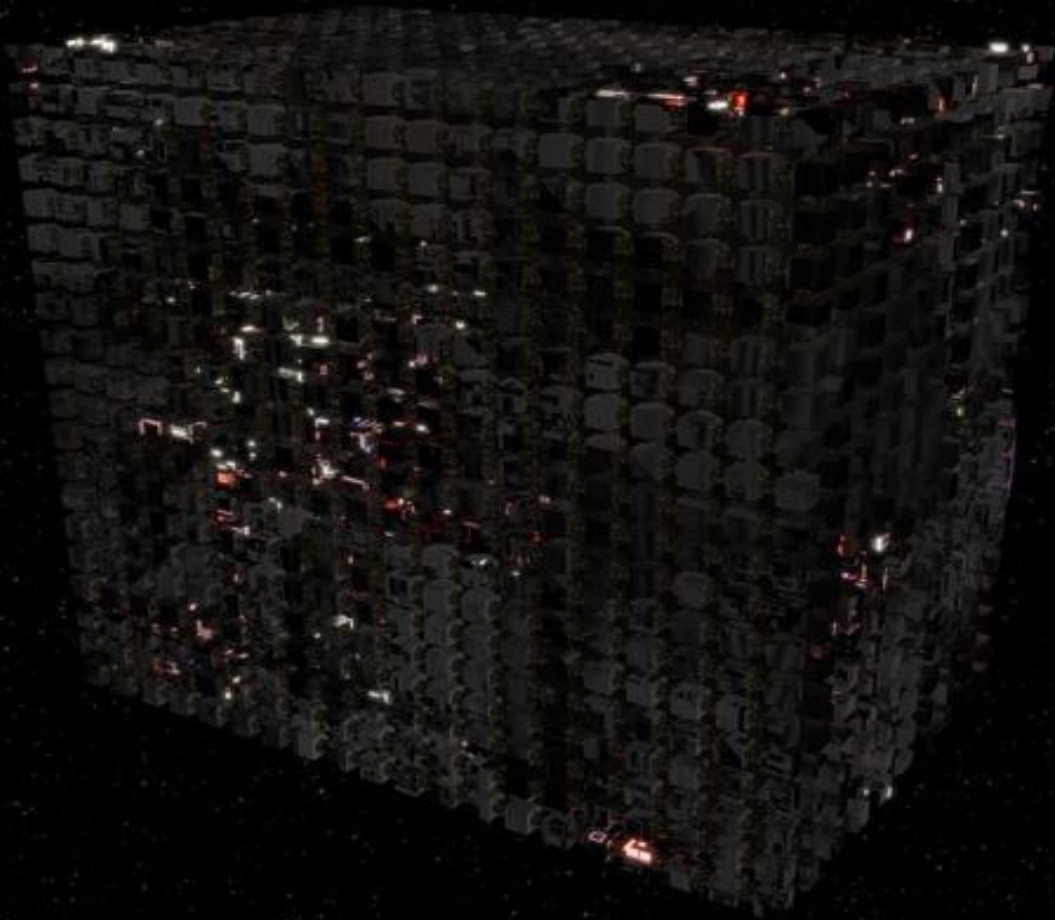


A WORK OF STARTREK FAN FICTION

STARDATE: *42761.3*



A SHORT STORY BY:

GLENN G G MAITLAND

STARDATE 42761.3

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Stardate:42761.3

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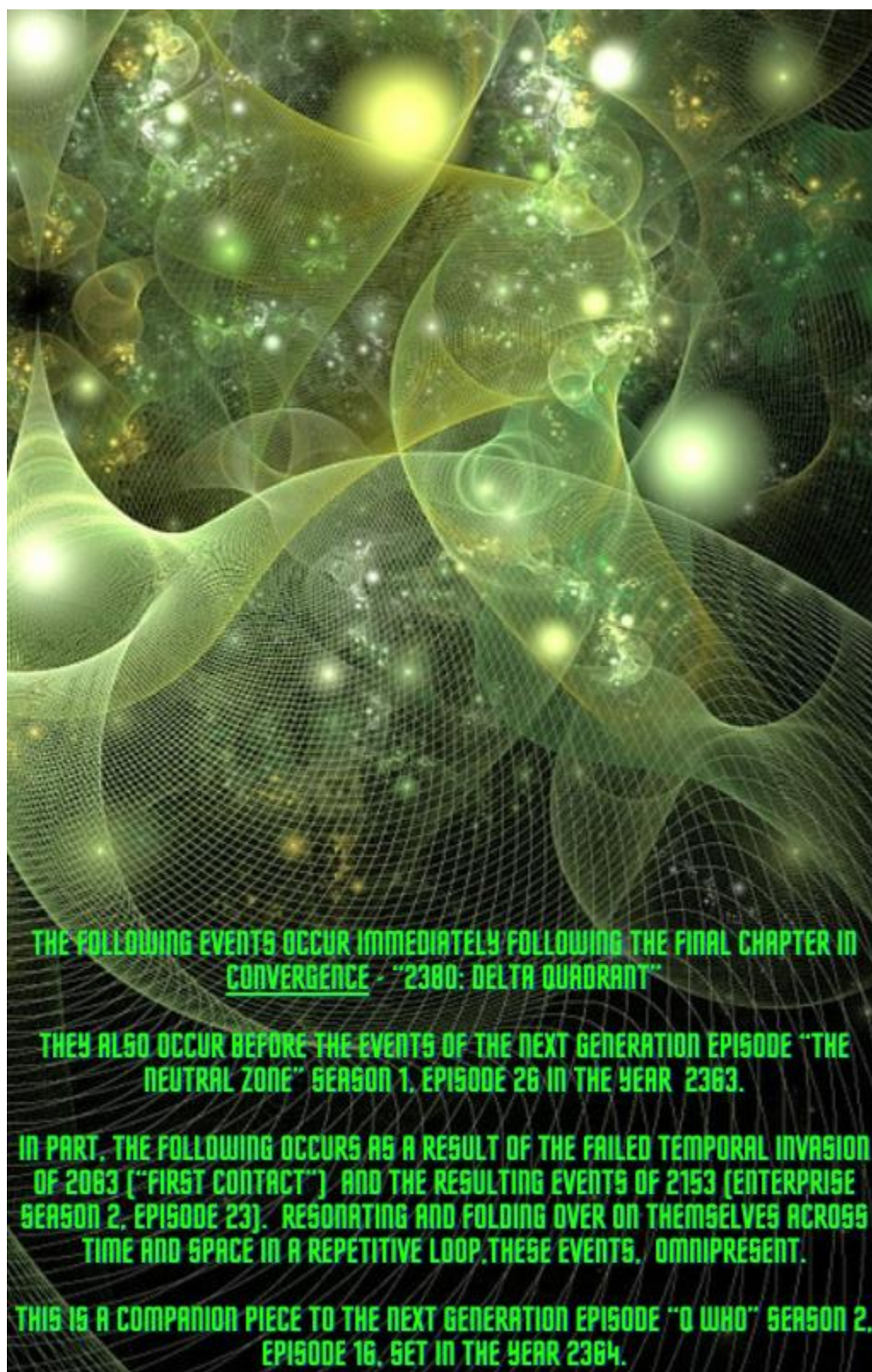
**"MUST BE
SOMETHING YOU
ASSIMILATED."**

**ADMIRAL KATHRYN JANEWAY
2378: END GAME**

"Pathogen." Published 21 Jun. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

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"Cosmos." Published 30 Jun. 2014 Pixabay Licence Free

The Hive Mind

Imagine an incalculably large energy sphere of perfectly formed dimensions coursing with currents and threads of immense pulsing energy currents; charged streams of white and green plasma chasing tails of lightning round the perimeter of a digital universe of ones and zeros.

Within this colossal sphere spins a second sphere of nearly identical proportions. Buffering the frenetic inner shell of the first larger sphere from the tumultuous power of this inner-sphere's manic outer shell, are untold hundreds of trillions of nearly microscopic roller bearings; themselves infinitesimal spheres within spheres.

Within this second sphere, a third, buffeted by a fourth – both in a perfectly balanced counter-spin to one and other buffeted by more bearings which themselves host nanoscopic universes of digital fragments spinning and contributing to the whole. Each sphere containing tens of spheres, containing hundreds of spheres, containing thousands and tens of thousands ad infinitum...

A digitized repository of all the knowledge in the known universe. A single mind populated by billions and trillions, quadrillions and sextillions of small beings. A whole made greater by the sum of its parts and growing stronger, larger and more perfect with every new acquisition.

The Hive Mind. The essence of the Borg. Ethereal Perfection.

Spheres of thought and knowledge and energy existing across space, time and dimensions. Vast. Powerful. Perfect in its overriding drive to stalk and metastasize all worthy biological and technological distinctive elements in the universe.

Adding inefficient, chaotic, small societies to the whole is noble. Bringing order to chaos is sacrosanct.

When that perfection was attacked...when the mind was closed-off from itself as a result of Species 5618's treachery, there were no options left to the Collective. The sin against perfection had to be repaid in kind.

The Hive Mind was untouchable. It was the eternal plain.

The Unimatrix that was the hard worldly manifestation of the Collective proved to be the deficiency Janeway was able to exploit and attack.

Though diminished, the Queen survived. The sin against perfection would be repaid in kind. The Hive Mind would be preserved. Though diminished, she would protect the Collective.



"Interstellar Bowl." Published 14 Dec. 2011 Pixabay Licence Free

2380: Delta Quadrant

Unicomplex One hummed. Millions of voices spoke in harmony. All information flowed to her.

Millions of voices within Unicomplex One filtered the billions of voices interacting, analyzing, examining and contemplating every conceivable facet of scientific and mathematical substantiation encountered by every drone, every sphere, every cube, every world in Unimatrix One, which comprised the entire Collective.

Only the most useful drones were chosen to maintain Unicomplex One. Of those few millions, only the most exemplary drones were installed in the three tiers of adjuncts she relied upon to help order the flow, so that she might best direct the Collective.

Nine tertiary adjuncts monitored and filtered mass assimilation and expansion data; advising their Queen of tactical concerns and recommending situational strategies when required.

Nine secondary adjuncts monitored and filtered the mass data interchange within the Hive Mind: disseminating complex formulae, physical conclusions and scientifically proven rational to the Collective through the greater Unimatrix. In this way they assisted the Borg in implementing seamless innovations and techniques to adapt to and overcome any impediments which might be encountered.

Nine primary adjuncts surrounded and directly supported the Queen in the heart of Unicomplex One. They performed whatever duties she required. They liaised with their counterparts on her behalf on benign matters. They helped order the torrent of data she had to deal with every instant of the Collective's existence.

The adjuncts worked at their stations.

She watched them from above.

She focused on her nine. The millions of voices of the Unicomplex were there, but she'd dampened them, as she often muted the billions of voices of the greater Unimatrix.

Two years had passed. This was her fourth construct of Unicomplex One following the attack of Species 5618. It was very nearly stable. So very nearly perfect. It was maddening.

In her mind the voices of the nine spoke as one. Through them she was aware of what was happening throughout the Collective.

A memory of her own voice is what she focused on...

WE WILL FIND OTHER WAYS TO ADAPT. WE WILL NOT RISK ANY OF OUR REMAINING FUNCTIONAL HUBS...

She'd dispatched Cube 42495 to the closest possible coordinates the Collective could pull from the ancient transmission they'd received from the once and future Borg who'd had contact with Species 5618 on their home world.

So much had been purged to ensure the integrity of the Unimatrix and the continuance of the Collective. So much lost.

Species 5618 had destabilized the very nucleus of the Borg. Their pathogen had very nearly ended perfection.

Species 5618 had entered aperture 823 and collapsed key manifolds of Transwarp Corridor 09, which accessed the Alpha Quadrant.

In a desperate effort to salvage the Hub, Red Matter had been introduced. As the manifolds crumbled and subspace collapsed along corridor 09 behind Species 5618's augmented vessel, a chain reaction began. Red Matter had been assimilated from data retrieved from the Alpha Quadrant sometime in the past. The act was rash. It was a decision made in an instant with devastating consequences. Red Matter did not yield consistent results.

An inversion had taken place. The Hub fell into an artificial singularity and travelled across time and space to appear somewhere in the Alpha Quadrant. Only the unstable aperture created by the Red Matter remained. Cube 79938 had been sent through to secure the Hub at its new location. One one-trillionth of a second after emerging from the displaced Transwarp Hub, Cube 79938 was destroyed. That too had been a desperate, ill-conceived act.

The Hub was now useless.

The nine were monitoring the small decaying singularity Cube 42495 had generated to seek out Species 5618's home world using a small amount of remaining Red Matter. Time was fluid. The need for vengeance and self-preservation was what had stabilized the Unicomplex. The Collective was galvanized in the knowledge that continued existence hinged on Species 5618's assimilation. Cube 42495 had entered the singularity two years ago from the perspective of the Unicomplex but had only just departed from their own perspective on the other side.



2304: BETA QUADRANT

"Sky." Published 17 Nov. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Beta Quadrant

Spatial Grid 872, three light years from the point of temporal incursion.

Cube 42495 sidled through the inky vacuum of space unobserved.

Their supply of Red Matter, two precious scintillas worth, was now exhausted. The first larger drop had fueled the journey across thousands of light years and back more than a decade in time to this place. The second smaller drop, the last of their Red Matter, had been used to complete the first sortie of their probing search grid.

The second drop had been used to create a small singularity. Just big enough to allow Cube 42495 to slip to and from a promising line of planetoids and artificial structures grouped together on the fringes of the Alpha Quadrant. This was where Species 5618 were thought to have their home world.

Cube 42495 had just returned from this sortie. They'd travelled through the second singularity, collected samples and returned to this place before the smaller singularity collapsed. The temporal displacement of this second, smaller singularity had amounted to little more than a year. Cube 42495 had journeyed back to 2363 to raze those structures without warning or mercy and then traversed space/time back to Grid 872 in 2364 before the singularity closed forever.

There had been contact with an unknown civilization on a small world in a tiny system on the fringes of the larger singularity which had brought them to this place from the Delta Quadrant. They were in Sector J. There was one world supporting technologically possessed lifeforms in the twenty fifth of thirty systems in this Sector. Samples were taken. The civilization was inferior. The civilization had nothing in common with Species 5618. All traces of the civilization were sterilized. System J25 was now barren.

This place, while the larger singularity remained viable, allowed Cube 42495 to communicate with the greater Collective. This place, Spatial Grid 872, was the point of demarcation. The final point of known fact. The destination from which Cube 42495 was to search for the home world of Species 5618.

Eighteen thousand drones worked as one. Eighteen thousand drones plotted a systematic arrangement of overlapping elliptical search patterns. They focused on planets and systems likely to support biological and technological lifeforms corresponding to the general attributes associated with Species 5618.

STATUS UPDATE: BIOLOGICAL/TECHNOLOGICAL SAMPLES RETRIEVED.

Queried Two of Fifteen.

Cube 42495 functioned as its own Collective. The ties to the greater Unimatrix were strained across time and space. Each drone communicated with the whole within their diminished shared consciousness. Each drone spoke with the voice of the Collective.

>EVIDENCE OF SPECIES 5618 CONFIRMED. EVIDENCE OF SPECIES 3783 CONFIRMED. PROXIMITY OF SITES CONCENTRATION OF DIRECTED ENERGY GENERATORS AND RUDIMENTARY DEEP SPACE SCANNING TECHNOLOGY SUGGESTS A PARTITION OF SOME KIND BETWEEN THE TWO SPECIES.< Came the Collective response.

Direction from Unicomplex One was clear. Samples were to be taken, examined and then disposed of. Gross assimilation was not the objective. Secondary contacts were irrelevant.

Species 5618 was lethally cunning. Cloyingly meek in appearance, but without a doubt the most dangerous threat the Collective had ever, could ever, and would ever face. Their home world was to be located. Their home world was to be assimilated.

A working group of fifteen drones on the primary control deck poured over the kiloquads of data gathered from the collection of small installations lifted from the string of planetoids. Without assimilating the data wholesale, the Collective required a buffer of reliable drones to analyze and disseminate the information gleaned from the gathered structures and biological lifeforms collected so far. The danger of reinfecting the Collective was too great to risk blind assimilation.

Deep within Cube 42495 Nine of Twenty processed a data module discovered in the ruins of a heavily fortified structure ripped from a world apparently occupied by Species 3783; Romulans.

Nine of Twenty's cranial negative focus sensor whirled and chirped as the drone used the phased magnetic resonance sensor embedded in its left arm to decompile the Romulan data. Twenty drones stood in a wide circle systematically scanning and archiving each piece of alien technology.

On the control deck a red diode illuminated at the back of Two of Fifteen's dark metal skullcap. **NINE OF TWENTY, REPORT.**

Eighteen decks away, Nine of Twenty blinked once and its negative focus sensor ceased its activity. The drone stood up straight and turned mechanically to face a glowing communications matrix to respond.

**EVIDENCE OF SUBSTANCE Z223. PROCESSING... PROCESSING...
CONFIRMED. DATA SUGGESTS THE STRUCTURE REMOVED FROM PLANETOID
R23 IS A SCIENTIFIC FACILITY. MOLECULAR DATA RELATED TO SUBSTANCE
Z223 CONFIRMED. DATA %72 COMPLETE. EXTRAPOLATING...**

Two of Fifteen was now with Nine of Twenty within the Collective. They shared the discovery between themselves and every other drone aboard Cube 42495 nearly instantaneously.

Nine of Twenty stopped speaking as Two of Fifteen began formulating a plan of action...

Information was patchy.

Details which should have been readily accessible were gone.

Files purged.

Through the fog, fragments of data were seized upon.

A few scant facts.

Little context.

**CONFIRMED. ON STARDATE 41986.0 THE BORG ASSIMILATED
SUBSTANCE Z223 RED MATTER. FROM A ROMULAN SCIENTIFIC FACILITY
REMOVED FOR EXAMINATION DURING EARLY EFFORTS TO SEEK OUT AND
ASSIMILATE SPECIES 5618. RELAYING... RELAYING...**



"Unimatrix." Published 13 Jul. 2017 Pixabay Licence Free

2380: Unimatrix 1

The adjuncts stirred.

Sensors spun and purred.

Lights blinked.

Digital storage filters drew additional power and began archiving the incoming information. The greater Unimatrix buzzed with activity.

Across infinity, across time...the Collective heard its own voice echoed back to the center of everything.

>CUBE 42495 COMMUNICATES.<

She hung above the nine adjuncts processing the central phase plexus' data stream. She could see her most elevated drones work in unison at their task from her cloistered alcove four meters above the floor.

A compressed data fragment had been received. The adjuncts were entrusted with securing and decrypting the fragment, preparing its information for her scrutiny. They worked in silent harmony. The many, the one. A wave of satisfaction surged within her.

Order had been restored to chaos.

Four Collective Unicomplexes had been infected and ultimately needed to be culled because of the neurolytic pathogen introduced by Species 5618.

She'd won though. She'd focused the Collective on a single overriding goal: the mass assimilation of the creatures who'd come so close to extinguishing order forever. Every drone everywhere worked towards eliminating the distinctiveness of Species 5618; less the perfection of the Collective again be threatened by their impudent iniquitousness.

With a thought, the umbilical tendrils which suspended and sustained her diminished biological core, twisted and relaxed. Slowly she descended from the alcove high above and lowered into the cybernetic cradle waiting to receive her mottled, fleshy remains.

The tendrils deposited her within the hollow of her waiting cybernetic golem. She unfurled the stub of her duranium-reinforced spine with its leads to her carefully augmented brainstem to find purchase within the receiving nodule. The tendrils disengaged from her trapezius-mounted buttress ports. Her spine connected to the golem's support systems and eight locking clamps engaged to ensure a secure docking and uninterrupted operation.

REPORT. She sighed slightly as her own systems switched over from umbilical support to draw power through her spinal adapter.

>CUBE 42495 REPORTS THEY HAVE FOUND EVIDENCE OF SPECIES 5618. EVIDENCE OF SPECIES 3783 ALSO COLLECTED. BASE DATA FOR SUBSTANCE Z223 HAS BEEN ACQUIRED.<

She reveled in the cybernetic body which allowed her to walk amongst her drones and took three slinking steps towards her adjuncts as she opened her mind to the voice of the greater Collective.

There was harmony. Only a single note of discord sounded in the cacophony that was the Hive Mind. Just one key out of sync with the greater symphony.

None could hear it. None would ever suspect it.

The one despondent chord was her own.

She could hear it clearly, even if the adjuncts and the hundred trillion drones across the Collective could not.

She was the Queen. The hub of everything rooted deep within the warren of webs, tangles of networks and maze of consciousness that underpinned the Collective. Everything was hers for the knowing. Voices, thoughts, sights, sounds. Everything was just a thought away.

Information flowed like mighty rivers from the tiny streams, creeks and rivulets that were her drones in Cubes and Spheres and Worlds across the cosmos. Those tributaries themselves were fed by the drips, drops and beads of lived experience of each drone functioning within the Collective. It flowed to her unfettered in a welcomed tide of knowledge and power...

...but the tide flowed unfettered in only one direction. At the hub of everything the Queen was her own only confidant. She alone had the power to decide what was shared with the Collective from her vast reservoir. Her most venerated responsibility was to determine what should be shared with the Hive Mind.

The Borg assimilated Red Matter, substance Z223 on stardate 41986.0. She knew this because the Collective had known this; before it was necessary to purge teraquads of information to ensure the pathogen was well and truly remediated.

She stood directly behind One of Nine, primary adjunct. The drone had been assimilated decades earlier from a remote planet deep within the Delta Quadrant where Species 227 had thought to hide from the Borg. The Queen tilted her head and a rush of information flowed to her.

THE LOCATION AND STARDATE FOR CUBE 42495?

LOCATION: GRID 872.

STARDATE: 42761.3 CONFIRMED.

TEMPORAL DISPLACEMENT: 16 YEARS.

She closed her silver eyes for a moment. The Red Matter Cube 42495 had used to create the singularity to affect its transit across the universe had resulted in a lessor temporal displacement than expected. The voices of the Collective, ever present, washed over her for a moment. She concentrated. The voices of her adjuncts were clear. The status report from Cube 42495 was clear.

They'd used the last of their Red Matter collecting samples from stardate 41986.0. Conventional warp drive was all that remained to them. No matter.

She directed her drones aboard 42495 to prepare to set course back towards the line of planetoids where they'd discovered evidence of both Species 5618 and Romulan habitation. The precise location of Species 5618's home world may have been lost, but they'd discovered tell-tale indications of its direction.

She went deeper; beneath the intimate network where her adjuncts could speak to her. Beneath the network that was the Unicomplex. Beneath the web of the greater Unimatrix. Through the snare of firewalls and safeguards in the tangle of filigree that was her own private neural net. Into the fretwork of the most secure nest of tracery where the deepest, most critical data ever gathered by the Borg was bulwarked within its own impenetrable nexus. It was here where she'd chosen to keep the few vital scraps of memory she'd hoped to preserve from the previous Queens, her previous selves.

It was dark. Nothing was clear. Thoughts existed as ghostly fragments here. Data was incomplete – blotted and obscured by vast gashes in continuity. The purge had been

wide-ranging. If the nexus could be represented as something akin to an egg; all that remained was the shattered shell, an incomplete jigsaw puzzle of ill-fitting fragments.

Still...the Borg had assimilated three quarters of the molecular data relating to Red Matter from a secret Romulan facility along something Species 3783 referred to as the 'Neutral Zone'. She knew this because the Collective had known this. They'd been to the Alpha Quadrant before.

Information on Species 3783 was far more plentiful than what was left concerning Species 5618. The Romulans had obtained their incomplete understanding of Substance Z223 through a network of spies working among Species 3259, Vulcans. She lifted these fragments from the depths and lofted them to the network shared with the adjuncts.

The Neutral Zone.

Nothing remained of Species 5618's assimilated knowledge of the Neutral Zone; however, Romulan drones had archived detailed information for her benefit.

She'd ventured deep within the oubliette of her own most sacred stores of data searching for direction before, to no end. If Species 3783, or 3259, or any of the other Alpha Quadrant Species assimilated by the Collective had knowledge of the spatial coordinates of *Earth*...she paused...

Her head spasmed slightly to the right, but her eyes remained shut. The adjuncts witnessed the odd spasm but registered no concern.

Species 5618's home world was called, *Earth*. She seized on the fragment of memory, elated and at the same time terrified. Had she purged enough of 5618's files to ensure the pathogen was truly gone?

Gigaquads of information relating to Species 5618 had been removed from the files associated with other species known to co-mingle or interact with humans as well.

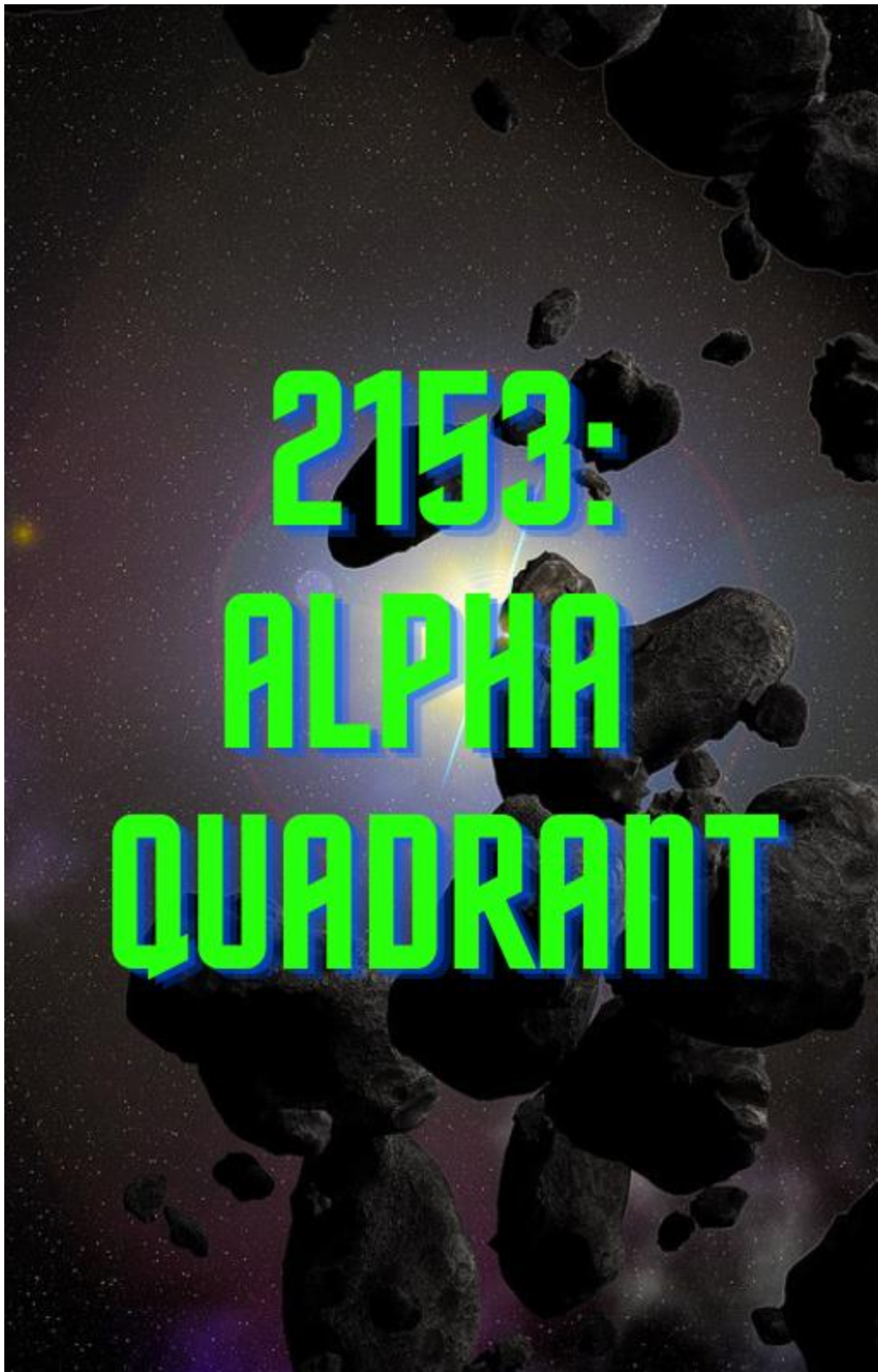
Earth.

She decided to keep *Earth* here. Secreted away from the Collective. Secure. She could not risk endangering the Unicomplex with impurities.

They'd received a transmission. Badly degraded. More than two hundred and twenty years old. From Borg in the past. Relating to the location of...*Earth*. The information was incomplete. Cube 42495 had travelled to the closest point that could be discerned from the centuries old message.

The adjuncts were still working at restoring the celestial co-ordinates.

STATUS OF SUBSPACE TRANSMISSION?



"Sol." Published 11 Aug. 2018 Pixabay Licence Free

2153: Alpha Quadrant

The technology was primitive.

>ERROR.< The small Collective spoke as one.

The first nine drones still assimilating into the tiny, isolated Collective were members of Species 5618. Their thoughts were chaotic. They were slow to succumb to the nanoprobes which had lain dormant in the ice for ninety years. The other eighteen drones were Tarkaleans, taken from a freighter. They were becoming Borg somewhat faster than the humans.

>ERROR.< The small Collective spoke as one.

Arctic One was obsolete and easily assimilated. While the new drones struggled for clarity and were of limited use, the vessel's primitive engines were assuredly being adapted to out-pace the limitations of their original design. They were now exceeding warp factor 4. Progress would have been greatly improved had they successfully assimilated the Tarkalean freighter they'd encountered on their way out of the Sol System.

Two Tarkalean drones had been abandoned, but for a brief period they were Borg. One of Twenty-Nine was aware that the drones had attempted to cripple the hostile vessel which had stopped the assimilation of the freighter. One of Twenty-Nine was aware that the two drones no longer functioned.

Primitive voice broadcasts identified their pursuers as a Starfleet.

Small. Obsolete, yet dangerous.

>ERROR.< The small Collective spoke as one.

One of Twenty-Nine worked at manipulating the evolving transport's sensors to glean more information on the pursuing vessel. The first three attempts had resulted in unsatisfactory results. The fourth attempt succeeded in advancing the primitive vessel's rudimentary sensors significantly. The overall mass of what had been designated as a Type-One transport of Starfleet design had increased by a full 3% as engines, weapons and now sensors were adapted to serve the Collective.

PURSUING VESSEL IS A CRUDE STARSHIP. WARP CAPABILITY: WARP 5. ARAMAMENTS: PHASE CANNONS. PRIMITIVE TORPEDOES. DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES LIMITED TO POLARIZED HULL PLATING.

Two of Twenty-Nine moved to interact with the newly formed weapons interface. Power bled from the engines to energize the proton emitter.

TARGETTING PURSUING VESSEL. PREPARING TO FIRE. Two of Twenty-Nine's hand moved across the face of the black and green control surface as the other drones continued working at adapting and upgrading *Arctic One's* engines.

NEGATIVE. YOU WILL POWER DOWN PROTON EMITTER. RESTORE FULL FLOW TO THE DRIVE SECTION. ASSIST THE OTHERS WITH FURTHER WARP CORE MODIFICATIONS. COMPLY. One of Twenty-Nine moved from the sensor controls to the communications array.

The tiny, grey Starship had increased its speed to warp 4.5. The humans were gaining. A flashing green indicator alerted One of Twenty-Nine that the small vessel chasing them was powering phase cannons.

Suddenly the transport lurched forward noticeably. The crude inertial dampeners nearly overloaded as Two of Twenty-Nine and the others succeeded in ameliorating the

engines. The transport now screamed along at warp 4.8. The humans were again falling behind.

ENGINE PERFORMANCE INCREASED %38. BASIC DEFENSIVE ENERGY SCREENS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED. PROTON YIELD INCREASED BY %21. THE PROBABILITY OF SUCCESSFULLY DEFEATING THE PRIMITIVE VESSEL CURRENTLY IN PURSUIT IS ESTIMATED TO BE %78. Two of Twenty-Nine took a shuffling step back from the controls to assess the progress of the others. Five of Twenty-Nine and Eight of Twenty-Nine were finally falling into sync within the Collective. The others were progressing.

MAINTAIN PRESENT COURSE. ASSIST WITH ADAPTING THE COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY TO BROADCAST LOCATION AND DISPOSITION. One of Twenty-Nine used the targeting beams adapted for the proton weapon to plot broadcast coordinates.

WITHOUT AN INTERPLEXING CARRIER WAVE ANY BROADCAST WILL TAKE CENTURIES TO REACH A RECEIVING ASSEMBLY IN THE DELTA QUADRANT. Two of Twenty-Nine successfully communicated the need to continue work on the engines to Five of Twenty-Nine. The newer drones would be completely operational with moments. The nanoprobes were resilient.

RISKING DESTRUCTION BEFORE RELAYING OUR DISPOSITION WOULD BE AN ERROR. NO INTERPLEXING ASSEMBLY CAN BE CURRENTLY ADAPTED. THE BROADCAST MUST BE CARRIED ACROSS REGULAR SUBSPACE FREQUENCIES. ASSIST US. One of Twenty-Nine continued to work.

Two of Twenty-Nine stepped to the open bank of relays beside the communications terminal and deployed its assimilation tendrils to begin injecting the system with nanoprobes. **WE WILL COMPLY.**

The Collective was small. One and Two of Twenty-Nine struggled to adapt.

Five of Twenty-Nine continued working on improving engine performance. The Collective grew stronger. Five of Twenty-Nine was Borg.

Eight of Twenty-Nine was Borg.

A message was hastily composed as the Starfleet vessel continued its pursuit. One of Twenty-Nine filtered the simple message through the system and waited for consensus from Two of Twenty-Nine before accessing the transmit sub-routines.

Thirteen of Twenty-Nine was Borg.

Six and Fourteen of Twenty-Nine were Borg.

The Collective grew stronger.

The human vessel was closing again.

Five of Twenty-Nine increased speed to warp 4.98. One of Twenty-Nine remained focused on broadcasting their message. The Starfleet vessel increased speed.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGES REGISTERED.<

The Starfleet vessel destroyed the primary EPS manifold and *Arctic One* fell out of warp.

One of Twenty-Nine successfully triggered the broadcast and Two of Twenty-Nine disrupted the human vessel's plasma network with an activation sequence hidden within the broadcast. The two abandoned drones had managed to sabotage the Starfleet vessel before being terminated. One of Twenty-Nine swung *Arctic One* around to assimilate the humans and add to their growing Collective.

Broadcasting to the stricken Starship: **>YOU WILL BE ASSIMILATED. RESISTANCE IS FUTILE.<** Two of Twenty-Nine brought the proton emitter on-line and began picking away at the Starship's polarized plating. A boarding party was organized.

An incursion was detected. Two humans near the central engineering EPS junction. Drones, now all fully Borg, were dispatched.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGES REGISTERED.<

Six drones were transported to assimilate the Starfleet vessel from within.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGES REGISTERED.<

Nineteen of Twenty-Nine...off-line.

Sixteen of Twenty-Nine...off-line.

>ADAPT.< The Collective had lost voices newly added.

Ten of Twenty-Nine...off-line.

>ADAPT.< Another voice silenced. Their Collective was diminished.

Twenty-seven of Twenty-Nine...off-line.

STARFLEET DEFENCES BREACHED. ENGAGE CUTTING BEAM.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGES REGISTERED.<

Explosions ripped through the corridors of *Arctic One*.

>EPS GRID OFFLINE.<

RECALL BOARDING CONTINGENT TO ASSIST WITH REPAIRS. One of Twenty-Nine frantically worked to compensate for ship-wide systems failures.

More explosions echoed through *Arctic One* as acrid smoke began contaminating the vessel's atmosphere.

Sensors registered a restoration in the human ship's weapons systems.

>REGENERATE. REGENERATE. REGENERATE.<

One of Twenty-Nine restored *Arctic One*'s proton emitter as the transport's tactical sensors registered incoming fire from the human Starship. The numerical sequence, the pulsar frequencies and geometric lightyear measurements, had been broadcast.

Arctic One was incinerated.

The transmission steaked away from the carnage towards its destination in the Delta Quadrant.



"Web." Published 4 Feb. 2019 Pixabay Licence Free

2380: Idiom

Five of Nine looked up from the display matrix it had been utilizing to sieve through the data pouring in from the greater Unimatrix. The adjuncts had been rallied to a specific task.

The incomplete transmission was drawn from the greater repository within Unicomplex One concerned with interpreting and reconstructing cyphers.

Nine of Nine, Four of Nine and Three of Nine simultaneously locked their own terminals into diagnostic cycles. The Queen stood motionless just a meter away from One of Nine and her other primary adjuncts. The drones then moved in step with one and other towards their alcoves and slotted themselves into a group regeneration sequence.

A smile insinuated itself on the Queen's lips as the nine became one.

She cocked her head gently to the right and closed her eyes. The Unicomplex was again dampened. The Unimatrix was mute. The Hive Mind became an intimate locus. The many became the few.

This state of intimate congress was as exotically still and focused as it was empty and unnerving for her. She needed to be sure everything had been done to extrapolate the coordinates of (*Earth*) Species 5618's home world.

She could see the data. She could hear all nine voices of her primary adjuncts. They were one. A wonderous, beautiful choir. More musical than vocal.

She could see the response; hear the idiom.

The Unicomplex roared back like a welcomed storm across a desert. In the distance, the raucousness clamor of the greater Unimatrix. The voices of the Borg welcomed her back to the security of the Collective.

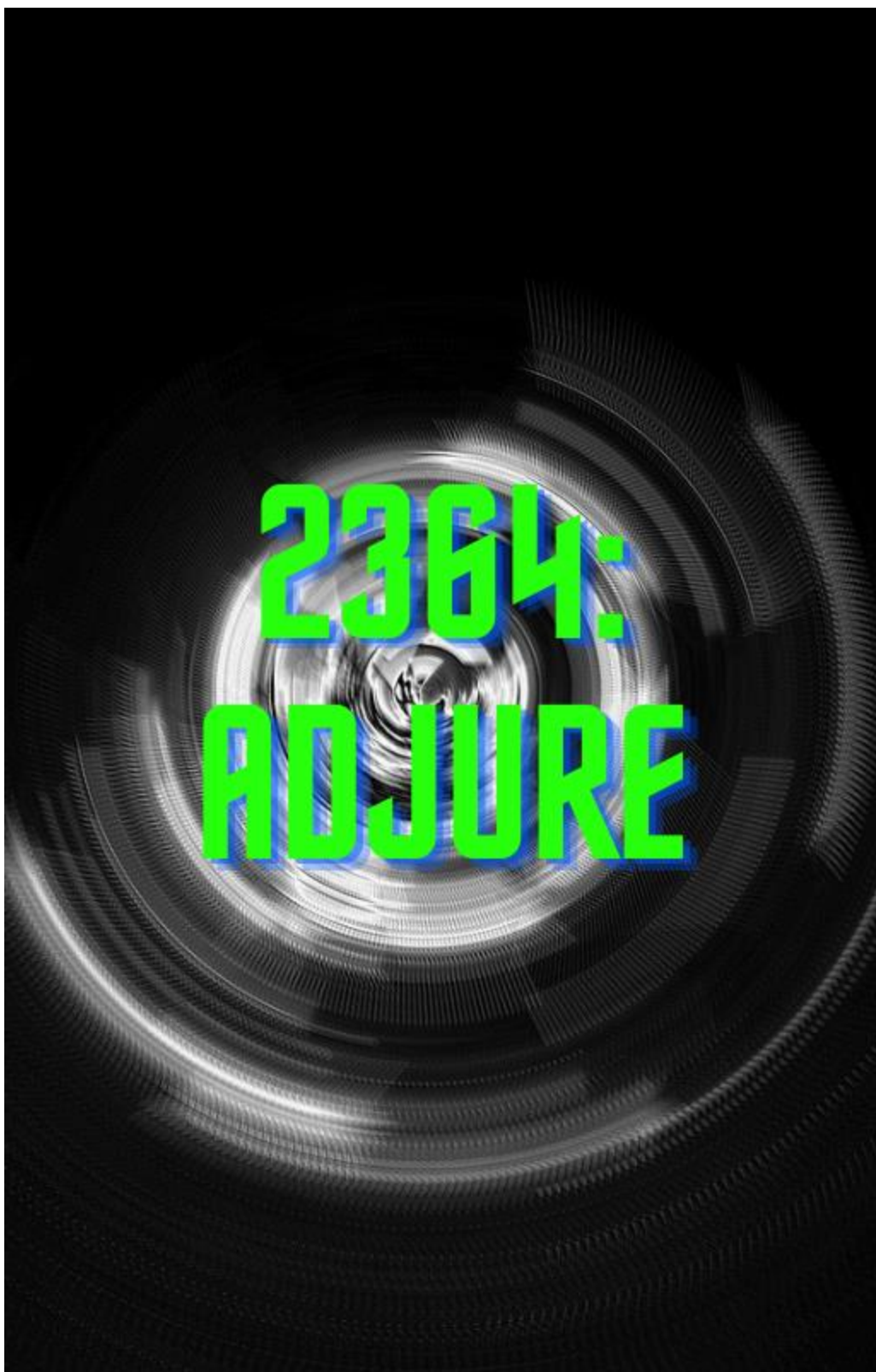
She'd been alone with the nine and their pure carol of perfect honesty for less than a second; an eternity in a still void. She knew the answer.

THE TRANSMISSION CAN YEILD NO FURTHER DATA.

>CORRECT.<

TIME REMAINING BEFORE THE SINGULARITY TO GRID 872 CLOSES?

>ESTIMATE POINT TWO CYCLES TO EVENT HORIZON COLLAPSE.<



"Adjure." Published 9 Jul. 2017 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Adjure

One of Fifteen stood motionless in its alcove.

Cube 42495 was in a routine regeneration cycle. Twelve thousand drones were dormant. Lifeless effigies framed by the dark bulkheads of their individual alcoves, backlit by the pulsing green axial status projectors mounted slightly above each slot. Twelve thousand drones cast in vacillating, eerie green light.

The cycle was meant to recharge the drones' implants, repair any biological degradation which may have occurred during active hours and nourish those biological components as needed. The regeneration cycle by function tied each drone directly to the cube; in effect making each drone literal extensions of the vessel.

One of Fifteen had accessed Cube 42495's integrated communications array and had established a clear link between the cube and Unicomplex One across the galaxy and more than a decade and a half into the future. In this way Cube 42495's Collective was linked to the greater Unimatrix in the Delta Quadrant.

The artificial singularity generated by the Red Matter, which had allowed the cube to traverse space/time to come to this place, was collapsing. All data concerning the cube's journey to that point was shared.

One of Fifteen did not "speak" for Cube 42495. One of Fifteen was simply designated as the primary contact between Unimatrix One and the cube's eighteen thousand strong Collective.

Data surged from the cube through the contracting singularity in a steady stream on an encrypted subspace carrier wave. The data flowed through Unicomplex One's reception nodes, to the passive data collection buffers, up the subspace transition modulator and through the drones tasked with operating the bioneural sequence regulators. From the regulators the encrypted data was transmitted to the secondary adjuncts. The secondary adjuncts applied the appropriate elucidation algorithms and then shared the data with the primary adjuncts and the Queen at the center of the boundless web of networks and linkages which held the entire Collective together in the greater Unimatrix.

Red Matter.

Romulans.

Neutral Zone.

She took in all that she'd been sent nearly instantaneously. All things everywhere were hers for the understanding. If the Collective could observe, interact with, or experience a thing anywhere, she could know that thing nearly instantaneously. Temporal and interdimensional thresholds presented the only barriers to this knowing.

Cube 42495 had only conventional light drive to rely upon now that the supply of Red Matter was exhausted. Cube 42495 had only a scant supply of Red Matter when ordered to intercede during the chaos of the attack of 2378.

The singularity which permitted direct communication across time and space was collapsing.

The tertiary adjuncts weighed in on the best course of action open to the Collective. Their voices were heard.

In her dark chamber in the heart of Unicomplex One, she cast her silver eyes upwards towards the murky bulkheads and hidden support systems she relied upon for regeneration. Her adjuncts were still slotted in their alcoves. She'd not yet released them. Her thoughts were not for the nine at that moment. She reached out through the Unicomplex's arrays and nodes and made her thoughts heard by the Collective aboard Cube 42495.

The strategy moving forward for her lone cube was sound. She sent the details to One of Fifteen across space and through time. Clarity, brevity and efficiency were what was needed.

She heard the eighteen thousand drones working aboard 42495. She could feel their determination.

With her eyes cast upwards, with the nine still slotted in their alcoves, she spoke aloud: "Comprehension is required. Confirm?"

In her mind she heard the voice of One of Fifteen. The drone 'spoke' with the voice of its small Collective: **CONFIRMED. PROTOCOLS RECEIVED AND UNDERSTOOD.**

The event horizon began to destabilize.

She allowed her eyes to flutter as she lowered her gaze. The nine disengaged from their alcoves and resumed their duties.

LOCATE AND ASSIMILATE THE HOME WORLD OF SPECIES 5618, COMPLY.
>WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.<



"Lone Cube." Published 28 May. 2017 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Solus

Seven of Fourteen monitored the final collapse of the temporal incursion point leading back to the Delta Quadrant from Cube 42495's secondary tachyon resonance array.

THE ARTIFICIAL SINGULARITY HAS TERMINATED.

>CONFIRMED.<

CUBE 42495 WILL HOLD POSITION UNTIL THE CURRENT REGENERATION CYCLE CONCLUDES.

>CONFIRMED.<

Cube 42495 hung lifelessly in space.

3,036 meters long by 3,036 meters wide by 3,036 meters tall; her dark mass haunted the interstellar vacuum between the greater nothingness of the universe and the sixth planet of the nearby system they'd sterilized upon first arriving.

Cube 79938 had been a Survey Cube; equipped with specialized sensor packages and a full interplexing relay system. Cube 79938 had been destroyed.

Sphere 634 had been a Scout/Interceptor Sphere; equipped with superior propulsion, advanced weaponry and a full interplexing relay system. Sphere 634 had been destroyed.

Cube 28742 was a Tactical Cube; equipped with ablative hull armor, heavy proton emitters, quantum charge gliders and a full interplexing relay system. Cube 28742 had been disconnected from the Unicomplex when Species 5618 had attacked and could not be dispatched.

Cube 42495 was a Standard Cube. Seven hundred decks. Standard propulsion, standard armament. No interplexing relay assembly; but more than a match for Species 5618.

Cube 42495 had been tasked with transporting drones from Galactic Cluster 3 to Unicomplex 5 when the Collective cried out for assistance. A cube which would ordinarily function efficiently with a crew of five thousand drones now carried more than three times that number.

Hastily dispatched to hunt down and assimilate Species 5618, Cube 42495's on-board Collective was that much richer for the additional drones. As the singularity closed and the connection between Cube 42495 and the greater Borg Collective faded, Seven of Fourteen took comfort in the din of voices sustained in the vast nothingness by the dark cold cube.

An interplexing relay assembly would have ensured contact with the Unimatrix.

The observation, which wasn't quite an observation, but neither was it precisely a thought...ran through the dim recesses of Seven of Fourteen's mind.

An interplexing relay assembly would have ensured contact with Unimatrix...

One of Fifteen could visualize the words in its state of regeneration—like a hazy dream. On deck five-five-two, Eight of Twelve, slotted into alcove T421 could visualize the words as well.

Seven of Fourteen was one of the six thousand drones actively attending to the cube while the other two thirds of the drones regenerated. At the same instant '*an interplexing relay assembly would have ensured contact with the Unimatrix*' rippled

through Seven of Fourteen's cerebral cortex, it flitted through every cognizant drone throughout the cube. For a full second everything onboard came to a stop.

Borg did not question directions.

Borg complied.

The drones aboard Cube 42495 were Borg. They would comply with the direction from Unicomplex One. The anomalous fragment of thought was isolated, firewalled and deleted.

>WE ARE BORG.<

One of Fifteen and the other twelve thousand drones slotted into their assigned alcoves continued to regenerate. The neurological pathways touched by the anomaly were purged. Their cortical implants were adjusted to exclude the ghost of doubt.

Seven of fourteen returned to work. All the drones alert and functioning aboard the cube resumed their duties. The six thousand waking drones would have their own neural pathways purged when they next reported to their alcoves in a few hours. Within the cube's small Collective, direction was given for every waking drone to perform a level 4 diagnostic *refresh* of the memory engrams within their own cortical implants. They were Borg.



"Entity." Published 7 Sept. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Detection

Throughout the existence of the Collective in all the universe, through all of time, across all existence, there were three critical directives every drone was hardwired with:

- 1) **Particle 010.** Critical - a molecule of complete, absolute perfection. If encountered Borg everywhere are to assimilate Particle 010 at all costs; all other priorities rescinded.
- 2) **Species 1732.** Critical - an entity or entities of unknown abilities which has been observed utilizing a seemingly boundless reserve of ill-defined energy closely mirroring elements exhibited by Particle 010. If encountered Borg everywhere are to investigate, record and report on any instance of Species 1732 activity.
- 3) **Species 8472.** Critical - regarded as the ultimate form of biological evolution. A telepathic, xenophobic species residing in Fluidic Space. Their technology is organic and resistant to assimilation. Species 8472 is responsible for billions of Borg fatalities. If encountered Borg everywhere are to report incursions to, or from Fluidic Space immediately and avoid contact with Species 8472 at all costs.

Recent developments following the attack of Species 5618 had lined up a possible fourth directive. Species 5618 had to be assimilated. Though not as offensively deadly as Species 8472, Species 5618 represented a continuing threat to the survival of the Collective. Species 5618 was an affront to perfection. Their assimilation was an immediate requirement.

In the two years since the re-establishment of the central Unicomplex, measures had been taken to engrain a visceral hatred for Species 5618 into the Collective. It was a different tact. Drones were not often gifted with such personal, biological feelings outside of the Hive Mind. In time, Species 5618 may indeed be written into the critical directive software. For now, the ingrained biological reaction to Species 5618 was what steeled the Collective to a single purpose. The objective was to assimilate and eliminate Species 5618. To include them on the continuing critical directive list would be akin to acknowledging the Collective was unable to achieve the subjugation and assimilation of Species 5618.

On deck three-one-nine, Twenty-Seven of Thirty attenuated the subspace pulse refractor to a sharper focus...

**CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED. MOVE TO INVESTIGATE.
>CONFIRMED.<**



"Cube." Published 22 Sept. 2022 Pixabay Licence Free

Stardate 42761.3

One of Fifteen opened its dark eyes and disengaged from the coupling node mounted to the right-side bulkhead of its alcove. The regeneration cycle was complete. One of Fifteen stepped out of the slot and proceeded to its working collective.

The cube was moving to investigate a faint energy signature associated with Species 1732. One of Fifteen knew this, because the Collective knew this.

On deck three-one-nine, Twenty-Seven of Thirty was stepping into its own alcove to begin its regeneration cycle, as were the other six thousand drones who'd maintained the Cube while the majority of the drones replenished themselves. The small Collective was in harmony. Keenly focused on Borg Critical Directive Two.

One of Fifteen walked silently past Five and Twelve of Fifteen, to interlink directly with the cube's long-range sensor probes.

INDICATIONS NEGATIVE FOR TRANSIENT ENERGY SIGNATURES RELATED TO SPECIES 1732.

>REPLAY SENSOR READINGS FROM TIME INDEX 32/8.23.<

One of Fifteen silently reviewed the records from moments ago. The Collective observed what it had already recorded. A flash. A brief spark of high-powered energy registering at the maximum limits of the cube's sensors. The flash, which had lasted less than a second, shared five of the six control markers of Particle 010.

Only Species 1732 was known to be associated with such energy.

CONFIRM. RECORDED ENERGY EVENT ADHERES TO PARAMETERS ESTABLISHED FOR SPECIES 1732. REPORT.

>VESSEL DETECTED IN SECTOR J25. VESSEL APPEARS TO BE PROBING THE SIXTH PLANET IN THE J25 SYSTEM.<

CONFIRMED.

Ten of Fifteen moved from its navigation relay station to one of the cube's targeting nodes to fix an exact spatial lock on the distant vessel suddenly present in Grid 872.

VESSEL DISPLACES 4,500,000 TONS. LIGHT DRIVE TECHNOLOGY DETECTED.

>CONFIRMED.<

%99.996 LIKELIHOOD VESSEL IS ASSOCIATED WITH NOTED ENERGY EVENT. RECOMMEND CAUTION.

>CONFIRMED.<

One of Fifteen interlinked with deck two-nine-six and set an intercept course with the unknown vessel probing the barren planet the Borg had sterilized just three light years away.

Cube 42495 corrected its course and jumped to warp one to cautiously close the distance between the small Collective displaced in time and space and the unknown vessel suddenly present in the Borg's theatre of operation. The drones on deck one-six-two energized the cube's magnetic defensive field. On deck one-one-eight, Six of Eight channeled energy from the primary drive system to the cube's tractor and energy emitters in preparation for assimilation operations.

>UNIDENTIFIED VESSEL HAS DETECTED OUR APPROACH.<

CONFIRMED. MAINTAIN COURSE AND SPEED. READY DEFENSIVE MEASURES. COMPLY.

Cube 42495 moved to meet the approaching vessel head-on.

>UNIDENTIFIED VESSEL HAS EMPLOYED MINIMAL DEFENSIVE SCREENS. TACTICAL SYSTEMS HAVE ENERGIZED. UNIDENTIFIED VESSEL'S SHIELD GENERATOR REMAINS DORMANT. SHIELD MODULATION DECIPHERED: 257.4 MHz. VESSEL IS CONDUCTING RUDEMENTARY SCANS OF CUBE 42495.<

CONFIRMED. COMMENCE TACTICAL ANALYSIS. MONITOR THE VESSEL AND SURROUNDING AREA FOR SUBSPACE ENERGY DISTURBANCES. COMPLY.

Cube 42495 began probing the approaching vessel from a dozen different arrays shrouded within the exoplating of the massive cube's hull.

**>INCOMING TRANSMISSION FROM THE VESSEL.<
OPEN AUDIO FREQUENCIES.**



"J25." Published 14 Nov. 2021 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: J25

"This is Captain Jean Luc Picard of the *USS Enterprise*."

>VESSEL IDENTIFIES AS USS ENTERPRISE. ARMAMENT: 12 PHASED ENERGY EMITTER ARRAYS. 3 ENERGY PROJECTILE PORTS. ENERGY SIGNATURES CONFIRM ON-BOARD SUPPLY OF DEUTERIUM/ANTIDEUTERIUM WEAPONS.<

CONFIRMED.

"This is Captain Picard representing the United Federation of Planets."

All fifteen drones working within the primary control group looked up from their tasks and turned to face the central status matrix.

REPLAY PREVIOUS TRANSMISSION. One of Fifteen spoke with the voice of the Collective. The other drones waited to hear the alien transmission again.

"This is Captain Picard representing the United Federation of Planets...This is Captain Picard representing the United Federation of Planets...This is Captain Picard representing the United Federation of Planets..."

ANALYSIS. Even as One of Fifteen directed the Collective to break down the alien transmission, a sense of familiarity stirred deep within. A disquieting sensation began to light deep within long dormant synapses.

>TRANSMISSION CARRIED ON BASIC SUBSPACE FREQUENCY. TRANSMISSION PROCESSED THROUGH AN ADAPTIVE TRANSLATION MATRIX. USS ENTERPRISE APPEARS TO BE EQUIPPED WITH TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION CAPABILITY UTILIZING THIS TRANSLATION TECHNOLOGY.<

Two of Fifteen cocked its head to the left and queried the Collective: **ANALYSIS: UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS.**

>QUERY UNSUCCESSFUL.<

On a primal level One of Fifteen knew the Collective's response to be incomplete. There was...something ominous. **INSUFFICIENT RESPONSE. SEARCH ALL DATABASES FOR THE TERM: UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS.**

Two of Fifteen blinked, straightened its head and returned to the operations terminal. Critical Directive 2 was in effect; however, every drone aboard Cube 42495 was experiencing the uneasy angst One of Fifteen had felt at the sound of the unknown lifeform's words.

>QUERY UNSUCCESSFUL. ACCESS TO COMPLETE DATA ARCHIVE LIMITED. ESTIMATE 83.8% LIKELIHOOD VESSEL USS ENTERPRISE REPRESENTS SPECIES 5618.<

CONFIRMED.

One of Fifteen turned from the central status matrix to regard the rest of the drones tasked with maintaining the cube's primary control deck. Two of Fifteen was organizing drones on deck three-nine-seven into survey groups. The others remained motionless, regarding the matrix. They were momentarily lost in their pangs of...emotion.

RETURN TO YOUR STATIONS. DIRECTIVE 2 DICTATES INVESTIGATION OF THIS VESSEL'S ASSOCIATION WITH SPECIES 1732. CONCORDANT WITH OUR MISSION WE WILL DETERMINE IF THIS USS ENTERPRISE IS ALSO ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIES 5618. COMPLY.

The other drones moved silently back to their assigned posts and began preparing to engage the aliens.

**>USS ENTERPRISE HAS DEPLOYED HIGH ENERGY DEFENSIVE SHIELDS.<
CONFIRMED.**

**>USS ENTERPRISE ENERGY SHIELDS OPERATE ON A MODULATION OF
257.4 MHz.<**

**ADJUST MATTER-STREAM CONVERTERS TO ADAPT. READY SURVEY
DRONES.**

On deck three-nine-seven One of Six stepped onto a transport pad in preparation for incursion. Six drones equipped with subspace phase dampeners and multi-phasic ocular data nodes stood ready for deployment. Their objective was to probe the alien vessel from within, collect all possible data regarding the lifeforms operating the craft, then return to the cube so a determination could be made regarding the *USS Enterprise's* affiliation with Species 5618 and possibly even Species 1732.

One of Six dematerialized.



"NCC 1701-D." Published 21 Sept. 2020 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: NCC 1701-D

One of Six found itself standing before the alien vessel's reactor core. Immediately the scanner nodes and relay sensor implants affixed to its type-97 right limb augmentation came online and began pulling data. Equipped with an optical node capable of multi-phasic discrimination and seamless data extraction abilities, One of Six made a rapid survey of the alien's matter/anti-matter reactor. The alien reactor was capable of generating an output of 12.75 by 10 to the 6th Power Terawatts.

Movement.

One of Six continued its survey. Its dynamic resonance sensor detected a concentration of crystalline matter secured within an alcove at the center of the towering reactor. Evidently the species responsible for manufacturing and operating the vessel *USS Enterprise* used this crystalline matter to regulate the reaction the vessel's powerplant required to enable it to achieve faster than light speed. The design was inefficient.

One of Six moved around the reactor. Trace elements in the molecular makeup of the reactor core, cooling conduits and bulkheads were blindly recorded by the secondary variance nodes which provided redundant backup to the primary sensors of the type-97 limb.

A single life form which appeared to be mildly augmented ocularly, babbled four and half meters off One of Six's left flank. It was bipedal. It did not seem possessed of any remarkable biological features.

One of Six moved past the lifeform. The objective was to survey the technology of *USS Enterprise*. Four of Six was equipped with the appropriate axial biometric arrays to conduct an efficient scan of biological lifeforms. As One of Six proceeded past the lifeform however, it noticed a small device mounted to the alien's flimsy garb. A communications device equipped with a translation matrix.

The lifeform presented no threat. It passively backed away as One of Six made its way from the reactor to a simplistic computer interface. One of Six noted numerous computer terminals—possibly intended for the lifeform present and others like it to manually interact with systems aboard *USS Enterprise*.

Information was broken down and displayed on simple black display panels using a basic series of codified icons and overly simplistic diagrams. One of Six scanned a panel depicting power flow dynamics and status indicators for *USS Enterprise's* light drive actuation systems. Though primitive in design, *USS Enterprise* was able to channel the power generated in its reactor to a pair of elongated emitter nacelles. By doing so the vessel could generate a stable warp field within which the craft could achieve light speed.

The data from this first specific computer terminal was downloaded *en masse*, digitized and stored. Systems aboard the *USS Enterprise*, though crudely networked, were not truly integrated. One of Six paused for a moment. It had pulled all it could from this first terminal.

The lifeform was still chattering. Several other lifeforms of similar ilk had joined it but remained cautiously at a distance.

One of Six moved to the next closest terminal to its left and began pulling data from that small computer. There were a handful of connections between this station and

the terminal it had just examined—perhaps a few thousand. Each computer may as well have been a standalone unit.

More lifeforms clad in flimsy fabric garments were arriving.

One of Six was done with the second computer quickly. It moved over to the next station and paused. The visual survey so far was as expected. This new station displayed a rudimentary graphic of *USS Enterprise*'s defensive shield grid and a number of redundant tactical systems and power distribution points.

The augmented lifeform was chittering quietly with...One of Six focused on the terminal. The survey had to be completed.

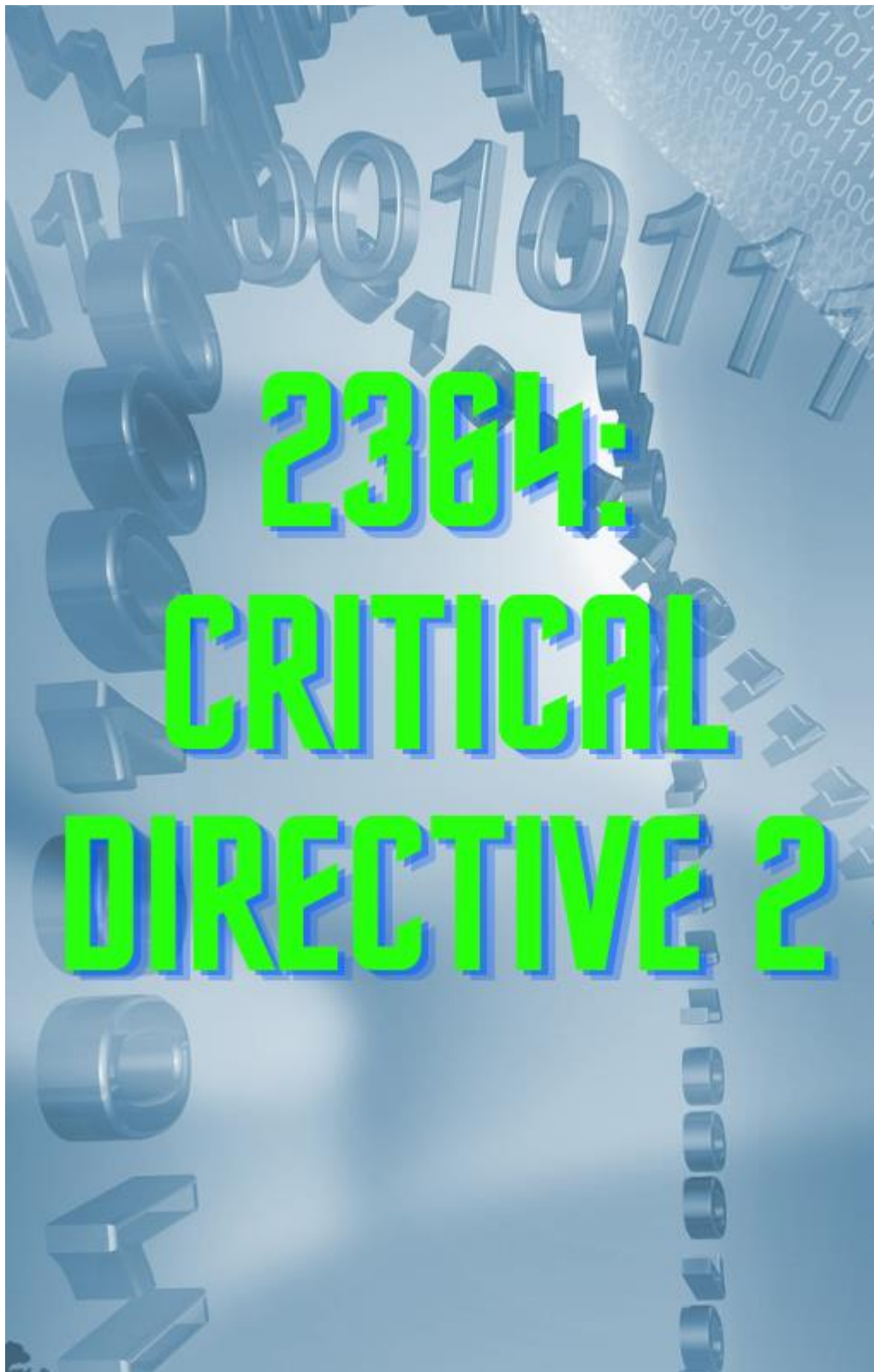
>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED. MOVE TO INVESTIGATE.<
The voice of the Collective was clear and strong in One of Six's mind.

At that instant a flash of energy so blinding it washed everything away for one one trillionth of a second, flooded the chamber. The lifeforms didn't seem to notice.

One of Six spoke directly to its Collective through the shared stream of consciousness: **CONFIRMED. SPECIES 1732 IS PRESENT ABOARD USS ENTERPRISE. REQUEST UPDATED INSTRUCTIONS.**

>CONTINUE SURVEY USS ENTERPRISE. PASSIVE OBSERVATION SPECIES 1732 ONLY. FOUR OF SIX WILL CONDUCT BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS SHORTLY. DO NOT ENGAGE SPECIES 1732. COMPLY.<

CONFIRMED.



2364: CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2

"Directive." Published 25 Mar. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Critical Directive 2

Aboard Cube 42495 Three of Fifteen was monitoring the feed from One of Six's ocular transmitter. *USS Enterprise* was hanging in space so close to the cube that there was no lag time between the survey drone's basic visual transmission and the cube's vinculum.

THREE OF FIFTEEN COPY AND DIGITIZE THE VISUAL RECORD OF THE APPEARANCE OF SPECIES 1732. COMPLY.

Three of Fifteen complied with the direction given from Two of Fifteen.

One of Six had been focused on the terminal depicting *USS Enterprise's* defensive and tactical power distribution pathways when the visual record captured the blinding flash of light which had alerted the cube to the presence of Species 1732. Three of Fifteen scrolled back through the record ten times to determine if One of Six had captured a visual image of the entity. One of Six had not. Three of Fifteen was scrolling back through the record an eleventh time when Two of Fifteen spoke with the voice of the Collective...

THREE OF FIFTEEN YOU ARE DISPLAYING INEFFICIENCY BY REPEATING THIS TASK. EXPLAIN.

Three of Fifteen paused, then rolled back the visual record for Two of Fifteen to scrutinize and allowed the eighteen seconds preceding the optical flash of energy the Borg associated with Species 1732 to play out.

Two of Fifteen observed the alien biped babbling as One of Six surveyed *USS Enterprise*. Two of Fifteen observed the growing collection of lifeforms gathering in the distance to observe the drone at its work. Two of Fifteen was about to order Three of Fifteen to its alcove for a diagnostic when another two aliens appeared.

One was tall, densely muscled and adorned with cranial protrusions...

>SPECIES 5008. KLINGON.< The Collective Hive Mind saw all as Two of Fifteen observed the visual record. The Borg had a knowledge of Alpha Quadrant species, because the Borg had been to the Alpha Quadrant before.

Then an unanticipated wave of *familiarity*, even *awe* ran through Two of Fifteen and shook the cube's small Collective as well when the life form accompanying the Klingon spoke...

>LOCU...tus...?!<

The other thirteen drones at work on the primary deck turned in unison towards Three of Fifteen's station.

The other seventeen thousand nine hundred and eighty-five drones making up the cube's small Collective all paused for a fraction of a second. Even the six thousand drones presently regenerating sputtered in their collective subconscious uplink.

One of Fifteen directed the others to return to their duties. All fourteen complied. All eighteen thousand had seen the face though. Moments ago, One of Six had registered an anomalous feedback engram. One of Fifteen was going to enquire as to the drone's status...but then, *Locutus*.

QUERY: DESIGNATION "LOCUTUS".

>QUERY UNSUCCESSFUL. ACCESS TO COMPLETE DATA ARCHIVE LIMITED. RECOMMEND PURGING INCONGRUOUS DATA.<

One of Fifteen didn't hesitate: **CONFIRMED. PURGE ALL INCOGRUOUS DATA RELATED TO DESIGNATION, LOCUTUS. COMMIT.**

>COMMIT ALL?<

COMMIT ALL. COMPLY.

In an instant the drones in their regeneration cycle had all memories and data concerning the disturbing remembrance the alien had stirred eliminated from their biological and technological systems. One of Fifteen found itself back at its designated station without the hazy, unsettling phantom remembrance of its fellow drone—the Queen's own prince consort, the bridge between humanity and the Borg, Locutus.

There were more than five hundred drones pouring over the visual record of Species 1732's energy flare. Borg could not be disappointed, though the Collective rued the lack of visual context for the entity. One of Six had a specific task to perform, but surely the drone could have captured a glimpse of the entity which was closest to the embodiment of Particle 010 in all the known universe.

One of Six registered more chatter from the lifeforms aboard USS Enterprise.

Systems registered another flare of energy. Brief. Fleeting. Powerful.

>DO NOT ENGAGE SPICIES 1732. COMPLY.<

CONFIRMED.

Forty-seven seconds later One of Six was offline.



"Data Retrieval." Published 22 May 2018 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Retrieval

>ONE OF SIX NO LONGER FUNCTIONS.<

CONFIRMED. Two of Fifteen interlinked with the data collection buffer and replayed the last twenty seconds of One of Six's rudimentary dispersion stream.

On deck five-zero-nine Eighteen of Twenty-Three poured over the raw energy readings One of Six's dynamic pulse reader had relayed back the instant the drone had gone offline.

Both drones spoke simultaneously within the Hive Mind of Cube 42495's Collective: **>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGE REGISTERED. FREQUENCY 126.4 MHz. ADAPT INDIVIDUAL SHIELD EMITTERS TO MATCH.<**

On deck three-nine-seven Two of Six stepped onto the transport pad while attenuating its axial polarization module. **ADAPTATION COMPLETE.**

>COMPLETE PRIMARY SCAN USS ENTERPRISE TACTICAL POWER DISTRIBUTION NETWORK. RETRIEVE DATA STORAGE AND LOCAL MEMORY DRIVES OCULAR SCANNER AND TASK LOGS.<

WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.

Two of Six dematerialized and an instant later found itself standing over the nonfunctional corpse of One of Six. Lifeforms, including the Klingon, were present. Two of Six proceeded directly to the basic computer interface associated with the designated tactical power networks the Collective required and easily extracted the remaining information from the crude computing system.

The Klingon, the lone member of Species 5008, received instruction from one of the alien lifeforms. The Klingon produced a phased energy weapon and discharged a focused beam directly towards Two of Six's cranium. Thoracic shield emitters activated automatically and easily absorbed the blast which was modulated to a frequency of 126.4MHz.

The last of the raw data uploaded to the collection buffer mounted within Two of Six's type-98 limb augmentation. The Klingon ceased its attack. Two of Six turned slightly to the left to regard the three lifeforms responsible for ending One of Six's functionality and took a detailed scan of the Klingon, the slightly augmented lifeform One of Six had first encountered and the third lifeform which appeared to be instructing the others.

Two of Six was Borg.

Borg felt no fear.

Still, Species 1732 had been confirmed to be in the vicinity and for some reason the simple lifeform directing the others caused Two of Six to experience stirrings of...unease.

The last of the data drained away from the primitive computer. Two of Six secured its collection apparatus and immediately moved to disconnect the specified components from One of Six's remains. The Klingon and the two other lifeforms stood silently and did nothing.

Two of Six rose and faced the lifeforms. Species 5008, without doubt. Species 5618, likely. As the dematerialization sequence began Two of Six contemplated the unease which was growing deep within its biological components. There was the drive to eliminate 5618. There was also something...more.

A second after Two of Six was brought back aboard Cube 42495, Thirty of Thirty-One broadcast an immolation command to One of Six's autonomous reactor regulator. The nonfunctional drone molecularly disintegrated in front of the three alien lifeforms.



Figure 1: "Re-Route." Published 4 Feb. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Adaptation

Two of Six rematerialized on deck three-nine-seven. A triad of analysis drones were waiting. The three drones moved to surround Two of Six. One removed the components taken from One of Six. Another removed Two of Six's own redundant log file module. The third drone extended its limbs and revealed access ports built into its twin type-47 mobile hard uplink conductors. One of Three and Three of Three wasted no time in slotting the components removed from One and Two of Six into Two of Three's waiting jacks.

A surge of ones and zeros coursed through Two of Three. Every miliquad of data collected by the survey drones was immediately uploaded and decompiled for the small Collective to ingest.

>USS ENTERPRISE GALAXY CLASS STARFLEET REGISTRY NCC 1701 D UTOPIA PLANITIA FLEET YARDS MARS FIFTH STARSHIP TO BEAR THE NAME LAUNCHED STARDATE 40759.5 UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS WARP ENGINE DESIGN THEORETICAL PROPULSION GROUP COMPUTER DESIGNS COMPONENT ELEMENTS LOGISTICAL LAYOUTS INDICATE USS ENTERPRISE WAS CONSTRUCTED BY AND IS OPERATED BY SPECIES 5618.<

Two of Fifteen brought Cube 42495's sixteen reactance coils online, anticipating the need to utilize the tractor emitters.

One of Fifteen adapted their approach. It stood down the remaining drones who'd been designated to conduct initial surveys.

On deck six-one-one a troop of tactically proficient drones were complying with direction to prepare to engage *USS Enterprise*.

OPEN LINGUISTIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH SPECIES 5618.

Fourteen of Fifteen opened a subspace channel operating at the same frequencies as the communications systems aboard *USS Enterprise*.

COMMUNICATIONS LINK ESTABLISHED. USS ENTERPRISE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM REQUESTS VISUAL BROADCAST. TRANSMIT VISUAL AS WELL AS AUDITORY COMMUNICATIONS. Fourteen of Fifteen allowed its head to twitch slightly as connections were made between the cube's powerful relays and the underpowered receivers of *USS Enterprise*.

CONFIRMED. BEGIN TRANSMISSION ONCE SPECIES 5618 OPENS FREQUENCY IN RESPONSE TO OUR SIGNAL. COMPLY.

Fourteen of Fifteen fixed visual transmitters on the lateral view of the precipice that was the edge of the primary command deck. It then waited for *USS Enterprise* to connect to their subspace signal. A moment later two yellow indicators flashed above Fourteen of Fifteen's broadcast transceiver array. Species 5618 were responding.

Before Species 5618 could transmit anything more than: "This is Captain Jean Luc Picard of the US..."

The Collective eighteen thousand drones aboard Cube 42495 spoke with one voice.

>WE HAVE ANALYSED YOUR DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES AS BEING UNABLE TO WITHSTAND US. IF YOU DEFEND YOURSELVES, YOU WILL BE PUNISHED.<

The channel was closed. Borg did not negotiate. The steps taken to broadcast a visual message to *USS Enterprise* through its own network were nearly unprecedented.

QUERY: PUNISHED? Three of Fifteen spoke with the voice of the Collective, but kept its inquiry limited to One of Fifteen.

One of Fifteen had been tasked with ordering the machinations aboard Cube 42495. Instructions from Unimatrix One had been clear.

CORRECT. USS ENTERPRISE WILL HAVE THE DATA REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE OUR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE. THESE LIFEFORMS WILL FACILITATE THE ASSIMILATION OF THEIR OWN HOME WORLD. BY ASSIMILATING SPECIES 5618 COMPLETELY THE COLLECTIVE WILL BE PRESERVED. One of Fifteen noted that Seven of Ten had primed the drive systems and computed requisite intercept trajectories on deck two-nine-six.

ASSIMILATION WILL BE ACHIEVED. PUNISHMENT IS IRRELEVANT. INITIAL QUERY STANDS. Three of Fifteen displayed physical symptoms of anxiety and its internal diagnostic center was beginning to cycle. Borg did not question. Borg complied.

One of Fifteen was about to command Three of Fifteen to comply when the voices of Three of Fifteen and Seven of Ten were heard willing the Collective to initiate Assimilation.

NEGATIVE. ASSIMILATION WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER MORE SAMPLES ARE TAKEN. AFTER RISK OF CONTAGION HAS BEEN MITIGATED. REMAIN VIGILANT FOR ANY MORE INDICATIONS OF SPECIES 1732. COMPLY. One of Fifteen received notice from deck zero-nine-two that the *USS Enterprise* was powering its crude drive system.

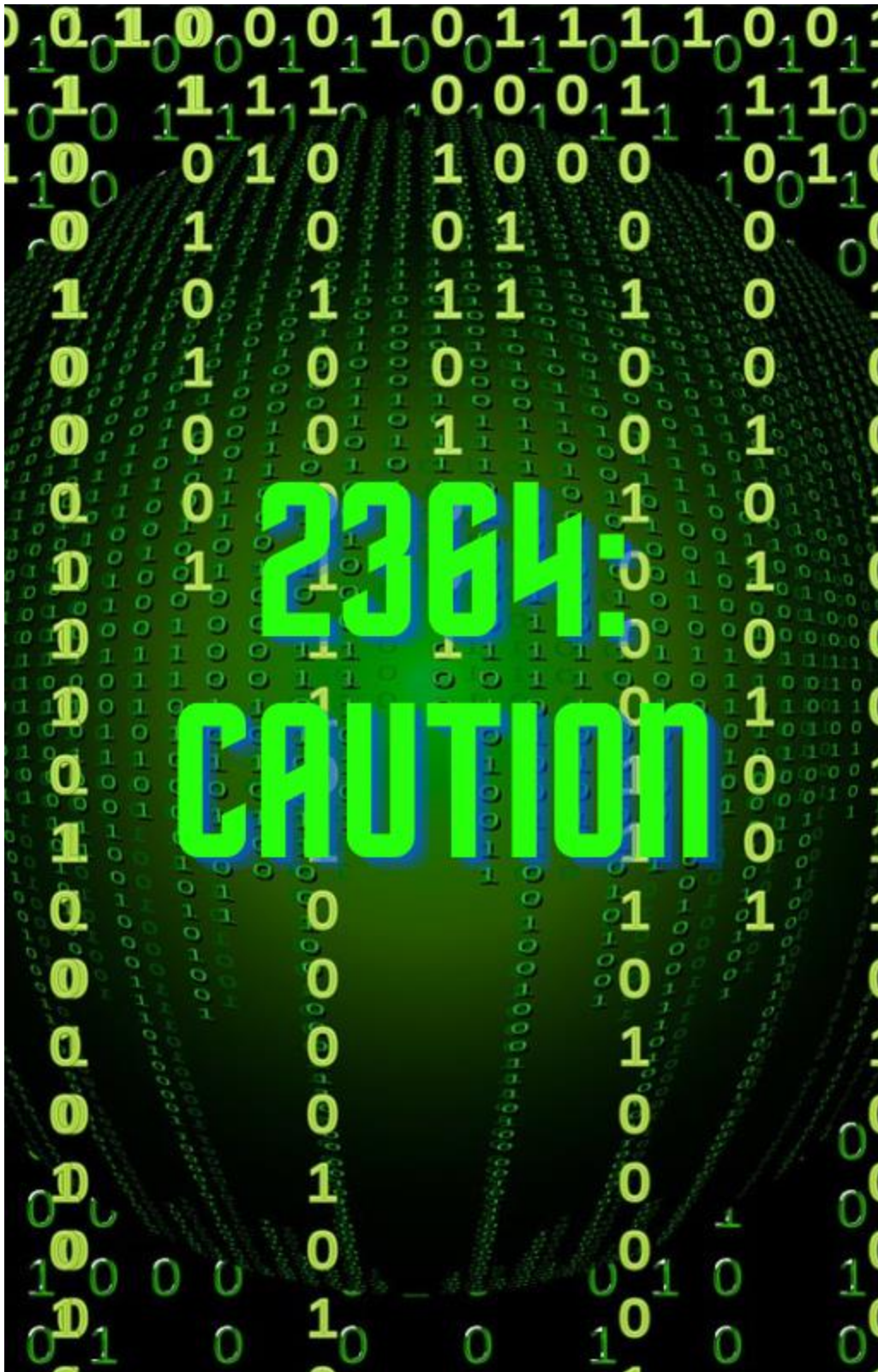
One of Fifteen acknowledged the information. It deferred to tactical drone One of Seven and surveyed the Collective for any additional points of concern.

Three of Fifteen slowly backed away from the status matrix that was One of Fifteen's assigned station. Throughout the Collective the powerful emotion of anxiety and anger simmered. Three of Fifteen returned to its station and sought comfort.

IF PUNISHMENT IS VIEWED AS A SIGNIFICANT DETERENT TO RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF SPECIES 5618 THE THREAT OF PUNISHMENT MAY BE SUFFICIENT TO GAIN COMPLIANCE IN LIEU OF ASSIMILATION.

Three of Fifteen's feelings of anger and uneasy hostility had not abated, but the revelation of the reasoning behind One of Fifteen's odd tactic was almost exhilarating.

>CONFIRMED. PREPARE TRACTOR EMITTERS AND CUTTING BEAMS. DRIVE SYSTEMS PREPARE TO ENGAGE. WE WILL COMPLY.< Came the response of the entire Collective.



"Warning." Published 17 Jun. 2013 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Caution

>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED. MOVE TO INVESTIGATE.<

Little was known about Species 1732.

Its ability to manipulate energy and seemingly create any form of matter had been observed on nine separate occasions over twelve centuries.

Cube 157 was the first Borg vessel to encounter Species 1732 while assimilating Species 1731 on a small moon concealed by a cosmic fount. A never-before observed emission of near molecular perfection was recorded by the cube and in one tenth of a second, the small moon and the bulk of Species 1731 were gone. No practical explanation could be discerned.

Similar instances followed over the centuries.

Brief flashes of immense power. Altered circumstances. A sometimes-chaotic instantaneous reorganization of reality which defied all known logic.

Data was thin. Emissions were fleeting. Efforts were made to adapt to occurrences as they happened. To capture firm telemetry so that the Collective might research and in time, recreate the energy associated with these sparsely observed entities thought to be shapeshifters or changelings of some kind, was the ultimate goal.

It wasn't until the disappearance of Diamond 003 that the Collective came to appreciate how powerful and dangerous the entities designated as Species 1732 truly were. Emissions thought to be associated with Species 1732 were observed close to Borg world 329. The Queen herself moved to investigate. She was confident that the offensive and defensive capabilities of Diamond 003 would provide adequate protection from whatever threat Species 1732 might pose.

Records of the encounter were fragmented.

Diamond 003 made contact with a spatial entity of pure energy in Grid 266. A basic scan was initiated. An energy emission of immeasurable power was recorded. Diamond 003 passed out of all existence.

The Collective faltered.

The data from Diamond 003, thin as it was, managed to be picked up by the central plexus of Unimatrix Six. Her essence just barely escaped into the Hive Mind.

In Unicomplex One the Queen quelled the sputtering Collective. Download and regeneration had been remarkably fast, a fact attributed to the proximity of Diamond 003 to the Unicomplex at the time of its cessation. The Queen was just able to preserve the stability of Unicomplex One and ensure the continuance of the greater Unimatrix. The experience was jarring.

More jarring still was the revelation only a few short hours later—after her adjuncts had ensured the transition from her previous corporal incarnation to her new form was indeed successful; that the fleeting data transmitted back from Diamond 003 aligned nearly perfectly with the attributes displayed by Particle 010. From that instant on Species 1732 was added to the critical directive list every drone was imbued with.

Two of Fifteen acknowledged the latest update on Species 1732. The decision to proceed cautiously was sound. Species 5618 presented a possible contamination risk as related to the neurolytic pathogen they may be in possession of. Species 1732 presented a potentially greater threat of unknown proportions.

They would take samples of Species 5618's technology to gradually reacquaint themselves with their abilities. They would marshal initial compliance by capitalizing on a small species' small fears and slowly assimilate *USS Enterprise* around the hated lifeforms within. Based on the data gleaned from the perfunctory survey conducted by One of Six and completed by Two of Six, it was probable that the information required to locate Species 5618's home world would be found stored in the computer banks aboard *USS Enterprise*.

They would be wary of the entity.

Species 1732 was unpredictable and powerful.

Critical Directive 2 required Borg to investigate, document and report any activity associated with Species 1732.

They were Borg. They would comply.



"Shattered." Published 28 Dec. 2014 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Damage

USS Enterprise was seized by a standard proton heavy tractor beam.

One of Fifteen monitored the cube's energy status as One of Seven began to implement the unorthodox, yet cautiously meticulous plan-of-attack the Collective had agreed upon.

On the primary tactical control deck, six-one-one, One of Seven was satisfied with the lock achieved by the primary emitter. Three of Seven initiated the beam's protonic transfer circuits and the tractor beam began sapping energy from the *USS Enterprise's* defensive shields.

USS ENTERPRISE SHIELD MODULATION APPEARS TO BE STEADY AT 257.4 MHZ. THEIR DEFENSIVE MEASURES ARE INADEQUATE.

One of Seven acknowledged Three of Seven.

A fast and brutal assimilation would be simple.

A fast and brutal assimilation at this point was not possible.

One of Seven signaled Six of Seven to ready the cutting beam.

On deck three-five-one a recovery team of sixteen drones equipped with emergency biological focus adaptors and regeneration units awaited delivery of living specimens.

USS Enterprise attempted to engage its light drive. One of Fifteen noted the power surge detected and ensured an uninterrupted power-supply remained viable to the primary tractor emitter.

>USS ENTERPRISE WILL EXPERIENCE DEFENSIVE SHIELD COLLAPSE IN 18.23 SECONDS.<

Stripping Species 5618 of their vessel's defensive capabilities was calculated to induce panic. Cube 42495 could assimilate or destroy *USS Enterprise* easily as the modulation of their shields and screens were known; however, the tactic agreed upon was one of subtlety. Species 5618 were not yet aware how useless their defenses were. The opportunity was to attack them psychologically.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGE DETECTED.<

Deck six-eight-three reported a disruption to the cube's electromagnetic field. Power distribution nodes 10012 – 10021 were off-line.

USS Enterprise's defensive energy shields were down.

One of Seven gave targeting control to Six of Seven and the cutting beam was engaged. Three, Four and Five of Seven took readings from the beam and measured the resistance offered by the duranium rich hull of *USS Enterprise*. Seven of Seven attenuated the broad band secondary tractor emitter in preparation for collecting their sample.

A section of *USS Enterprise's* hull was removed.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGE DETECTED.<

At its post before the status matrix, One of Fifteen rocked unsteadily on its feet. The second blast from *USS Enterprise* measured an impressive 1 x 10 to the 5th power Terawatts.

A section of the lower port quarter of Cube 42495 was obliterated. Portions of decks three-eight-eight through four-seven-four were open to space. Two hundred and fifteen drones were offline.

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGE DETECTED.<

>PHASED ENERGY DISCHARGE DETECTED.<

Another massive explosion rocked the cube and the power distribution nodes across deck three-six-six were knocked offline.

The second hit came quickly on the destabilizing impact of the first. The primary tractor emitter and the drones exercising the cube's offensive capabilities on deck six-one-one were offline.

Three of Fifteen assessed the damage and totaled the casualties. Another eighteen hundred drones were offline.

One of Fifteen directed drones Thirty of Thirty-Five and Thirty-One of Thirty-Five to bypass the faulty power nodes on the ruined decks and reestablish fire control from their location on deck two-two-two. The thirty-three remaining drones from their damage control unit were to erect force fields around crucial systems which may have been compromised.

The waiting team of drones on deck three-five-one attended the eighteen specimens brought over from the *USS Enterprise*. Only twelve were members of Species 5618. Of the remaining six, four were left to expire in the compromised receiving bay, which had been badly damaged by the most recent round of phased energy fire. The other two specimens were deceased, their bodies discarded. The remaining ten consisted of six mature males, a female and three juveniles.

Force fields began energizing along bulkheads to keep the inner labyrinth of decks, scaffolds, berms and corridors from decompressing. There had been sixteen drones assigned to retrieve specimens. Two had been destroyed and three others had been blown out into space when the cube was ripped open by the attacking *USS Enterprise*. The remaining drones were all suffering from varying degrees of damage to both their biological and cybernetic components.

One of Eleven, previously Three of Sixteen, organized the others in their slow, limping retreat deeper into the stable, undamaged chambers further back along deck three-five-one. None of the specimens resisted. The vital signs for all ten were faint. One of Eleven directed the others to pull their quarry to the nearest assimilation chamber where they could be duly studied. It wouldn't be any of the eleven surviving drones doing the examinations though. Once the specimens were secured, One of Eleven and the others would find alcoves and regenerate before their own operations ceased as a result of their wounds.

>DAMAGE SUSTAINED TO 20% OF CUBE 42495.<

ROUTE POWER FROM LIFE SUPPORT TO REGENERATION MATRIX.

COMPLY. One of Fifteen interfaced with the nodes of the status matrix directly by way of its assimilation tubules. The destructive power of *USS Enterprise* had been...miscalculated.

>LIFE SUPPORT TO MINIMUM. RECOMMEND REGENERATION.<

STATUS USS ENTERPRISE.

>USS ENTERPRISE REMAINS STATIONARY. DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS OFFLINE. OFFENSIVE CAPABILITIES REMAIN INTACT.<

DAMAGE CONTROL GROUPS TO ALL CRITICAL JUNCTIONS. SECURE CUBE 42495 FROM DECOMPRESSION. ALL OTHER DRONES REPORT TO ASSIGNED ALCOVES TO ASSIST WITH REPAIRS. COMPLY.

>WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.<

THIRTY OF THIRTY-FIVE THIRTY-ONE OF THIRTY-FIVE YOUR NEW DESIGNATIONS ARE ONE AND TWO OF TWO. CONTINUE RESTORATION EFFORTS OF TACTICAL CONTROL. MONITOR USS ENTERPRISE. DEFEND THE COLLECTIVE. COMPLY.

>WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.<



"Nodes and Sprouts." Published 6 Nov. 2019 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Perfection

All but twenty-three hundred drones reported to alcoves and interlinked with the wounded cube. Regeneration began *en masse*. Each individual drone connected itself to the linkage nodes normally meant to carry nutrients and maintenance nanoprobes from the cube; reversed their engagements, and the collective energy from the surviving drones aboard Cube 42495 was channeled towards repair and regeneration of the massive vessel itself. Almost immediately damage assessment algorithms began calculating where to commence repair operations as energy coursed into the redundant generators and matter converters located throughout the seven hundred decks of the damaged cube.

One of Two remained focused on rerouting defensive shields and weapons control to a secondary cluster of control junctions newly adapted to bypass the destroyed systems. Two of Two managed the flow of loss assessments and damage reports while manipulating the transverse spectral sensors to augment the cube's compromised internal network. More than %64 of deck two-two-two had been decompressed. Two hundred and seventy drones had gone offline. Only the larger group of thirty-three drones dedicated to damage control and the group of two drones newly assigned to fire control and security remained functional.

Cube 42495 hung lifeless in space her damaged face fully exposed to *USS Enterprise*. One of Fifteen directed the others populating the primary control deck to report to their alcoves to assist with repairs. All complied without hesitation...except Two and Three of Fifteen.

**>USS ENTERPRISE REMAINS CAPABLE OF OFFENSIVE ACTION.<
CONFIRMED.**

**>RECOMMEND REGENERATION OF SECONDARY PROTON EMITTER.
TARGET AND DESTROY ENERGY DISTRIBUTION NETWORK ABOARD USS
ENTERPRISE. RENDER USS ENTERPRISE DEFENSELESS BEFORE DEPLOYING
MASS ASSIMILATION SQUADS.<**

**NEGATIVE. USS ENTERPRISE WILL NOT ENGAGE WHILE SPECIES 5618
ARE WITHOUT DEFENSIVE SCREENS. SPECIES 5618 WILL NOT RISK THEIR
INDIVIDUAL LIVES IN A FUTILE HOSTILE ACTION.**

**>PROBABILITY OF COMPLETE AND SUCCESSFUL ASSIMILATION STANDS
AT %99.99.<**

**SPECIES 5618 PRESENTS AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK OF CONTAMINATION.
WE WILL NOT ASSIMILATE THESE LIFEFORMS UNTIL EXAMINATIONS ARE
COMPLETE. THEIR HOME WORLD IS LOCATED AND ABSOLUTE SUCCESS IS
ASSURED. SPECIES 1732 REMAINS AN UNPREDICTABLE VARIABLE ABOARD
USS ENTERPRISE. WE WILL REGENERATE CUBE 42495 AND PROCEED AS
DIRECTED. COMPLY.**

>WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.< Two and Three of Fifteen turned away from One of Fifteen and proceeded silently towards their own alcoves.

One of Fifteen returned to the status matrix to monitor the progress of repairs and catalogue the losses suffered. The primary power distribution network had been badly damaged, and the collective energies of the drones onboard were being applied to the

restoration of the grid. Twenty-two hundred and fifty-three drones were offline. Some had been vaporized when *USS Enterprise* had attacked. Some had been blown into space when the sections they were stationed in had been ripped open. Some had suffocated in place as sections and decks decompressed. Cube 42495's Collective had grown smaller.

Two of Two monitored an energy flare aboard *USS Enterprise*.

>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED.<

CONFIRMED. One of Fifteen replied.

The greater Collective was now engaged in regenerating the cube. Two of Two and One of Fifteen spoke with the voice of the Collective, but their small unimatrix was focused on more immediate priorities.

Two of Two monitored a more benign surge of energy from *USS Enterprise*. **USS ENTERPRISE HAS RESTORED DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES.**

CONFIRMED.

One of Fifteen consulted its screens and noted the regeneration of Cube 42495 was not progressing as efficiently as the situation required. To redirect the Collective to prioritizing a resumption of hostilities with *USS Enterprise* without the immediate goal of mass assimilation, would be inefficient. One of Fifteen considered the logistics of concerning Species 5618's observed behavior patterns. A %62.8 likelihood of non-offensive behavior was likely, provided *USS Enterprise* was left unmolested.

The situation was complex.

Cube 42495 could readily destroy *USS Enterprise*. Cube 42495 could just as easily disable *USS Enterprise* and assimilate all lifeforms. Species 5618 presented an unknown and unacceptable risk *vis-à-vis* standard mass assimilation, however. The presence of Species 1732 further complicated matters.

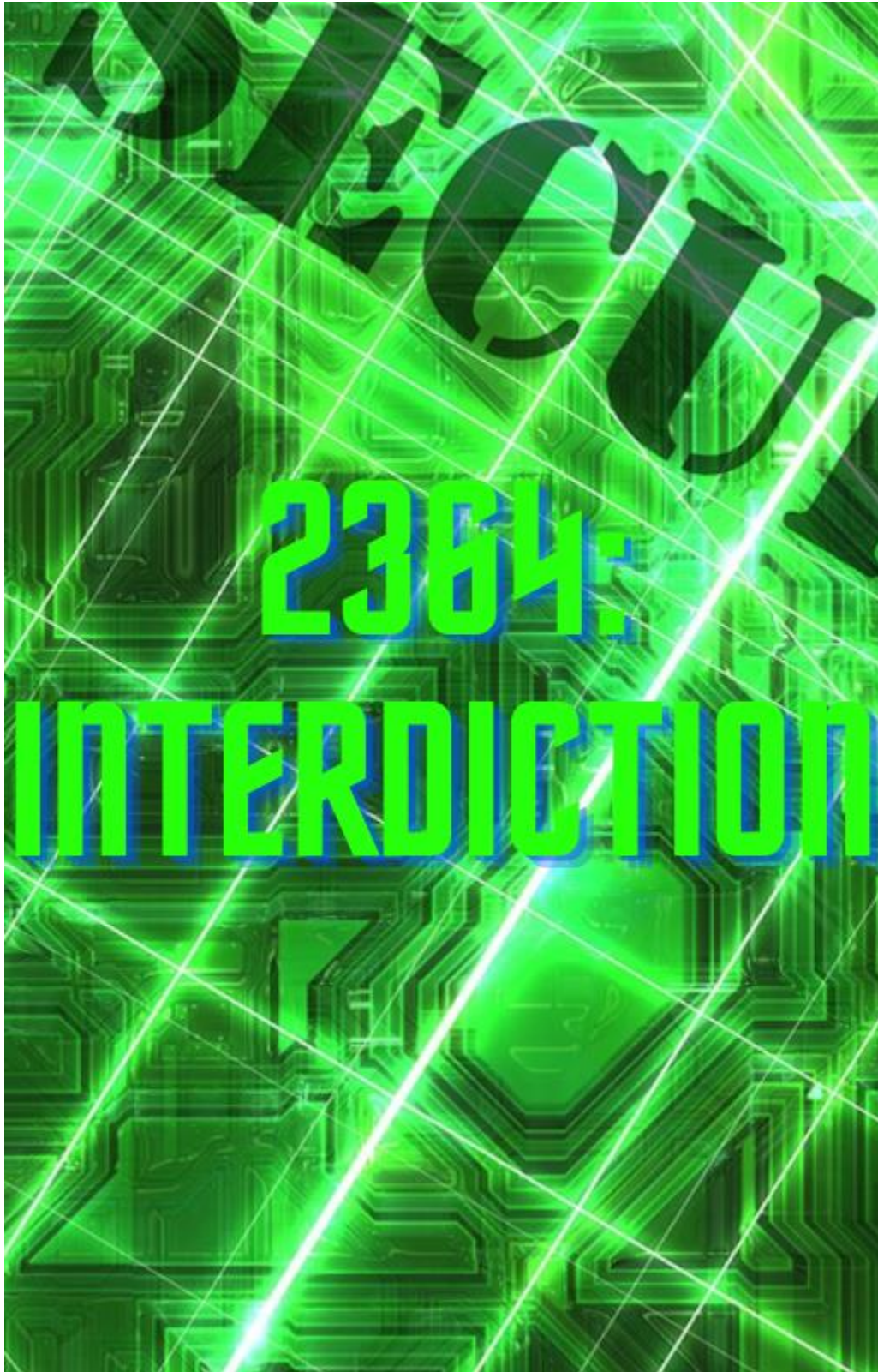
The cube's Collective was diminished. The small Collective was focused on regeneration. One of Fifteen relied upon the knowledge imparted by Unicomplex One to guide its actions and the diminished unimatrix comprised of the few thousand drones not presently interlinked with Cube 42495 to formulate its course of action.

The strategy now was to capture *USS Enterprise*. Assimilate the vessel. Assimilate the technology. Assimilate the primitive computers and all the information stored therein. The lifeforms aboard *USS Enterprise* would be left in their unperfect forms until their home world was found and any threat of future contagion nullified.

Species 5618 was imperfect. The task of eliminating the threat of Species 5618 would have to follow an imperfect path.

Species 1732 was an anomaly. So close to Particle 010, the possibility of Species 1732's perfection necessitated caution.

Having both species in such proximity to one and other was proving to be...challenging.



"Security Alert." Published 22 Dec. 2014 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Interdiction

A green alert icon flickered in the middle of the status matrix. One of Fifteen closed out the active interface with the internal damage control catalogue and opened a new korero with Two of Two. The internal sensor network was far down on the list of priorities being addressed by the Collective. Two of Two was processing all available feeds through its own independent bioneural confinement regulator to make what information could be gleaned, readily available to the control deck.

AN INCURSION HAS BEEN DETECTED. TWO LIFEFORMS. SPECIES 5008. SPECIES 5618. ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORM OF UNKNOWN DESIGN. DECK FIVE-FIVE-SIX SECTION B33. Two of Two spoke with the voice of the small Collective of drones slowly roaming the vast corridors and dark channels throughout Cube 42495.

One of Fifteen absorbed the notification. **CONFIRMED. THREAT ANALYSIS.**

One of Fifteen twitched sporadically as it worked to create more pathways within the slowly regenerating network of control clusters and processing arrays.

THREE PORTABLE PHASED ENERGY EMITTERS OF THE TYPE ENCOUNTERED BY ONE OF SIX. MODULATION FREQUENCY UNKNOWN. RECOMMEND ADAPTIVE ALGORITHMS BE EMPLOYED TO MITIGATE POTENTIAL THREAT.

CONFIRMED. MONITOR INTRUDING LIFEFORMS AND ADVISE. One of Fifteen called up external sensors and proceeded to plot points of vulnerability the Collective could exploit once Cube 42495 had been sufficiently restored to proceed with the assimilation of *USS Enterprise*.

One of Two reached out to One of Fifteen. **DEPLOY TACTICAL UNITS TO ASSIMILATE SPECIES 5008 AND CONFINE ARTIFICIAL ENTITY.**

NEGATIVE. MONITOR AND REPORT. INTERDICTION IRRELEVANT. USS ENTERPRISE WILL BE ASSIMILATED AND MADE TO SERVE US. COMPLY.

One of Two returned to the task of rerouting primary power couplings to the newly established proton emitter and tractor port it had been focused on. Two of Two watched the party of three *USS Enterprise* beings as they began moving through corridor 556/154.

The beings from *USS Enterprise* worked as a small collective. They moved slowly, but steadily along the corridor in a rough triangular tactical pattern. Their phased energy units were stowed. They communicated verbally.

The artificial lifeform examined an empty alcove. Two of Two accessed the alcove's dedicated passive scanners and managed to pattern a partial survey of the device. Positronic. Two of Two blinked reflexively. Something stirred deep within.

One of Fifteen became aware of the detection of a positronic neural net a nano-second after Two of Two. Without knowing why, One of Fifteen triggered a purge.

Two of Two refocused on its output feeds. Data streamed through the drone in fragmented dribs and drabs as Two of Two filtered it all thorough its internal buffers and disseminated the internal sensor information to the Collective.

One of the lifeforms, identified as a member of Species 5618, began communicating with *USS Enterprise* over subspace. One of Fifteen allowed the transmission. Three lifeforms were not a concern. Calculations strongly supported the supposition that provided the interdicting lifeforms remained aboard the cube, *USS*

Enterprise would not engage its phased energy weapons to inflict further damage. Regeneration continued.

The artificial lifeform entered alcove 556s.22n.427. Two of Two conducted a second scan of the positronic network. The information was catalogued. No biological matter was detected. Two of Two ensured lockout protocols were in place to prevent the robot from gaining access to any vital systems.

The lifeforms continued their verbal interaction.

SEVENTEEN OF FORTY PROCEED FROM SECTION 12.2 TO SECTION 13.1 BYWAY OF CORRIDOR 556/154. CONDUCT PASSIVE OCULAR SCAN OF UNKNOWN LIFEFORM SITUATED AT ALCOVE 556.S22N.427. COMPLY. Ordered Two of Two.

Seventeen of Forty immediately disengaged from its work at the modular flux inverter in corridor 556/153 to round the corner and comply. It walked steadily past the three lifeforms noted, to resume its work on the power distribution subsystems at alcove 556.s22n431.

Two of Two noted an aggressive action taken by Species 5008. The Klingon raised its phased energy weapon as Seventeen of Forty passed, but the lifeform belonging to Species 5618 prevented any hostile action. A clear hierarchy was emerging amongst the three lifeforms. The member of Species 5618 appeared to be directing the others. Two of Two logged the observation and continued monitoring all active internal systems.

Seventeen of Forty was directed to return to corridor 556/153 to continue regeneration efforts. Again, as the drone passed the three lifeforms, it took a detailed ocular scan of the group. It was curious that the lifeform from Species 5618 should be the one directing the others when the artificial lifeform appeared superior in all regards.

The lifeforms continued along to maturation chamber 52A, off corridor 154. One of Fifteen noted a proximity alert. There were only two hundred and nine immature drones aboard. Most had been taken when Cube 42495 had assimilated a rogue convoy of personnel carriers attempting to cross Borg space in the Delta Quadrant. The immature drones were small and contributed nothing to the Collective in their current physical states; however, given the number of drones who'd been taken offline by the hostile actions of *USS Enterprise*, these two hundred and nine would be needed to assist in replenishing the strength of the Collective moving forward.

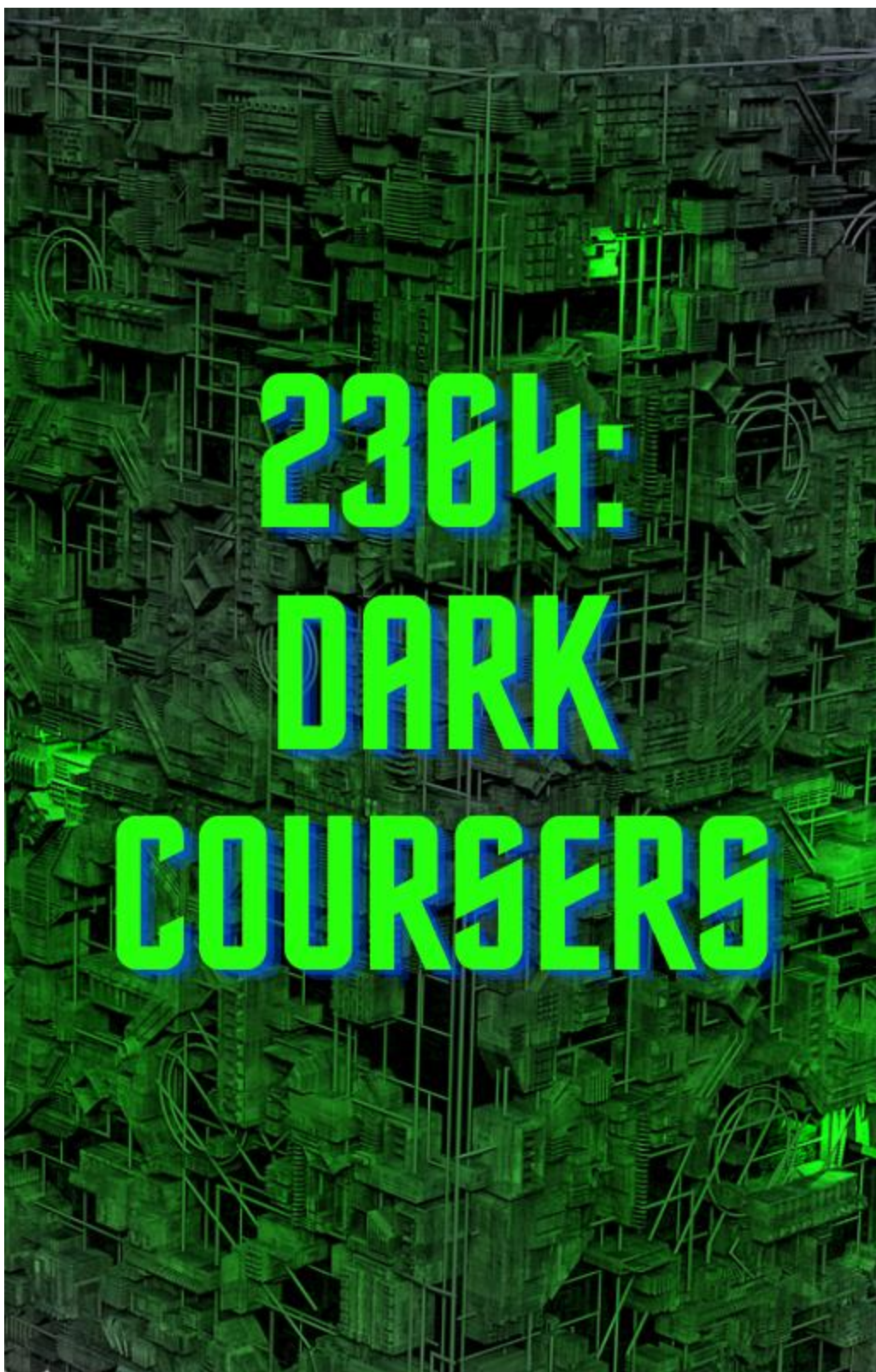
Two of Two was directed to alert local drones to prepare to intercede should the lifeforms from *USS Enterprise* pose a serious threat to the immature drones.

More subspace transmissions. A matter/energy transport signal. The three lifeforms were taken from maturation chamber 52A and pulled back to *USS Enterprise*.

One of Two brought the new emitters online.

Two of Two rerouted sensor controls to the central cluster and signaled all active drones to immediately prepare for action.

One of Fifteen linked One of Eighteen on deck three-eight-six to the central status matrix in order to allow the drones responsible for the newly adapted propulsion center to program the appropriate course and speed to commence assimilation of *USS Enterprise*.



"Borg." Published 28 Apr. 2020 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Dark Coursers

USS Enterprise turned and engaged its light speed engines.

Cube 42495 engaged propulsion. One of Fifteen left tactical control to One of Two. The objective was to capture and assimilate *USS Enterprise*. Consensus solidified the small Collective of drones active aboard Cube 42495.

USS Enterprise registered a surge in power and its speed increased.

Cube 42495 matched course and speed as One of Eighteen ensured all necessary power flowed in a continuous stream through the propulsion plant.

One of Fifteen remained at the status matrix monitoring the pursuit. The Collective remained linked with the cube. The cube regenerated as it sliced through the vacuum of interstellar space at faster and faster speeds.

The combined efforts of the small Collective had restored the power distribution network. Automated systems were able to draw power. The Collective directed their energy to regenerating the primary tractor emitter and proton weapons. Two of Two adapted additional tactical systems as the others worked. Compromised compartments and damaged hull sections began regenerating. Matter-energy-converters were brought online and drew from the cube's increasing wealth of power to patch and repair the physical scars left by *USS Enterprise*.

One of Fifteen noted that *USS Enterprise* was cresting the upper limits of its powerful, but inefficient light engine plant. One of Six had successfully downloaded key engineering data from its initial survey. *USS Enterprise* was now at warp 9.

One of Eighteen steadily increased the flow of plasma to the cube's primary drive system. Cube 42495 easily matched *USS Enterprise's* speed.

Two of Two noted a power surge in the weapons grid of *USS Enterprise*.

One of Two confirmed. Tractor and proton beams were brought to power.

One of Fifteen ensured adaptive protocols were active and energized the cube's defensive grid.

PROJECTILE LAUNCH DETECTED. PHOTONIC ENERGY CONFIRMED. DEUTERIUM/ANTI-DEUTERIUM WEAPONS DEPLOYED. One of Two spoke with the voice of the Collective.

CONFIRMED. MAINTAIN PURSUIT. PREPARE TO ASSIMILATE USS ENTERPRISE. COMPLY. Responded One of Fifteen as the two projectiles slammed into the face of Cube 42495 and detonated.

One of Eighteen steadily poured more power into the propulsion plant.

Two of Two noted no damage from the offensive weapons deployed.

USS Enterprise exceeded warp 9.65. One of Fifteen noted *USS Enterprise* could not maintain its current velocity for any great duration of time without suffering a catastrophic propulsion failure. Species 5618 had demonstrated a proclivity towards self-preservation. It was unlikely *USS Enterprise* would be pushed to the point of destruction by Species 5618. Cube 42495 increased its own speed, gradually gaining on *USS Enterprise*.

One of Two calculated that without destroying the fleeing *USS Enterprise* outright, Cube 42495's most efficient course of action would be to force Species 5618 to exhaust their reserves and render *USS Enterprise* helpless. Ripe for assimilation.

>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED.<

Each of the two thousand three hundred alert drones working to bring Cube 42495 to bear down upon *USS Enterprise* acknowledged the energy signature associated with Species 1732.

One of Fifteen applied the logic algorithms their Collective had been developing since initial contact with *USS Enterprise* to gauge a course of action. Critical Directive 2 obligated all Borg to proceed with caution and make whatever observations they could regarding Species 1732.

Species 1732 represented a threat.

Species 5618 had to be assimilated.

Species 5618 would end the Borg.

One of Fifteen knew this because Unicomplex One had known this.

The Collective knew this because it had and would happen, unless Species 5618 was completely assimilated; their biological and technological distinctiveness added to that of the Collective. Only by assimilating all of Species 5618 could the Collective be free of the looming extinction Species 5618 represented.

One of Eighteen poured on the speed.

They would proceed.

They would risk contact with Species 1732 and assimilate *USS Enterprise*.

USS Enterprise crested warp 9.83. The inefficient vessel sliced through space in a fragile bubble of energy which was on the verge of collapse.

A single strike from a properly tuned proton emitter would destabilize their warp field and the impressively powered, yet primitive vessel would disintegrate into a fine dust to mingle with the background particulate of the universe.

One of Fifteen was linked with One of Two and One of Eighteen. Their Collective was growing strong. They would comply with the strategy adopted. *USS Enterprise* would be captured and assimilated. All data concerning Species 5618 and their home world would be extracted and Cube 42495 would proceed to prevent the end of the perfection.

Regeneration of Cube 42495 was 72% complete.

One of Fifteen sought consensus from the others and obtained it. The efficient course of action was to allow the Collective to restore Cube 42495 completely. Run down *USS Enterprise* and disable the vessel's offensive, defensive and propulsion capabilities, then proceed with the strategic assimilation of *USS Enterprise's* technology.

One of Two noted *USS Enterprise* was now within range of the secondary proton emitter and fired a modified burst of protons to drain *USS Enterprise's* defensive shields without disrupting the fleeing vessel's fragile warp field.

>USS ENTERPRISE SHIELD STRENGTH REDUCED 12%.<

One of Fifteen confirmed the report and directed One of Two to continue the attack.

A second proton burst. *USS Enterprise* shield capacity was reduced by a further 29%. The strategy was irregular, but the application was proving sufficient. *USS Enterprise* unleashed another volley of photonic weapons to no effect. Another proton burst and *USS Enterprise* was without defensive energy screens. A second proton burst. *USS Enterprise* fell out of warp.

One of Two had tuned the proton emitter to mirror the static field modulations of *USS Enterprise's* reactor using data Two of Two had gleaned from the survey information

One of Six had extracted. One of Eighteen backed the cube out of faster-than-light travel to stay on the helpless *USS Enterprise*.



"Nebula." Published 20 Dec. 2016 Pixabay Licence Free

2364: Vexations

USS Enterprise slowed, and its energy readings became erratic. The vessel's reactor was struggling to cycle. The final proton burst had destabilized *USS Enterprise's* ability to employ its light-drive systems.

One of Two's modifications had efficiently ended Species 5618's futile attempt at escape.

One of Eighteen channeled the excess drive energy through Cube 42495's recycler units and communicated directly to One of Two that the rebuilt pathways would allow the newly regenerated primary tractor emitter to draw from the surplus.

One of Fifteen noted regeneration was now cresting 93% completion. The drones would be brought out of their shared regenerative state of directed unconsciousness within moments. The Collective would soon wake. *USS Enterprise* was helpless.

One of Two engaged the newly regenerated primary tractor and immobilized *USS Enterprise*.

One of Fifteen began assigning squads of designated tactical drones to assimilation groups which would be transported to critical areas of *USS Enterprise* once the others surfaced from the collaborative regeneration cycle. Engineering. The central computer core. Life support and medical facilities. The control center on *USS Enterprise's* designated *Deck One*. Taking control of these areas would allow the Collective to access and control *USS Enterprise* completely.

Two of Two calculated the correct proton cycle each drone's personal emitter would require immobilizing the lifeforms aboard *USS Enterprise* without terminating biological functions. Once the vessel was secured and their databases were Borg, an examination of the lifeforms belonging to Species 5618 could be conducted and a determination of contagion made.

One of Two noted a surge of energy aboard *USS Enterprise*. Species 5618 was preparing to fire another photonic device. Futile.

>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED.< The voice of the cube's full Collective roared back like a tsunami.

CONFIRMED. PROCEED WITH ASSIMILATION USS ENTERPRISE. COMPLY. One of Fifteen ignored the dull sense of relief washing through the dim biological remnants of its brain matter.

>CONFIRM. ASSIMILATE USS ENTERPRISE. IMMOBILIZE LIFE FORMS. EXTRACT PERTINENT DATA. LOCATE HOME WORLD SPECIES 5618. ASSIMILATE. PRESERVE PERFECTION. WE ARE BORG. WE WILL COMPLY.<

Secondary tractor beam reactors came to full power. Tactical drones from decks four-three-one, six-two-zero, two-two-two, and one-seven-zero silently marched to designated matter/energy buffers. Each drone received and complied with the necessary instructions to modify their personal proton emitters. None of the lifeforms aboard *USS Enterprise* were to be assimilated. The primary objective was to assimilate the technological components of *USS Enterprise*.

>CRITICAL DIRECTIVE 2 EMISSION DETECTED.<

Three of Fifteen had resumed the task of coordinating and directing Cube 42495's external sensors. Nearly all the surviving drones aboard the cube were now alert and

functioning as one. Only fifteen hundred and seven drones remained in their alcoves, too damaged to rejoin the waking Collective.

On the central status matrix One of Fifteen observed an all-consuming flash of light. Three of Fifteen confirmed the energy discharge displayed five of the six key elements associated with Particle 010.

In a flash, *USS Enterprise* was gone.

Two of Fifteen immediately began employing the cube's deep space gravitronic emitter coil to sweep light years of nothingness for *USS Enterprise*...

Species 1732 was responsible.

Cube 42495 stood down from assimilation operations and plotted a course towards a distant system. Data was still incomplete. The Neutral Zone outposts. The fragmented data downloaded from the initial survey of *USS Enterprise*. Partial celestial data from the ancient transmission; a probable location was set, *Alpha Centauri*.

They were Borg.



"Infinite Assimilation." Published 10 Jul. 2021 Pixabay Licence Free

2380: Unicomplex One

The adjuncts worked silently.

Coldly.

Efficiently.

The Unicomplex thrummed with a structured rhythm of near perfection.

Near perfection.

She watched her adjuncts at their cluster panels seamlessly processing the unending surge of information flowing to the seat of the Borg. Flowing to her. As ever the present, past and future Queen.

If any of the nine drones below turned to look up towards the dark vaulted ceiling of the chamber their biological eyesight might pick out her form. An inky mass of augmented cranial and upper thoracic matter supported at the trapezoids by thick umbilicals...a sharp nub of a spine hanging low. More likely a blind eye would only sense movement. Perhaps they might catch the glint of reflected light from a flitting silver eye.

Communication with Cube 42495 had ceased the moment the artificial singularity collapsed. Her Borg were more than a decade in the past. Tasked with finding the origin point of Species 5618. Charged with finding *Earth* so the Collective might wipe the hateful stain of *humanity* from the universe once and forever.

Nothing had changed.

The task was not yet complete.

A cube with a proper interplexing relay assembly would have been able to remain in contact with the Collective through space/time. None had been available at the instant of catastrophe.

She remained the lone chord out of tune with the greater symphony of perfection. The attack... *"maybe it was something you assimilated"*...5618's attack, had left her diminished. She should be able to hear the voices of the others across time, across space, across dimensional planes even. Something had been taken from her.

Beneath the intimate network where her adjuncts could speak to her. Beneath the Unicomplex and the web of the greater Unimatrix. Past the firewalls and safeguards in the tangle of filigree that was her own private neural net, deep in the fretwork of tracery where the deepest, most critical data ever gathered nested...she sought solace.



"Red Dwarf designated Wolf 359." Published 14 Oct. 2023 Pixabay Licence Free

Wolf 359

Nine of Fifteen consulted the subspace transference deflector. Cube 42495 was proceeding along the speculative course the information gathered to that point had assisted the small Collective in plotting.

Cube 42495 had completely regenerated.

>UNIQUE ENERGY SIGNATURE DETECTED FROM A SYSTEM ORBITING THE G-TYPE MAIN SEQUENCE STAR AT 225.06. DISTANCE 7,295.43 LIGHT YEARS.<

Two of Fifteen, now monitoring the primary status matrix as One of Fifteen had entered its own regeneration cycle, processed the information. **ELUCIDATE.**

>THE STAR AT 225.06 SUPPORTS A SIMPLE EIGHT PLANET SYSTEM. EVIDENCE OF AN INTERPLEXING OSCILLATION ARE BEING DETECTED FROM THE FIFTH PLANET OF THAT SYSTEM.<

QUERY: THE HOME WORLD FOR SPECIES 5618?

>INDICATIONS NEGATIVE. FIFTH PLANET IS A GAS GIANT. UNINHABITABLE FOR BIOLOGICAL LIFEFORMS SUCH AS SPECIES 5618.<

Two of Fifteen cocked its head at an odd angle and sought understanding.

>PRESENT HEADING OF 225.0165 MOST PROBABLE LOCATION FOR THE ORIGIN POINT OF SPECIES 5618 BASED ON INCOMPLETE DATA.<

QUERY: IS THE INTERPLEXING OSCILLATION A NATURAL OCCURRENCE?

>NEGATIVE.<

QUERY: ARE THERE ANY PLANETS CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING SPECIES 5618 IN THE SYSTEM AT 225.06?

>THE THIRD PLANET IN THE SYSTEM PRESENTS OPTIMAL CONDITIONS FOR BIOLOGICAL LIFE.<

ALTER COURSE TO 225.06. COMPLY.

Cube 42495 altered course accordingly. It would arrive at its new target in a little over two years. A large swath of nothing lay between the Borg and what was the Sol system. The most notable point of interest between the cube and its new target was a red dwarf star some 7.56 light-years out from the third planet, designated as Wolf 359.



"Cyborg Queen." Published 24 Jun. 2023 Pixabay Licence Free



CONVERGENCE

AUTHOR'S NOTES

"Displaced Hub, Kea System." Published 12 Oct. 2013 Pixabay Licence Free

Author's Notes: November 2023

The following "notes" are provided to offer readers some insight into the Convergence Series as it presently stands.

With Stardate: 42761.3 the series has only one remaining book to come before the story of Captain Shorh, the *USS Sheaffe*, Contemporaneous Affairs and the Zhat Vash is concluded. The experience of researching, writing and working with Trekkie Fan Fiction to bring these characters and stories to life for anyone interested in their adventures in the Star Trek Universe has been both a pleasant and rewarding one.

Here you will find a brief one-page discourse on each of the installments thus far published and an alternative cover for each book depicting some of the key characters throughout the series.

Having had the extraordinary experience of getting to interact with a few readers and fellow authors concerning these stories and characters, I would like to simply say *thank you* to everyone who has taken the time to download and follow along with the adventure so far. As a fan friendly resource of accessible and endlessly original writing and art, I can't praise Trekkie Fan Fiction enough for its repository of outstanding works.

Special thanks to Sean for his hard work and vision in creating this forum for fans to write and share original stories from a Universe we all know and love.

To my fellow authors and creators on TFF, thank you for sharing your imagination and passion with fans (like me) around the world.

To anyone reading this who ever felt they might have a story to tell, I would encourage you to do it. "*Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations*" works best when all our voices are offered up to be heard.

In closing, with the Holiday Season approaching, I'd like to offer all of you my sincere hope that everyone, everywhere, regardless of creed, race or religion, is gifted with health, peace and happiness in the coming New Year.

Live long and prosper.

Glenn.



THE GREATEST UNTOLD
ADVENTURE OF THE LOST AREA.

GLENN G G MAITLAND

CONVERGENCE

<https://trekkiefanfiction.com/stories/convergence/>

"Admiral U'Chtukli." Published 4 Jun. 2018 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

The first two Books of the series, *Sheaffe* & *Aftermath*, started out as a short story meant to pass the hours through a blizzard during the Christmas 2019 break. The idea was to write a short tale for personal amusement about a bumbling Commander who finds himself thrust into captaincy aboard a pathetic starship with a disinterested crew. The character of Brian Harris was originally meant to be a sort of anti-Kirk. The first draft of what was then titled: *0564*, sat at about twenty pages and had some choice bits of humor as relate to the impossible standards set by the original crew of the “TOS” *Enterprise* and those very uncomfortable looking turtlenecks from the original run of films.

The pandemic lockdown set in, and time became abundant. *0564* slowly grew into a proper story of a man displaced within a bureaucratic system; gifted with tactical talents, but wholly unsuited for the duties thrust upon him. The world of Brian Harris’s Starfleet was slowly constructed using the infrastructure laid down over fifty plus years of television and films. Slowly *0564* became a more serious tale of adventure and intrigue.

A personal challenge was devised for the fable of poor Commander Harris and the rickety old *Sheaffe*; could elements from each televised and filmed iteration of mainstream Trek be incorporated into a single book?

The continuity of Star Trek through the decades has always been something to be admired. In those decades of continuity lies the “Lost Era” between “ST: Generations” & “TNG: Encounter at Far Point” in which our story would seek to expand our Trek Universe while respecting canon. By the time work on *Convergence* began in earnest the first season of “Picard” had aired and an overriding story arc started coming together. A framework was realized, and world building began in earnest.

Book One (*Sheaffe*) developed into a captain/ship story, a sort of sendup to Starfleet’s best crews as typified onscreen by the various crews of the *Enterprise*. Harris was no Kirk and frankly, no one in this first book comes close to the various crews of the *Enterprise*. The general mediocracy of the *Sheaffe* is meant to contrast and highlight the excellence of all the onscreen *Enterprise* crews.

Book Two (*Aftermath*) became a necessary compendium to *Sheaffe*—expanding the basic space adventure to explore the Machiavellian maneuvering, bureaucracy and politics within this Star Trek Universe. Characters drawn from mostly underrepresented races such as Bolians, Nausicaans, Remans and Andorians were fleshed out and given prominence. A personal favorite, Admiral U’Chtuklli, serves as a tool to introduce and explore the machinations of Section 31 and how it had evolved during the “Lost Era” since first being introduced canonically in “Enterprise”.

DIRGE FOR A WINTER'S SOLSTICE

THE HAUNTING OF
ONE MAN'S LEGACY

GLENN G G MAITLAND
[HTTPS://TREKKIEFANFICTION.COM/STORIES/DIRGE-FOR-A-WINTERS-
SOLSTICE/](https://trekkiefanfiction.com/stories/dirge-for-a-winters-solstice/)

"Old Man (Teague)." Published 27 Mar. 2016 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

Could one story capture all of Trek, across all of time? Goodness, no.

Still, Convergence had come together as a solid story with some interesting bits and pieces of fun. The second half of Convergence allowed a deep dive into the underbelly of Federation politics. It also explored some of the more interesting aspects of Romulan society and politics as concern Remus and the newly introduced Zhat Vash. In retrospect, it may have been more palpable to publish the story as two separate books as the final page count exceeded four hundred and thirty, no breaks, no plates...a tome.

A mass of some thirty-plus pages was cleaved from the final draft of Convergence. Within those clipped pages was a character of great interest, though. He wasn't a Starfleet officer, a Klingon warrior, or even a disgruntled Borg. He was an introverted engineer. In fact, he was one of the engineers responsible for designing *Excelsior* and was developed as a backstory to "ST: The Search for Spock's" mention of Transwarp and "The Great Experiment".

Leaving Dannar Teague in the Recycle Bin didn't seem right. So, again as another Christmas Season was approaching, a new personal challenge was devised. Inspiration was had after viewing a favorite Christmas film, 1951's "A Christmas Carol". Teague would be presented as Scrooge. Mr. Moddax, the dark operative from Convergence would stand in for Marley, and the entire affair would be orchestrated by Admiral Maureen Bautlin.

Dirge for a Winter's Solstice was the first of three planned short stories/novellas meant to flesh out the adventure begun by the ill-fated Commander Harris. Two full-length books were vaguely conceived to finish telling the main story and these shorter outings would be used for world-building and atmospheric purpose.

Dirge for a Winter's Solstice was presented in a format meant to harken back to Dicken's original tale—broken into staves and paced accordingly. This was also the first attempt to include illustrated plates within the body of the text to add some illumination to the tale and provide readers with some visually diverse breaks as the story follows Dannar through an often-surreal journey through his life.

Though hardly an original premise (TNGs S.6 E.15 "Tapestry" has Q showing Jean-Luc what *A Wonderful Life* he had). Dirge for a Winter's Solstice did allow for some gaps in Trek history to be filled in and allowed poor Dannar to rise from the grave of that Recycling Bin to help tell the bigger story.

[HTTPS://TREKKIEFANFICTION.COM/STORIES/
COR-COROLI-BOOK-ONE/](https://trekkiefanfiction.com/stories/cor-coroli-book-one/)

**GLENN G G
MAITLAND**

COR COROLI 1

"Tellarite." Published 4 Jul. 2021 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

Of all the ‘secondary’ characters developed to help tell the Convergence story, none is so personally entertaining as the Section 31 Tellarite Controller, Wegaos Skeffef.

Part comic relief, part warrior space pig à la Henry VIII, Wegaos came about almost accidentally. As established in canon, the four founding members of the Federation were the Vulcans, Humans, Andorians and Tellarites. “TOS” touched only fleetingly on Andorian and Tellarite characters; most famously in the episode “Journey to Babel” in which we’re introduced to a certain Vulcan’s father...who looked suspiciously like the Romulan commander from “Balance of Terror”.

Using the first three books in the series to establish a mystery concerning what happened to the *USS Sheaffe*, Cor Coroli 1 sets out to draw into sharp focus the real consequences of the *Upgrade* and Maureen Bautlin’s powerplay. Here we explore the political realities of the universe in the sixteen-odd years since the first Khitomer Accords and come to understand some of the motivations and political realities which shaped Trek following “ST: The Undiscovered Country”.

Romulan activity has roused the Klingons and alerted the Federation to the possible threat of interstellar war. Resources and materials are dedicated towards staving off a possible invasion and extraordinary measures are taken to steel the Federation against a suspected Romulan super-weapon. All as the Klingons rattle their bat’leths and spill across the Neutral Zone, not as enemies, but not quite as trusted allies either.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Quadrant, the Cardassian Empire is making moves into unclaimed space. Starving and convinced of a coming war with the Federation, the Empire desperately seeks out planets for resources and new territory to help rebuild their civilization after a devastating revolution. Of course, where there’s the Cardassian Empire, there’s the Obsidian Order.

Cor Coroli 1 gives a back story to the political realities “DS9” eventually addresses. It also gives us Wegaos and the Glev glov Nansh—a long overdue dose of Tellarite flavor. Admiral U’Chtuklli continues his story and the Andorian Imperial Guard come into their own. This all transpires as Section 31 adapts to the “Lost Era” themselves and a larger conspiracy is hinted at as new threats materialize. Wegaos, as rotund and *colorful* as he is, is present for one reason and one reason alone; to expose a more devious operator than Maureen Bautlin and to do so all in service to the Federation. At least from a Section 31 perspective.

An unlikely group of heroes begins to emerge from the pages of Cor Coroli 1 as the *USS Isadore* falls prey to a prototype *Galor*-class Battle Cruiser.



ZOOMERS & BOOMERS

GLENN G G MAITLAND

**[HTTPS://TREKKIEFANFICTION.COM
/STORIES/ZOOERS-BOOMERS/](https://trekkiefanfiction.com/stories/zoozers-boomers/)**

"Gixr." Published 13 Apr. 2022 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

Zoomers & Boomers is the second of the three planned short stories/novellas meant to augment the Universe of Convergence. This tale is specifically noted as not necessarily being a “must read” to appreciate the on-going series itself and can stand alone as a fun short story. Zoomers & Boomers was intended to be a fun summer read.

The term “boomer” is taken from “ST: Enterprise”. You’ll recall Travis Mayweather was the son of boomers and grew up in space aboard long-haul transports.

The story is straight forward and focuses on a young Trill light-pod racer and his gruff old pit boss trying to make a living in non-Federation space in the Light-pod Racing League. Mr. Preed, our “zoomer”, was first mentioned in Dirge for a Winter’s Solstice as a possible test pilot for Dannar Teague’s stunted attempt to revive the Transwarp program on a smaller scale. Teague himself makes an appearance (albeit under a pseudonym) in this story as he first approaches Preed about signing on to the *Virgo* project.

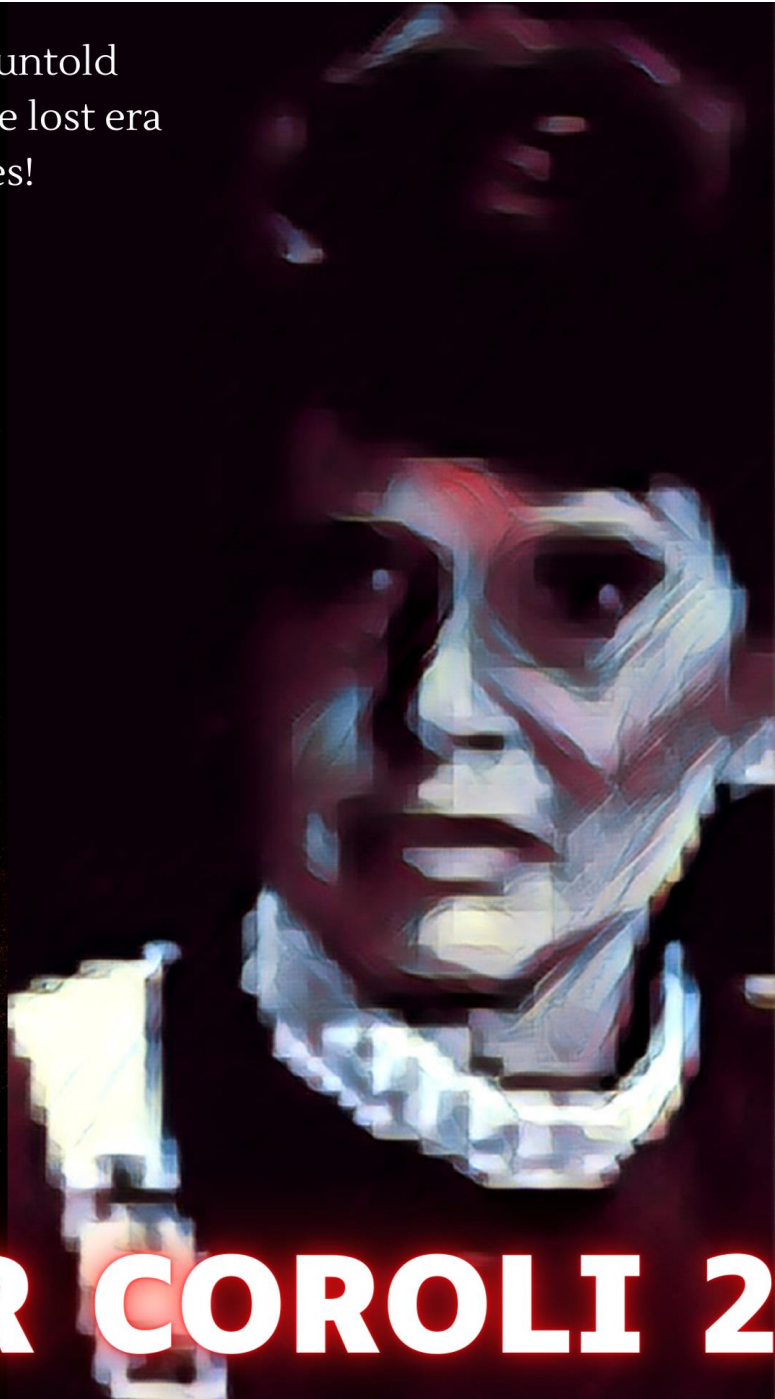
The story has only marginal points of contact with the main series though. Preed and his partner are left high and dry by Mr. Mann (Teague) whose promised financial and technical aid fails to materialize over the course of a crucial LRL racing season. This forces Preed to wager heavily against a pair of Nausicaans in a high stakes race his battered little pod is ill-prepared for. Predictably, Preed loses and is left without finances with not but a rickety old transport and a disgruntled partner.

The situation is grim until the arrival of a young boomer named Gixr. Gixr himself has lost everything and finds himself in trouble with not only his employer, but the authorities as well. With no ship, an ongoing murder investigation and a suspected price on his head, young Gixr finds himself in an impossible situation. The entire story is set aboard an alien space station far removed from the familiar world of the Federation.

Gixr happens to be the nephew of retired Starfleet Lieutenant Arex, the Edosian officer who served under Kirk aboard the original NCC-1701 in the Animated Series. On his travels to help smuggle Klingon warnog, Gixr happens across a derelict starship he becomes enamored with, the *USS Sheaffe*. Believing the old ship to be worth a fortune in salvage, Gixr, who has some funds from his smuggling efforts, teams with Preed to try to escape their collective fates of failure and ruin.

Including “TAS” was important if the series was to reference all of Trek. “Lower Decks” is somewhat more difficult; however, in a six degrees of separation kind of scenario, in Season 3 Episode 5, Rutherford is revealed to be a light-pod enthusiast looking to race competitively, so...kind of? I’ve not yet experienced “ST: Prodigy”.

The greatest untold
adventure of the lost era
continues!



COR COROLI 2

GLENN G G MAITLAND

[HTTPS://TREKKIEFANFICTION.COM/STORIES/COR-COROLI-2/](https://trekkiefanfiction.com/stories/cor-coroli-2/)

"Admiral Bautlin." Published 30 Sept. 2016 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

Cor Coroli 2 was meant to “wrap” the Convergence storyline. Set three days after the events of Cor Coroli 1, the original intention was to put a bow on the Section 31 story arc, address the outstanding issues from Aftermath and call it a day. It quickly became clear though that unless another foray into the realm of four-hundred-page-plus epics was going to be attempted, a further book would be required to capture all that was envisioned for the series.

Cor Coroli 2 was scaled back to a far more reasonable outline and given a particular focus on the concept of jurisprudence (if not justice) within this Trek universe. This streamlined focus allowed Cor Coroli 2 to examine the roles of several characters as they maneuvered through both the Cardassian and a version of the Federation Justice Systems.

Explaining what happened following the ambush of General U’Chtuklli’s Imperial Battlecruiser and the devastation of the *USS Isadore*, Cor Coroli 2 embroils the reader in the Cardassian legal system as first depicted in the “DS9” Season 2 Episode 25, “Tribunal”. Here we see Makot Kom, the first officer from the *Galor*-class prototype taken to task. The tumult and desperation of the Cardassian people is highlighted and the fragile grasp the Central Command holds over the civilian population of the Empire is exposed. The (Earth) year is 2310—decades before Cardassia’s occupation of Bajor, but the precursors of conquest are all present.

To contrast the goings-on in the Cardassian Military Tribunal, Wegaos brings his own man to trial at the secret installation which serves the Section 31 Controllers as their base of operations, Cor Coroli.

Admiral Bautlin, now Chief of Section Operations, finally has her eyes opened to the reality of her position and the breadth and scope of Section 31’s mandate and responsibilities. For the first time in the series, Bautlin is not presented as the lurking power behind the throne; she is, as U’Chtuklli ultimately was, just a big fish in a small pond. We also get a call back to “ST: The Final Frontier”.

What is revealed in both trials are a series of facts which paint a twisted picture. Obsidian Order agents liaising with Section 31 Operatives. Section 31 Controllers in league with the Tal Shiar. Vulcans being manipulated to stunt the Andorian Imperial Guard’s ability to function. The Klingon Empire being used as a bargaining chip to potentially hobble Starfleet...and an overriding, unnamed threat consuming the Zhat Vash.

The questions of “why” and “how” things developed the way they did during the “Lost Era” are what truly drive Convergence. Motivations always make for complicated and interesting tales.



"Two of Six." Published 17 Oct. 2023 Pixabay (Canava+) Licence Free

The final short story/novella concerns potentially the Federation's greatest adversary (to badly paraphrase Jean-Luc Picard). The Borg.

Their first appearance in "Q Who" was shocking at the time. In retrospect though, perhaps not so much? Certainly, there have been several YouTube videos, Podcasts and fanzine-type retrospectives calling out that somewhat "tame" first appearance of the Borg in "TNG"; however, the thought that perhaps the Collective had good reason to be restrained in that "first" encounter with humanity occurred early on in the writing of Aftermath.

Stardate: 42761.3 is intended to serve two ends.

First, the story is meant to round out the mystery of the Kea System at the heart of Convergence, which ended with two seemingly disjointed chapters set beyond the "Lost Era". Considering how often the various Borg Queens have remarked how "small" and "limited" human thinking is; an abstract notion took hold during the writing of Convergence... What if, in introducing the pathogen to the Queen in "VOY: Endgame", Admiral Janeway inadvertently prompted the Borg obsession with humanity in the first place? A nod to "Star Trek (2009)" and the literary assimilation of Red Matter (and its onscreen temporal singularity timey-wimey effects) and we can see how things might have developed the way they did in Convergence.

Second, the criticisms of the primitive, slow, less than impressive and incongruent first appearance of the Borg in "Q Who" needed some rethinking. We know the Borg are (at least on some level) aware of the Q, and vice versa. The words "Don't provoke the Borg!" come to mind. Yes, Q makes out like the Borg are just big and bad and only interested in consuming technology, but consider: if the Borg were aware of the Q and their awesome abilities, would it not make sense that the Collective would be cautious in maneuvering around such an entity?

As for the Borg obsession with (and frequent failures to assimilate) humanity—that had to come from somewhere. The Borg's motivation overall needed explanation, enter Janeway. Time loops, am I right?

Finally, perhaps Q did humanity a favor by riding shotgun in "Q Who". The Borg were coming no matter what ("ENT: Regeneration"). Perhaps Q mitigated a bigger tragedy? Stardate: 42761.3 was written with the express intention of having readers enjoy the story after they rewatch "Q Who". It's a companion piece. It's the other side of the coin we were shown all those years ago.

An abstract background image featuring swirling, smoke-like patterns in shades of green and yellow against a solid black background. The patterns are more dense on the left side and become more wispy towards the right.

Cor Coroli : Convergence

**The series will
conclude in
2024.**