

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

14x10 - "In Circles"

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and on the *Star Trek* tie-in novels
by Pocket Books

TNG 19x10 - "THE CLOSEST CUT"

Enterprise helps with security for President Bacco's top-secret summit with the Gorn. They also work with Data to prove his innocence of murder - the Soong-type reading could be from one of the androids the Breen stole. LaForge and Smrhová track the Starfleet Intelligence operative's movements to learn who killed her; evidence leads to the bank where Bacco's summit is taking place. Starfleet gives chase, and finds the Orion financial worker who was replaced previously. At a reception, Bacco's longtime advisor Piñiero suddenly pulls a gun and aims at both Bacco and the Gorn Emperor. Picard shields Beverly rather than Bacco, leaving Crusher disturbed - Picard's priorities have changed as a husband and father. Bacco is saved by Gorn agents, and Piñiero's body is found elsewhere - she had also been replaced with an android duplicate. Infuriated, the Gorn ship in orbit targets its weapons on *Enterprise*...

VOY 12x10 - "HEARTLESS"

On *Voyager*, Janeway and Chakotay finally have the chance to reconnect properly. Despite the quibbles, Starfleet wants them to pursue alliance with the Confederacy. They have enemies, the unexpected Devore-Turei-Vaadwaur union for one. Is this really an alliance they want right now? Janeway decides to split up the four ships to learn more of what the Confederacy is about. Meantime Barclay tracks Meegan, his alien-possessed hologram who stole a shuttle to help her fellow phantom criminals escape (VOY "Unworthy"). Where did she go? Torres hates that Paris is absent, Cambridge likewise for Seven. The Doctor continues his catom research, oddly unmoved at Seven's absence. Janeway learns why; the Doctor was so distraught over Seven's relationship with Cambridge and Axum's return, that Dr Zimmerman segregated his memories of Seven. Has the tactic caused a disastrous cascade memory failure for the EMH?

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE

THE WORMHOLE bursts into life, the familiar blue-and-white flower of churning light and energy. From it emerge...

-- *Robinson*, a majestic Starfleet Galaxy-class starship
-- *Eletrix*, a sleek menacing Romulan Mogai-class warbird
-- *Ren Fejin*, a Breen freighter, blocky and asymmetrical
-- *Sess'lessar*, a Gorn science vessel, TTN 2x16 "Primeval"

The four varied vessels move towards us, spreading out as the wormhole closes up behind them.

SISKO (comm, v.o.)
Robinson to all vessels - welcome
to the Gamma Quadrant.

2 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE

The bridge of this Galaxy-class, as seen in previous eps. SISKO sits in command, with his usual bridge crew at their stations. The main VIEWSCREEN is split three ways, showing the other ships' commanders - T'JUL, BELD and SSILITH.

T'JUL (screen)
I appreciate the welcome, Captain.
My crew and I are looking forward
to an enlightening few months of
exploration and adventure.

BELD the Breen BUZZES - the computer translates.

BELD (screen)
Mine are looking forward to a
profitable few months of trade.

SSILITH the Gorn GROWL-HISSES - the computer translates.

SSILITH (screen)
And mine is none of your business.

The Gorn ROARS with reptilian laughter. Sisko relaxes.

SSILITH (screen)
I will see you soon, my friends.
And when I do, I hope to have a
brand new breeding world for my
caste to colonise.

SISKO
Good luck... to all of us.

Sisko nods to Cmdr PLANTE at Ops, and the screen returns to the starfield. Sisko takes a moment to look around at his crew - he's actually quite excited about this, the most energised and invigorated he has felt in months.

SISKO
Commander Sivadeki - set course
for our first destination, and
engage at warp two.
(grin)
And let's see what we find.

SIVADEKI, the Tyrellian woman at helm, works her controls.

SIVADEKI
Aye, Captain.

3 EXT. SPACE

The four ships turn in four different directions, ramp up the power... and each in turn WARPS away into the distance.

Last to go is the *Robinson* - we watch as it stretches out, snaps back into place and disappears with a FLASH of light.

FADE TO BLACK

An on-screen caption says...

TWO MONTHS LATER

FADE IN

We GLIDE over the surface of this Gamma Quadrant world - advanced but not industrial, nature and construction in harmony with each other, not competition.

Everything is laid out in circles - a circle of low, two-storey buildings here, a circle of green parks and winding pathways there, a circle of glittering pools next along. Occasionally one circle will intersect with another, like a giant Venn diagram. The effect is not stark or oppressive - it is ripples from a stone in water, soothing and placid.

As we move across this view, we see FIGURES strolling on the boulevards that ring and loop and connect. But there is NO SOUND beyond the wind in the trees. No conversation, no birds tweeting. Life here does not rely on sound.

Eventually we approach one building larger than most in the very centre of one of the city circles. At five stories it is still the highest building in sight - a tower precisely for looking out over the low, wide view.

We finally reach the top of that tower, and see two more figures standing and enjoying the view. One is SSKO, in uniform but with a mesh of fine lights spread across his chest and a metal box attached at the hip.

The other is VENTU, one of the native species, the VAHNI VALTUPALI. They are largely humanoid, tall and slim, with no face as such - completely smooth and featureless apart from a full ring of small sensory nubs at eye-level.

Its arms are flexible and tentacle-like, and its unclothed flesh is constantly shifting in complex patterns of colour from head to toe - this is how they communicate.

SISKO

I read Vaughn's reports... they
don't do the reality justice.

The lights on Sisko's chest mesh flash in complex patterns, translating for the soundless alien. Ventu responds in more patterns on flesh - drifting waves, blooming flowers, fire works bursting. The box on Sisko's hip translates aloud.

VENTU

I stood here with Vaughn then as
I stand here with Sisko now. It
was a terrible day for the Vahni
Valtupali... but Vaughn ensured
such a day never came again.

Without turning, Ventu walks "backwards" from the edge.
Since its eyes ring its entire head, there is no forwards
or backwards for it - it sees in all directions at once.

Sisko turns from the view and follows Ventu to the centre
of the tower's roof deck. There stands a life-size double
statue, carved in marble that matches the colour of its
subjects as closely as it can - VAUGHN as he appeared in
8x15 "Haunted", and the Vahni who died that day, BRESTOL.

The statue is both sombre and victorious, commemorating
both life and death. Sisko takes a moment to gaze at the
representation of his friend, pondering him. Then to be
polite, moves on to look at the image of Brestol.

SISKO

Do these colours mean something?

More colours back and forth, translated aloud.

VENTU

The blue identifies the form as
Brestol, who died on this tower.
The green and silver marks on the
crown remind us of Brestol's love
for science and nature. The grey
on the thorax signifies death. The
white circles, the terror we all
felt that day. And the yellow, the
joy we still take in their memory.

Sisko is touched by this. He notices a PLAQUE on the base
of the statues, and crouches down to read it, amazed.

SISKO

That's why this plaque is written
only in English. You tell your
stories a different way.

VENTU

Vaughn's second, the one called
Dax, wrote the words for the Vahni
Valtupali.

SISKO

She always had an artistic streak.

VENTU

I recall Vaughn opposed the idea.
Even though Vaughn saved the Vahni
Valtupali, Vaughn resisted being
commemorated for the action.

Sisko stands again, gazing into his friend's marble face.

SISKO

He was a good man.

At this, the colours on Ventu's flesh stutter and slide.
Sisko's translator makes a buzzing, "untranslatable" noise.

VENTU

Forgive. Translation not certain.
Did Sisko use past tense?

Sisko blanches at his slip of the tongue. How to explain?

SISKO

Vaughn is not dead. But he is very
ill. There was a great battle. He
saved lives again that day. But he
paid the price for it.

Ventu's background flesh turns a deep indigo - there is no
translation, but it seems to indicate "sad".

Sisko gazes at Vaughn. Ventu reaches out a tentacle... and
gently touches the tip to Sisko's head, a ripple of colour
flowing back down the arm. Sisko turns in surprise...

VENTU

Vaughn was hurt in form that day.
I sense Sisko is hurt in soul.

Sisko can't deny that. He tries to push it aside and rally. He steps away from the statues, back towards the roof edge, and the view beyond it. Ventu follows and joins him.

(By now we should recognise the distinctive pattern Ventu always uses to refer to its own people - one large circle filling its chest, coloured in a repeating rainbow of all the colours. It signifies the totality of their people in all their colourful variety - it is this symbol which the light-mesh translates into the words "Vahni Valtupali.")

SISKO

I'm only sorry it took us so long to come and see you again. Our president at the time had a stricter view of contact with alien cultures, but since then we've got a new president, and she's a bit more open minded.

VENTU

The United Group of Planets is always welcome to visit the Vahni Valtupali. Though I am especially pleased that Sisko has come now.

SISKO

Why's that?

VENTU

Vaughn saved the Vahni Valtupali six cycles ago. Now... the Vahni Valtupali need Sisko to save them again.

Off Sisko's curiosity, and indeed alarm at that...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. SPACE - VAHNI HOMEWORLD - ORBIT

The *Robinson* glides smoothly in orbit of the planet below.

SISKO (v.o.)

Captain's log, stardate 60324-point-1. Our visit to the world of the Vahni Valtupali was intended as catching up with old friends, with a little shore leave mixed in. But it's taken a darker turn.

6 INT. ROBINSON - MAIN ENGINEERING

The large MASTER SYSTEMS DISPLAY has been given over to a full-screen replay of the events of 8x15 "Haunted"...

-- images of the moon shattered, planet-busting chunks of rock plummeting towards the surface
-- Shar's diagram of the thoughtscape energy pulse entering the system and hitting the moon
-- *Defiant* and its shuttles battling to destroy as many of the moon fragments as possible before they hit
-- the mass funeral for all the Vahni who were killed

Watching this are some of the *Robinson*'s engineering crew, including chief engineer RELKDAHZ (the non-humanoid Otevrell male), plus Lt GSELLMAN (human female) and crewman SCALIN (Bajoran male), both last seen in season 13.

Over the above, Sisko's log continues...

SISKO (v.o.)

(continuing)

Six years ago, *Defiant* stopped the energy pulse that destroyed the Vahni's moon, before it had chance to destroy the planet as well.

New images replace these on the large display - readings and graphics revealing the state of the world today, images of earthquakes and floods and volcanoes. Over this...

SISKO (v.o.)

But for a world that evolved with a moon to suddenly lose that moon has created chaos. The planet has shifted on its axis, changing the climate and the seasons. Crops died out, populations were forced to relocate. Tides altered their patterns, creating droughts in some places, floods in others.

7 INT. ROBINSON - OBSERVATION LOUNGE

First officer ROGEIRO chairs a meeting of all the senior staff except for Sisko - engineer Relkdahz, pilot Sivadeki, scientist CORALA, plus ops manager PLANTE, tactical UTELN and doctor KOSCIUSZKO. Relkdahz is at the wall display, taking them all through a presentation. Over this...

SISKO (v.o.)

The Vahni are an advanced people - strictly speaking they're pre-warp but they've explored their solar system, discovered subspace, even met other alien species. But they are not equipped to handle this. So I've ordered all of *Robinson's* science and engineering teams to come up with some way - any way - to help these people. They don't deserve what's happened to them.

8 INT. ROBINSON - READY ROOM

SISKO stands at the window, staring down at the planet below, pondering and waiting. The log concludes...

SISKO (v.o.)

I'm happy to let Commander Rogeiro co-ordinate the crew's efforts. No doubt he'll complain I'm isolating myself again. But I have something more important to take care of. Something... vital. End log.

Sisko's reveries are interrupted by a COMM CHIME...

PLANTE (comm)
Bridge to Captain Sisko.

SISKO
Sisko here. Go ahead, Commander.

PLANTE (comm)
We've received the regular comm
package from the wormhole array,
sir. Shall I patch it through?

SISKO
To my ready room, please.

PLANTE (comm)
Aye, sir. Bridge out.

Sisko eagerly takes his desk, turns the screen, works its controls. The screen shows the Federation seal, then...

...KASIDY and REBECCA, the girl sat in her mother's lap, talking into the screen as they record a message. Sisko immediately relaxes - this is what he's been waiting for.

REBECCA (screen)
Hi daddy!

The little girl waves - Sisko waves back. Kasidy smiles...

KASIDY (screen)
Hi, Ben.

REBECCA (screen)
It's snowing! Mommy said we can go
out later and play.

KASIDY (screen)
I said we can go after you record
a message for your father, and
after you finish your homework.

REBECCA (screen)
Mooooommm...

KASIDY (screen)

Don't whine to me, young lady. Why don't you tell daddy about school?

Sisko smiles, charmed by the easy byplay between them.

REBECCA (screen)

It's good. We're doing letters and sounds and counting, but I already know most of that so it's easy.

KASIDY (screen)

You should have no trouble doing your homework then, should you? Then we'll go and make a snowman.

REBECCA (screen)

A snow-captain!

Kasidy and Sisko both LAUGH out loud at that.

REBECCA (screen)

I'm going to go and do my homework now. Love you daddy!

SISKO

Love you too, sweetheart.

Rebecca scampers off-screen, door audibly SLAMMING as she heads into her bedroom. Kasidy turns back to the camera...

KASIDY (screen)

I thought you should know, Ben, Rebecca's got a few days off from school coming up. It's right when Brathaw's going back to Bolarus for his sister's wedding, which means I've gotta take the *Xhosa*'s next run myself. And Jasmine isn't available to look after her the whole time, Nerys isn't back from Cardassia yet, Jake and Rena are on Earth... so I'm bringing her with me. Don't worry, I'm not going anywhere near the Badlands or any sensitive areas. I'm just picking up a few supplies from

Deep Space Nine, then going home.
Rebecca's excited about seeing the
station again, and exploring where
her mommy and daddy used to live.

(beat)

She does miss you, Ben. Please come
home safe.

With a wistful smile, Kasidy signs off. Sisko sits back,
loving the fact that Rebecca misses him, unsure about the
fact that Kasidy didn't say she misses him too.

The DOOR CHIME sounds...

SISKO

Come in.

The door opens, and Cmdr ROGEIRO enters, hands him a padd.

ROGEIRO

Latest updates from the Romulans.
Proconsul Tomalak reports they're
exploring an unusual carbon planet
that might be suitable for mining.

SISKO

Very good, Commander. How is your
own project progressing?

ROGEIRO

Cautiously, sir. Creating an
artificial moon to replace a real
one is not as easy as it sounds.

SISKO

I'm confident the crew's up to the
task. This is the kind of mission
the *Robinson* should be tackling.

ROGEIRO

Are you sure you wouldn't like to
supervise the work yourself?

Sisko smiles - Rogeiro is trying to encourage his captain
out of his shell again. But that's not what this is about.

SISKO

I appreciate the offer, Commander.
But if you must know, I have a
meeting with Counsellor Althouse
planned. Carry on, Mister Rogeiro.

Rogeiro is impressed - Sisko is voluntarily addressing his
problems. He nods acknowledgement and leaves the room.

9 EXT. SPACE - VAHNI HOMEWORLD - ORBIT

A different angle on the *Robinson* in orbit of the planet.

10 INT. ROBINSON - COUNSELLING SUITE

The private room for counselling sessions, as seen in TNG.
Sisko sits in one chair, cross-legged and closed off. With
him is Counsellor DIANA ALTHOUSE, a human woman in her 60s.

ALTHOUSE

So... you believe the Prophets are
punishing you. What leads you to
that conclusion?

SISKO

You wouldn't understand.

ALTHOUSE

What I would or wouldn't is not
the point. Tell me how you feel.

Sisko pauses to try to order his thoughts.

SISKO

I gave them the idea for how to
stop the Ascendant attack. And
then I didn't play my own part. I
stayed with Kasidy when I should
have gone back to them.

ALTHOUSE

But you said that happened against
your own will. Captain Vaughn took
your place. The plan still worked.

Sisko is getting frustrated - it's difficult to explain.

SISKO

What else am I supposed to think?
The first time I went against
their instructions, Jadzia was
murdered. They warned me not to do
it again, and I did... and look at
everything's that happened since.

ALTHOUSE

Correlation is not causation.

SISKO

I'm not saying it is. The Prophets
weren't threatening me, they were
worried about me. They saw a time
line where I stayed with Kasidy,
and felt sorrow. And another where
I didn't stay, and I wasn't sorry.

ALTHOUSE

But you're sorry now.

SISKO

Because I stayed with Kasidy.

ALTHOUSE

No you didn't. You left. You're
still sorry. You're miserable. You
didn't avoid the prophecy, you
made sure it came true.

Sisko turns away, trying to avoid that idea. She pushes...

ALTHOUSE

When was the last time you felt
happy? Actually, genuinely happy?

SISKO

(defiant)

Just this morning.

ALTHOUSE

Why? What happened?

He knows what she's getting at. He's reluctant to admit it.

SISKO

A message from Kasidy and Rebecca.

ALTHOUSE

Your family. That made you happy.
So why do you deny yourself that?

SISKO

To protect them from being hurt.

ALTHOUSE

You don't know they'll be hurt.

SISKO

The Prophets do.

ALTHOUSE

(shakes head)

By your own account, they weren't
that specific. They said you'd be
sorry. And here you are - sorry.

SISKO

No. I can't take the risk.

ALTHOUSE

So, to avoid possible sorrow in
the future, you're guaranteeing
sorrow right here and now. Are any
of your family happy? Any of you?

SISKO

...No. I guess I can't say we are.

Off Sisko's sad admission...

11 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The SS *Xhosa* is berthed on the circular docking ring...

12 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

The circular airlock rolls open, and KASIDY and REBECCA
climb out, hand in hand, into the throng. Kasidy pulls her
young daughter closer by instinct, still wary of strangers.

Tamping down a mother's worries, Kasidy lets Rebecca drag her excitedly by the hand into the flow of traffic.

KASIDY
Rebecca - slow down.

REBECCA
But I wanna see everything!

KASIDY
We will, it's not going anywhere.

REBECCA
We've gotta find Aunt Nerys.

KASIDY
Wh - Aunt Nerys isn't here, honey.
She's still on Cardassia.

REBECCA
No she's not, she's here. Come on!

KIRA (o.s.)
Kasidy?

Kasidy turns - and sees KIRA there, in informal travelling clothes rather than her vedek's robes. Rebecca SHRIEKS in delight, pulls free of her mother and races towards Kira...

REBECCA
Aunt Nerys!

...who catches her and hefts her up onto her hip.

KIRA
Oof, you're getting a bit big for
this now, Rebecca!

Kasidy approaches more reservedly - how did Rebecca know?

While Rebecca plays with Kira's longer hair, Kira notices the stunned, confused look on Kasidy's face...

KIRA
Kas? Everything okay?

KASIDY

What...? Oh, yeah - it's just a surprise to see you, that's all. I didn't realise you were back...

KIRA

Just yesterday. Haven't been down to Bajor yet - kinda felt like checking out some of my old haunts first. What about you?

KASIDY

Oh, uh... freighter run. Rebecca came along to explore. Ever since Ben gave her those ships, she's barely talked about anything else.

REBECCA

I'm gonna be a captain! Just like my mommy and my daddy!

KIRA

Well, how about we do a little exploring ourselves, together?

REBECCA

Yay!

Kira carries Rebecca off into the crowds.

Kasidy watches them go, following behind uncertainly, still disquieted by Rebecca's inexplicable prophecy...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 EXT. VAHNI HOMEWORLD - SURFACE - NIGHT

Another long pass over this beautiful world. We are on the coast of a large sea, but its water level has drawn back considerably, leaving a shallow slope down that is covered with dried, dead scrub and the bodies of lower life forms.

It is NIGHT, but a combined Starfleet and Vahni team works under a circle of FLOODLIGHTS that bathe the entire area in cold artificial light. The scientists take readings using tricorders and larger sensor modules. Over all this:

SISKO (v.o.)

Personal log, supplemental. My talks with Counsellor Althouse are nothing I haven't said before - to myself or to friends... or family. I doubt she'll come up with any solutions I haven't considered and dismissed. But as the counsellor herself pointed out, since I've removed myself from all my friends and family, she's the only one I have left to talk to about this.

...until we find SISKO himself striding up to join the team wearing his mesh of lights.

He approaches chief science officer CORALA (also wearing a light-mesh, like every other Starfleet scientist here), who is working with a green-hued Vahni scientist called AT'E.

SISKO

Lieutenant Corala - report.

CORALA

Captain. This is At'E, of the Vahni Environmental Authority.

At'E bows fluidly from the waist. The Vahni's flesh flows with colour, but it's difficult to see the precise colours in the artificial light. Sisko's light-mesh translates...

AT'E

Sisko -
(buzz)
- happy -
(buzz)
- welcome.

Sisko nods his respects, getting the gist.

SISKO

Lieutenant, is there a problem
with the translators?

CORALA

There's a problem with the light,
Captain. They can't see properly.

AT'E

Vahni Valtupali communicate -
(buzz)
- colour. Since colour changes
with light, Vahni Valtupali have
developed night and day dialects -
(buzz)
- everything changed.

CORALA

They can't even talk to each other
at night anymore, Captain. It's
making our progress here rather
slow. Not to mention frustrating.

SISKO

I'm sorry, Mister At'E, I -

CORALA

(breaking in)
Uh, begging your pardon Captain,
but At'E is not male. The Vahni
have no gender as we know it.

SISKO

Then I apologise again. I'm afraid
my own cultural blind spots seem
to have gotten in the way lately.

Sisko looks up into the sky, past the ring of artificial light to the stars beyond.

SISKO

It never occurred to me... that losing your moon would stop you from doing something so basic as talking to each other.

(quieter)

People need to talk.

Sisko shakes himself free, and turns back to Corala.

SISKO

What is it your team is actually doing here, Lieutenant?

Back on familiar ground, Corala eagerly explains...

CORALA

No moon, no tides. Aquatic life depends on those tides to survive. Putting a new moon in orbit will help, but it won't bring back all the sub-sentient life that died in the meantime. So we're working on ways to help that life recover.

(deep breath)

I won't pretend, Captain - a lot of damage has been done, and it won't be easy to fix. But it will never get better if we don't try.

Sisko considers this wisdom...

14 **EXT. SPACE**

Open space... until the *Ren Fejin* comes into view. The blocky Breen freighter travels at low warp...

15 **INT. REN FEJIN - BRIDGE**

Small, cluttered and poky, a functional command centre with no luxuries. Rickety machines rattle and creak with effort.

A HOLOGRAM fills most of the cramped bridge. The WORMHOLE is marked, a blue-outlined cone of space starting there and expanding as it gets further away, eventually dissipating.

The Breen engineer THOT TROK (14x07 "The Summit") glares at this, impatience and irritation radiating even through the suit. Master BELD and the sole Romulan on the bridge, KINN (who wears the dark uniform of the Tal Shiar) stand nearby.

BELD

These are the prescribed shipping lanes. We will wait until we reach the end of them before circling back around to the Dominion.

THOT TROK

Do you know how much time that will add to our journey? We need to develop the slipstream drive now, not in a thousand days.

Kinn works controls, and RED DOTS appear along the edges.

KINN

These are Starfleet sensor buoys. It is reasonable to assume that if they detect a Typhon Pact vessel deviating from course, Starfleet will send a ship to investigate.

THOT TROK

And they will fail to find us.

KINN

Irrelevant. If this ship cannot be located - perhaps especially if it cannot - the Khitomer Accords will rightly claim the Pact has violated the agreement. They will cancel the entire mission and fortify their defences at the wormhole.

BELD

We have contingencies in place if we need to fight our way through.

KINN

But those contingencies depend on normal operations on and around Deep Space Nine. If Starfleet expects a battle, they will be better prepared for it.

THOT TROK

Could we disable one of the buoys? Make it look like a system error?

KINN

Their coverage overlaps. We would still be seen by its neighbours.

Trok utters a short sharp BUZZ of a Breen curse, and stomps back to his seat, landing in it with a CREAK of protest.

THOT TROK

I am tired of going around in circles aboard this death trap.

BELD

Though it may take longer to reach the Dominion than we expected, Thot Trok... we will reach it.

KINN

But only if Starfleet and Deep Space Nine remain ignorant.

Trok continues to glare at the hologram...

16 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Bringing us home, with the *Xhosa* and *Defiant* docked...

17 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Kira and Kasidy walk together, Rebecca between and holding both their hands, pulling them forwards, as full of energy and raring to go as ever. They are coming back around the other way, as if they've made the full Promenade circle.

Kira smirks at Kasidy behind Rebecca's back...

KIRA

I swear this girl has a warp core
inside her. She never stops.

KASIDY

And you've only had her for one
afternoon.

Ahead of them, Captain RO emerges from the busy bar...

KIRA

Captain Ro...

RO

Oh - Vedek Kira. Captain Yates.
Major Cenn told me you were both
on board. Everything okay?

KASIDY

(too happy)

Fine! Rebecca's just determined to
look behind every door on the
station. Aren't you, sweetheart?

REBECCA

I'm gonna be a captain!

KIRA

Everything okay with you, Ro?

RO

Oh yeah, fine. Got a counselling
session later, bit nervous about
it. It's something Captain Sisko
suggested, actually. Just to help
me adjust to being a captain. I
suggested the same back.

KASIDY

Ben's going to see a counsellor?

KIRA

Maybe that's a good sign.

Ro doesn't know the full story there, but doesn't pry.

RO

Actually we just had the latest comm package from the *Robinson*. They're helping some people Vaughn met when he went out there. And the various Typhon Pact ships seem to be behaving themselves so far.

Kasidy is relieved, pulls Rebecca in a little tighter.

RO

I was just on my way to security to check in with Rwego. Have you been to security yet, Rebecca?

REBECCA

No! Can I, mommy?

Kasidy is unsure... Ro tries to reassure her...

RO

There's nobody in the cells at the moment. It's pretty quiet in fact.

KASIDY

...Okay.

Excited all over again, Rebecca runs down the Promenade...

18 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS**

Inspector RWOGO leads Kira, Kasidy, Ro and Rebecca into the cells area, which as promised is currently free of inmates.

RWOGO

And this is where we hold them until they're ready to either be let go or be sent somewhere else, like Bajor.

REBECCA

And you're in charge of all this?

RWOGO

I am indeed. I'm also in charge of investigating when bad things

happen, so we know we're putting
the right people in these cells.

REBECCA

What are you investigating now?

Rwogo pauses, shares an awkward look with Ro.

RO

There was a rumour somebody had
threatened the station.

Off Kira and Kasidy's alarm, Ro continues...

RO

We've been looking into it for two
months straight, and we haven't
found a thing. But we're going to
keep looking. So don't worry.

Rebecca just accepts that and moves to the next subject.
She wanders over and steps inside one of the cells...

REBECCA

How do you keep people in these?

RWOGO

We create a forcefield across the
door. No-one can get through it.

REBECCA

Turn it on!

Rwogo looks to Kasidy for permission... Rebecca pleads...

REBECCA

Please, mommy! I just wanna see.

KASIDY

Alright. Just for a moment though.

Rebecca bounces with elation. Rwogo touches the control...

...and a FORCEFIELD pops into place. Rebecca instinctively
takes a half-step back, a gulp of alarm in her throat.

RWOGO

You know, Rebecca, you're very
lucky to be growing up on Bajor
and Deep Space Nine.

Rebecca is not really listening. Her attention is on the
BUZZ and FLICKER of the forcefield. She doesn't like it.

RWOGO

Because where I come from, women
don't get to be investigators. We
don't get to be much of anything.

19 **REBECCA**

...the CRACKLE of the forcefield is all she can hear, the
blue SPARKS of energy all she can see. Rwego's dialogue
continues half-heard in the background...

RWOGO

(continuing, b.g.)

Here, I can fulfil my potential.

20 **RWOGO**

...looking proudly around at Ro, Kira and Kasidy...

RWOGO

(continuing)

And look at these strong, varied
women as role models. Captain Ro,
the soldier and commander. Vedek
Kira, the priest. And your moogie,
who gets to be a businesswoman
and a mother at the same time.

But as the other women are flattered by Rwego's effusive
praise, they don't notice...

21 **REBECCA**

...flinching in terror as the FLASHBACKS hit her...

22 **FLASHBACK - 11x21 "INFERNO"**

ARCS of power sparking across the interior of the ship...

23 **REBECCA**

...hugs herself, scared, breathing hard...

24 **FLASHBACK - 11x21 "INFERNO"**

...The Ascendant ship Luka-Axno FIRES its jagged electric weapon then JUMPS away in a flash of white light...

25 **REBECCA**

...backs away to the rear wall of the cell, curls herself up into a shuddering ball of terror, looks up...

26 **KASIDY**

...as seen through the forcefield, happily chatting MOS, until she turns and notices Rebecca, suddenly worried...

27 **FLASHBACK - 11x21 "INFERNO"**

...curled up at the back of Luka-Axno's ship, with the electricity arcing all around her, Rebecca SCREAMS...

28 **REBECCA**

...and she SCREAMS again in the cell...

...a WHITE LIGHT growing in her chest, power just like how the Ascendant ships jump...

...as she screams, the light grows, BURSTS out of her chest, FILLS the security cell and...

WHITE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

Begin on **WHITE OUT**

The light recedes back into...

29 **REBECCA**

...who looks around herself for a moment, mildly confused. She is back on her feet, standing in the middle of the cell and not backed against the wall. The forcefield continues.

Meanwhile in the background, we hear repeated...

RWOGO (b.g.)

Because where I come from, women
don't get to be investigators. We
don't get to be much of anything.

Rebecca speaks up...

REBECCA

Mommy, let me out. Let me out!

30 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS**

Kasidy reacts, looks to Rwego. The Ferengi woman shuts down the forcefield immediately, and Rebecca barrels out of the cell and into her mother's arms, hugging her fiercely.

KASIDY

You okay, sweetie?

REBECCA

Can we go now, mommy? I didn't
like that.

Kasidy is confused at the sudden change of attitude...

KASIDY

Yes, yes that's okay. Let's go and
get something to eat, shall we?

Rebecca just nods, clinging to her mother's side. The group heads back out towards the office and the Promenade...

KIRA

Actually, I've booked temporary quarters while I'm here. Why don't you all come round? Been a while since we've had a girls' night in.

KASIDY

Alright. Not like I'm in any rush to get home. Thank you, Nerys.

RWOGO

Anyway, I was about to say, you're lucky to have such strong, varied women as role models, Rebecca...

And they leave the room.

31 EXT. SPACE

The *Robinson* is now in orbit of a smaller, rocky globe, with the familiar Vahni homeworld in the background.

PULL BACK, the star field fades at the edges, revealing...

32 INT. ROBINSON - HOLODECK

...that we are actually on the *Robinson's* holodeck and the image of *Robinson*, the homeworld and the new moon circling it are a 3-D hologram displayed in the centre of the room.

Observing it are SISKO, chief engineer RELKDAHZ and the two engineers GSELLMAN and SCALIN. They all wear light-meshes, and they demonstrate for a purple-hued Vahni named HALSA.

Relkdahz gestures with an upper tentacle, his own voice of CREAKS and SCRATCHES translated by a device on his uniform.

RELKDAHZ

Obviously there is no way *Robinson* could build an artificial moon the same size as your original. This construction will instead contain graviton manipulators to ensure it has the same gravitational effects on your world as its forebear did.

SISKO

This is outstanding work, truly.

GSELLMAN

It also has stabilising thrusters
to make sure it keeps its orbit.

SCALIN

And a replicated rock surface
designed to reflect the same
amount of light as the old moon.

All of this is translated into colours by the Starfleet
officers' light-mesh suits. Halsa responds in its own
colours, which are translated by the light-meshes.

HALSA

Most grateful, Relkdahz. Vahni
Valtupali are very impressed with
the United Group of Planets'
technical abilities.

SISKO

It all comes from many different
kinds of people working together.
We each have our own specialties,
and when you put them together,
the sum is greater than its parts.

RELKDAHZ

Although you were quite fortunate
to receive a visit from the only
Starfleet vessel with an Otevrel
chief engineer. Artificial planets
are a specialty of my people.

HALSA

Especially impressive given your
peoples' inherent deficiencies.

Silence, aside from an untranslated creak of awkwardness
from Relkdahz. Halsa's body flushes indigo.

HALSA

I sense I have insulted. Forgive.
Did not intend.

Sisko takes a deep breath, maintains the diplomacy.

SISKO

That's alright, Halsa. But what...
deficiencies are you referring to,
exactly?

HALSA

Like all visitors to the Vahni
Vahltupali, your visual organs
receive from only one direction.

Off Sisko's thoughtful reaction to this...

CUT TO:

33 INT. ROBINSON - COUNSELLING SUITE

Another counselling session, in which Sisko and Althouse
are discussing recent events.

ALTHOUSE

So were you offended?

SISKO

No, not really. It just struck a
chord, that's all.

ALTHOUSE

How so?

Sisko pauses, trying to put his thoughts into words.
Althouse remains patient, giving him the space to think.

SISKO

The Vahni's eyes are all around
their heads. They see everything
around them at all times. The full
three-sixty degrees. There's no
forwards or backwards for them.
They see all of space at once.

ALTHOUSE

Okay. And?

SISKO

The Prophets see all of time at once. What came before now is no different to what is now, or what is to come. It is one's existence.

Althouse absorbs this. He's stuck on the Prophets again.

CUT TO:

34 INT. ROBINSON - HOLODECK

...where Halsa continues to explain.

HALSA

We were surprised to learn most of the galaxy is this way. We assume this must be limiting for you.

SCALIN, the young Bajoran crewman, speaks up...

SCALIN

Actually I do have a question. If no life form on your planet ever evolved to use sound as a method of communication, how do you even have names we can pronounce?

Sisko worries that Scalín has offended their guest, but the silver sparkles across Halsá's skin and the playful waving of its tentacle-arms apparently translate as laughter.

HALSA

A fair question. Vahni Valtupali means "all-seeing people" in the words of our first visitors. They created the mesh you wear, helped us programme it to translate you. They matched their words to ours -

Halsa demonstrates the rainbow circle pattern that means...

HALSA

(continuing)

- Vahni Valtupali.

RELKDAHZ

And since you could not hear it
anyway, it did not matter what
sounds they used to name you.

Halsa's flesh flushes in a way that indicates pleasure and
agreement. But Sisko remains stony and contemplative...

CUT TO:

35 INT. ROBINSON - COUNSELLING SUITE

Sisko and Althouse in their counselling session...

SISKO

All-seeing people. Backwards and
forwards. They see it all.

ALTHOUSE

So if you weren't offended by what
Halsa said, how do you feel?

SISKO

Limited. Stuck in the dark, unable
to explain or ask for help.

ALTHOUSE

You say that. You say you can't
explain, but when someone asks you
to explain, you refuse. Which is
it? You're going round in circles.

SISKO

Yes! That's it exactly. I'm going
round in circles. I'm back where I
started. No family, isolated...
incapable of moving forwards.

ALTHOUSE

Incapable? Or unwilling?

SISKO

You think I want to be like this?

ALTHOUSE

"You bring us here."

The simple phrase drains all the blood from Sisko's face.
He can barely whisper...

SISKO

What?

ALTHOUSE

That's what they said, isn't it?
What the Prophets said when you
first met. "You bring us here."

SISKO

Yes...

ALTHOUSE

In other words, it's in your own
hands.

Sisko tries to absorb that...

CUT TO:

36 **INT. ROBINSON - HOLODECK**

Relkdahz trundles on his hundred tiny feet to the holodeck controls, manipulates them with his upper tentacles. The holo-image ZOOMS IN on the surface of the new moon...

RELKDAHZ

We have also installed an interior for you, designed to allow one of your standard sub-light vessels to dock and technicians to maintain the new satellite's systems.

The hologram moon's surface OPENS in a circular airlock not unlike the ones on DS9. PASS THROUGH the airlock inside the moon, to the control centre within, with computers that use the Vahni language of colours and shapes to confer data.

GSELLMAN

The systems are designed for your use, not ours. Plus life support, living quarters, and supplies to last three people a full cycle.

HALSA

The Vahni Vahltupali assigned this task will be greatly honoured. You have saved the Vahni Valtupali.

RELKDAHZ

We are helping, nothing more. We don't intend to leave you reliant on us. You'll have to be able to manage these systems yourself once we're gone. It is in your control.

HALSA

We understand. Gratitude again.

As Halsas flesh ripples with happiness, Sisko looks on...

CUT TO:

37 INT. ROBINSON - COUNSELLING SUITE

Sisko and Althouse, her gentle but firm...

ALTHOUSE

It's in your control.

(beat)

You have a tendency towards depression, don't you, Captain?

SISKO

I beg your pardon?

ALTHOUSE

That emotional state you described - the isolation, the inability to move on. It's happened before.

SISKO

(dark laugh)

You're saying I'm depressed?

ALTHOUSE

Convincing yourself that the worst possible interpretation of a set of circumstances is true, and then

fixating on it. If it's chemical or psychological is a matter we'll need Doctor Kosciuszko's help to determine. But either way, nothing will change until you can admit there is a problem.

Sisko gets out of the chair to pace. Althouse lets him.

SISKO

Change? What could possibly change here? You're suggesting it's all in my imagination and I should just snap out of it!

ALTHOUSE

No. Depression is a real thing, and there's no shame in it. But you have to be willing to ask for help. And up until now, you haven't been. These sessions have been a good start. Next steps are up to you.

SISKO

The Prophets' warning was genuine, Counsellor. I've seen the effects of not following it. I'm living them. You're not going to convince me I've chosen the wrong path.

ALTHOUSE

Maybe. Maybe not. Either way... I've started you thinking about it, haven't I?

Sisko stops pacing. Has she actually broken through...?

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

38 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Focusing on the *Xhosa* berthed on the docking ring...

SISKO (v.o.)
Personal log, supplemental. Out
here, on the other side of the
galaxy, I've been asking myself...

39 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

As in 14x09 "Crossroads". While Kasidy herself is occupied, her crew (including Pardshay but not Brathaw) use the anti-gravs to manoeuvre the supplies from the bay into the hold.

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
...Where do I belong? Where is
home for me these days, exactly?

40 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Life as normal continues, with Starfleet officers and civilians of all types going about their day...

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
It took me years to feel at home
on Deep Space Nine. Having Jake
and Kasidy there with me helped.

41 FLASHBACK - 10x20 "IN THE STARS"

Jake and Ben's fight after he accused Rena of unspecified evil intentions, Kasidy pulling Rebecca away from him...

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
I wanted Bajor to be my home, but
the Prophets said I would find no
rest there, and they were right.

42 **FLASHBACK - 12x14 "DUTY CALLS"**

Sisko takes his old uniform out of the wardrobe, deciding whether to put it back on and go fight the Borg...

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
When I went back to Starfleet, it
only got worse.

43 **FLASHBACK - 13x06 "BORN UNDER A BAD SIGN"**

Shar presents Sisko with a newly replicated baseball, which he arranges on his new desk in his new office...

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
*Robinson isn't my home, no matter
how much I try to force it to be.
How could it be? They're not here.*

44 **EXT. VAHNI HOMEWORLD - SURFACE - NIGHT**

Sisko strolls the dried and dead beach alone at night, with only the distant Starfleet floodlights to see by...

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
But they could never be here with
me. Jennifer only died because she
met me. If she'd never gone to the
beach that day, she'd probably
still be alive now.

45 **INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM**

Kira, Ro, Kasidy, Rebecca and Rwogo all sit at the table, dinner having recently been finished, chatting MOS.

SISKO (v.o.)
(continuing)
I can't go through that again.
I have to protect Kasidy and
Rebecca. I have to. End log.

And we pick up with the women's conversation...

RWOGO

This has been a genuine pleasure,
but I must get back to work. Those
mysteries won't solve themselves!

RO

Actually, I should probably head
off as well. Plans with Quark.

KIRA

I will never understand you two.

RWOGO

Rule number thirty-three proudly
states, "It never hurts to suck up
to the boss."

RO

I wasn't the boss when this all
started. Nerys was.

RWOGO

I meant Quark. He's the boss -
honoured ambassador, brother of
the Nagus... that's one prime
sucking-up target right there.

RO

And on that note...

Ro gets up from the table, pauses to gaze at the others.

RO

It's good to see you home safe,
Nerys. Check in with me before you
leave, yeah? You too, Mrs Sisko.

Kasidy instinctively tenses at that title. Kira nods...

KIRA

Goodnight, Laren. Inspector Rwogo.

Rwogo does the traditional Ferengi gesture - half-bow,
wrists together, fingers wide - then she and Ro EXIT.

REBECCA

Mommy...?

KASIDY

Yes, honey?

REBECCA

Do you and Ro not like each other?

KASIDY

Of course we do! Why would you ask?

REBECCA

She called you Mrs Sisko. And you got all tense and angry about it.

Kasidy blanches, looks to Kira - this girl is so damned perceptive. How can Kasidy possibly explain this...?

KASIDY

I wasn't angry, sweetheart. And I'm sure Ro was just being polite. We don't really know each other that well. But you're right, there is something I'm tense about.

Kira just looks back supportively, letting Kasidy take it. Kasidy takes a deep breath, hunts for what to say...

KASIDY

You know daddy and I are going to be living apart a lot of the time.

REBECCA

(nods)

Because Starfleet needs him to captain a starship.

KASIDY

Exactly. Well, I've been thinking, since your daddy won't be living there anymore, and we don't really have anything keeping us there...

(take the plunge)

...we might move away from Bajor.

Kira's jaw drops - this is not what she expected Kasidy to say, and she is stunned by it. Rebecca is just curious...

REBECCA

Where would we go?

KASIDY

Maybe Earth, where your daddy's from. Maybe Cestus, where I come from. There's hundreds of places. The galaxy is never going to stop needing freighter captains.

KIRA

But Kas...

KASIDY

I haven't made any decisions yet, I'm just thinking about it. But... Bajor just doesn't feel like home anymore. Not without Ben.

(brighter)

And you like exploring, Rebecca, right? Just think of all the new places you could explore.

Rebecca shrug-nods, not really minding either way. But Kira is amazed, and Kasidy feels her wide-eyed stare...

46 INT. ROBINSON - COUNSELLING SUITE

Another day, another counselling session...

SISKO

I never saw myself as an explorer. I joined Starfleet to tinker with starships, not to roam the stars.

ALTHOUSE

But you lobbied for this mission with Admiral T'Nea. Repeatedly.

SISKO

The *Robinson* is a Galaxy-class ship - it's built for exploring. Its crew deserve their chance.

Althouse smiles internally. She knows that's a lie.

ALTHOUSE

You originally took command of the *Robinson* to get far away from your family. How much farther could you get than the Gamma Quadrant?

SISKO

(defensive)

Elias did it. He'd been a soldier for eighty years, but he changed his life and became an explorer.

ALTHOUSE

Is that why you came to the Vahni? You were hoping for some of the same inspiration he found here?

SISKO

Isn't that a good enough reason?

ALTHOUSE

I guess. For other people. I'm not sure it's your reason, though.

SISKO

You think I'm lying?

ALTHOUSE

Not to me. It's just that I seem to recall that when Captain Vaughn visited the Vahni, the experience helped him to reconnect with his family. With Lieutenant Tenmei.

Sisko is shocked - he hadn't put the two things together.

SISKO

You... think I'm trying to follow Elias in more ways than one?

ALTHOUSE

I've only read his mission logs. You knew him.

SISKO
(getting impatient)
If you have something to say to
me, counsellor, please say it.

ALTHOUSE
(shrug)
I'm not saying anything. I'm just
pointing out the contradictions.

SISKO
Contradictions? Like what?

ALTHOUSE
Like if you're determined to be an
explorer, and you came to the All-
Seeing People for inspiration...
why have you spent the entire
mission in this room with me?

Sisko has no answer for that...

47 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS - BEDROOM

Kasidy is just tucking Rebecca into bed. Kira stands in the
doorway watching affectionately from afar.

KASIDY
Sleep tight, sweetheart.

REBECCA
I'll try. I might have nightmares.

KASIDY
Nightmares? What about?

REBECCA
About when daddy's friend took me
away. In his spaceship.

Kasidy shares a look of horror with Kira, then turns back
to Rebecca, trying to control her own reaction...

KASIDY
Rebecca... that was years ago.

REBECCA
But going in that security cell
today reminded me. I didn't like
it. That's why I screamed.

KASIDY
(confused)
You didn't scream, honey.

REBECCA
I did. I was scared, so I curled
up, and I cried, and I screamed!

Kasidy looks to Kira again - she is equally as confused.

KASIDY
Aunt Nerys and I didn't hear you
cry or scream, Rebecca. Maybe you
just thought you did...?

REBECCA
I screamed, mommy! But then it all
went white, and then you let me
out. I made it all better.

Kasidy has no idea what Rebecca is talking about, but it's
making her very worried. She tucks her daughter in again.

KASIDY
Alright, well as long as it's all
better now. Go to sleep, sweet-
heart. I'll be right outside.

REBECCA
Night night, mommy.

Kasidy withdraws, closing the door behind her...

48 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM

Now alone in the living room, Kira asks...

KIRA
What was that all about?

Kasidy can't answer. She walks back to the sofa, reaches for the drink on the side table. She is clearly disturbed. Kira can see something is going on, follows her...

KIRA

Kas? What is it? Talk to me.

Kasidy looks into Kira's eyes, on the verge of tears.

KIRA

This isn't the first time this has happened, is it? Something strange.

KASIDY

No. She... knows things. Things she couldn't possibly know.

KIRA

Like what?

KASIDY

Just little things. What room I'm in at the house, when there's no way she saw me go in there. The fact you were back from Cardassia, when no-one had told us.

KIRA

She's a perceptive girl, Kas.

KASIDY

No. It's more than that. There's something wrong.

(tears break)

Oh God, Nerys... there's something wrong with my baby!

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

49 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM

Kira holds a weeping Kasidy in her arms. The human woman is letting out all of the worry she has been holding in.

After a moment, Kasidy pulls herself together a little, separates from Kira, tries to wipe the tears. Kira leads her to the sofa, they sit together.

KIRA

Tell me everything. How long has this been going on?

KASIDY

I don't know. A couple of years. I started noticing strange things after the whole mess with Luka.

KIRA

You think there's some trauma there, something Rebecca hasn't dealt with? Philippa said -

KASIDY

No, that's not it. When I think about it, it goes back further. To when she rescued Elias from...

KIRA

...from the wormhole.

Kasidy nods. She doesn't want to offend Kira, but...

KASIDY

The Prophets did something to her, Nerys. Put something in her.

KIRA

Or maybe that something was always there. She is the daughter of the Emissary. The Infant Avatar.

KASIDY

I don't want her to be the Avatar,
Nerys! I want her to be a normal
human girl. And if I get her away
from Bajor... maybe she can be.

Kira takes it all calmly. This is a moment for the vedek,
not for the resistance fighter. She holds Kasidy's hands.

KIRA

Kasidy...

KASIDY

Please don't tell me the Prophets
have a plan, Nerys. I don't want
to hear it.

KIRA

I wasn't going to. I was going to
say... don't make any decisions in
haste. You're upset right now -

KASIDY

Why not? Ben's made his decision -
to swan off around the galaxy and
abandon me and Rebecca. It's time
I make mine. I can't keep going
round in circles waiting for him.

KIRA

Things will change, Kasidy.

KASIDY

What things? When?

KIRA

I... I don't know. But I know they
will change. They have to. Look at
me and the Cardassians - that's a
relationship that felt like it was
going around in circles for years.
It takes time and patience... but
things do change. Please... just
hold on a little longer, Kasidy.

Kasidy isn't sure if she can do that...

50 EXT. SPACE

With the *Robinson* in the distance, facing us...

RELKDAHZ (comm)
We're ready, Commander Rogeiro.

ROGEIRO (comm)
Acknowledged, Commander Relkdahz.
Energising...

...in the foreground, up close, a massive object TRANSPORTS into space. A curved segment of shell, metal on the inside but rock on the outside. As we PULL BACK...

...We see humanoid figures in STARFLEET ENVIRO-SUITS using the built-in jetpacks to push themselves towards the shell. They take up strategic positions, and with two inside and two outside, they fire hand-held TRACTOR BEAMS at it...

...and use them to DRAG the piece back the way they came. After a moment, we see what they are dragging it towards...

...the NEW MOON. A giant globe-shaped machine constructed to look like a natural satellite, with one segment of skin showing bare metal. The enviro-suited figures tractor the final section into place, multiple keys slot into locks...

...and with a solid KERTHUNK, the moon is complete.

We MOVE around the curve of the globe, until we find the AIRLOCK that was visible on the hologram. Standing inside it is RELKDAHZ himself, without an enviro-suit, upper and lower tentacles flying over various computerised controls.

RELKHDAHZ (comm)
Relkdahz to Rogeiro - docking is complete. Please notify the Vahni.

ROGEIRO (comm)
With pleasure, Commander. Well done to you and all your staff.

We even hear APPLAUSE over the comm, before the line drops.

One of the enviro-suits floats up to outside the airlock, looks in through the aperture at Relkdahz - it is SCALIN.

SCALIN (comm)
How are you doing that, Commander?

RELKDAHZ (comm)
Doing what, crewman Scalin?

SCALIN (comm)
Standing. Breathing. In a vacuum.

RELKDAHZ (comm)
I do not breathe. Otevrel respire through stomata on the skin. My system stored sufficient before we left the ship. As for standing...

Relkdahz turns and scuttles away on his hundred tiny feet into the depths of the satellite, letting his voice carry.

RELKDAHZ (comm)
...my prolegs are adhesive.

Leaving Scalin floating free in space...

51 EXT. VAHNI HOMEWORLD - SURFACE - NIGHT

Back at the observation tower, where SISKO and VENTU stand gazing out over the night city. There is little to see, barely enough ambient light for them to pick out anything. Sisko wears his light-mesh, colours flashing in the dark...

SISKO
I want to apologise to you, Ventu. You have been nothing but kind and welcoming during this visit. I've been sullen and remote. I'm sorry.

VENTU
I sensed from our first meeting that Sisko was wounded in soul. I do not take insult. Is Sisko now healed?

Sisko turns, looks at the statue of Vaughn and Brestol.

SISKO

Not completely. A lot of damage has been done. I still feel like an insect caught in amber, unable to move anywhere. But you... you can move in all directions. See in all directions. I envy you.

Ventu raises a tentacle, points it at the Vaughn statue...

VENTU

Sisko looks only backwards. At what was, not what is to come. Sisko's people may only walk in one direction...

(beat)

...but you can turn. You can look forwards as well as backwards.

Sisko looks at Ventu, struck by the simple clarity of this advice. His combadge trills...

ROGEIRO (comm)

Robinson to Captain Sisko.

SISKO

Go ahead, Commander.

ROGEIRO (comm)

Commander Relkdahz confirms the artificial moon is complete. He's ready to activate its systems on your order.

Sisko looks to Ventu, whose flesh flushes with approval...

SISKO

Tell Relkdahz - the order is given.

ROGEIRO (comm)

Acknowledged. *Robinson* out.

They turn to look out over the city again... just as the AMBIENT light levels begin to rise over its architecture. And while Sisko watches enchanted...

...the CITY is revealed before him, not to full daylight but to a gorgeous moon-lit night, picking out the city in circles of glittering silver and gold. It's breathtaking.

And then even better - EXPLOSIONS OF COLOUR from Vahni all around the city, who were waiting in darkness to witness the return of the light. A spectacle of rainbows and hues that burst like FIREWORKS - even in complete silence, the Vahni reveal their undeniable delight and excitement. This will be a celebration to encompass the planet for days.

SISKO

Your people are so... beautiful.

VENTU

Life is beautiful. Now, the Vahni Valtupali will have more of it to enjoy... thanks to Sisko giving us back our light.

SISKO

I thought I'd lost my moon... and my sun. I wonder if there's some way to get them back as well.

As they continue to enjoy the colourful celebrations...

52 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

...to the bright lights, sounds and colours of the station. Civilians and Starfleet, humans and Bajorans and aliens, caught together as they leave the bar and head off.

KASIDY, KIRA and REBECCA walk along, pause at the bar...

REBECCA

Are we going home today, mommy?
Back to Bajor?

Kasidy looks across the Promenade, at the circular airlock rolling open and more visitors arriving...

KASIDY

Not yet, sweetie.

REBECCA

Are we going to Earth instead?

KASIDY

Actually... I thought we might
stay right here for a few days.
There's no need to rush things.

Rebecca accepts that on faith. Kira looks at Kasidy with relief and gratitude. Kasidy has taken her advice. With a nod, Kasidy leads Rebecca by the hand into the bar...

...while Kira turns to walk past the bar to the REPLIMAT. She climbs the steps, spots a table, heads towards it...

KIRA

Hi. I realise you don't know me,
but I was hoping... can we talk?

Dalin SLAINE looks up from her lunch, surprised... but nods politely. Smiling, Kira takes a seat...

53 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Off the circular shape of the station, **CROSS-FADE INTO:**

54 **EXT. SPACE - VAHNI HOMEWORLD - ORBIT**

...the new moon holding place proudly, the Vahni homeworld in the background...

...and *Robinson* curves into view.

55 **INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE**

With his trusted bridge crew all around him, SSKO takes the centre seat, confident and relaxed. From the first officer's seat, ROGEIRO reads off the panel at his side...

ROGEIRO

Vahni orbital control has given us
clearance to leave the system.

SSKO

Acknowledged, Commander. Ops...

Cmdr PLANTE at Ops turns to look at him...

SISKO
...put it on screen.

She knows what he means, works her panels...

...and the VIEWSCREEN shows the new moon they created.

SISKO
I'm proud of us, Commander. I'm
proud of all of us. We did good
work here.

ROGEIRO
Your sessions with Counsellor
Althouse were beneficial?

SISKO
They were. But so was dealing with
the Vahni. They're a remarkable
people. But then, as a wise man
once said... maybe in the long
run, space travel is less about
exploring the stars... than it is
about exploring ourselves.
(beat)
Helm, full impulse, resume course.

Off Sisko's contentment...

56 **EXT. SPACE - ROBINSON**

The *Robinson* pulls away from the Vahni homeworld...

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW