

Captain's log, stardate 48756.9:

We have just started our second month patrolling the Cardassian Demilitarized Zone. Normal traffic patterns in the vicinity, and so far we have not had to stop any ships this week, either Cardassian, Federation, or Maquis. If the next two months go like this past week has, I'll be very happy.
Cosna, out.

“Good morning, Captain,” said Lt Commander V’Pier ‘Greg’ N’Vorda, the *Sarek*’s acting-chief engineer as he took his station at the rear of the bridge.

“Good morning, Commander. How are my engines?” Cosna inquired.

“MY engines are fine, Captain,” T’Veer – the *Sarek*’s chief engineer and acting-first officer – said as she exited the turbolift and took a seat next to the young Asian woman in the command chair.

“Uh-uh, T’Veer,” Cosna said with a smile. “They’re not yours anymore. I would think that after a month you’d be used to the red uniform.” T’Veer raised an eyebrow.

“No matter who may be the assigned engineer on this ship, Captain, they will always remain MY engines.”

“Emotional attachment? From a Vulcan? I’m shocked, T’Veer.”

“Pride IS a human emotion, but after all, I am half human.” The two officers returned to gazing at the main viewer. “When it suits me,” T’Veer concluded under her breath. Cosna glanced sidelong at her and smiled.

“Captain,” said security chief Penji Fil at tactical. “I’m reading a small class K cargo ship, bearing 344 mark 9. She’s not on any of the approved shipping lanes.”

“And thus our day begins,” Cosna commented, slightly disappointed at the turn of events.

“Captain?” T’Veer glanced at Cosna, a puzzled look on her normally stolid face.

“It’s time to get to work,” Cosna explained. “Helm, intercept course. Ahead warp three.”

Space, the Final Frontier...

These are the voyages of the starship *Sarek*!

Star Trek: Sarek

“The Calamity with Cardassians” by PJK

As soon as the small cargo ship had detected the Federation starship’s approach, a high speed chase had ensued.

“...I repeat,” said commanding officer Yu-Fen M. Cosna. “This is the Federation starship *USS Sarek*. You are in violation of the DMZ treaty. Heave to and prepare to be boarded.”

“I read her as the Cardassian freighter *Bokkaat*, registered at the Cardassian colony at Salva IV. Crew of twelve. Top speed is warp 3.5,” Setton To’Lock Arbelo reported from ops.

“And she’s running at warp 3.2 now!” added Penji Fil from his post at tactical. Cosna looked at her Vulcan first officer.

“Tractor beam?” she asked.

“Tractor beam,” T’Veer agreed.

“Mister Arbelo. Lock a tractor beam on them. Bring them to a halt,” Cosna ordered. Upon Arbelo’s affirmation, Cosna pressed the intercom.

“Mister A-ZuRQuIL, prepare the IKDF platoon for a boarding party,” she ordered, referring to the Klingon security contingent aboard the starship. “Set phasers to stun, and be cautious. There should be twelve Cardassians aboard that ship.”

“Yes, Captain,” replied the voice of the Capellan assistant security chief.

“Captain!” Arbelo exclaimed, turning to face Cosna. “I’m reading far more than twelve life-forms aboard that freighter. Twelve are Cardassian. I can’t get a clear reading on the rest.”

“How many more?” Cosna asked.

“Well either ten very large, very complex life-forms, or a whole lot of something concentrated very close together.”

“Okay. T’Veer, lead the away team. Update them on what we know.”

“Aye, Captain,” T’Veer replied as she rose from her seat and walked into the turbolift.

* * * *

Aboard the *Bokkaat*, the twelve members of the *Sarek*'s away team beamed into existence on the freighter's bridge, phaser rifles drawn and ready. Surprisingly, the eight Cardassians on the bridge did not put up a fight.

"I told you no good would come of this," one Cardassian growled under his breath at the Gul in the captain's seat. "We should have dumped the crates when I said."

"I am Commander T'Veer of the *USS Sarek*," the Vulcan woman said, stepping up to the seated Cardassian leader. "Your ship is hereby impounded for violations of the DMZ treaty."

"I am Gul Topach, master of the *Bokkaat*. You can have this ship for all I care. My career was finished from the moment I brought my cargo on board."

"Where is the rest of your crew?" T'Veer inquired.

"Probably in their quarters, keeping themselves amused," Topach replied vaguely.

"Lieutenant Kro'Toth," said A-ZuRQuIL to the Klingon platoon leader. "Leave three of your men here. Have the rest come with me."

Kro'Toth assigned which of his warriors he wanted to stay on the bridge, guarding the Gul and his crew, and ordered the others to follow A-ZuRQuIL as they started to search the ship. In the meantime, T'Veer continued to question the Gul about why his ship was outside of the established shipping lanes and what his cargo consisted of, but his answers proved less than enlightening.

"A-ZuRQuIL to T'Veer," said the Capellan's voice over the half-Vulcan woman's combadge a few minutes later.

"Go ahead," T'Veer said after tapping her combadge.

"We have taken the remaining four Cardassians into custody. And we have found ten medium sized cargo containers with Federation markings on them in the cargo bay." T'Veer raised an eyebrow as she looked at Topach.

"Theft as well as treaty violations. Is that why you ran? Mister A-ZuRQuIL, please escort our new guests to the brig." T'Veer then tapped her combadge again before saying, "T'Veer to *Sarek*."

"Go ahead, Commander," replied Cosna's surprisingly calm voice.

"Everything is under control. Please rig the freighter for towing. We will have to take it to *DS9* for processing."

* * * *

With the *Bokkaat* in tow and the Federation cargo containers transferred to one of the *Sarek*'s cargo bays, chief science officer T'Ashara was scanning the containers with a tricorder as T'Veer, Cosna, and Arbelo looked on.

"According to the coded shipping labels, these containers were supposed to have been delivered to Volon II in the DMZ. Our records indicate the *SS Toran* was carrying them before they were attacked and boarded by an unidentified spacecraft shortly after crossing into the Demilitarized Zone two days ago," Arbelo reported.

"Well I'd say the attacker has been identified now," Cosna said with a smile as T'Ashara walked over.

"These are definitely the source of the life-form readings, Commander. Thousands of them."

"Animals?" T'Veer inquired.

"Affirmative," T'Ashara confirmed.

"Well, let's open them up and have a look," Cosna said.

T'Ashara and Arbelo walked to the nearest of the silver containers, opened the lock, and slowly swung up the lid. The noise of the purring and cooing was immediate.

"Uh... Captain. We may have a slight problem," said Arbelo, his face contorting between worry and a broad smile. Before she could walk over, small furry animals had already started to fall out of the crate at Cosna's feet.

"Tribbles?!? Why would Cardassians steal tribbles?"

* * * *

"I thought tribbles were extinct?" A-ZuRQuIL said to T'Veer as Commander Cosna approached the brig cell containing Gul Topach. "Weren't they wiped out by the Klingons?"

"The tribble homeworld was attacked by the Klingons and all the tribbles located there destroyed, yes," T'Veer replied. "However, tribbles have survived as a species in zoos on several Federation worlds where their reproduction is carefully controlled."

Cosna was standing just outside the cell, looking at the Cardassian gul who sat on the bunk inside.

"Ten containers of tribbles," Cosna said to the captured Cardassian, causing him to momentarily flinch. "Why did you steal ten containers containing live tribbles from the Federation registered freighter *Toran*?" She watched the Cardassian, repeating the question several more times, but Gul Topach merely looked back placidly at Cosna.

"I asked you, why did your ship..."

Suddenly Gul Topach interrupted Cosna.

"I heard you the first time, Commander, and the second time, third time and even the fifth time. Your fourth time, however, was a little mumbled." Cosna glared at Topach as he continued. "It should be obvious to you by now that I will not answer."

A-ZuRQuIL stepped closer to the forcefield of the cell.

"If you don't answer the Commander's questions, I'll give you such a pinch!" he threatened. Topach looked at Cosna, confusion clear on his face.

"Please, Captain?" A-ZuRQuIL practically begged. "Let me question him my way!"

“He’s not giving me much choice. Go ahead, Lieutenant.” The utter glee that spread across A-ZuRQuIL’s face prompted an even more intense look of confusion, now mixed with fear, to appear on Topach’s own. The forcefield shut down and A-ZuRQuIL stepped into the brig cell, T’Veer restoring the field again once the Capellan was inside.

“Come here, big boy. We’re going to have some fun!” A-ZuRQuIL said.

“But...! But...!” Topach stuttered. “I thought you Feds didn’t believe in torture during interrogations?”

“Torture? Who said anything about torture, ...Sweetie?” A-ZuRQuIL reassured the near terrified Cardassian. He then started removing his gown-like uniform.

“What are you...? NO! No, please! I’ll talk! I’ll tell you whatever you want to know!” The Cardassian got down on his knees to beg.

“You already know the position! Very good!” A-ZuRQuIL said. “You’ve done this before?”

“Commander! PLEASE!” Topach shouted.

“Okay, A-ZuRQuIL. Back off,” Cosna requested.

“But, Captain...!”

“As you were, Lieutenant!” Cosna ordered. Disappointment grew on A-ZuRQuIL’s face as relief spread on Topach’s. “Maybe later,” Cosna added as an aside, glaring directly at Topach. A-ZuRQuIL heard and his smile returned. He did, however, remain in the cell as the questioning resumed.

“Why did you steal those containers?” Cosna demanded to know.

Keeping one eye on A-ZuRQuIL, Topach said, “There were reports that the *Toran* was smuggling weapons to the colony on Volon II. Weapons are not allowed in the Demilitarized Zone, and we suspected they were bound for the Maquis.”

“So rather than report what you suspected to the regular patrols, you took it upon yourself to stop, board, and confiscate cargo from a Federation registered freighter?”

“You say that like Starfleet would bother to search a Federation ship.” Topach spit in contempt. “We have to help ourselves or be slaughtered like voles.”

“You’re being charged with piracy, theft, and possession of stolen property. You and your crew will be handed over to Federation authorities as soon as we dock at *Deep Space Nine*,” Cosna informed the unimpressed gul. “In the meantime, Mister A-ZuRQuIL, see to it that our prisoner is kept comfortable.” Again a smile spread on the Capellan’s face.

“Yes, Captain,” he replied. “I’ll wait on him hand and foot.”

Cosna then walked out into the corridor, joined by T’Veer, and the two began to slowly walk down the corridor.

“Have you determined why all those tribbles were being shipped to Volon II? I can’t imagine a colony actually wanting them.”

“Yes, I have,” T’Veer replied. “The Federation established a colony on Volon II fifteen standard years ago. Recently it was determined that a native plant – now referred to as Volon-Kudzu, from a similar plant originating in the southeast region of Earth’s North American continent – has started overgrowing the colony site. It has been choking out all the fields planted by the colonists for food, and since the Kudzu itself is poisonous to carbon-based life-forms, it is not viable as a food source itself. It grows incredibly fast, as much as one meter per day. The tribbles were being shipped to the colony to act as a predator to the Kudzu. The tribbles would keep the plant in check, just below the current foliage level, while the plant would keep the tribble population in check, poisoning the tribbles before they could overpopulate themselves.”

“Sounds like a perfect arrangement,” Cosna commented.

“Most nearly. But the colony is in trouble. With the Cardassian theft of the tribbles, the colony is on the verge of being starved out.”

“Which leads me to believe that this theft was not the accident Topach claims it is,” Cosna remarked.

“Topach and his crew may not have known exactly what was in those containers they took, but you must believe that someone in the Cardassian Central Command did, and wanted to take advantage of the situation?” T’Veer asked.

“T’Ashara to Commander Cosna,” interrupted a calm sounding voice over Cosna’s combadge.

“Go ahead, T’Ashara,” Cosna replied after tapping her emblem.

“Could you please come down to cargo bay nine, Commander. I believe we have a problem.”

Cosna looked at T’Veer, confusion on her face, before replying, “On my way, Commander.”

* * * *

Cosna had a bad feeling long before the cargo bay door was even in sight. Periodically along the corridor she noticed several tribbles, mainly in groups of three or more. The *Sarek*’s acting-commanding officer entered the cargo bay with apprehension.

“Ah, Commander,” said T’Ashara as Cosna entered the bay. The Asian woman stopped dead just inside the entrance, her mouth agape, surveying the huge room with her eyes. Everywhere she looked, balls of fur clung to walls, shelves, containers, the huge outer loading door, but mainly all across the deck. Here and there, members of Penji Fil’s security team were picking up tribbles, gingerly stepping over some and between others, before placing them into new, hastily replicated cargo bins. Even acting-chief engineer V’Pier N’Vorda was involved in the cleanup, his arms formed into huge shovels, grabbing up dozens of the small furry animals at a time and dumping them into bins.

“Wha... Wha... Wha...?” Cosna began to stutter.

“I’m afraid it is my fault, Captain,” T’Ashara explained, having gently tip-toed over to the short yet usually intimidating human woman. “Some of the crew and civilians, having heard of all the small animals being held here, asked if they could help take

care of them until they were delivered to their assigned destination. It had not occurred to me that these tribbles are natural tribbles and not the genetically altered tribbles normally displayed in zoos. I am afraid the feeding got a little out of hand.”

“A LITTLE?!?” Cosna said incredulous.

“Well..., perhaps a lot,” T’Ashara admitted.

“How...? How...? How...? How many?”

“Well, the original ten containers are full again, as are five new crates that we replicated earlier. Some of the crew are now in the process of filling another five. On average, each container holds five thousand tribbles, so I estimate one hundred thousand, plus or minus a thousand.”

“Well, I guess that’s not too bad. That includes the tribbles out in the corridor too, right?” Cosna asked.

“There are tribbles in the corridor?” T’Ashara asked with an eyebrow raised.

“Commander, I think we’d better get to work.” Cosna walked back out into the corridor, looked both ways at the ever increasing amount of cooing furballs, took a deep breath, and sighed. She was about to activate the nearby wall intercom when shouting down the hall caught her attention. She rushed to see what the problem was.

Rounding the corridor, she came across the Klingon Lieutenant Kro’Toth standing in the corridor, roundly cursing at the door of his quarters in Klingonese.

“Lieutenant, what is the problem?” she asked.

“Commander, my quarters are no longer habitable. I demand new quarters.”

“What’s wrong? Temperature control is out? Wrong gravity?”

“Parasites!” the Klingon grumbled.

“Parasites? What kind of...?” The door to Kro’Toth’s room opened at Cosna’s approach and inside a multitude of hissing, spitting tribbles milled about.

“THAT kind of parasite!” Kro’Toth growled. “I thought we had eradicated these vile creatures! I have never had my honor so insulted in all my life as a warrior.”

“Believe me, Lieutenant, this was an accident, not an insult to your honor. I’ll have security clean up your quarters immediately.”

The Klingon nodded curtly, then said, “I believe I will work out in the gym until it is done. If you will excuse me, Commander.”

“Kro’Toth?”

The Klingon stopped, then slowly turned to face Cosna, disgust still evident on his face.

“Yes, Commander?”

“If you think your quarters are bad,” she thumbed toward his stateroom door, “then I suggest you steer clear of cargo bay nine.” At first, Kro’Toth seemed to take her words as a challenge before he thought about what the human woman was saying.

“Yes, Commander. Thank you.”

* * * *

Hours later, with a good portion of the off-duty crew helping in the cleanup, Cosna sat on the bridge with T’Veer, Counselor Sutherland, and a few dozen tribbles.

“T’Veer, has any other starship ever confronted the problem of tribble infestation?” the acting-commander asked.

“I will have to double check, but I believe there was at least one such instance.” The Vulcan woman stood, walked over to the ops position, and ordered the young Andorian ensign there to access LCARS for records of any tribble infestation problems. She returned to the command area moments later.

“As I believed, a little over one century ago, the *USS Enterprise NCC-1701* suffered the first and only known tribble infestation aboard a Federation starship. On stardate 4523.3, while making a call at *Deep Space Station K-7*. In fact, it was directly because of that incident that natural tribbles were deemed animals proven harmful to humanoid life and an effort was made to develop genetically engineered tribbles, or ‘safe tribbles,’ that could not breed so easily on their own.”

“At last! Progress!” Cosna said. “Does the captain’s log say how they eventually got rid of all the tribbles?”

“Yes, captain. An organized effort, led by the ship’s chief engineer, collected every single tribble, and then beamed them into the engineering spaces of a nearby Klingon battlecruiser just before the Klingons went into warp.”

“If Lieutenant Kro’Toth is any indication, I’ll bet that was one unhappy crew of Klingons,” Counselor Sutherland commented, rolling her eyes.

“If it had not been for the restraining factors of the Organian Peace Treaty, the incident would almost certainly have led to full scale war,” T’Veer explained.

“Well... A) We need to deliver ten containers of five-thousand tribbles each to Volon II or the colonists will starve. B) We need to get rid of the other tribbles we still have because too many would destroy Volon’s ecosphere. And C) Even if a Klingon ship just happened to be around, I wouldn’t be so mean as to beam the tribbles aboard their vessel. Find me other answers.”

“Cap’n,” said John Q. Laran from the tactical post in his thick Australian accent. “I’ve got an incoming hail foy ya.”

“On screen,” Cosna ordered. The screen changed to the image of a Cardassian sitting in the command seat of his ship.

“I am Gul Duvar of the Cardassian Fifth Order, commanding the warship *Dexoftuo*,” the Cardassian said menacingly. “Our sensors indicate that you are towing the Cardassian freighter *Bokkaat*. That ship is on assignment for the Central Command. If you do not release it, its crew, and its cargo before we arrive at your location, we will release them ourselves, with unpleasant consequences for you.”

* * * *

“Here’s how it stands,” V’Pier ‘Greg’ N’Vorda said to the collected senior staff around the observation lounge table. “If we open her up to the warp five limit, we can just enter orbit of Volon II before the *Dexoftuo* catches up to us. A little fancy talking by our esteemed captain here, and I’m sure Ron can have those containers beamed down to the colony before we have any real problems with Duvar.”

“What if he just tries to just beam them back up?” Arbelo asked.

“If he tries, we’ll just point out that the cargo is Federation property which has already been confirmed in both the *Bokkaat* and our own logs as not being weapons. I’ll just tell him we’ll defend the property with the full firepower of this ship,” Cosna said, determination on her face. Pressing the intercom, she ordered, “Bridge, this is the captain. Increase speed to warp five.”

“Aye, Captain,” replied the helm officer’s voice.

“What’s the current status of the... ahh... round-up?” Doctor Rasa Palin asked.

“Slow,” replied Penji Fil. “It almost seems that for every tribble my security team picks up, two more are born.”

“That is highly illogical, Mister Fil,” pointed out T’Ashara. Fil was on the verge of protesting when the Vulcan chief science officer continued. “These tribbles are multiplying at a rate of ten per tribble every twelve hours. The first few tribbles escaped approximately 27.634 hours ago...”

“Excuse me, Commander,” interrupted Cosna. “But just how many is ‘...the first few...?’”

“Taking into account the ventilation system and those that slipped through the opening door of the cargo bay, I would estimate no more than five hundred, give or take twenty three.”

“Five... HUNDRED?!?” Cosna exclaimed in shock.

“That would imply another fifty thousand of the animals are now loose aboard this ship,” T’Veer pointed out.

“Plus or minus a thousand,” said T’Ashara, almost smugly.

“Fifty... Thousand... Tribbles... loose on my ship?” Cosna asked, her voice low with shock.

“A-ZuRQuIL to Cosna.”

Yu-Fen Cosna just sat staring wide-eyed at T’Ashara.

“A-ZuRQuIL to Cosna!” Almost in a dazed state, Cosna tapped her combadge.

“Yeah...?”

“Captain, please come down to the brig,” requested the Capellan security officer.

“I’m... I’m on my way.” Slowly, still staring in disbelief at her science officer, Cosna stood and, accompanied by T’Veer, made her way to the brig.

* * * *

“It’s the weirdest thing I’ve ever seen,” stated A-ZuRQuIL. The assistant security chief, Cosna, T’Veer, and two security guards looked on in disbelief at the dozens upon dozens of tribbles pushing up toward the brig’s security forcefield and being repelled back several meters by the energy discharge, only to try once again. A living river of fur.

“What is causing it?” T’Veer asked.

“As near as I can figure, from observation, ...the Cardassians,” A-ZuRQuIL replied. For the first time, Cosna realized that the only cells the tribbles seemed intent on getting into were the four cells containing the Cardassian prisoners.

“I tried an experiment before you arrived,” A-ZuRQuIL explained. “I placed Ensign Hodges into one of the empty cells, but aside from some happy purrs, the tribbles ignored both him and the cell. For some reason, they’re dying to get to those Cardassians.”

“I know that tribbles are instinctively repulsed by Klingons,” T’Veer said. “Maybe they’re instinctively attracted to Cardassians?” Cosna eyed Topach sitting on the bunk in his cell and smiled a slight, somewhat evil looking grin.

“Well, let’s find out!” she said. She walked over to the side of the cell, gingerly stepping around the cooing, throbbing carpet of tribbles.

“What are you doing, Commander?” Topach asked.

Wordlessly, she pressed the control of the brig forcefield and it snapped off with an audible click. Immediately, the thousands of tribbles that had been piled in front of Topach’s cell rolled in and started climbing up the legs of the hapless Cardassian.

“Commander...? Commander...! Please! Get these organisms off of me! I’ve cooperated with you! Please!!” Topach pleaded.

“Ensign, take all the tribbles out and place them in storage containers,” Cosna ordered one of the nearby security guards. “I’ve got an idea to comply exactly with Gul Duvar’s demands.”

* * * *

Hours later, the *Sarek* came out of warp as close to Volon II as safely possible, followed closely by the Cardassian Galor-class warship *Dexoftuo*. As soon as both ships had dropped out of warp, the Cardassian ship hailed the *Sarek*.

“Is everything ready?” Cosna asked over her shoulder.

“Yes, Captain,” replied a sweat soaked Penji Fil.

“Okay. On screen.”

“Captain,” said the angry face of Gul Duvar on the main viewscreen. “I am most displeased with your reaction to my demand. Will you release the *Bokkaat* or won’t you?”

"I'm sorry, Gul Duvar. We were on an emergency mission and could not stop to chat with you. Of course I'll comply. The *Bokkaat* and her crew are being released now." With a nod of Cosna's head back toward Fil, the *Sarek* released its tractor on the small Cardassian freighter. "As for the cargo, I'm ready to beam it aboard your ship now." A look of surprised pleasure was evident on Duvar's face.

"Why, Captain, I've underestimated you. For a Terran, you're much more reasonable than I expected. I'm lowering my shields now."

Cosna glanced back over her shoulder to look at Lieutenant Fil. The chief of security nodded at her.

"Transporter rooms, energize... now!"

In *Sarek's* transporter rooms one and three, Lt Commander N'Vorda and Ensign Giacobbe both energized their transporter systems simultaneously.

* * * *

In the Volon II colony, ten containers materialized into existence in the court yard of the Cental Hall. A cheer went up among the colonists as they quickly opened the containers and started grabbing tribbles, rushing them to the fields to begin munching on the Kudzu encroaching on their fields. While elsewhere...

* * * *

"Transport complete," Cosna said to Gul Duvar, barely able to hold back a smile.

"Very well, Captain. I'm glad that we could resolve this..." Duvar's sentence was suddenly interrupted as another Cardassian officer ran onto the bridge.

"Gul Duvar! We've got thousands of parasitic animals loose aboard the ship!"

Duvar's face became hard and angry.

"You...! You've tricked me!"

"No. I just fulfilled your demand." Unable to restrain herself any longer, a huge smile covered Cosna's face. "You demanded the return of your freighter, its crew, and the cargo it appropriated. Your freighter is free. Your crew is aboard the freighter, and the cargo in question is now aboard your ship."

"But..."

"...The cargo CONTAINERS, however, were and remain Federation property, to which you had no right. So we just kept them. But the cargo... You're welcome to it!"

On the screen, thousands of happy, purring tribbles started to fill the Cardassian vessel's bridge, climbing on equipment and crew alike.

"Captain, I..." Duvar shouted.

"...If, however, you have a complaint with our compliance to your demands, you may file your complaint with the regional representative of Starfleet Command, which is at starbase *Deep Space Nine* in the Bajor sector," Cosna continued.

"If I ever come across you or your... mumph!" Duvar was interrupted as a tribble climbed over his face. "...Come across you or your ship... Blasted parasites... your ship again, I will truly take out my wrath on you then!"

As if not hearing Duvar's threat, Cosna calmly continued, "...In the interests of interstellar harmony, we are transmitting a computer file that gives you all the information you will need to know about the care and feeding of your new pets. We hope they provide you with hours... ahem ...I mean months of fun and enjoyment. Have a nice day!" She then looked toward the officer at ops and said, "Screen off." The viewscreen blinked to the view of Volon II below as the *Dexofuo* and *Bokkaat* slowly moving off. Silence reigned for a moment, then suddenly the entire bridge crew started applauding.

"You want to know something?" Cosna said, smiling at Counselor Sutherland.

"What's that, Captain?" the counselor asked.

"That felt damn good. Helm, return us to our patrol of the DMZ. Ahead warp two."

The End

Author's Note: This story, one of the last of the Sarek stories written before I joined the Navy in January 1995, was written almost two years before the production of the special 30th Anniversary episode of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine "Trials and Tribbulations," when we learned that the Klingons had hunted tribbles to extinction. And since this story was also one of the more popular ones that had been written for the Sarek, when it came time to post the story to the Fifth Fleet web site, I could not just pretend the story had never been written. So keeping in mind that tribbles had been seen elsewhere in Trek (most notably in the San Francisco bar scene in Star Trek III: The Search for Spock and on the dinner table in the mines of Rura Penthe in Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered County), I decided it would be logical to conclude not ALL tribbles had been eradicated and that some were probably studied and displayed in zoos on Earth and other Federation planets. With a quick edit to a few lines, acknowledging the special DS9 episode, we now present the Star Trek: Sarek story "The Calamity with Cardassians."

~ Cap'n Pete