

STAR TREK: FINAL FRONTIER

"THE EMPTY EYE"

PART TWO

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Based on "Star Trek" created by Gene Roddenberry

EXT. ALIEN PLANET - DAY

Pink sky fills the frame, giving no indication of place. REVEAL JAX, unconscious, sprawled in yellow foliage in a rocky ravine. For a moment we hear ONLY WIND.

Jax's eyes open slowly. She GROANS.

JAX
Captain?

She smacks her lips, frowns.

JAX (CONT'D)
Ugh. What is that taste?

Jax begins to rise. She doesn't get far before her attention is taken by a HIGH-PITCHED WHISTLE nearby. She turns.

A WHISTLER stands about twelve feet away. Two bulbous eyes, an armored thorax, and spindly-sharp limbs. It's sniffing the air in Jax's direction. Antennae twitching.

JAX (CONT'D)
(tentative)
I'm Lieutenant Jax from the
starship Enterprise. I'm not quite
sure how I got here. Or where here
is. Do you... talk?

The creature takes a step toward her. It sniffs, bristles, and FREAKS OUT with a MIGHTY WHISTLE. Armored plates CHICK and CHACK as a pair of wasp-like wings spreads from its back.

JAX (CONT'D)
Okay.

She draws her phaser and scrambles back, but is blocked by a spiny shrub. The creature rises four feet into the air. Dust kicks up from its hummingbird wings. It SHRIEKS.

Jax spins away and tries to bolt, but the HISSING creature is too fast. It strafes in an arc to block her path. The thing's spindly legs are now weapons; it rears back to strike.

One dagger-like leg whips out. Jax dodges, but falls to the ground. She drops her phaser, which skitters away in the dust. Jax looks up as the creature hovers, ready to pounce.

ZIRRRRR! A PHASER BLAST strikes it in the side. It's confused. Unhurt.

ZIRRRRR! Another hit. That one stung, but it's not going down.

ZIRRRRRRRRRRR! Two more, and these are enough to knock it out of the air. It hits with a THUMP, twitching. Stunned.

HOLDEN (O.S.)

Clear!

Jax looks over to see CHASE and HOLDEN, phasers drawn, emerge from behind a rock. She gets to her feet and retrieves her sidearm as they approach.

JAX

Captain.

CHASE

Lieutenant.

JAX

Where the hell are we, sir?

CHASE

We're not quite sure yet. You okay?

JAX

I've got a terrible headache. And a really awful taste in my mouth.

CHASE

Prowse'll give you a look. We've almost got everyone together.

JAX

Everyone?

CHASE

The crew's accounted for. It's the ship that's missing.

Chase turns and begins heading up a nearby embankment. Holden follows. Jax looks around for a moment. A distant WHISTLE pierces the silence. She runs to catch up.

EXT. SPACE

An empty dragonfly hovers over the surface of the sphere, an anion beam emitting from its nose to reveal a section below. On the surface stand ZERO, DONAL, and CHEN. Donal and Chen wear thin, lightweight space suits with transparent headpieces and gravity boots.

ON THE GROUP as Donal wields a phaser cutter, glowing brightly against the hull of the sphere. She stops.

DONAL
I've got no idea how thick it is,
but it's thick enough that this
thing's useless.

ZERO
And the other teams?

Donal's bug blinks. She shakes her head.

DONAL
No luck.

She looks up at the Dragonfly.

DONAL (CONT'D)
We should regroup. This isn't
working, and no sign of Enterprise.

Donal's BUG blinks. Chen straightens and disengages his
boots. His thruster pack glows bright as he flies up toward
the waiting dragonfly.

DONAL (CONT'D)
No telling how long we'll be here.
Chen will start inventorying
supplies.
(beat)
We need a way in. You look into a
software solution. My guys and I
will cover hardware.

It's tough to read Zero's expression, but he's concerned.
Donal sees it.

DONAL (CONT'D)
It's going to be fine, Zero. Either
we'll find them or they'll find us.

She stows the plasma cutter, rises, and floats for a moment
above the sphere.

DONAL (CONT'D)
Trust me.

With that, she jets off toward the waiting ship. Other
dragonflies approach in the distance.

EXT. ALIEN PLANET - DAY

Oddly-colored rocks and crystals littered around multiple
cave entrances. The ENTIRE CREW of the U.S.S.

Enterprise is here, over 100 people clustered into groups with REDSHIRTS at the perimeters. Some are scanning plants, others are simply wondering where the hell they are.

DR. PROWSE is set up under a rocky overhang, a few INJURED CREWMAN lying nearby. Chase and Jax are with him. He's finishing a scan as Jax smacks her lips again. In the background, Holden talks with a group of REDSHIRTS.

PROWSE

It's increased alkalinity in your saliva. We've all got it, but your taste buds are sensitive enough to notice.

JAX

It tastes like licking a ruptured phaser cell.

Chase shoots her an odd look.

JAX (CONT'D)

It was an academy dare. Sir.

PROWSE

Alkaline increase is typically a result of matter transmission. Usually imperceptible. I've never seen it at a level where you can actually taste it.

CHASE

We were beamed somewhere? The whole crew?

PROWSE

That would make sense.

Holden approaches.

HOLDEN

Tricorder range is severely limited. Likely by these crystal formations. We're working to fix it, but so far no luck. Scouting parties have found a few edible plants, and we've got a well in one of these caves. They go pretty deep.

CHASE

And the wildlife?

HOLDEN

A few more of those creatures, but heavy stun seems to work.

Chase peers up at the sky. He's frustrated.

CHASE

We've got about four hours of light left. Start divvying up supplies, get people into caves.

(beat)

We need to find our ship.

HOLDEN

Captain, we don't even know the ship came with us.

Chase brushes him off with a look.

CHASE

She's here, Barric. I know she's here.

HAYES (O.S.)

Captain!

The duo is interrupted by the SHOUT. Nearby crew turn their heads to look.

ON RIDGE, where THREE REDSHIRTS (one's LIEUTENANT HAYES) have emerged. They've got a PRISONER at gunpoint. The creature stands seven feet tall. He's hooded, wrapped in rags. Hayes waves to Chase and Holden.

HOLDEN

More wildlife?

CHASE

Let's hope this one speaks universal translator.

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - DAY

A hastily thrown-together Starfleet command center. Various supplies (whatever crew were holding onto when they were transported) line the walls. In the background, TWO CREWMEMBERS are piling plants and strange fruits.

The prisoner is here, flanked by Hayes and his men. Chase stands in front of the creature. Holden behind him.

CHASE

My name is Captain Alexander Chase
of the Starfleet vessel U.S.S.
Enterprise. Who are you?

The prisoner looks at the three phaser rifles pointed at him.
Chase has them lowered with a hand motion.

PRISONER

My name is Yara. I am displaced,
like you.

Four red arms emerge from Yara's cloak, pulling back his hood
to reveal a craggy, rugged alien face. Horns dot the
creature's head, some broken away.

YARA

I have not heard of Starfleet. Are
you part of the Spire Contingent?

Chase looks to Holden, then back to Yara.

CHASE

I have a feeling we're both far
from home. You said we're
"displaced."

YARA

No one is here by choice. The eyes
brought them. Even the whistlers
are from far away.

CHASE

The eyes? You mean the cloaked
sphere we found?

YARA

Cloaked? Interesting.
(beat)
May I have some water, Captain
Chase?

Chase nods to Hayes. One of his men departs as the others
back away. Yara sits on a rock.

HOLDEN

How long have your people been
here?

YARA

My ship was taken twelve cycles
ago. We approached the eye while on
patrol. We attempted to
communicate.

(MORE)

YARA (CONT'D)

One moment I was on the bridge, and then I was lying in a field of yellow flowers.

CHASE

And there are others?

YARA

You're the sixth group since we got here. Most are with us at our camp beyond the ridge. I can take you there.

Holden bristles.

HOLDEN

And why should we trust you?

Chase glares at him. Yara has no answer. A redshirt arrives with a cup of water, which Yara takes eagerly.

CHASE

Excuse us a moment.

Chase and Holden walk to the mouth of the cave, warm sunlight visible outside. They speak quietly.

CHASE (CONT'D)

He knows more about this place than we do. We could use a little light in the dark right about now.

HOLDEN

A friendly face shows up 30 minutes after we arrive, I get suspicious.

CHASE

We can't circle the wagons every time we face the unknown.

HOLDEN

I'm just saying we should exercise caution.

CHASE

Noted, Commander, but right now we need to find Enterprise and get back home. It's worth the risk.

Holden's upset, but he reigns himself in to refocus on the mission at hand.

HOLDEN

If Zero were here, we could at least have our tricorders up and running. Figure out exactly where we are.

CHASE

If Zero were here, we'd be home by now.

He heads back to Yara, raising his voice.

CHASE (CONT'D)

Yara, you said you woke up on the surface. What about your ship?

YARA

We found it ten days after we arrived. But it was too late.

HOLDEN

Too late?

YARA

(a difficult memory)

It had been stripped to the bone. Every circuit and interlink, every node and blast capsule, pulled to the depths of the planet by those... things.

Chase and Holden share a look. Yara notices. He stands.

YARA (CONT'D)

Come, before night falls and the whistlers come. I will show you your U.S.S. Enterprise.

He stands and strides past our heroes. Chase and Holden follow. Holden nods to Hayes and his men, who join them.

INT. DRAGONFLY

Donal sits in the pilot's seat, a Starfleet ration pack open in front of her. She's checking a readout.

DONAL

Still nothing.

ZERO (COMM)

Now?

DONAL
Still nothing.

ZERO (COMM)
Now?

Donal pops a potato chip equivalent into her mouth.

DONAL
This is totally engaging, Zero, but
I don't get it.

EXT. SPHERE

Donal's dragonfly sits on the surface of the sphere, a patch illuminated to visible by two others overhead. A motley collection of cables runs from an open panel on the side of the dragonfly to a hastily-built machine nearby, attached to the sphere's outer hull. Zero fiddles with some controls.

ZERO
I have built a focused neutrino
beam from the dragonfly's inertial
dampening system.

As Zero explains, we SEE the readout on his machine. A sine wave bounces up and down, showing neutrino activity.

ZERO (CONT'D)
The beam is directed through the
sphere. It should emerge on the
other side.

With that, we ZIP down to the other side of the sphere, where another dragonfly is parked. A cable runs from its side to a sensor box on the surface.

CHEN AND A REDSHIRT, in space suits, sit near the sensor box. They're bored, playing poker with holographic cards. The readout on the box shows no sine wave, just a flatline.

ZERO (CONT'D)
Yet it does not. So where does it
go?

We ZIP back up to Zero, fiddling with his controls.

DONAL (COMM)
To wherever the ship went?

ZERO

An excellent guess, Lieutenant.
Perhaps, in order to transport
Enterprise, the sphere requires a
direct connection to the endpoint.

(beat)

I am modulating the frequency of
the neutrino beam in ways
Enterprise's computer should
recognize. If it is anywhere within
range of the endpoint, it should
pick it up and respond.

INT. DRAGONFLY

Donal munches away, peering at the screen in front of her.

DONAL

I understood eighty-five percent of
that. Which is about my average.

(beat)

Still nothing.

EXT. SPHERE

Zero patiently modifies the signal.

ZERO

We will find her.

As he modulates the beam once more, we ZIP down, through the
box, through the surface of the sphere, and into a tunnel of
light. Time and space stretch around us for a few beats
before we are deposited above

EXT. ALIEN PLANET

A red alien planet, strange shapes dotting the surface below.
We speed down through the atmosphere, skim over red hills
dotted with crystals and rocks, until we are

EXT. RED HILLSIDE - DAY

Chase, Holden, and Yara trudge up the hillside. Hayes and TWO
REDSHIRTS follow at a distance. Jutting out of the ground is
a ruined tower, massive and ancient. The curved lines and
graceful angles indicate impressive technology.

YARA

(re: tower)

The builders were incredibly advanced. We believe they built the eyes as a transport system. But then they died. Or left.

(beat)

Only the eyes kept working. Bringing ships here.

CHASE

These ruins must be tens of thousands of years old.

YARA

Likely. In that time, something took over. It is mechanical. Perhaps an evolved AI built as servants. A security measure or repair system. It deposits organic matter on the surface and takes the ships for raw materials.

HOLDEN

Takes the ships where?

Yara is silent as the group approaches the crest of the hill. He stops at the top, reaching his four arms out to show them.

YARA

Here, Captain Chase. I am afraid you do not have much time.

Chase and Holden reach the top and stare out into the distance. Their eyes go wide.

REVEAL a massive facility on the valley floor. Parts resemble the design of the ruins, but taken over by cruder technology, like silver moss. Massive dock-like pods extend upward. Some are empty. Some contain the remains of long-dead ships.

One bustles with activity. Enterprise floats in the center. The mighty ship is swarmed by hundreds of squid-like robots, about the size of small cars. Most are congregated around the engineering hull, where they cut away at the ship with glowing cutting beams on the tips of their tentacles.

The drones are cutting away sections of the hull, bit by bit, pulling the material down into the depths of the complex.

As we PUSH IN on the crazed robots eating away at Enterprise like ants on a corpse...

END PART TWO