168 Civilian; Specialist, Auxiliary Craft Systems
Thorne, Jonas D.; SFA 142 Lieutenant; Specialist, Signal Intelligence

They all had similar instructions and clearances so there was no problem interacting with them on specific matters. At least the ones they were told about. Carolyn’s plate was full but not overwhelming. There were briefing sessions and study periods devoted to the Klingon home planet and interstellar ops, weapons, data and voice communications, language, encryption schemes and related technology. During one prerecorded message to the group, Dr. Capello stated, “As you know, the political situation with the Klingons is heavily strained at this time. The Federation is not surprised; established Klingon houses and

	a		l		p		u		2
	b		j		q		v		3
	ch		l		Q		w		4
	D		m		r		y		5
	e		n		S		'		6
	gh		ng		t		0		7
	H		o		tlh		1		8
									9

loose clan groups have formed coalitions, broken up, and reformed with different members over the centuries. All with different views of relations with the Federation and other major cultures in the galaxy.” For reasons not yet clear, there were also presentations on matter and energy in the Milky Way galaxy. She wasn’t expected to become an instant expert on high energy physics, but something in the coming work might spark an idea. *So to speak*, she thought.

Even with the new information they had to process, there was down time for meals together and catching up, so the initial work activities up on *Nechayev* were not exhausting. Regardless, Carolyn had a habit of turning in early with some light reading and music. Who knew what time would be available at the end of the three weeks? Starting on the very first night, she played a list on her PADD that included a mix of soft melodies and heroic compositions. She reasoned it would help take her mind off the Klingon situation, though she also admitted that warriors of the Empire would probably approve of the epic tunes. Notes and chords and voices drifted through her quarters; she lost count of the number of times she heard her favorites.



Calendar Date: 30 AUG 2395 Stardate: 72661.4 Time Dilation Factor: 0.008

Three days after Carolyn arrived, Capello came up for a visit accompanied by four serious-looking OSI operatives and an impressive data storage unit about the size of a full medical kit. All of the station based OSI members in Carolyn’s group were requested to gather in a spacious meeting room in uniform. Even civilians had nice outfits with communicators when close to home, though without rank pips. Of course, OSI operatives in the field could appear as anything. Capello entered, smiled and nodded at Carolyn, and stood at the lectern as the doors slid closed.

“This session is now at secure status,” Capello began. “As you will see in your orders file, contact with allies or any adversary back-channels concerning this matter is not authorized.” She paused. “Thank you all for accepting this assignment. Your individual OSI upgrades are now entered into the station and Starfleet Headquarters AI systems. All of you are now cleared for SFA 175 level files, and some will be cleared for SFA 200 under controlled interactions.” Carolyn sat in rapt attention and almost forgot to breathe. Capello continued with the astounding news that had occupied her and a few dozen other select Starfleet officials, and had Carolyn wringing her hands since first hearing about it.

“The mystery surrounding the *Intrepid* class stealth vessels U.S.S. *Segouin* and U.S.S. *Germain* can now be discussed with you. They had been covertly investigating Klingon ship movements when a series of energetic events occurred some fifty-eight degrees south of the galactic plane as measured from Qo’noS and 127 lightyears away from that world.” Maps and icons appeared and animated on the wall monitor. “They were hit by highly focused weapons fire of an unknown type from a long distance, attempted to fire back at the origin point, and the attacker or attackers then disappeared. Simply disappeared. Transmissions from the Klingon vessels ceased and data about them could not be picked up while the *Segouin* and *Germain* exited the area with all possible speed. No additional useful active or passive sensor readings could be retrieved from either Starfleet ship. However, and this may be vitally important, two weeks ago on Stardate 72623.1 a pair of galactic subspace arrays closest to the theater of action reported an energy emission similar to the original bursts, but of lower intensity. Each burst was followed by a sequence of smaller bright emissions. No additional bursts have occurred as of today. From a spectral standpoint, and Lieutenant Commander O’Connor can give you more specifics as we go, the

beams that impacted the area appeared to be a dense column of hard gamma rays with a wavelength of 10^{-12} meters with some outer components shifted down into the far UV at 10^{-7} meters. What makes them highly unusual is that they seem to have undergone a temporal acceleration into what we would consider high warp, making their origin difficult to pinpoint. The numerous smaller emissions were released at speeds within the normal subwarp regime.” Capello watched with the team as data-driven graphics sliced and flared and expanded across a region of space “below” Klingon territory. On the map, the beam appeared almost as a black and deep violet sword stabbing perfectly straight through space. Interestingly, the most intense part of the phenomenon was isolated to a volume only a lightyear or two in diameter before dispersing into faint but still detectable ripples. *So many strange, complex pieces to the puzzle.* She waited until the display stopped moving.

“On a continuing basis, *every scrap of data* from every source under our control is being preserved for study, along with the analysis done up to this point,” she said. “There may still be real information to be found deep within the petaquads of signals recorded. Some believe that the Klingons must be responsible, but there are signs that tell us they do not and could not have the advanced systems necessary. You will have access to everyone cleared to work this problem, and we believe you are the keys to solving this.” Capello paused again, looking around the room at some of the brightest minds in OSI. From a political standpoint, even three years in, she knew that most of her Starfleet superiors and the Federation did not want to assign blame to the Klingons without a thorough examination, did not wish to bring the Klingon High Council into the investigation, or let them know what OSI knew. Most did not mean all, but that was another matter entirely.

“The ships are safe, though they both sustained damage and small crew losses,” she continued. “We conducted a quiet but intense search in the area over nineteen months and eventually discovered that the *Germain* was in orbit around the moon of a superjovian gas giant, and the *Segouin* had landed on the surface of that moon. Both had gone long range RF and subspace silent. The star system is some eighty-nine lightyears from the original attack, is uninhabited, and thankfully has not been visited by any Threat force vessels. The ships were able to reach the system within forty-one days while maintaining an average warp speed of 7.65 and full stealth mode. After three years with no subsequent encounters, both are deemed safe and operating on minimal power, exhibiting no real hardware signatures. We must, however, remain vigilant in this situation. Something is still happening near Klingon space, and the Klingons themselves have not spoken a single word of these events. The planetary system is near the border of the Federation and the Empire, but still south of the galactic plane. In a *very* secret operation, the original crews were extracted, small maintenance crews were brought in with new stores of fuels and components, and the ships were brought back up to at least basic flight readiness, and able to defend themselves. Distressed hull plating and stealth coating samples were removed for study. And outside of the upper levels of OSI, it was deemed absolutely necessary that the galaxy believe that both ships had been lost.” Carolyn bit her lip. *The crew members still in hiding after all this time...their families...*

The group was dismissed to consider all that had been said and to proceed over the next days with new waves of analysis, new eyes on the data, asking the computers to think about things differently. Capello spoke briefly to each team member, but had Carolyn wait until the others left. And then hugged her. “Congratulations, Miss 200,” she said in a quiet tone but with a broad grin. Carolyn exhaled, nervous and excited, but buoyed by the doctor’s confidence in her.

“Thank you. Thank you, Doctor,” Carolyn said.

Before she could say anything more, Capello said, “You’re going to be in charge of this team. And you can call me Marjorie. Want to get a drink?” Carolyn nodded and the two headed along corridors and a turbolift to the nearest lounge. “You’ll like this,” Marjorie said with a chuckle. “Even the lounge is *very* secure.” The *Nechayev* was partitioned off such that the OSI had at least one of every kind of physical facility that the analysis group needed for their work, including control and computing, communications out into the galaxy and incoming sensor data, quarters, mess halls and other refreshment areas, and even a theater and a few holodecks. All of the amenities were welcome, certainly, but each Starfleet member understood that the base’s central function was to provide close-in defense of the headquarters complex 35,786 kilometers below.

They sat down at a table by some windows looking out into the interior of the base, where they could get a glimpse of various craft coming and going. A waiter came over. "May I interest you ladies in a new offering? J'nandt Onyx. A special blend, very smooth, from Denkir Four."

Marjorie glanced at Carolyn, who shook her head subtly. "I'll have a Norato Drop," she said.

Carolyn simply ordered her usual. “And a Rambutrix margarita for me.” With their drinks and a few snacks, they relaxed and talked about most everything. Except the work. Starfleet people they both knew, travels around Earth and other worlds, some childhood experiences and family, and careers. Carolyn at 26 did not yet have the breadth of experiences that Marjorie had at 79, but their age difference didn’t seem to matter. They were enjoying each other’s company so short a time after meeting.

Marjorie laughed at one point and said “I could have been an admiral.” Carolyn was surprised.

“What stopped you?” she asked.

“I decided I wanted to do research and teach and solve mysteries,” Marjorie replied, “instead of ordering folks around to do the work.”

Carolyn said, “Well, you’re ordering folks around now, right?” Marjorie took one last sip from her glass.

"I'm not doing that. You're doing that." Which set them both to some welcome laughs.

As they eventually departed down separate corridors, Marjorie said, “We’ll start fresh in the morning. Sleep well.”

Calendar Date: 31 AUG 2395 SD 72662.9 - 72665.4 Time Dilation Factor: 0.008

The next day, Carolyn's team was presented with OSI data that the AI systems seem to feel was evidence of Klingon involvement in the attack on the two *Intrepid* vessels, particularly in light of the sensor readings disappearing. Everything seemed to point to cloaking fields and directed energy weapons. The OSI AI maintained the opinion that a group of Klingon houses had somehow acquired advanced cloaking tech and plasma weaponry that could perform at very high FTL speeds. Carolyn read all of the available notes, listened to OSI covert ops officials over holos deliver spoken presentations, asked many, many questions, and conferred with Marjorie on key issues. They both agreed that keeping the *Segouin* and *Germain* "lost" was important, regardless of who attacked them. The team pressed forward retrieving and rebuilding outlines, graphs, and connections, occasionally dropping in bits of real-time data from distant sources in multiple attempts to "connect the dots." Hamasaki compiled all of the data she had from her studies on Klingon ship and crew survivability, grateful for the direct experiences that Starfleet had with various vessels built by the Empire in friendlier times, as well as a few hulls acquired through covert means.

Buried deep in the subspace EM data, clues were emerging about the Klingon ships, and the *Nechayev's* isolinear computer cores were pressed into service to break out and then decrypt some long strings which were “horribly stacked and intertwined and peppered with missing bits,” according to Thorne, who sat at his main LCARS screen massaging some new algorithms while Carolyn stood beside him. The team drifted between the consoles and big wall displays for most of the day, breaking for short group polls and talk about progress and next steps. Carolyn took it all in. It ultimately took until 2150 hours to make general sense out of the strings, and with a few code tweaks, the computer produced the names of six ships involved in the initial incident, though not much else.

1. ལྷོ་རྩི་ལྷུ་ལྷུ་	qlmroq blr tut	Column of the Cold Season
2. ལྷུ་ ལྷུ་	quv nlt	Pure Honor
3. ལྷུ་ལྷུ་ལྷུ་ ལྷུ་	jajlo'Daq ghoS	Procedes Towards Dawn
4. ལྷུ་ལྷུ་	'ejyaH	Infinite
5. ལྷུ་ ལྷུ་	qul qa'	Fire Spirit
6. ལྷུ་ལྷུ་ ལྷུ་	ghurbogh ruv	Justice Rising

“But not bad for the first day,” Thorne noted. Carolyn studied two of Thorne’s data windows, one seemingly filled with random nonsense and the other with the assembled names.

“Wait a second,” she said, glancing toward the ceiling, squinting and processing...something. “How did you get from here to here?” she asked, pointing. Thorne chuckled.

“Untrustable extrapolations?” he replied. Carolyn rolled her eyes and nodded.

“Well, looks like you got lucky. This was the easy part. I’m thinking it gets much worse from here.”

Language routines in the isolinear core, along with expert live help, arrived at words that seemed to fit. The names were entered into the OSI database for further processing. The team, Marjorie included, agreed on the translations. “Sounds very Klingon,” she noted. “Let’s see if we can figure out ship types, capabilities, and where they went.”

Calendar Date: 01-04 SEP 2395 SD 72665.7 - 72676.6 Time Dilation Factor: 0.008

The next four days saw the team making slow but steady progress. Between Jonas Thorne’s ability to tear into Klingon subspace signals and Deirdre O’Connor eliminating at least thirty naturally-occurring energy readings in the galaxy, they were starting to build a vague picture of what happened in the initial incident. O’Connor, who had studied under some of the most brilliant astrophysicists, didn’t eliminate any energy signature unless she was amazingly sure that it wasn’t artificial.

“Carolyn, it looks like we have at most five candidate fields and particles left to concentrate on,” Deirdre said. “If we take Jonas’ signal results and all of the other impulse, warp, weapons, and other Klingon technology that we’re pretty familiar with, and compare that with the readings from the two burst events, there’s something in the bursts that simply cannot be created with Klingon materials. Or even materials that they could bring home from elsewhere. I guess what I’m saying is that every element or compound or forced-matrix alloy that the Empire has, when exposed to their usual energy sources, doesn’t make the burst radiation with that intensity of gamma rays. Oh, and a sprinkling of other spectral lines.” Deirdre tapped through a series of data files on the big screen to make a point. “And we’ve gone through records of at least three thousand systems with the potential for warp and weapon materials, and nothing sticks.”

Mendez, Moreno, and Reyes, all familiar with Klingon technology, agreed. Mendez said, “Based on the energy that glanced off our ships, whatever caused the original burst would have required maybe fifteen times the equivalent reaction mass of matter and antimatter from a *Vor’cha* class cruiser going off at once, but the resulting energy didn’t exactly match an M/A reaction.”

Deirdre added, “We know the burst was pretty quick, like maybe six seconds, and directional, followed by that much longer string of reactions, which *might* have been deuterium and antideuterium reacting. There was a lot of noise and spectral shifting in those pops. But we’re looking at a *hell* of a lot of gamma radiation that’s being packaged and aimed.”

Carolyn sat, thinking. And then looked up. “Thanks. I want to go over all of this with Marjorie before she heads out. Let’s keep looking at what the Klingons might have been capable of. And anything else that we can think of.”

Calendar Date: 05 SEP 2395 SD 72678.6 Time Dilation Factor: 0.008

The lounge on the *Nechayev* was as good a place as any to give Marjorie a summary of the team’s progress before her trip downhill. There were no recent big revelations, but she and Carolyn agreed that it was still good to talk about the results, maybe pose a few familiar questions once more, and think about other directions to go in. The data was continually being processed, and Carolyn continued to absorb what her colleagues were seeing individually, sometimes in pairs, and as a whole. The sensor readings and coms that were spread out over the full timeline were joined by timelines of political events, personnel travels among different cultures, and Carolyn’s chosen area of study, resource acquisition and movement. No intelligence report was ignored. So far, only one unusual item got the team’s attention – an observed sixty percent decrease in Klingon starship traffic between Qo’noS and the areas adjacent to the beam incidents. The AI systems were busy attempting to make connections.

Carolyn's com badge gave a tone and called out. "This is Jonas. We have at least one bit of news that the good Doctor can take home." He sounded serious.

Carolyn replied, "We'll be right there." Marjorie already had her travel cases placed aboard the shuttle, but went back to the team's lab room to see what had come up. When they arrived, Jonas pointed to the wall monitor.

"It's all we have, but we're going to keep on it." The familiar graphics of the beam and chain emissions, the Klingon ships, and the *Segouin* and *Germain* moved about the screen. "Initially, our ships didn't seem to be able to hear anything from the Klingons during the first beam event," he began, "but we've been able to clean up some faint subspace traffic from two of them, *Pure Honor* and *Justice Rises*. We can thank Deirdre for the filtering ideas." He waved an open palm in her direction.

Audio from the display crackled and hissed terribly. "Their com channels were trashed, but it took a large fraction of a second. Which is all we needed," Jonas explained. Small graph curves rose and sank and stretched and compressed in time with the audio distortions, until a voice spoke a very rapid, tiny handful of phonemes, but recognizably Klingon. If the speaker were underwater with a mouthful of marbles, as Jonas would describe the sound. Translations of two clearest snips were spoken by the computer and the letters lit up. The first was "...warp..." The second was "...attack..."

"The two Klingon ships were close, like three thousand meters from the edge of the beam. It looks like they got bounced around, which could be, I don't know, a miscalculation? I mean, if they initiated the burst. However..." Jonas paused, moving a few LCARS sliders and tapped some algorithm controls. "Here are the best guesses from the AI. Ninety-two percent confidence. The Klingon words and translations wrote onto the screen.

ᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠶᠡᠭᠡᠨ	'plvghor ylchu'	Activate the warp drive	■ 92% Likely
ᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠠᠶᠢᠨ	'plvghor wlchu'	We're activating the warp drive	
ᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠠᠶᠢᠨ	'plvghor wlchu' choH	We're beginning to activate the warp drive	

ᠠᠶᠢᠨ ᠠᠶᠢᠨ	nuHlv	They're attacking us	
ᠠᠶᠢᠨ ᠠᠶᠢᠨ	wIHlvlu'	We're being attacked	■ 92% Likely

The most likely reconstructions put a completely different spin on Marjorie's day.

"...Activate the warp drive..." and "...We're being attacked..."

Calendar Date: 06-09 SEP 2395 SD 72680.5 - 72689.8 Time Dilation Factor: 0.006

Marjorie and her four OSI operatives left Starbase *Nechayev* for a routine shuttle flight back to Starfleet Headquarters, now with a bit more information than when she first arrived. She would need to bring her OSI and Starfleet superiors up to speed on the situation while Carolyn and the team continued their research. A few days later, shortly after dinner, the starbase AI presented an updated timeline and galactic location data for all significant energetic events, with all known and unknown causes marked. Deirdre O'Connor rotated the map in a few different orientations, ran the time forwards and back, swiped away the understood events like border skirmishes among different cultures, added and subtracted other galactic phenomena, and stared. The map animated over time with dots, streaks, and fuzzy patches. Different colors and icons were attached to ships and literally everything else of interest. Carolyn looked on as Deirdre played a certain piece of the timeline over and over. A pale blue patch appeared and faded, and another in a different spot, and a third further along. The violet and black beam slashed out and faded, and the popping of blue-white dots followed near the trajectory of the beam. The sequence happened

again in a different location, followed by a final line of blue patches at an angle to the first two, as if they were stepping stones in space. They were headed up through the galactic plane at high FTL speeds.

“Well, these are new,” Carolyn remarked, pointing at the screen. Deirdre sat back as the sequence repeated.

“I was able to pull some continuum distortions out of data sent by Starbase 117,” she said. “Looked like really faint natural galactic emissions when I could process only a couple, but there are a lot of them happening over time. If I had to call them something, I’d spin the wheel and say gravimetric flow events. But whatever is making them appears to be moving very fast. By normal EM, we wouldn’t see these for maybe a hundred and fifty years, if ever.”

A tone sounded and the computer spoke. “The new data load from Starbase 105 has been added to the display.” The team watched their consoles and the wall monitor. While Deirdre pushed and pulled energy readings, Jonas scoured the data for additional Klingon transmissions. Hamasaki, Mendez, Moreno, and Reyes attempted to correlate the information with Klingon – or anyone else’s – spacegoing assets. With the EM speed limit of c , virtually nothing on a galactic scale was knowable in real time, or even over a reasonable lifespan for sentient beings. For fixed facilities, everything depended on subspace sensing and communications, in concert with starship crews and probes that could travel at warp or in extremely rare hyperspace jumps. The blue stepping stones might just be jump signatures, and for Carolyn that was a disturbing thought.

Calendar Date: 10-12 SEP 2395 SD 72690.6 - 72696.1 Time Dilation Factor: 0.006

As the team worked over the next two days and additional data loads were received, they adopted staggered hours. Carolyn spoke with Marjorie when both were free. During one exchange, they both looked very tired. “You doing okay?” Marjorie asked. “You look like I feel, but I’m going to guess the medical staff are helping where they can,” she added.

“Doing okay, thanks. It’s just the different shifts and the incoming data,” Carolyn replied. “I’m actually surprised at how far we’ve gotten. Jonas should have something more in about an hour. I’ll let you know.”

Marjorie smiled. “Tell him Starbase 36 is sending along another data load, so grab some breakfast and we’ll talk later.”

Carolyn grinned back. “Lunch,” she responded, and the two signed off for the time being.

Calendar Date: 13 SEP 2395 SD 72700.1 Time Dilation Factor: 0.006

Jonas finished running the latest subspace data load through the computer. And the latest scraps of Klingon com through the latest decryption algorithms. Which is when he called for the real Klingon tech experts, Hamasaki, Mendez, Moreno, and Reyes to consider the findings. Some interesting words popped up in the com strings. Chief Roberto Mendez, their propulsion expert, ran his own version of the timeline with the new data. After discussing some of the possibilities with the team, he was now convinced that what they had seen was an attack on two previously unverified Klingon storage facilities based far from Qo’noS. Facilities containing considerable amounts of one new word – *antimatter*.

Moreno and Reyes agreed, and Hamasaki, sometimes quiet during the group sessions, provided an extensive report on which classes of Klingon ships and shuttles might have been able to escape the aftermath of the attacks and preserve their crews and onboard supplies. Carolyn was impressed with Azumi’s thoroughness and said so. The observed decrease in ship travel in the attack area seemed to point to a major loss of antimatter, but why the Klingons did not report these difficulties was still to be determined. Marjorie was kept in the loop on all items. If the Empire wasn’t responsible for the attacks, who was?

Calendar Date: 14 SEP 2395 SD 72701.5 Time Dilation Factor: 0.008

At mid-morning, as Carolyn was getting to the lab and Azumi, Deirdre, and Jeremy were signing off, a subspace data transmission was coming in from Starbase 24 near the Federation border with the

Klingons. Different files were prioritized for display before others, and everyone stuck around long to see what appeared on the galactic map first. Aside from all of the expected interstellar activities being watched, the starbases were instructed to flag anything that seemed to match the phenomena being studied, and that is exactly what lit up on the map. Deirdre's eyes went up and down between her console and the wall monitor as she wiggled a few sliders. Jonas' fingers were poised over the com traffic controls.

And then a line of three blue patches appeared on the display, recorded some thirty minutes earlier. Carolyn rotated the map in three axes and read the positional data. The patches were north of the galactic plane by some twenty-two lightyears, traveling up and away from Klingon territory according to the time sequence. They were about five lightyears apart, made a line angled about eighteen degrees off the plane, and headed generally in between the Federation and the Romulans. Carolyn called down to Marjorie, who was delayed by a few moments finishing up a meeting with Starfleet officials. She sent real-time images of what her team was analyzing.

"Okay, give me a second," Marjorie said. "This is what just came in, correct?" Carolyn nodded.

"Yes. About half an hour ago," she replied. Marjorie was tapping on her PADD and looking up at the display she had at headquarters.

She looked away in thought, worked a few more bits of the display, and finally said, "Everyone sit tight. Do not leave. I will return shortly." As the headquarters visual pickup winked off, she was seen catching up to a Starfleet admiral. Carolyn took a breath.

"All right, you heard her. Let's see what else we can find until she comes back. Deirdre, the galaxy's all yours."

After an hour Marjorie had still not called back in, and the team continued to refine the data. No additional transmissions were received from the starbases. The lab wall display repeatedly played the timeline as numerical information appeared and disappeared, and the team built their reports. Finally the com system came on, and Marjorie was sitting with two other OSI officials. Red OSI symbols winked on and a new tone sounded.

"This communication is to remain classified," she began. "You are cleared to hear the following information and to work with me on it. You will share it with no one else outside this group." Carolyn knew that secrecy and conduct within the rules was all part of OSI operation, and she steeled herself for what was coming. Her team stood, nodding. "Fleet Operations has examined the data on the latest gravimetric flow events and plotted a preliminary trajectory," Marjorie said, with a tone more serious than Carolyn had ever heard.

"If they continue on this path, they will intersect with our antimatter refinery at Alpha Siolrahn 4, fifty-eight lightyears from Sol. We must not allow that to happen. Our fleet must get there first. The existence and location of the refinery and similar facilities are not known outside of the highest levels of Starfleet, and any disruption to its operation will have devastating consequences for the Federation."

Oh shit, thought Carolyn.

The team was soon briefed in person up on the *Nechayev* by Marjorie. Some of them would remain at the starbase and some would soon be heading toward Alpha Siolrahn 4. As team leader Carolyn got a bit more time with Marjorie to go over the situation and simply to talk before they were separated. Carolyn would be heading out on the U.S.S. *de Baissac*, a new fast stealth ship being prepared on Mars. As they sat in the lounge for what could be the last time, Marjorie presented Carolyn with a small gear bag. Carolyn opened it and reached inside. "Is this...an EVA headset?" she asked, carefully unfolding the soft cap and communicator rig.

"This was from my last mission," Marjorie explained. "and now it's yours." She smiled at the young woman she had known for so short a time, though it felt like years, and pointed at the headset. "We'll talk."

Carolyn's voice broke slightly. "Yes. We will."

To be continued...

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