

AVALON

Episode 2

"Glory"

by

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FADE IN:

INT. AVALON - CONFERENCE ROOM - END OF MEMENTO MORI

SIREN sits alone behind the large wooden table that dominates the small room, watching each and every one of her crew mates stand and arm themselves as a dozen heavily armed Cult Acolytes storm in, ready to kill.

BRIE

What did you all expect? You don't outsmart the Cult. You don't bargain with us. We ALWAYS get what we want. Give us Siren and the Omega and they will be treated as royalty and you can go on your merry way. If you don't, then we will lay this ship to ruin and take them forcibly.

The crew reacts with fierce stares and the unmistakable sound of cocking guns.

RIDEK

If Zorin taught us one thing, it's that we will not let this family go down without a fight.

Brie sighs and the Acolytes raise their weapons higher.

The slaughter is just about to begin.

Our focus suddenly shifts down to Siren's lap, where a mewling and squirming newborn baby rests in her lowered arms. Siren's gaze drifts down to her child as the scene unfolds around her. It seems as if all the sound in the world suddenly drifts away as Siren focuses on her baby son.

SIREN

(whispering)

I won't let them hurt you. I promise.

Siren looks up to see the conference room about to explode in conflict. Conflict over her and her child.

HATCH

Then this story will end with us fighting to our last breath...

Siren looks down again and cradles her baby, lifting his tiny frame as she stands.

SIREN

No! I'm going.

All eyes suddenly turn to the new mother. The Cultists look ravenous and pleased, the Avalon crew look desperate and defeated.

RIDEK

Siren, sit down and get behind-

SIREN

No. I'm going with them.

Slowly, Siren makes her way forward, slowly pushing her way past the tightly grouped Avalon crew on her way to BRIE and her soldiers.

THOMAS HATCH is the last one in her way. His eyes are dour but not tearful. He looks hurt more than saddened.

HATCH

Siren, don't go.

Siren's own eyes flash with a thousand emotions as she regards the human. Keeping the baby in a tight but loving grip, Siren reaches out and places a comforting hand on his shoulder.

SIREN

Take care of yourself, Tom. All of you. Everything will be better for you now that I'm leaving.

Hatch nods slowly and moves backward out of Siren's reach, letting her hand fall limply back to her side. He drops his gun on the table as a final motion.

Finally, Siren moves to the slightly shorter in stature BRIE and looks her dead in the eye.

BRIE

Guards, take her onboard the ship.
Keep her safe.

Slowly but gruffly, the Acolytes comply, shoving Siren out of Brie's presence and out into the corridor.

But she suddenly fights back, dodging the first soldier and running back into the room, where all eyes suddenly widen with surprise.

SIREN

Tell Zorin what I told you to tell him!

Unfortunately, she doesn't say anything more when a soldier roughly grabs her arms and pulls her back into the corridor.

Brie smoothly follows as the conference room's door automatically closes.

The camera follows her into:

INT. AVALON - CORRIDOR

Siren is still as the acolytes form a tight circle around her. Brie slowly marches to the front of the procession and turns to Siren.

BRIE
You did the right thing.

SIREN
As long as you do what you promised.

Brie suddenly looks taken aback.

BRIE
And I will. I'm not one of those
double talking fools you've come to
know, Launal-

Siren's mood immediately darkens. Her face twists with anger and her child begins to cry.

SIREN
Where did you learn that name?

BRIE
Your true name is common knowledge
among us, Launal. And it's a name
you have no reason to be ashamed of.

Siren doesn't reply, she simply stares. Her child is almost completely forgotten in her anger.

BRIE
I suggest you tend to your newborn.
We have a long journey ahead.

With that, Brie and the Acolyte circle moves forward, forcing Siren to march with them. Slowly, her anger subsides and she begins to comfort the wailing newborn as best she can.

The group marches through a few corridors and rooms until they finally reach the airlock, which is already guarded by two Acolytes on both sides. Brie marches through like a triumphant war hero while Siren sulks. We again follow this group through the short airlock tunnel until we end up in:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - AIRLOCK

When Siren's ring of soldiers and the two Avalon-side guards are in the massive airlock chamber, Brie presses a simple button that releases both ships with a menacing hiss of air.

Siren quickly turns around and peeks through the armor of her rear guard Acolytes to the tiny window the airlock provides, where she watches the Avalon drift away into open space.

Brie maneuvers through the soldiers as Siren simply stares at her home getting ever smaller in the interstellar void.

BRIE
Welcome home, Launal.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CULT CLASSROOM

A standard classroom if there ever was one, thirty students about six to ten years of age sit in orderly rowed desks, taking notes and listening with intent to an ancient female acolyte give a very long lecture.

TEACHER

... And so it was in the fifth year of ascension, Tensar the Black and his corrupt armies were crushed under Sovari's superior strategies and fleets. The corrupting influence of the false Prophet was brought to an end and the galaxy was brought one step closer to the light.

The old woman manages a very short and uncomfortable bow at the mention of Sovari, and slowly creaks up to take questions.

One boy, AJAY, seated in the exact center of the classroom, slowly raises his hand. We focus on him for a moment, especially at the faint line of ridges that cover his forehead.

TEACHER

Yes, Ajay?

AJAY

Was Tensar the Black also the one who tried to forcibly convert the moons of Tellar?

TEACHER

Indeed he was. Excellent memory, Ajay.

Ajay lowers his hand and smiles. Some students smile with him while others sneer and lean closer to whisper.

STUDENT 1

Why does he always gotta do that?

STUDENT 2

I know. Inhuman little pri-

The teacher makes quick notice of the whispers and ends it with a quick slap upside the first student's head.

TEACHER

That will be enough of that, Belus.

STUDENT 1

Yes, teacher.

The old crone nods once and moves back to the front of the classroom to continue the lecture. We keep focusing on the two students.

STUDENT 2

(Mocking)

Yes, teacher.

STUDENT 1

Shut up.

The teacher goes back to lecturing after a moment, seeming to forget about the previous disturbance.

As the lecture goes on, the two students begin to snicker and conspire. It's a moment before we see what the cause is. Slowly, to avoid the teacher's wrath, the boys produce a simple slingshot made out of common classroom items. Even slower, they load the device with a small piece of metal the size of a ball bearing. Their snickering grows louder as they both load and prepare the slingshot, aiming it directly at Ajay's head.

Slowly they pull back.

Their laughing grows louder.

RELEASE!

FEMALE STUDENT

Ajay, LOOK OUT!

Almost unnaturally fast, Ajay turns from his entrapping lesson to see the piece of metal in flight. With the same reflexes, and to much awe of the students, he simply grabs the flying object and lets it drop to the floor with a loud CRACK.

The boys and Ajay stare each other down for a long moment until the crone of a teacher realizes she is being ignored.

TEACHER

Stop this at once!

The class doesn't pay much attention. All eyes are on Ajay.

FEMALE STUDENT

So it's true...

STUDENT 1

Did he just-?

STUDENT 2

Yeah, he did.

Ajay, however, stares at the boys with a decidedly neutral expression. His face betrays no emotion as he calmly breathes. The faint ridges that denote his mixed heritage seem to darken slightly with blood.

Fortunately, the teacher runs between Ajay and his tormentors a mere moment later.

TEACHER

Belus and Porram, you two are now officially on the reprimand list as of now. Assault on any converted child, even by a minor yourself, is an extremely serious offense.

Both boys' faces drop with shock.

STUDENT 2

But... but we just-

TEACHER

You would have seriously hurt him!

STUDENT 1

It was just a hollow sphere!

The teacher's face darts back and forth between the outraged boys and the still seething Ajay.

TEACHER

That doesn't matter!

Emboldened by rage, one of the boys stands.

STUDENT 1

You're just giving him special care because of who he is!

The teacher herself gasps.

TEACHER

You will remember your place, student! The Penultimate HIMSELF watches over Ajay-

The other boy stands, but with much more fear.

STUDENT 2

He's just a hybrid bastard child, not even human!

TEACHER

ENOUGH!

STUDENT 2

He's only six years old but he's
with us eighth-level students!

The teacher is close to losing her temper now. Her own face darkens with rage at the blasphemies.

TEACHER

Ajay is the OMEGA!

The class suddenly erupts! The two boys are now screaming their defiance, with others either agreeing or violently disagreeing. The teacher does her best to diffuse the shouting, but it's quickly blowing out of control.

We keep a close angle on Ajay through most of this, keeping his ever unchanging face the focus of our view until:

ACOLYTE (O.S.)

What's going on!?

A burly acolyte, followed by four similarly armored and armed individuals, storm into the classroom, bringing quick order to the near riot.

Flustered, the teacher turns and sighs, moving away from the still standing boys and over to the five men.

TEACHER

(pointing at boys)

These... these insolent... violent-
... NON BELIEVERS have disrupted my
lessons!

The boys suddenly look more shocked than usual, but don't speak in the presence of the acolytes.

The five men, fortunately, show great restraint in the face of the sudden calm and angry teacher. Finally, the lead acolyte sighs.

ACOLYTE

Three and five, remove the non
believers and place them in holding.
(to teacher)
And where is HE?

Without a word, the teacher points at the still immobile Ajay. The acolyte nods and walks over to him while the rest of his squad arrests the young troublemakers, who act resigned but look defiant.

We go back to the close shot of Ajay, but the acolyte is now there. He leans mere inches away from the young man's face.

ACOLYTE

Ajay? Ajay? Are you all right?

Ajay is still for a long moment more, but his eyes slowly turn to face the older man.

ACOLYTE

Ajay, please talk to me.

As his eyes slowly move, Ajay's cheeks begin to curl up in a tight grimace. His lips soon follow. His ridges grow ever darker.

ACOLYTE

Now, Ajay, we talked about this. You can't show weakness, but you can show pain. Are you going to show pain or weakness?

Slowly, very slowly, the young man's expression turns from the grimace of childhood sadness to a mere hurt look.

AJAY

(softly)

They were going to hurt me.

The acolyte nods and leans in closer to Ajay, making sure no one else can hear.

ACOLYTE

But you stopped them. All by yourself. You showed strength in the presence of the weakness of those boys. You should feel the glory of that.

Though Ajay tries his best to keep his face calm, tears begin to drip down his cheeks. The acolyte shields this from the eyes of the students around him.

AJAY

But they still-

ACOLYTE

We must always be strong in the presence of the weak, Ajay. Sovari taught you this. It's one of the Prophet's commandments. Don't fail the prophet because of two idiot boys.

Ajay begins to compose himself, letting a few tear-filled sniffles out before drying his eyes on the cloth of the older man's robes. The acolyte smiles.

AJAY

(reciting)

"Be vigilant in the face of the
darkness, and the light is reward."

ACOLYTE

Exactly.

(beat)

Want me to take you out of here for
a while?

Ajay merely nods yes, and the acolyte stands back up to his full height, letting Ajay move first to the classroom's doorway. Ajay walks out with the other acolytes forming a ring around him.

ACOLYTE

We're taking him to devotions for a
while. Carry on.

The teacher merely nods and watches the soldiers leave.

Finally back in control, the ancient woman turns to the remaining students.

TEACHER

Now, if there are no further
interruptions...

CUT TO:

INT. CULT HALLWAY

Ajay is walking in the middle of the group as they march down the very bright corridors to their destination. Ajay's head is bowed with confusion.

AJAY

But why would they do that to me?
Why show that kind of disrespect,
even to another student?

The same lead acolyte, not at the head of the protective group, doesn't turn around to respond.

ACOLYTE

It's the mind of youth, Ajay. They feel intimidated. Confused. Scared. Combine those three in a mind that has yet to mature and it leads to incidents like this one.

AJAY

But I've never felt such things before. Why do they?

The acolyte's face twists with confusion. Clearly he's used to such questions, but not sure how to answer.

ACOLYTE

(confused)

Well, lord Sovari has used his connection with the Prophet to tell us all your... uniqueness. What makes you special is how mature you are for your age.

AJAY

I know. I know I'm only six years old, but I'm in classes with those twice my age.

ACOLYTE

Then you must be special.

Ajay is quiet for a moment.

AJAY

Or a freak.

The group stops. Finally, the acolyte turns to face Ajay.

ACOLYTE

No. You're not a freak. Freak implies an aberration to the natural order. And if you're already a part of the Prophet's divine plan to lead us to light, how can you be an aberration?

Ajay is still despondent.

AJAY

Maybe he was wrong about me.

The acolytes all looked shocked, but keep their composure. The leader once again leans closer to Ajay.

ACOLYTE

Ajay, listen. Listen to me.

(sternly)

The Prophet is never wrong.

(comforting)

And don't let two young boys shatter your entire faith. We are always confronted with these tests, and we must always succeed to prove both to ourselves and the Prophet we are capable in following the path laid before us. Just keep your faith strong and your mind sound.

AJAY

But I hate all these tests.

The acolyte nods and smiles.

ACOLYTE

I do, too. But as long as you follow my advice, you'll always succeed. Evil can't win against good. It's our first lesson, and something you teach us every day.

Ajay finally smiles.

AJAY

How do I teach you?

ACOLYTE

We all teach each other. When we see others strong in the face of troubles, we all know we can stand up to our own. We draw strength from each and every person around us.

AJAY

Really?

ACOLYTE

Really.

AJAY

Then I'm ready.

The acolyte smiles in turn.

ACOLYTE

Excellent.

Suddenly, the group of acolytes with the young man between them make a sharp left turn and open a set of doors in the hall slightly larger than the others.

We follow them into:

INT. CULT ANTECHAMBER

A small room absolutely draped with red curtains, torches and the full medieval look of the Cult we haven't seen anywhere else in this script. The lead acolyte smiles and moves to the side, allowing Ajay to take the forefront.

In an instant, the shy, introverted and melancholy boy's demeanor changes completely. His hunched shoulders straighten, his dour mouth tightens into a determined stare. He sighs a practiced sigh, fully removing all concerns and cares from his outer expressions. It's clear he's done this many times before.

In unison, the surrounding troupe of Acolytes bow their heads and cross their arms in a slow salute.

ACOLYTE

Omega, gift of the Prophet, guide
us and lead us to the light.

In a quick motion, the acolyte reaches behind him and THROWS one of the larger curtains back, revealing an absolutely ENORMOUS chamber filled with literally thousands of red-clothed people of all species. Their cheers are deafening when the curtain is pulled back.

ACOLYTE

Ready, Ajay?

Ajay merely nods and he strolls forward, not looking at any of the acolytes as he approaches the awesome crowd of worshippers.

The first to approach is a wild eyed older woman clutching a fairly large portrait of a young man in a red hued military uniform.

WORSHIPPER 1

Omega! Omega! Please extend your
blessings to my son. He fought in
the third campaign and is trying to
walk again.

Ajay genuinely smiles and brings his hands to the woman's head, holding her gently.

AJAY

His path is decided, he will follow
as the Prophet wills.

Ajay leans in to kiss the woman's forehead before waving the
next person, a young man, forward.

WORSHIPPER 2

Omega, please bless my crops for
the next season. The rebuilding
efforts of my home town will be for
nothing if we cannot eat.

As Ajay leans forward to do the exact thing we saw earlier,
we suddenly begin to pull back. Past the acolytes keeping
constant vigil around him, past the antechamber, past the
unnaturally bright corridors, past everything.

CUT TO:

INT. SOVARI'S CHAMBERS

SOVARI stands in his massive chambers, watching a modest
sized screen with intent. On the small monitor is Ajay's
ceremony. Even though it's clear he's blessed dozens of
people already, thousands more await his touch.

SOVARI

Unbelievable.

BRIE (O.S.)

What is it, Lord Sovari?

We slowly pull back from Sovari and the monitor, to reveal
several different and new things. Gone are Sovari's robe-
like clothes, replaced with a fully cut military uniform
decorated with dozens of shiny metallic medals, awards and
other jewelry. Brie's uniform is much the same, only less
opulent and a bit more functional. Also, in contrast to her
last appearance, Brie now sports a massive burn scar running
down the entire right side of her face, giving her a very
two-faced appearance.

SOVARI

The child has been at this for
three hours and still shows no sign
of being anything more than a well
practiced speaker.

BRIE

Well, Penultimate, to be fair, he
is only six years old.

SOVARI

And has the mental capacity of someone double, triple his age. And if the reports from his class to be believed, the reflexes of some of our best warriors.

(beat, frustrated)

And yet all he does are these simple blessings...

Brie grimaces. Her face makes it clear this is a very common point of discussion.

BRIE

Mere mental capacity and reflexes are no sure sign of divinity, Penultimate. There are several species that mature just as fast, if not faster, than Ajay-

SOVARI

Don't lecture me on exobiology, General. This boy was decreed by the Prophet himself to bring the salvation of our people. We fought a war with him on our side already, and won a mere cease fire. A war that lost countless lives, and he still does nothing more than bless the sick and weary.

BRIE

What do you expect him to do, Penultimate? What do you expect of a six year old boy?

Sovari turns to face Brie in a violent motion. His face is twisted into something beyond frustration.

SOVARI

A war. With the Prophet's chosen savior. An astronomical body count, and all we got was an armistice with bloodthirsty savages. He SHOULD have already done his part!

Brie gulps.

BRIE

And you know his exact path in life? When he is EXACTLY supposed to follow the first prophecy?

Sovari looks ready to strike Brie, but controls himself. She doesn't flinch, clearly used to this behavior.

SOVARI

No... I don't. That is the exclusive way of the Prophet.

BRIE

And yet you remain impatient.

Sovari seethes, placing his hands heavily on the monitor. The tiny representation of Ajay is clearly exhausted, but continues to bless the masses.

SOVARI

We're running out of time, Brie. The time of the final prophecy comes nearer every day, and only the Omega will ensure we survive. That is the only interpretation.

Brie sighs and nods.

BRIE

And I agree. But we are not privy to the knowledge of the Prophet. We may still be centuries from the final Prophecy. It's taken over a millennium for the Omega to show himself, we can only be patient.

SOVARI

Then you must be patient for the both of us, General Brie. You be patient while I lose sleep every night about our coming annihilation.

Brie nods slowly, willing herself to speak again.

BRIE

Penultimate, if I may make a suggestion.

Sovari faces brie, his own look one of resignation.

SOVARI

If it's your idea to parade the Omega before sick and starving children, you already know my answer-

BRIE

No, Penultimate. We already know trying to evoke both empathy, guilt and anger have proved useless in bringing forth the Omega's... abilities, but what if we try another emotion?

SOVARI

Isn't he happy enough to live with his fellow children instead of the convent?

BRIE

No, not happiness. I'm talking about something far deeper.

(beat)

The mother.

Sovari looks shocked.

SOVARI

She's still alive? I stopped reading the reports on her years ago.

BRIE

I've taken care to make sure she survives just in case this complication were to reveal itself.

SOVARI

Against orders to remove all traces of Avalon crew...

BRIE

To confess, Penultimate, she has been confined completely solitary the entire time. Not even my staff knows she still lives.

Sovari nods.

SOVARI

I'll allow this experiment. Have the Omega contact the mother and see what the bond between them brings up.

Brie smiles slightly and bows. She turns to leave.

BRIE

Thank you, Penultimate.

SOVARI

But general...

Brie turns back around.

BRIE

Yes, Penultimate?

SOVARI

My orders still stand. If the mother does nothing to advance the Omega's role in the prophecy, I want her killed.

Brie salutes curtly.

BRIE

I understand, Penultimate.

Brie exits and Sovari turns around to the monitor, where Ajay is now being held up by the acolytes, but the boy continues to help the unending masses of faithful.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRISON CELL

A dark form languishes in the darkest corner of the tiny stone cell. We can make no form of the figure so wrapped in shadow, something that makes the entire image slightly disturbing.

Slowly, a gnarled and bruised hand reaches from the shadow, slowly extending toward a scrap of moldy bread already beset by a small family of rats.

The hand tries to shoo the rodents away, but gets only a series of painful and deep bites and scratches for its efforts. Finally frustrated, the hand PUSHES forward, grabbing the bread in an instant, even with a smaller rat still hanging on. The hand, bread and rat disappear into the shadows, with only the rat re-appearing a moment later, a small trail of blood dripping behind it.

And into this depressing scene, a sudden BURST of light comes forth, destroying all the shadows and sending the rats scurrying.

BRIE (O.S.)

You could always call for more bread, Launal. We'd bring it as soon as it was baked fresh.

Siren says nothing, still curled in her small corner. Her appearance, like everyone else's after the long period of absence, is much different than we remember. Obviously gone is her pregnant form, now replaced by a mere stick figure body. Emaciated and starved, her entire look is haggard and worn. Her usually long and flowing hair is a matted mess and several stains mar ever part of her exposed skin.

Brie walks briskly into the cell, seating herself on a well polished stool right in front of the former Avalon crew member.

BRIE

Did you know it's been six years since you decided to join us? Six years of constant struggles, fights, imprisonment and near starvation. How many times have we had to feed you intravenously because you refused to eat?

Brie stares at the starving Siren, who still refuses to speak.

BRIE

I've come here once a week, every week for the past six years, and you haven't said one word to me. Not one since that day you made the right choice to join us. But how did you reward us after that one decision? After we fed you, took care of your child better than any mother ever could in this pathetic excuse for a galaxy?

More silence.

BRIE

You rejected us. You continue to reject us. The path we laid for you and your child. The life of royalty you would live if you just would accept our terms.

Again, silence. Siren merely regards Brie with an icy glare. Brie stares back for a long while, but finally sighs. She reaches into her uniform's pocket and reveals a tiny folded piece of paper. She tosses it gently to Siren, who takes a long time to finally reach out and grab it.

We focus tight on the image as Siren quickly unfolds it. We soon see it's a picture from Sovari's monitor of Ajay and the crowd, but the focus is clearly on the boy. Siren's chapped lips crack slightly with a smile.

BRIE

The longest he's been able to hold a blessing ceremony without collapsing.

(beat)

And today he stopped a couple of bullies from taunting him... by stopping the ball they had tossed at him in midair.

Siren's head jerks up in surprise.

BRIE

I know you hope to your last breath he isn't the Omega, just so we lose in the end, that our delusions bring us to doom. But he's proved every day just how special he is.

Siren goes back to the picture, gently stroking the flat image as if she really was holding him.

Brie watches this scene with an odd expression, but it doesn't last. She clears her throat.

BRIE

(quickly)

Lord Sovari has allowed me to let you see him.

Siren immediately drops the picture. Her mouth twitches with the will to speak, but not the ability. Tears begin to form in her red and dry eyes.

SIREN

Y...You...?

BRIE

So that's what gets you to speak after all this time. If we had only known.

SIREN

(slowly)

I want... to see... him.

BRIE

In good time. First, you MUST agree to follow our customs and traditions. ALL of them. Ajay has lived all his life with us, and if you do anything to subvert his faith...

Brie lets the threat hang heavy.

SIREN

I... want to see him.

Brie smiles and stands.

BRIE

I'll take that as an agreement.

Siren finally begins to stand, and for the first time we can see the full extent of her physical transformation. She looks almost entirely different from the beautiful woman and mother from before. Brie merely watches as Siren stands for the first time in a very long time.

As we watch her do this, we:

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. AJAY'S QUARTERS

Ajay lies still on a small bed draped completely with red cloth. His arms are neatly folded over his chest and his legs are extended perfectly straight and parallel. In fact, it's almost impossible to tell if he were even breathing.

At least until Brie opens the door with a flourish, prompting the boy to sit up with a military air.

AJAY
General Brie?

Brie smiles, making her way to the small bed.

BRIE
Good memory, Ajay. How long has it been since we last talked?

AJAY
Two years ago, I think.

BRIE
Precisely. And do you remember what we talked about?

Ajay thinks for a bit, scooting to the side a bit to allow Brie room to sit.

AJAY
I know we went over the children's prayer and recited the five Prophecies.

BRIE
Yes, yes, we did.
(beat)
But do remember the last thing we talked about?

Ajay's face goes blank for a while.

AJAY
My... mother?
(confused)
But what about her? You said she left me with you when she couldn't accept the Prophet herself?

Brie sighs.

BRIE

While it's true your mother refused to accept the Prophet into her heart when she brought you to her, Ajay...

(long beat)

She never left.

Ajay is now very confused.

AJAY

I've never known her. Why are we talking about her now?

BRIE

Because... because Lord Sovari wishes you to meet her.

Ajay looks at Brie square in the eyes.

AJAY

(a little afraid)

But why? Haven't I been tested enough in the last week?

Brie leans over and places a hand on Ajay's shoulder.

BRIE

There are times when we all must-

AJAY

"Be strong" all that. Yeah, you adults keep telling me that more and more.

BRIE

Because it's the best advice we can give to someone as special as you, Ajay. None of us can walk the same path you do, we can merely offer our own advice and experiences so you can make your own way in this life.

AJAY

I just wish you had something else to say. I'm tired of being strong all the time.

Brie smiles.

BRIE

Then all I'll tell you is to keep your faith strong, your head high and your wits sharp. You're only six years old but are smarter and more capable than people much, much older than you.

(beat)

We'll always be at your side, Ajay, no matter how tough the tests become.

Ajay half smiles. Brie stands.

BRIE

Now, if you fell ready, we need to accomplish the task our Penultimate has set for us.

Ajay sighs and stands, exiting the room with Brie.

INT. BRIE'S QUARTERS

In Brie's much larger quarters, Siren barely holds herself upright on the extremely soft bed. Her emaciated form barely supports itself and the heavy red robes that cover her now cleaned modesty. Out of the dungeon, she does look a little better, but not much.

As she struggles to remain sitting, Siren stares at the door with a raven's glare, never moving or blinking as she waits.

Finally, the door slowly creaks open, allowing four acolytes to march into the room with complete precision. Siren doesn't pay them any heed, she continues to stare.

ACOLYTE

Room clear.

Slowly, Brie enters the room with Ajay holding her hand like an obedient child. His face is impassive as he regards his mother, but Siren's composure snaps nearly the moment she sees him.

Slowly, on underused and atrophied muscles, Siren tries to stand and approach her son, but the acolytes suddenly train their weapons on her.

ACOLYTE

Do not approach the General or the child without their permission.

Siren goes still, visibly shaking from the effort of standing.

BRIE
It's all right, soldiers. You're
dismissed.

The acolytes nod and, as one, file past Brie and Ajay on their way out of the room.

Finally, when all three are alone, Brie bends down to Ajay's height.

AJAY
Is she okay?

BRIE
Go to her.

We switch to a view of Siren from Ajay's view. Though her body is broken, her face is still warm and inviting. She doesn't move an inch, but her eyes are locked on his.

AJAY
But I'm... afraid.

BRIE
Don't worry, we're all with you.

Ajay gulps and slowly makes his way forward, keeping a cautious and suspicious eye on Siren the entire way. Siren, is still, but the tears running down her cheeks are a torrent.

Ajay finally makes his way mere inches from Siren and stops, not making a move to touch or even look away from her.

BRIE
Give her your blessing, Ajay. She
needs you.

Siren can only weakly nod. Ajay sighs with frustration.

AJAY
Kneel, please.

Siren takes a full minute to rest on her knobby, knees, but she follows her son's request.

SIREN
(weakly)
Like this?

AJAY

(nodding)

Mm-hmm.

(beat, closes eyes)

Prophet, one who sees the light and guides us on our paths, please extend your hand to this woman's heart and soul. Keep your love with her and guide her, like you guide us all, into the light.

Ajay repeats the chant two more times then reaches forward and places a gentle kiss on Siren's forehead. Finally, Siren can take no more and embraces Ajay in a deep hug, finally sobbing even in her weak state.

Brie just watches the scene near the door.

SIREN

(whispering)

I've missed you. So much.

Ajay is quiet as Siren continues to hug him. But to his credit, he extends his hands around her bony form to return the hug at least as courtesy.

The embrace doesn't let up for a minute, or even two. Finally, Ajay begins to push his mother back.

AJAY

Please, I must go back to my classes.

Siren breaks the hug when Ajay's arms leave visible welts on her weak and exposed arms.

SIREN

But... I've only just-

Ajay brushes himself off, looking at the new bruises with concern.

AJAY

I'm sorry.

Siren doesn't pay attention, she only looks into her son's eyes.

SIREN

It's all right.

Suddenly, something sparks within Ajay. His eyes close for a moment and his mouth curls into something between a grimace and a frown. Brie looks on excitedly.

SIREN
Ajay? What's wrong?

Ajay doesn't listen, his head bows with strain. His eyes close tightly shut.

SIREN
Ajay!? Ajay!?

Siren rushes forward, grabbing her son before he collapses. She holds him gently as he continues to express nothing other than extreme pain. Siren can only hold him tight.

SIREN
It's okay. It's okay. I've got you.
I've got you-

And just as suddenly as the attack began, it ends. Ajay's eyes slowly open, letting a few tears escape before he can see again.

AJAY
Mama?

Siren's eyes can't help themselves, and a new flood of joyful tears begin to form, some of them dripping onto Ajay's head.

SIREN
Yes, yes. It's me.

AJAY
I... I think I remember now.

Brie's eyebrows shoot up with surprise and awe. Siren is just overjoyed.

SIREN
It's okay. I'm here now. I won't
ever leave you. I promise.

Ajay smiles.

AJAY
I know.

Slowly, Ajay reaches his arm up to finally embrace his mother with affection. Siren doesn't move as he does.

SIREN
I've missed you.

AJAY
I missed you, too.

Mother and child embrace one another until:

ACOLYTE (O.S.)
Release the child and step away!

The acolytes are suddenly all over Siren, tearing her and Ajay apart, nearly breaking her brittle arms in the process.

SIREN
What? No!

AJAY
Mom!

Brie is also in the fray, shouting.

BRIE
What is this!? Why did you
disregard my orders!?

When one acolyte has Ajay roughly by the arm and another has restrained Siren, the leader turns to the General.

ACOLYTE
Apologies, General, but orders just
came from Penultimate Sovari to end
contact between the boy and... her.

BRIE
WHAT?

Siren doesn't speak, she merely looks at her son, and he at her.

ACOLYTE
I'm sorry, general.

With gruff and now distressed precision with Ajay now struggling, the Acolytes begin marching out of the room.

AJAY
NO! Let me go! STOP IT! MOM!

Unfortunately, the soldier holding Ajay is several times larger and stronger than the boy, and his fighting is futile.

The soldiers are out of the room in an instant.

When the door is closed, there is silence for a moment. Until brie hears the sound of quiet tears.

Brie turns and kneels over Siren, who has curled onto her side, covering her face and sobbing.

BRIE

I had no idea he would do this. I really didn't.

Siren continues to cry.

Brie watches this for a moment before sighing and reaching down and scooping Siren into her arms. Brie holds Siren as the room fades into night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOVARI'S CHAMBERS

Sovari is watching his monitor yet again, but Ajay is not on screen. A news reporter is on the screen, reporting from some blasted cityscape.

REPORTER

...And the death toll continues to rise as the cleanup efforts uncover ever increasing amounts of destruction. Government officials blame this on a freak ion disturbance in the planet's upper atmosphere, but an eye witness has another story.

The monitor's camera swings wildly to the interviewee, a stocky alien covered in ash and soot.

ALIEN

I swear, it was a ship done this! A ship all yellow and menacing over our town. Never saw somethin' so horrible since the war-

Brie storms into the chambers like it were her own. Sovari is calm in the ten full seconds it takes for her to reach him.

BRIE

Are you out of your mind?

SOVARI

That's a dangerous tone, general.

Brie sighs and composes herself.

BRIE

Penultimate, why did you break the contact between the mother and the Omega so quickly?

Finally, Sovari turns to regard Brie in full.

SOVARI

Because I deemed the experiment a failure. And we need to limit his exposure to evil as much as possible.

Brie is flabbergasted.

BRIE

They were together only a moment! You can't judge success or failure so quickly-

SOVARI

I can, and I did, general.

BRIE

Penultimate, I implore you. He's only six. Why are you expecting so much from someone so young?

Sovari's face flashes red.

SOVARI

Why, General? Did you not attend the final prophecy ceremony with everyone else who follows us? Did you not hear the final words the Prophet gave us?

(beat)

The end times are coming, general. They're here now, and the only one who can save us is the Omega. The FIRST prophecy makes that clear. We need him to awaken whatever the Prophet has in store for him sooner than later, or it will be too late to save us all.

Brie has no response. Sovari continues to rant.

SOVARI

Believe me, if it weren't for these... unusual circumstances, I would allow the boy to live his life in peace, like a normal child. We'd only reveal his purpose to him when he was ready, when he was mature, but the universe and the Prophet so rarely gives us those perfect circumstances. I do what I believe is best for us and the galaxy, and to make sure civilization survives the next cataclysm!

BRIE
(to herself)
NEXT cataclysm?

SOVARI
(ignoring her)
And it merely shows why I was
chosen to be Penultimate over all
others for that foresight. Lesser
Penultimates would have been
content to let the boy grow up, but
I am the only one who can make
these awful choices for the
betterment of all.

BRIE
Yes... Penultimate.

Sovari looks Brie over for a moment before returning to his
monitor.

SOVARI
He is to have no more contact with
her unless I specifically allow it,
is that clear?

BRIE
Yes, penultimate.

Sovari smiles.

SOVARI
And... I'll allow another meeting.
In three weeks.

BRIE
Why the delay?

Sovari doesn't look up as he talks.

SOVARI
My intelligence department has been
whispering of Confederate movement
along our borders again. I want you
to head to sector J-32 and investigate.

BRIE
Will I need escort?

SOVARI
No, just take your ship and a
minimal crew. I just want you to
observe and report back.

BRIE
I will obey.

Brie begins to sadly march out of the chambers.

SOVARI
General.

BRIE
Yes?

SOVARI
I've changed my mind. Take both the
mother and child with you. Allow
them no more than five minutes
every week and report any new
findings about them immediately after.

Brie is shocked.

BRIE
I will... obey.

SOVARI
Good girl.
(beat)
Now go.

Brie smiles as she turns on her heel and walks for a full
ten seconds before she finally exits the massive room.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - BRIDGE - LATER

Some time later, Brie stands on the bridge of her cruiser, an exact carbon copy of ever cruiser's bridge we seen before, but with a few cosmetic differences. Where there once was an abundance of torches and paper-spewing primitive consoles, the bridge is fully awash with a flood of white artificial light and many of the consoles are almost indistinguishable from any other console seen in any Trek production. Advanced and well staffed, the sight is almost unreal on a Cult bridge.

But everyone seems perfectly comfortable in this setting. In fact, the only surprised is Siren as she slowly strides into the massive room. She is, of course, flanked by two very burly guards.

As Siren gets closer to our view, we can tell she is looking better. Though she is still dangerously thin, her frame is no longer totally starved. She walks with a small amount of confidence now, but it is frail, and supported by a whole lot of anger.

SIREN

Why did you bring me here?

Brie checks a console with a subordinate for a moment before replying.

BRIE

New orders from our Penultimate.

SIREN

If you think letting me see parts of your space ships will make me become one of you-

BRIE

That's not it at all.

(beat)

Ajay is here.

Siren's eyes flash with misery, joy, pain and excitement all at once.

SIREN

So you're using him as a sick bait for something, or vice versa. You people are all alike.

Brie sighs in frustration.

BRIE

I can understand your feelings,
Launal. But this is all for the
benefit of Ajay.

Siren is far angrier than we've ever seen her before.

SIREN

You think I can do something to
spark his Omega-ness don't you?
That's the entire reason you kept
me alive.

Brie sighs, she has no quick answers.

BRIE

It would be a lie if I said
anything else.

(beat, softly)

But you'll be able to see your son.

Siren stares at Brie with an icy stare as we slowly:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - GUEST QUARTERS

Ajay sits on the floor in a medium sized room full of Cult
banners, decorations and adornments. Surrounding him are
five burly acolytes who eye him with a mix of fear,
suspicion and genuine warmth.

After a moment of silence, Ajay finally speaks.

AJAY

I remember her, but I also remember
everything everyone has told me
about her. How she rejects the
Prophet, how she even fought
against us so many times. How can
she be so cruel to us but still say
she loves me so much?

The acolytes don't speak, they just allow Ajay to muse alone.
As he speaks, he gets progressively angrier.

AJAY

Why would she keep away from me so
long!? Why didn't she come see me?
Was I so unimportant to her for all
this time?

(beat)

Why did she reject me!?

On that last sentence, Ajay stands. His face is red with rage and his expression scares even the soldiers around him. One even holds his weapon for comfort.

AJAY

It's weird. I know you guys better than my own mother. I'm more comfortable with men who sit around and watch me all day than I am with her.

(beat, sorrowful)

And why does that make me feel so bad?

Before Ajay can talk further, Brie enters the room.

BRIE

Soldiers.

The acolytes nod, stand and exit.

A moment later, Siren cautiously enters. Ajay eyes her curiously, his rage and pain very evident.

BRIE

I'll leave you two alone. I'll be here if either of you need me.

Brie exits, but we can tell she is right behind the door.

Siren is still for a moment, but slowly moves toward Ajay. But for every step she takes forward, he takes one back.

SIREN

Ajay, what's wrong?

Ajay is silent for a moment. Tears begin to form on his face. The pain has not diminished.

AJAY

Why did you reject me?

The nearly whispered question knocks Siren back like a blow. She has to cover her mouth in shock.

SIREN

I... I didn't...

AJAY

I've heard nothing but your blasphemies and violence against my people since I can remember.

(MORE)

AJAY (CONT'D)

How you kill us over and over again
to fly around in that stupid little
ship. How you never once even came
to see me in SIX YEARS!

As Ajay yells, the artificial lighting on the ship seems to flicker slightly. Siren has backed up against the farthest wall from Ajay.

SIREN

But... but I...

AJAY

No, you don't have any excuses, do you? You let me grow up alone with soldiers, doctors and Sovari always around, always telling me of how holy I am, how special I'm supposed to become.

Ajay's red face slowly cools, replaced with tears.

AJAY

Where were you to tell me you loved me? Where was my own mother to hold me and tell me everything was okay on the nights I had wires and needles stuck my back to measure my brain waves? Where were you when I had to watch all my friends- When I had to... Where were you?

Ajay finally breaks down, falling onto his knees in sorrow. Siren finally approaches, crouching down to hold her son.

But when she finally touches him, Ajay lashes out, weakly pounding her arms and chest in rejection and anger. Siren takes the pain without a word, letting Ajay express his anger completely.

SIREN

(softly)

I never left you.

Ajay's blows quickly calm down and he allows Siren to hold him as he cries.

AJAY

But where...?

Siren looks at the room's door for a moment, seeing Brie's shadow rapidly pacing in the outside glow.

SIREN
 I can't tell you... not right now.
 But I promise you, I'm never going
 to leave you again.

Ajay looks up at Siren with tear filled eyes.

AJAY
 (plaintively)
 How do I know that?

SIREN
 Because I made a promise to you
 when you were born. I promised I
 would never let anyone hurt you. I
 know I've already failed you once
 and I won't let it happen again.

Ajay leaps up to grab Siren in a massive embrace just as:

CULT OFFICER'S COMM VOICE
 General Brie to the bridge! We're
 under attack!

And to punctuate that, the room suddenly JOLTS with untold violence.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - BRIDGE

Brie runs onto the bridge with a winded huff, but doesn't take a moment to catch her breath.

BRIE
 Report!

CULT OFFICER
 It's a Confederate battle cruiser,
 General. It dropped out of warp
 right on top of us!

Brie looks from her officer to the massive windows to the space outside, to see a large gold-colored battle ship slowly turning around to fire another volley.

CULT OFFICER
 Their starboard rail guns are charging.

Brie rushes over to another console and smashes a button down.

BRIE

General Brie to all hands, brace
for weapon impacts and take battle
stations.

As she looks back to the clear view into space we:

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Confed. ship has completely turned around now and we clearly see it's starboard side guns swirl around for a volley straight out of a World War Two documentary. Massive guns discharge their munitions with only a faint "buzz" of electricity, leaving behind the faintest blue trails behind them on their way to the Cult cruiser.

We follow the shells to the hull of Brie's ship, where they explode with massive force, shearing off dozens of heavy armor plates and leaving large black gashes on every point of impact.

But as we linger on viewing Brie's vessel, we notice her own weapons activating. In old fashioned naval style, dozens upon dozens of armor plates lift themselves up by themselves, revealing an array of missile launchers and gun turrets just as powerful looking as those on the Confederate ship.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - MISSILE BAY

For the first time, we see the other side of combat. Hundreds of Cultists stand in line behind missile racks and launchers, pulling levers and pushing buttons in near unison as they prepare to launch their counter attack.

BRIE'S COMM VOICE

Fire!

The soldiers all pull a large lever on their missile racks at once, loading the hundreds of launchers and turrets at the same exact time.

SMASH BACK TO:

EXT. SPACE

Brie's ship launches its own volley at the enemy vessel. But not as a continuous volley like the Confed. ship. Brie's missiles and guns all shoot at THE EXACT SAME TIME, sending hundreds of missiles and shells directly into the hull of the Gold ship.

It's a pile of flaming debris in half a second.

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - BRIDGE

Everyone on the bridge is still with stunned silence.

BRIE

Keep your eyes open for reinforcements.

The moment is tense for several seconds before Brie sighs with relief.

BRIE

Stand down, but be ready.

The crew visibly relaxes. Another ACOLYTE OFFICER approaches Brie with trepidation.

ACOLYTE OFFICER

General, this battle shouldn't have been that easy. We should have needed at least three more volleys to even penetrate their armor-

BRIE

I know that, Colonel. This could just have easily been a diversion to keep us off guard. Keep a full contingent at the weapons at all times until ordered otherwise.

ACOLYTE OFFICER

Yes, general.

The Acolyte salutes and moves to exit.

Brie stares at the debris field for a moment before her eyes open a little wider.

BRIE

Colonel.

ACOLYTE OFFICER

Ma'am?

Brie continues to stare at the debris for a moment.

BRIE

Send over a team to investigate that large piece of debris.

The officer looks confused for a moment, but salutes and nods.

ACOLYTE OFFICER

It will be done.

Brie stares at the debris as we quickly pull back to reveal the object in all its twisted glory. Indeed, a large chunk of the ship's hull is completely intact, sporting only a few faint char marks from Brie's missiles.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CONFEDERATE DEBRIS

A team of five Cult soldiers walk heavily in the ruined hulk of the Confed battle cruiser, using their magnetic boots to stay attached to the floor. Their bodies are all encased in heavy, antique-looking space suits not dissimilar to those you might expect to see in an 1800s diving suit with heavy copper and red leather.

LEAD SOLDIER

Have you found any bodies?

SUBORDINATE SOLDIER

No, sir. Not even bio-traces from the seers.

The leader nods under his helmet and moves to the only intact room in the shell of the ship, a large chamber that contains what resembles Ava's computer tower, but is of a much more sinister design.

LEAD SOLDIER

Have you gotten ANYTHING from their database?

SUBORDINATE SOLDIER 2

Negative. It looks like there was nothing here to begin with, much less erased before we got here.

LEAD SOLDIER

And what about that tower?

A rather impish looking soldier chimes in, interrupted frequently by his extremely ill fitting suit.

IMPISH SOLDIER

I can answer that, Colonel.

(beat)

It's a subspace device.

LEAD SOLDIER

Subspace?

IMPISH SOLDIER

Oh, right, you aren't paid to do much thinking, are you? Subspace is what we use to go to warp speed and a lot of other things, including communication.

LEAD SOLDIER

So what is this tower? A new engine?
Comm device?

IMPISH SOLDIER

You're on the right track, sire.
Near as I can tell, this is a
subspace transceiver. Or, rather,
one of the largest and most
sophisticated remote control
antennae in the galaxy.

The lead soldier looks over the transceiver for a long moment before turning to his subordinates.

LEAD SOLDIER

Get that thing disconnected and
back to the shuttle. We'll have the
General decide what to do with it.

The soldiers nod and get to work.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - GUEST QUARTERS

Ajay and Siren are sitting across from each other on the guest room's bed, talking quietly and looking over a small object. As we get closer, we realize the object is a tiny locket on a chain. And inside the locket is a picture of Zorin.

AJAY

And he was the one who saved you?

SIREN

Yes. Yes he did.

AJAY

He looks strong. And really proud.

SIREN

That he is.

Ajay looks at the picture of Zorin for a long time before speaking.

AJAY

You know, from everything Sovari
and the other said about him and
your... friends, this doesn't
seem... right. I don't know who to
believe.

Siren quickly hides a hurt look.

SIREN

A big part of growing up is choosing to believe what you think is right and wrong. I can only tell you what I know is true.

AJAY

Well, you know what? I believe you. This man look too strong to be evil. And what he did for you...

Siren holds up her hand to silence Ajay.

SIREN

It's all right.

AJAY

(cautiously)

You... don't like to think about what happened to you, do you?

Siren doesn't reply, she merely nods her head "no".

AJAY

But... without Him, without... what he did, you wouldn't have me.

Siren is clearly uncomfortable, but doesn't stop Ajay.

AJAY

I guess what I want to know is... who really is my father, if I wasn't a divine gift?

Siren is between tears and anger, but she covers both for her son.

SIREN

Ajay... no matter what anyone says, you are a gift. Maybe not from the Prophet, but you are a gift.

(beat)

As for your father... he was...

AJAY

You don't need to keep going. I can see in your eyes what he was.

(beat)

He was Naussican, right?

SIREN

Yes.

Ajay paws at the faint ridges on his forehead and cheeks.

AJAY
 So that would explain these.
 (beat)
 I can't ever keep 'em clean. I
 always get demerits when the
 inspectors come to my room.

Siren laughs lightly.

SIREN
 Then we'll work together on keeping
 those clean, okay?

Ajay smiles back.

But before the warm moment can continue:

BRIE (O.S.)
 Ajay, come here.

Brie stands at the now open doorway. Surprisingly alone.
 Siren stands and holds Ajay comfortingly.

SIREN
 What do you want with him?

Brie sighs.

BRIE
 Unless you couldn't tell, we were
 attacked a few hours ago by a
 Confederate cruiser. We need Ajay
 to look over the debris and see if
 he can come to any... conclusions.

SIREN
 That's ridiculous. How can a six
 year old know anything about ruined
 junk and debris?

Brie sees Siren's clear anger and frustration and approaches
 her, leaning in to whisper in her ear for Ajay's protection.

BRIE
 Lord Sovari wants to know having
 contact with you has sparked
 something in Ajay. And he wants to
 know now. If we don't have him do...
 something in the next hour, you're
 going to be executed.

Unfortunately, Ajay hear everything.

AJAY

WHAT!? NO!

Brie is taken aback.

BRIE

I'm sorry, Ajay, it's an order from the Penultimate himself. Unless you can do anything that proves you're on the path to being the Omega... there's nothing I can do.

AJAY

That's... that's insane!

BRIE

I agree. Trust me, I do. But this could possibly lead to a second war between us and the Confederates, and we need to prevent that at all costs.

SIREN

Then let me at least go with you. I know a little about Confederate systems.

Brie nods.

BRIE

Just stay behind me, then. There are a lot of people on this ship that know who you are, Launal.

Ajay looks confused at the name, but doesn't question it.

SIREN

Let's just get this over with.

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - CARGO BAY

Unlike cargo bays we're familiar with, the cargo space of Brie's ship is actually rather small, not unlike the space we saw on *Voyager*, though it's clearly evident there are countless similar rooms all over the ship.

And arrayed in the center of the room is the subspace transceiver, a black hunk of metal compared to the silver and gold debris from the rest of the ship.

Brie, Siren and Ajay enter as one, escorted by the same away team we saw on the Confed ship itself. They eye Siren with a mix of anger and suspicion, but don't vocalize it.

BRIE
Well, there it is.

Siren lets Ajay go reluctantly, allowing him to approach the debris. He does so slowly, taking in every detail he can.

AJAY
Well, it sure doesn't look like the rest of the junk around here.

Brie is silent, but the soldiers roll their eyes. Siren slowly makes her way to Ajay, looking over every piece of debris herself.

SIREN
Ajay, look at this.

Siren bends down and picks up a chunk of debris. The soldiers rush forward to stop her, but Brie holds up a hand to stop them.

Siren flips the debris over for Ajay to look at it. There's a tracking device on it.

AJAY
That's definitely not like what else is here.

SIREN
And look at the scorch marks around it. How they've faded.

Ajay thinks for a bit, looking into his mother's eyes with intent.

AJAY
This was put on the hull a long time before the fight.

Siren nods and drops the wreckage, moving over to the transceiver.

Brie smiles, seeing Siren's game. The soldiers stop their mewling to get Siren, watching Ajay work.

SIREN
So you said this was made by someone else. How do you know that?

AJAY
Well... it looks different.

SIREN

A lot of pieces of a space ship
look different from one another.

AJAY

Yeah, but this is REALLY different.
The angles they used to build it
are totally different from the rest
of the ship.

SIREN

Just like the other thing, right?

AJAY

Yeah.

SIREN

And we know this is a remote
control device, thanks to the
engineers, right?

AJAY

Yeah.

SIREN

And there was no crew aboard this
ship, right?

AJAY

This was a remotely controlled ship.

Siren and Brie smiles at Ajay's reasoning. The soldiers are
all impressed.

SIREN

And one thing you didn't know, Ajay,
is that standard Confederate battle
strategy is to disable and board
your enemy ship for looting and
potential takeover.

(looks at Brie)

So with no crew...

AJAY

The Confederate government wasn't
behind this.

Brie and the soldiers are shocked.

AJAY

This was just a test by whoever sent the ship to see how powerful the transceiver was and how effective it would be in real combat. There was no data in the computer core because everything was being routed to a central computer somewhere else.

(beat)

And when the test was completed, it wasn't this ship that destroyed it, the ship self destructed itself.

(beat, unsure)

But they left this room and device intact. Probably for later pickup. It's probably too unique and valuable to be left in space.

LEAD SOLDIER

Bless your eyes, General.

Brie, while impressed greatly by Ajay's deductive skills, is quietly musing.

BRIE

Or it was intentionally left for us to find. But why?

Brie regards the transceiver a moment more before walking over to Ajay and clapping a congratulatory hand on his shoulder.

BRIE

No six year old could possibly have figured that out, Ajay.

Brie looks at Siren, who is simply beaming with pride. She smiles in return.

BRIE

I think Lord Sovari will be very pleased with this. We may have just reached the first steps in averting a war.

Ajay smiles and goes over to Siren, grabbing hold of her hand with relief.

SIREN

You did great.

Ajay smiles all the broader.

And the soldiers stand with awe and pride, all of them staring at Ajay and Siren.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIE'S SHIP - BRIE'S QUARTERS

Brie sits at a large desk crammed with PADDs, books and stacks of papers ready to fall over. Her attention is locked on a small screen, a screen that is totally filled with Sovari's visage.

SOVARI

And you're absolutely certain Ajay came to these conclusions?

BRIE

I've just sent you the data logs to confirm it, Penultimate. He did what our analytical computers AND advisors do in a week... in less than two minutes.

Sovari nods, impressed.

SOVARI

And, of course, you've confirmed this data? He wasn't just guessing to put on a show?

BRIE

No, Lord Sovari. As soon as he was done we did a metallurgical analysis of the transceiver and found it to be made of an alloy only found in the neutral sectors. Low grade stuff, but clearly not Confederate in origin.

SOVARI

Excellent. We're going to delay releasing news of this attack for a week to allow you more time to get to the bottom of this. We can't risk another war until we know the source of these phantom ships, General. They could tip the balance unfavorably.

BRIE

I understand, Penultimate.

(beat)

Will I require escort?

SOVARI

No, not this time. We'll need as much stealth as strength in this mission. Take your ship alone to the neutral sectors and find the source of the signal.

Brie nods.

BRIE

It will be done, Penultimate.

Sovari nods in return and cuts the communication.

And not a moment too soon, as Siren and Ajay enter Brie's quarters a millisecond after Sovari's face disappears.

SIREN

So what's the word?

BRIE

(smiling)

He did it. Penultimate Sovari has ordered me to take this ship to the neutral territories to find the signal's source.

Siren looks down and smiles at Ajay. Ajay returns the smile and grabs her hand warmly.

Brie watches the two for a moment.

BRIE

You're welcome to stay here while we stay in the territories. I need to go to the bridge.

Brie begins to exit.

SIREN

Brie.

She turns.

SIREN

Thank you.

(beat)

Thank you for reuniting me with my son.

BRIE

It's the least I could do, Launal.
No thanks are necessary.

Brie exits.

Siren and Ajay look to each other for a moment.

AJAY

Could to tell me more about the
Avalon? I wanna know more.

Siren smiles, leading Ajay to Brie's bed.

SIREN

Well, have I told you about Thomas
Hatch yet?

Ajay shakes his head "no".

SIREN

Well, we found him floating in an
ion storm all alone, like he'd just
shown up out of nowhere...

Siren trails off as we pull away from her. Out of Brie's
room. Past the many corridors of the ship. Past the missile
launchers. Past the hull.

EXT. SPACE

And we see Brie's ship, in her massive and slightly scarred
glory, turn itself around in a gentle turn and jump into
warp speed.

FADE TO BLACK.