

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x01 - "Unjoined, pt 1."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novella

"Unjoined"

by Andy Mangels & Michael A Martin

appearing in

Star Trek: Worlds of Deep Space Nine
Book 2 - Trill / Bajor

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. FEDERATION COUNCIL HALL

The massive room where all Federation delegates meet when the Council is in session, as seen in "The Voyage Home." This is not a full session however, but an emergency security session to which only a few are invited.

There is Admiral AKAAR, and Andorian Councillor VRETHA. There is also the bulbous Tellarite male GLEER, the ancient Vulcan female T'LATREK, classically African-dressed human male MAZIBUKO, elegant Caitian female M'RELL, the human-looking Centauri female HUANG, and the green-skinned, horned-headed (and indeterminate gendered) Damiani RA'CH.

A door opens and out steps an unimpressive Bolian man, MIN ZIFE, with black-clad guards. He is the President of the Federation, and takes his appropriate podium...

ZIFE

I call this session of the Federation Security Council to order. Today's meeting is sealed, unless the entire Council votes otherwise at a later date. We will first hear from Admiral Akaar about the situation in question, then discuss the Council's best course of action. Admiral?

AKAAR

Thank you, Mister President. I trust that by now all of you have read Starfleet's official report on the recent crisis on Bajor, and its apparent connection to the world of Trill.

GLEER

I most certainly have, Admiral. And I ask - how could this have been kept secret for so long?

AKAAR

To what are you referring,
specifically, Councillor?

GLEER

All of it! These parasites and
their connection to the Trill
symbionts. The Trill government's
use of assassins against other
Federation heads of state.

AKAAR

I am prepared to discuss
Starfleet's involvement in those
events. But I cannot speculate
about the internal workings of the
Trill government.

T'LATREK

Indeed, such questions would be
more properly directed to the
councillor representing Trill.

RA'CH

And just why isn't Councillor Dev
present at this meeting? For that
matter, I should think Bajor would
demand representation at these
proceedings as well.

Akaar is interested in answers to these questions as well.
He looks to the head, where President Zife seems not to
have any. Vretha steps in to the breach...

VRETHA

To their credit, the Bajoran
people have not been blind to
the extenuating circumstances
surrounding the death of their
leader. They continue to demand a
full investigation into Trill's
handling of the crisis, as well
they should. But they have agreed
to wait for this council's
recommendations before acting.

(uncomfortable pause)

VRETHA (cont)

As for Trill, our business today might very well be hampered by a representative from that world.

HUANG

But must we conduct this business behind the backs of its people?

GLEER

Why not?! The Trill have never had a problem concealing essential truths from others. It seems to come naturally to them.

M'RELL

Given its actions, a re-evaluation of Trill's status as a Federation member might be in order.

T'LATREK

I believe that would be premature, and an over-reaction. The individuals in question claim to have no affiliation with the Trill government at large.

GLEER

(derisive)

Yes, so they claim.

MAZIBUKO

I agree with Councillor T'Latrek. All the facts are not yet in. We should not rush to judgement. The Federation can't afford to simply cut loose long-standing members. Our post-war recovery depends as much on political cohesion as on physical reconstruction.

GLEER

All of this is a distraction from the clear and present danger. How do we know that the parasite threat is truly over?

AKAAR

You raise a good point, Councillor Gleer. All we have to go on is the testimony of Captain Benjamin Sisko... and the complete absence of any evidence to the contrary.

GLEER

(snort)

Far be it from me to question the Emissary of the Prophets.

MAZIBUKO

(glare at Gleer)

What my esteemed colleague means is that our responsibility to the people of the Federation requires that we test those assurances.

AKAAR

Agreed. And to that end, Starfleet teams from Deep Space Nine are even now working with agents of the new Cardassian government to retrace the movements of everyone known to have become infected by the parasites, including Shakaar Edon himself.

VRETHA

I should also mention that the Trill government has asked Starfleet and this council to withhold information about the link between the parasites and the symbionts from the public.

M'RELL

Have we accommodated that request?

AKAAR

So far, Councillor M'Rell, yes.

President Zife quietly clears his throat, bringing the meeting back to order, and attention back to him...

ZIFE

I have been in contact with Trill President Maz, who has informed me her government is undertaking a full investigation of the parasite issue. She respectfully requests that we grant her time to conduct those proceedings before taking any action. President Maz has assured me that she knows nothing more than we do at the moment.

Akaar is not overly convinced of that, but doesn't argue.

ZIFE (cont)

I therefore recommend we allow her that time to complete the inquest before we make any public statements - or vote on any censure against her government.

RA'CH

Does she truly believe she can continue to keep this a secret? I find that ridiculous.

T'LATREK

Word of this will get out. It is simply a matter of time.

Off everyone's reaction to that plain, simple statement...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 EXT. MINOS KORVA SURFACE - DAY

A vast expanse of frozen rock. A bitter wind blows up puffs of light snow, and the weak sun does little to help. In the distance, a group of four FIGURES trudge across the stone.

CLOSER

DAX, RO, BASHIR and a Cardassian woman, VLU, wear Starfleet cold-weather gear (as in 8x10 "Divided We Fall"). Dax is in command, determined but already tired and uncomfortable.

Vlu SLIPS, pinwheeling for balance. An arm shoots out to grab her - TARAN'ATAR, unshrouding. Lifts her effortlessly by the collar, places her back down on safer ground...

TARAN'ATAR

You must be careful, Doctor Vlu.
This surface is not to be trusted.

VLU

(grumbling)

Neither is your strength. I think
you dislocated a few neckbones.

Bashir steps up and runs a medical tricorder over Vlu while she rubs at her neck and shudders against the cold...

BASHIR

You don't look so good...

VLU

I'm fine, Doctor. I just wish
Minister Shakaar had visited that
nice warm farming region during
his visit to Minos Korva. Remind
me again why I agreed to this?

DAX

Because you didn't want me to have
to do all the griping by myself.

VLU

Ah. What's that Starfleet saying?
'It's a dirty job, but somebody's
got to do it'?

Dax grins through chattering teeth, and the group returns
to walking through the wind and snow...

3 INT. MINOS KORVA CAVE

The five figures SILHOUETTED against the daylight in the
mouth of a black and ominous CAVE entrance... Ro stashes
her tricorder, raises a wrist-lamp and phaser...

RO

Everybody ready? Then let's go.

Ro leads the way... Bashir and Vlu hold out tricorders, the
beeps echoing coldly... Taran'atar watchful, weapon at the
ready... Dax trying to control her instinctive terror...

Ro's bobbing wrist-lamp shows icy rocks forming a crude
stairway down into the darkness. The walls GLITTER with
occasional opalescent colours. Ro leads the team on...

BASHIR

I'm reading minute DNA traces on
some of the rock faces.

VLU

Confirmed. Some are Bajoran.

BASHIR

More specifically, Shakaar's.

RO

Shakaar was a resistance leader
long before he was a politician.
He would never have gone down
without a fight.

The passageway WIDENS - the team emerge into a larger cave.
Dax comes up short to avoid walking into Taran'atar...

TARAN'ATAR

Turn off your light, Lieutenant.

RO
Are you crazy?

TARAN'ATAR
Indulge me for a moment.

Sceptical, but she does as he asks, plunging the room into DARKNESS. But gradually, they realise - it is not absolute.

A faint, sickly green GLOW pulses from veins of ice in the rocky walls. Just enough to cast dim light on Dax's face...

FLASHBACK - 8x24 "UNITY, pt 1"

Audrid Dax leads her team through the caves on the comet, with their own threads of luminous sickly green ice...

BACK TO SCENE

Dax shudders from the memory, forcing herself not to run...

BASHIR
Whatever produced this no longer appears to be active.

VLU
I would estimate that it died on the order of five weeks ago. This is simply a residual effect.

RO
That would tend to prove that the entire hive died when the main matriarch was killed.

BASHIR
But at the very least, we should verify that this nest is empty.

RO
Alright. Where do we look?

DAX
This way...

Dax moves on, following the veins deeper into the dark...

FLASHBACK - 8x24 "UNITY, pt 1"

Audrid leads on...

BACK TO SCENE

The team comes upon a raised BASIN formation, filled with sickly green ice. Again Dax must fight the urge to run...

Wrist-lamp reactivated, tricorder in the other hand, Ro cautiously approaches the basin. Dax watches...

FLASHBACK - 8x24 "UNITY, pt 1"

Jayvin leans over the basin in the comet cave, looks at the indistinct shape beneath the ice - which LAUNCHES out...

BACK TO SCENE

DAX
(warning)
No!

Ro pauses, and Dax suddenly realises the entire team is looking at her. Bashir approaches with gentle worry...

BASHIR
Ezri?

DAX
(embarrassed)
I'm fine, Julian.

BASHIR
Are you sure? You cried out as if
you were having a nightmare.

VLU
I have detected the remains of
several parasites in this chamber.
We have already established that
they possess limited telepathic
abilities. Perhaps their
decomposing nervous tissue can
exert some residual influence on
members of... related species.

VLU (cont)

But none of this tells us why they chose Minos Korva anyway. Why set up so close to Cardassian space? They don't appear particularly interested in us, after all.

RO

But they are interested in Trill. Maybe they planned to mount their next offensive directly from here. But getting hold of Shakaar gave them something even better - an entire world about to enter the Federation. The damage they could have done from a position like that is incalculable.

BASHIR

Trill appears to have dodged a bullet. That's something to be thankful for.

DAX

If there's nothing more to see here, I'd like to get back to the runabout...

She takes a step back the way she came, but CRUNCH -- she stepped onto something hard. She crouches down, picks up a small piece of POTTERY, greenish-grey, about six inches. Brushes off the dust and ice, holds it up to the light...

DAX

Anyone hazard a guess about this?

BASHIR

Perhaps they enjoy making ceramics - even monsters must need hobbies.

Before Dax can admonish him, her combadge BEEPS. She hands the piece of pottery to Bashir, taps to answer...

DAX

Dax here, go ahead.

COMPUTER VOICE
Incoming message from Captain Kira
Nerys on starbase Deep Space Nine.

DAX
Send it through.

KIRA (comm)
(static-y)
Dax, this is Kira. How's the
search going, Lieutenant?

DAX
It's going just the way we hoped
it would.

INTERCUT W/:

4 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

KIRA sits behind her desk in her new Starfleet captain's
uniform. VAUGHN sits opposite her, mid-conference...

DAX (comm)
(continuing)
We found the parasites' nest and
confirmed that Minister Shakaar
was lured here, and probably
infected here too. The parasites
themselves are all dead now.

KIRA
Good work. That goes for all of
you. Well done.
(pause)
Ezri, Starfleet Command has just
informed me that the Trill Senate
is conducting official inquests
into the whole parasite affair.

DAX (comm)
Gotta say that's kinda surprising,
Captain. I thought the last thing
they'd want right now is publicity
on that subject.

KIRA

I don't think they have a choice. Word's already gotten out, and the public are demanding answers. Some Federation officials are making noises about "Trill secrecy" too. Admiral Akaar and I agree that your testimony could be invaluable in heading off a real crisis. We need you on Trill, Ezri.

DAX (comm)

(hesitant)

Alright... Once we get back to the station I can --

KIRA

No, Ezri. Immediately. Tenmei is already en route to Minos Korva in the *Nile* to pick up the rest of your team. I want you to take the *Rio Grande* directly to Trill.

DAX

(deep breath)

Yes, sir. I'm on my way. Dax out.

With the channel closed, Kira looks back to Vaughn...

KIRA

Do you really think anything she can tell them will make it better?

VAUGHN

We can only hope. Trill society seems to make a habit of... shall we say, selective disclosure. Starfleet didn't even know about the existence of the symbionts until about a decade ago.

(shrug)

Perhaps the system may finally be about to collapse under the weight of its own secrets.

Kira is not encouraged. On a different but related topic...

KIRA
What about Mister Gard?

VAUGHN
Already gone. I'm not clear on the details, but Sergeant Etana says the Militia officially extradited him back to Trill custody.

KIRA
Okay. With Dax away I'll need you to run Ops, Commander. I have a meeting with Quark. The little troll is already pestering me for special diplomatic privileges.

VAUGHN
(grin)
You mean Ambassador Troll, surely.

Kira rolls her eyes and practically retches. Vaughn gets up with a chuckle and heads out...

5 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

The ship is parked on the ground, the cold, snowy scenery visible through the windows. Dax is in the pilot's seat, doing pre-flight. Ro is on the transporter pad as Bashir works the panels. As Ro BEAMS OUT, Dax turns to Bashir...

DAX
Your turn, Julian. I need to get underway to Trill.

BASHIR
I'm going with you.

DAX
Oh... I'm not sure that's such a good idea, Julian. This is Trill business, and --

BASHIR
-- and Trill are famously reticent about letting non-Trill in on their affairs, yes, I know.

He comes forward and casually sits in the chair beside Dax,
as if it is all already decided...

DAX

I appreciate the offer, Julian.
But I think this is something I
need to handle on my own.

BASHIR

And I think you'll need my help.
Or at least my moral support. You
already told me how guilty you
feel about Audrid's cover-up of
the first parasite encounter. And
I've seen for myself how traumatic
this whole thing has been for you.

DAX

This is all very "who counsels the
counsellor," isn't it?

BASHIR

You're not a counsellor anymore.

DAX

(indignant)

And you never were one. I love
you, Julian, but I think you're
straying a bit too far from your
specialty here.

BASHIR

Alright, then. I'll give you three
very solid, rational reasons why I
should accompany you to Trill.

DAX

(crosses arms)

Go on. Let's hear them.

BASHIR

(ticking off fingers)

One - we haven't spent nearly
enough time alone together since
before this whole parasite
business started.

BASHIR (cont)

Two - I have entirely legitimate medical concerns about your current emotional state after observing your behaviour here on Minos Korva.

(beat)

And three... I outrank you.

She can't decide on anger or affection. Bashir's wide, impish grin helps her make up her mind...

DAX

You win, Julian. But don't forget, I'm the only one here dressed in command red. And Kira placed responsibility for this mission with me, not you. So that extra pip on your collar doesn't mean all that much at the moment.

He effects a chivalrous, courtly bow...

BASHIR

I remain, as ever, your obedient servant.

With an unconvinced mutter, Dax turns back to the panels...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

6 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Windows show warping stars as the ship flies through space. Dax sits alone in the pilot's seat, glum and pensive...

DAX

Computer... create subspace link
to Trill Defence Ministry, office
of General Taulin Cyl.

COMPUTER

Unable to create link due to high
signal traffic in Trill system.

DAX

Keep trying.

An affirmative BLEEP. She decides to get up, stretch her legs, see what Julian is up to. It'll fill the time...

7 INT. RUNABOUT - REAR CABIN

As seen in 8x07 "Rogue". Dax ambles in, to find Julian sat and working at a computer station, completely engrossed...

DAX

Hi, Julian.

(no response)

Lieutenant Dax to Doctor Bashir.

BASHIR

Sorry. Thought I'd get started on
a little research.

She peers at the reams of text on his screen, bemused...

DAX

Since when are you interested in
exo-archaeology? That was one of
Jadzia's specialties, not yours.

Bashir grins and holds up the shard of pottery she found...

BASHIR

Since you found this. Don't worry,
I was happy to take charge of the
investigation. You seemed to...
have other things on your mind.

Despite Bashir's gentle tone, that feels like judgement -
and Dax doesn't like it. But she forges on...

DAX

So, what have you found?

BASHIR

It's not Bajoran, so it's unlikely
that Shakaar left it there. And
there's no chance it's native to
Minos Korva. So I wondered if it
might have some significance to
the parasites themselves. Then
my tricorder detected this...

He taps the screen - it displays a SCAN of the pottery
piece. He ZOOMS in closer on it, and in between some of the
layers is a pattern of lines - a symbol of some kind.

BASHIR

From this, I've been able to
determine that the object came
from the planet Kurl.

DAX

(remembering)

Kurl... that's the site of a long-
dead civilisation, isn't it? Way
outside Federation space.

BASHIR

The Kurlan civilisation died out
five-thousand years ago. And it's
hundreds of light-years from Minos
Korva. So however this fragment
ended up in that cave, it's had a
remarkable journey.

DAX

Sounds like quite a mystery.

BASHIR
Indeed it is. In fact, I can think
of only one thing I'd rather do to
pass the time...

DAX
Well, we have three days. No need
to tire yourself out... studying.

She smirks seductively as she takes his hand, pulls him out
of his seat and towards the bunk area...

CROSS-FADE INTO:

8 INT. RUNABOUT - BUNK AREA

Bashir is asleep - Dax lies awake, watching him breathe.
The distraction has not helped her to relax. She quietly
gets up, pulls back the curtain...

9 INT. RUNABOUT - REAR CABIN (CONTINUOUS)

...and emerges from the bunks back into the rear cabin,
lights dimmed for ship's night. She throws on a light robe,
goes to the computer console, speaks quietly...

DAX
Computer. Any luck contacting
General Cyl?

COMPUTER VOICE
Negative.

DAX
Okay... connect to Trill civilian
news nets.

Affirmative BLEEP. The Trill logo appears on the SCREEN,
followed by the Trill news service we saw in 8x10...

A NEWSREADER sits in foreground, as the background images
show a large and modern building with a huge crowd in its
forecourt, shouting and protesting. Trill security can just
be seen trying their best to keep them under control...

NEWSREADER (screen)
(picking up halfway)
...at the Senate building in Leran
Manev. Hearings into the recent
"parasite crisis" remain closed,
though Senate representatives have
promised its findings will be made
public "at the appropriate time."
The protesters themselves appear
to have a variety of agendas,
which has led to some sporadic
violence on the city streets...

DAX
No wonder Cyl's not answering.

Under the following, we ZOOM in closer on the scenes of
unrest on the Trill city streets....

NEWSREADER (v.o.)
One of the loudest voices is the
radical Neo-Purist movement,
inspired by the terrorist Verad
Kalon, who was killed last year...

SEGUE INTO:

10 EXT. TRILL SENATE BUILDING - DAY

Now we can more clearly see the protesters. Through the sky
over this, the *Rio Grande* curves slowly down towards the
Senate building. It comes to land on a dedicated shuttle...

The hatch opens and DAX and BASHIR emerge, looking out at
the crowds with dismay. Dax leads them a few steps towards
the building, seeing two familiar figures approaching...

CYL wears his Defence uniform, while GARD is in a smart but
functional black outfit. Both wear efficient ear-mounted
comm units. Bashir and Dax greet them professionally...

DAX
General Cyl. Mister Gard.

BASHIR

Mister Gard... I take it the
rumours of an official pardon are
not so off the mark.

GARD

(enigmatic smile)

Never listen to rumours, Doctor.

CYL

The Senate's inquest is already
underway. Needless to say, there's
been a lot of popular interest.

GARD

The Senate is particularly eager
to hear your testimony, Dax.

BASHIR

When do they want Dax to testify?

Cyl replies directly to Dax, practically ignoring Bashir,
who bristles with suppressed indignation...

CYL

Immediately, if that's alright
with you. I'll be at your side
throughout, just in case. So...
are you ready, Lieutenant?

DAX

...I suppose so.

BASHIR

Lead on, then.

Bashir begins to head towards the building, but Gard raises
a polite but firm hand, blocking his way...

GARD

Doctor, we'd rather you didn't
accompany us into the Senate
Chambers themselves.

BASHIR

Excuse me?

CYL
You're welcome to walk around
inside the building, of course.
But the Senate has requested no
non-Trills at the inquest.

DAX
I did try to talk you out of
coming along, Julian.

BASHIR
Yes, you did at that. I suppose I
could go for a walk. I'll catch up
with you in a few hours.

CYL
This way, Lieutenant.

He turns and walks away, pride clearly hurt. Dax watches
him go, feeling guilty, then follows Cyl and Gard...

11 EXT. LERAN MANEV STREETS - DAY

Bashir walks past grand buildings, watching the world go
by, unable to shake his doubts about this entire situation.

In a couple of places, he passes police questioning Trill
civilians or dragging them off. He doesn't like it.

CROSS-FADE INTO:

12 EXT. LERAN MANEV CEMETERY - EVENING

A large, dignified graveyard, holding hundreds of markers.
The vast majority are simple stone, but about ten percent
carry gentle coloured lights - green, purple or yellow.

INSERT

One gravestone carries a purple light. On it is carved:

JADZIA IDARIS
BELOVED DAUGHTER, SISTER, STUDENT, FRIEND
HOST OF DAX

ON BASHIR

... who stands in the shadow of this grave stone, gazing solemnly at the words. It's getting dark now...

DAX (o.s.)

I thought I might find you here. I suppose I owe her a visit myself.

BASHIR

Why? You never knew Jadzia.

DAX

True. But in some ways I know her better than anyone.

BASHIR

I think she would have liked you. How did your testimony go?

DAX

Bumpy, but serviceable. Cyl seemed nervous about some of the Senate's questions, insisting they be redirected to a private session.

(re pottery)

This especially, he was quite jumpy about.

BASHIR

Then I suppose he'll be doubly glad I wasn't testifying beside you. I continued my research on the way to Leran Manev.

DAX

Would have been nice to know that before going in there, Julian.

BASHIR

I'm not sure it's significant.

DAX

That's not your decision to make.

(annoyed pause)

Anyway, what did you find out?

BASHIR
(taking the piece)
Just that this is a fragment of an
ancient Kurlan *naiskos*.

DAX
A what?

BASHIR
A ceramic figurine in a squat,
roughly humanoid shape. They were
designed to be opened, and the
inside was filled with similar but
smaller figures. It illustrated
the Kurlan people's belief that
each individual is made up of a
diverse chorus of impulses and
desires, sometimes conflicting.
One thing in particular intrigued
me... The philosophy behind the
naiskos made me wonder if perhaps
the Kurlans might also have been
a joined species, like the Trill.

DAX
That sounds like a bit of a reach.

BASHIR
Different personalities, different
voices all inside one body, not
necessarily agreeing with one
another... We know the parasites
are related to the symbionts.
(re pottery)
This thing suggests they also have
a connection to Kurl. Maybe all
three points are connected.

Still not sure, but unwilling to argue with him on the
matter, Dax lets it go. She changes the subject...

DAX
The violence is getting worse.
These Neo-Purists... they're
winding up the whole population
with their wild accusations.

BASHIR

Don't blame the Neo-Purists, Ezri. Blame this... "aristocracy of the joined" your culture has created. Surely you can understand at least some of their grievances. You can't have missed how all the best opportunities seem to be filled with joined Trill.

DAX

Well of course - the joined have the most experience. Otherwise what's the point of doing it? And everyone has the chance to apply for joining if they want.

BASHIR

What if they don't want? Should that mean they don't get the same opportunities? You said yourself you wouldn't have got the XO job on the *Defiant* if you hadn't been joined by accident to Dax. And look at the current situation. Dax, Cyl and Gard all knew each other from past lives. And here you are again, the Old Boys Club.

Bashir is trying to keep it civil and reasonable, while Dax continues to take offence at Bashir's every insinuation...

DAX

Julian, these are extraordinary circumstances. And the whole idea of the ban on reassociation is to prevent exactly that kind of thing from happening.

BASHIR

Are you telling me you agree with the ban now, Dax? Because it wasn't all that long ago you were willing to suffer exile rather than go along with it.

DAX

Julian, in the time since I was joined to Dax, I've run into one ex-husband, one ex-wife inside my current boyfriend, my daughter reincarnated as a man twice my age and two people who have killed me. Now I'm standing over what feels like my own grave. None of those encounters has exactly been fun. So yes, I'm starting to wonder if the taboo against reassociation is such a bad idea.

BASHIR

What ever happened to the woman who refused to join Ethan Locken's "elite minority"? I think you've gone native, Ezri.

Suddenly, a wailing SIREN from across the other side of the city. Moments later, Dax's combadge chirrups...

CYL (comm)

General Cyl to Lieutenant Dax. I'd like to see you back at the Senate building as soon as possible.

DAX

What's going on, Taulin?

CYL (comm)

The transcript of your testimony has been leaked to the media. And the people are starting to riot.

Off Bashir and Dax's dismayed reactions...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

13 INT. TRILL SENATE SECURITY CENTRE

Trill Defence OFFICERS move urgently around the room, many shouting instructions into ear-mounted comm devices. Cyl and Gard lead Dax and Bashir into this, tensions high...

BASHIR

(*sotto*, to Dax)

Thanks for inviting me this time.

Cyl grabs a female officer, a stern and formidable woman who is in charge of this room. This is RIANU.

CYL

Colonel Rianu, report.

RIANU

Sir. We've identified several known members of the Neo-Purist movement among the agitators. We're moving as quickly as possible to apprehend them.

Rianu casts a suspicious eye on Gard, which Cyl notices...

CYL

Something to say, Colonel?

RIANU

(re Gard)

I'm not sure it's a good idea to bring that man down here, General. He has no formal rank or position within the Defence Force.

CYL

Colonel, Hiziki Gard is my right hand, at least for the current crisis. I expect you to give him whatever resources he asks for, and obey his orders as if they were mine. Do I make myself clear?

RIANU
(snap to attention)
You do, sir.

Cyl and Rianu go back to discussing the current situation.
Under this, Dax and Bashir talk *sotto voce*...

DAX
That's Colonel Behza Rianu. She's
supposed to be one of the best in
the Defence Force.

BASHIR
She seems to have everything well
in hand down here.

DAX
She has political ambitions, too.
As well as a quick temper that's
kept her out of a Senate seat.

BASHIR
Are you sure she hasn't advanced
just because she's not joined?

DAX
(gobsmacked)
...I can't even find the words to
answer that, Julian.

Cyl stares at the monitors, gazing with dismay at the riot
scenes outside. Shaking his head in exasperation, Cyl walks
back to the doors. Dax, Bashir and Gard follow. They reach
the doors, which open onto a large elevator...

As they step in, another officer, TALRIS, jogs over pushing
a trolley before him, carrying an object draped in a sheet.

OFFICER
General, hold the elevator please.

They do, and Cyl after-you's for Talris. He pushes his
trolley on first, to the back of the elevator.

The rest step in, turning their back to him...

14 INT. ELEVATOR (CONTINUOUS)

TALRIS

Thank you, sir. Seventh floor, if
you would, please.

Dax presses the buttons, and they talk quietly.

DAX

There's got to be a way to resolve
this without so much violence.
Can't we release some neural gas
in the plaza, or set up a wide-
dispersal phaser stun blast?

CYL

Either of those options could
still cause some deaths. The
colonel's forces should be able
to handle the worst of it.

The elevator comes to a stop at the seventh floor, and
Talris timidly pushes past them to exit...

TALRIS

Excuse me... thank you.

He leaves, and the doors close. The lift begins to move
again. The others continue their conversation...

DAX

Perhaps if President Maz spoke
directly to the people...

CYL

Though I have little truck with
the malcontents, I can't argue
against Maz's credibility out
there amongst the Great Unjoined.

GARD

Um, General... I believe we have a
new problem.

Gard has noticed that Talris left his trolley behind when
he exited the lift. Gard removes the sheet, revealing...

...a large and heavy DEVICE with blinking lights.

GARD (cont)

I think that's a bomb.

Tension spikes, as they all realise they are in a bad situation. Cyl presses the elevator's emergency stop...

DAX

If they bomb the Senate tower,
they could cripple the government
for months.

DAX

Okay, so how do we disarm it?

CYL

I'll call for an evacuation. Try
to save as many lives as we can.

BASHIR

Wait! Bashir to *Rio Grande*.

COMPUTER

Rio Grande acknowledging.

Not a second to lose. Bashir takes his combadge off the front of his uniform, attaches it to the bomb...

BASHIR

Lock transporter onto my combadge.
Program a five second delay, then
transport the large metal object
to which it's attached.

COMPUTER

Please specify coordinates.

BASHIR

Directly overhead. Maximum range.

CYL

(taps ear-comm)

Cyl to Rianu. Warn every orbiting
ship to raise shields or break
orbit. Immediately.

COMPUTER
Energising.

The bomb disappears in a transporter beam...

15 EXT. SPACE - TRILL ORBIT

Trill Defence ships (as seen in 8x21 "Lesser Evil") scatter out of the way... the bomb materialises in orbit...

...and EXPLODES, shaking our POV with the force of it...

16 INT. ELEVATOR

They all wait on tenterhooks to know if it worked...

RIANU (comm)
Rianu to Cyl. Patrol vessel TDM-one-twelve reports that a small device detonated in low orbit. They say it sent out some kind of electromagnetic pulse, but it dissipated before they could analyse it. They say it was more flash than substance, though.

The others relax - but only a little. Cyl is furious...

CYL
Colonel, I want Sergeant Talris found and arrested immediately. He's a Neo-Purist agent. Send an alert to look out for more bombs at other prominent locations.

RIANU (comm)
Sir... the Neo-Purist leader has sent out a planet-wide message. It's going out live right now. We're trying to trace it, but we can't block the transmission.

DAX
I guess they learned some new tricks since Verad.

CYL
Colonel, we'll view the message
in the Senate offices. Cyl out.
(to Bashir)
Well done, Doctor. Thank you.

Cyl punches the controls again, and the elevator starts moving. They know it's not over...

17 INT. TRILL SENATE OFFICE

The lift opens again -- onto a well-appointed office, with a large, dramatic desk and a huge window looking out over the plaza many floors below. Cyl stalks towards the desk, works the computer screen sat upon it...

CYL
Computer, begin playback.

The screen fills with the intense face of a Trill WOMAN, speaking with conviction and confidence into the camera...

WOMAN (screen)
Thanks to Starfleet testimony
before the Senate, information has
recently come to light about an
ancient link between the parasitic
creatures who attacked Bajor - and
tried to destroy our world - and
the extinct civilisation on the
planet Kurl. Clearly, this implies
Kurl is the missing link between
symbiont and parasite. President
Maz has concealed this from you,
as have the entire Senate and
centuries of their predecessors.

DAX
Can you pause the playback?

Cyl touches a control - the woman's face freezes...

CYL
This proves that the radicals
have infiltrated the government
pretty thoroughly.

BASHIR

They also came to the same conclusions I did about the history between Trill and Kurl.

DAX

(dismissive)

That just proves you're not the only one who loves ridiculous conspiracy theories.

BASHIR

(bristling)

Regardless, from my reading of Trill history, your people didn't make much use of warp technology until about three centuries ago. But the Kurlans were already extinct millennia before that.

DAX

Exactly. Which makes it very unlikely that the Kurlans were connected to the Trill at all.

Dax curtly nods for Cyl to restart the message. He does...

WOMAN (screen)

The Neo-Purist movement calls upon Maz and the ruling joined class to stop concealing the truth. To stop concealing the connection between parasite and symbiont, which has only left us vulnerable to their vendetta. It is the secrets and lies of the joined that led us to this place, and to them we say - be warned. We will not allow you to lead us to our destruction. In the defence of our world, we are prepared to take drastic measures.

The message ends, and the screen goes blank.

DAX

Think there's any truth to this?

CYL

She's not the first to suggest a long-term conspiracy within our government. Your own Captain Kira said the same.

GARD

It needn't be a conspiracy. We could have simply... forgotten.

BASHIR

Forgotten? I thought the Trill revered and cherished memories.

GARD

We do. But any society that collects and preserves its memories for long enough must inevitably lose track of some.

DAX

So we need to fill those gaps. We have to find out the truth. That's the root of the problem.

Bashir walks over to the window and looks down to the crowd below, which is still shouting and fighting. The police down there are forced to use occasional phaser fire to stun some of the rowdier protesters. He points to them...

BASHIR

That is our main problem. Putting a stop to all the violence, not plowing through some prehistoric archive that you already searched, looking for something that probably isn't there.

DAX

If we don't get to the bottom of this Kurl business soon, that -
 (also pointing)
- may just prove unstoppable. And I think we may have a short cut to the oldest memories on Trill.

She looks at Cyl, who smiles slightly, on the same page...

CYL

The Guardians of Mak'ala.

Decision made, Dax and Cyl stride away from the desk, back to the door. A puzzled Bashir and Gard try to keep up...

DAX

I'll take the runabout straight
to Mak'ala. Julian, report to the
Emergency Response Med Centre.

He grabs her arm, tries a last impassioned attempt...

BASHIR

Please, Ezri. Think for a minute
about what you're about to do.
Suppose you uncover some entirely
new unknown horror from Trill's
past? And what if you turn up
something that only confirms what
they're saying? That vindicates
them? What will you do then?

She stares back at him, her eyes smouldering...

DAX

(an order)

Report to Emergency Response,
Doctor. Ask Mister Gard to help
you if you have trouble finding
your way around.

She turns smartly, walking with Cyl towards the open lift
door. Bashir is left behind, frustrated...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

18 INT. TRILL SENATE OFFICE

On the floor of the office, a TRANSPORTER signal deposits Bashir's medical kit, and a small bag of additional items. Still smarting about his treatment by Dax, Bashir goes to inspect it, while Gard speaks into his comm...

GARD

Good luck, Lieutenant, General.

(glance at Bashir)

Doctor Bashir wishes you the same.

He closes the line, and steps closer to Bashir.

GARD

You seem to be taking her actions personally. I can certainly understand your position... but you must understand hers.

BASHIR

What I understand is that she and the general seem more interested in ancient Trill history than with what's going on here and now.

GARD

Perhaps. But as a doctor, surely you can see the wisdom of curing the cause rather than just patching up the symptom.

BASHIR

Of course, but you still deal with the most immediate problem first. That's why it's called first aid. And the immediate problem is that the streets out there are becoming drenched in blood.

Bashir stands and hoists the med-kit onto his shoulder, ready to leave. But Gard comes over all philosophical...

GARD

Haven't you ever had a secret
you couldn't share with anyone,
because you knew - you knew -
that it would change everything?

Bashir pauses - he has indeed held such a secret.

GARD (cont)

Surely you've kept confidences in
the course of your duties as a
Starfleet officer. Surely you've
concealed actions or decisions
that could have caused grave
damage if they were revealed.

BASHIR

Say it like that and lying to your
own people sounds so reasonable.

Gard does not rise to the bait, even though Bashir's
annoyance is becoming more and more obvious.

GARD

I'm not like most joined Trills.
Rather than redefine my life with
each new incarnation, my existence
has always been about one thing -
neutralising aberrant joinings.

BASHIR

Like Joran Dax.

GARD

Yes... although it's important to
understand that neither Joran nor
Dax were dangerous individually.
If Joran had been joined to
another symbiont, or not at all,
he might have lived a long and
normal life. It was the unique
combination of Joran and Dax...
that gave rise to a monster. The
point is that, despite all the
best intentions in the world...
sometimes bad things just happen.

BASHIR
(becoming curious)
How often?

GARD
(shrug)
Centuries can pass. Spotting them
requires constant vigilance.

BASHIR
And you're the one who maintains
that vigilance? You alone?

GARD
A number of us keep watch. But
whenever a threat arises, I'm the
one who deals with it. It's what
I've always done.

BASHIR
That's why you keep such a low
profile. When not assassinating
heads of state, that is.

GARD
(ignoring the jab)
Maintaining secrecy is essential.
It's the only way that our society
can maintain faith in the system
that enables us - even a tiny
minority of us - to enjoy the
immortality of joining.

Bashir lets out a frustrated sigh. This is all sounding far
too much like Section 31's usual justifications to him.

BASHIR
What about your previous hosts?
Other Trill symbionts are guided
by the needs and desires of the
humanoids they join with. But
you're telling me that your hosts
set all that aside to follow the
goals of the Gard symbiont.

GARD

It's entirely voluntary, I assure you. The screening process is even more stringent than the regular initiate program. And when the Commission finds the right match for Gard, that initiate is brought into the loop, and allowed to make an informed decision.

BASHIR

And if one of them declines the honour? What happens to them then?

GARD

(eyes narrowing)

What makes you think something happens to them?

BASHIR

You said secrecy is paramount. So I have to assume that either their memories are wiped, or they're killed. Which is it?

Gard holds Bashir's hard gaze, but declines to answer...

BASHIR

Alright, answer me this, then.
How many hosts have you had?

GARD

A good deal more than any other
joined Trill you've ever heard of.

BASHIR

And you remember all of them?

GARD

...No. Not beyond a certain point.
As I said earlier, anything that's
old enough must eventually forget
things. But frankly, I don't care.
My role, my function, is all that
matters. In fact, I can't remember
ever doing anything else.

BASHIR
Then, is it possible...

GARD
Yes?

BASHIR
If these aberrant joinings are as rare as you say, might your role have originally been created for an entirely different reason?

GARD
(way ahead of him)
What are you suggesting, Doctor?

BASHIR
That perhaps you were originally created to deal with joined parasites. Like Shakaar.

GARD
(straight-faced)
That would imply a very ancient knowledge about the threat the parasites pose.

BASHIR
Yes. Do you think it's true?

GARD
(enigmatic smile)
I think, Doctor, that some things should never be forgotten.

19 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Flying through the atmosphere. Dax is in the pilot seat, Cyl beside her, mid-relaxed and unofficial conversation. Dax's hands play absently with the *naiskos* fragment...

DAX
Of course I questioned it. Even if my symbiont hadn't lived through nine hosts already, two of us have been Starfleet officers...

DAX (cont)

...and another was a Federation diplomat. It's inevitable that we'd have a wider view of things than most. That we'd question the status quo more.

CYL

So what makes you different from the protesters?

DAX

Questioning and exploring aren't quite the same as anarchy and outright defiance of authority.

CYL

Ah, so it's a matter of degree, not necessarily the goal. And you would never defy the authority of accepted morality by, say...

(fake blasé)

...reassociating?

She purses, knowing she's been caught out...

DAX

Point taken. But it seems to me you're painting anyone who disobeys the rules with the same broad brush you'd use on the radical fringe.

CYL

I hope I'm not. I've broken plenty myself in my time. But no matter what comes in the next days, we're all going to have to re-examine our values and beliefs. We'll have to decide if our traditions should change... if they can change. Evolution is about change, after all. Do we allow our society to evolve? If we examine the mistakes and secrets of our past, how will that affect our future?

Dax looks askance at Cyl, surprised and impressed...

DAX

You're certainly not Audrid's
little girl Neema anymore, are
you? You've become quite the
warrior-philosopher.

CYL

Six lifetimes will tend to do that
to a person. Not that I have to
tell you... mama.

DAX

(quietly)

I'm sorry, Neema. I would give
anything to change what happened
to your father.

Cyl nods, accepting Dax's statement without judgement. He
is in a very thoughtful mood...

CYL

And that is the difference
between us and the powers that we
serve. We should not reassociate.
We should not remember the bad.
Perhaps neither of us is really
so different from those crying
out for radical change.

DAX

There's that broad brush again.
Not everyone in favour of change
wants what the Neo-Purists want.
Yes, they'd like to erase the
lines between the joined and the
unjoined... but they'd do it by
erasing the joined altogether.

Dax looks back down at the *naiskos* fragment in her hands,
twisting it around, wondering about it...

DAX

What do you think the truth really
is about Kurl?

CYL

My people found similar artefacts in the other parasite lairs we've investigated. We wondered if they were some kind of message, maybe calling cards. But neither idea made sense. Now I suspect they hung onto them as artefacts of memory. Perhaps they revere their history as much as we do ours.

She closes her eyes, remembering for a moment...

FLASHBACK - 8x24 "UNITY, pt 1"

Audrid runs terrified through the caves as her possessed husband chases her, screaming incoherently...

BACK TO SCENE

Gripping tightly onto the *naiskos* fragment, she turns and suddenly hurls it against a bulkhead. It shatters...

CYL

Feel better?

DAX

For now.

Her reflections are interrupted by beeps and blinkies from the computer. She checks a panel...

DAX

We're only a few dozen clicks from the Mak'ala caves.

CYL

So... we've managed to make it half way around the planet without once discussing the problems in your relationship with the doctor.

DAX

(surprised, annoyed)

What? I don't think - I don't...
We aren't having any problems.

CYL
(blank-faced)
Oh.

DAX
What is that supposed to -
(off panels)
I'm detecting weapons fire.

Suddenly concerned, Cyl is all business. Dax pilots the runabout closer, and through the windows...

...we see the cliff-side entrance to the caves approaching.

20 EXT. CAVES OF MAK'ALA - DAY

Several hundred PROTESTERS have gathered, mostly held behind a barricade but growing more restless by the moment.

A small garrison of Trill Defence SOLDIERS are trying to control them, but are almost completely overwhelmed.

One police vehicle has been overturned...

Another is AFLAME and belching black SMOKE...

In desperation, the police start SHOOTING the protesters...

...and the protesters start SHOOTING back.

21 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Seeing this through the cockpit window, Dax and Cyl realise - this whole thing just got out of control...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

22 EXT. CAVES OF MAK'ALA - DAY

In the mouth of the cave, RANUL KERU emerges (from 8x10 "Divided We Fall"). The big, bearded Trill Guardian looks out at the crowds with fear and worry - not for himself, but for the symbionts under his care. Then he looks up --

-- and sees the runabout *Rio Grande* hovering in the sky over the worked up crowd.

23 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

As Dax pilots them closer, Cyl leans forward, looks through the windscreen with worry at the crowds...

CYL

Why haven't we received any
distress calls?

DAX

Incoming transmissions are being
jammed from the outside.

CYL

Can you do what you said earlier?
Set the ship's phasers on stun?

DAX

Yes, but the wider the dispersal,
the less effect it'll have. A
ship's phasers weren't exactly
designed for crowd control. It
might knock them down for a few
minutes, but no longer. And I
can't guarantee some of your
guards won't get caught in it.

CYL

Do it. I'll try and get a message
through.

As Cyl goes to work on his panels, Dax does likewise, very nervous about this plan...

24 **EXT. CAVES OF MAK'ALA - DAY**

Keru sees the runabout OPEN FIRE on the crowd - a wide beam that sweeps over the agitating crowd and knocks almost all of the unconscious. He is momentarily horrified... until he sees that they are all unharmed, just stunned.

The runabout curves in to land behind the lines, between the crowd and the caves. The hatch opens, and Cyl and Dax step out. A Defence Force officer, DOYOS, meets them...

DOYOS

General, I'm Captain Doyos. We've been calling for back-up for an hour now. More protesters arrive all the time, and some of them have brought vehicles and weapons.

CYL

Your messages never got through, Captain. We didn't know.

(turns to Dax)

Ezri, I'll leave the research in your hands. I need to coordinate with my people out here and keep the caves defended.

As Cyl moves away with Doyos, Keru emerges from the cave entrance and approaches Dax - they shake hands warmly...

KERU

Lieutenant Dax.

DAX

Ranul! Oh, it's good to see a friendly face. And it should make things a lot easier for me - I've come to ask for the help of the Guardians.

KERU

I'm happy to assist however I can... especially if it'll help rein in the madness out here.

Keru leads Dax further into the darkness of the caves...

25 **EXT. LERAN MANEV STREETS - DAY**

Bashir hurries through the mostly empty streets, carrying his med-kit, on his way to the hospital. He is escorted by an unimpressed young female officer, ASAL. The continuing background noise of rioting and protesting distresses him, and the heavy police presence frustrates him...

ASAL

I don't know why Starfleet would
be here. This is Trill business.

BASHIR

(muttering)

Well, perhaps if Trill had made a
better job of actually managing
its business, Starfleet wouldn't
need to be here.

They turn a corner and see three figures slumped in the shadow of a building. Asal raises her weapon at them...

ASAL

You there! Stand and identify
yourselves!

One of the figures, a young GIRL of about eleven, stands on wobbly, frightened legs and calls back...

GIRL

My name is Dula Seng, and this is
my mother and brother. They're
injured. They can't stand.

BASHIR

(starting forward)

I'm a doctor, I can help --

ASAL

(holding him back)

Wait, Doctor Bashir. We don't know
if they're armed.

GIRL

Please... they wouldn't help us at
the hospital. Mama is very sick.

Bashir shakes off Asal's arm and approaches the family. Asal keeps her phaser aimed, wary, just in case. Bashir leans down to tend to the woman, talks gently...

BASHIR

What happened?

GIRL

We were at the Najana library when all the yelling started. Mama was trying to get us home, but we kept getting caught in the crowds. They sprayed something on us, and mama started having trouble breathing. The hospital turned us away because mama isn't joined.

Furious inside, Bashir keeps a gentle bedside manner. He presses a hypo to the woman's neck - her hitching breathing gets easier. Then he does the same for the little boy...

BASHIR

Don't worry, this won't hurt.
You'll both be alright, I promise.
You had a reaction to the gas they used. You should be able to walk in a few minutes.

MOTHER

(croaky whisper)

Thank you...

(with difficulty)

Have the bombs gone off yet?

Bashir's blood chills. Asal approaches in great concern...

BASHIR

The bombs?

MOTHER

I heard some people talking about bombs at the library. That's why I got the kids out of there.

ASAL

Why didn't you inform anyone?

GIRL
(angrily)
She tried to, but nobody would
listen. They sprayed gas on us.

BASHIR
Did you hear where they were?

MOTHER
No... but they said the joined
would be sorry when they went off.

ASAL
I've got to report this.
(pointing)
The hospital is that way. You
should be able to get there
without too much trouble. I've
gotta go.

BASHIR
Good luck.

Asal rushes the way they came; Bashir turns to the family.

BASHIR
I'd get home as soon as possible
if I were you. And thank you for
the information.

MOTHER
Thank you.

Bashir stands and walks in the direction Asal pointed...

26 INT. CAVES OF MAK'ALA

Dax waits to one side, impatient, gazing into the depths of
the milky symbiont pools.

Across the cave, a group of robed and dour-faced GUARDIANS
- including Keru - confer in hushed voices. After a moment,
they break. Keru goes to stand by the main pool, staring
into it - the meeting did not go his way.

The oldest Guardian of the group approaches Dax...

GUARDIAN

What you have told us is deeply troubling, Ezri Dax. Not just because of the unrest it causes our people now, but because it undermines the trust between symbiont and humanoid.

(beat, deep breath)

But we cannot help you. We cannot concern ourselves with anything but caring for the symbionts.

DAX

Do I really have to point out how impossible that will become if those protesters break in here?

Unhappy but determined, the Guardian turns away. All the others will not meet her eyes either. Dax is incensed...

Suddenly the placid pools become agitated, all splashes and jagged forks of electricity. Clearly, something is going on beneath the surface. The Guardians turn, transfixed...

Four SYMBIONTS bob to the surface of the water. A few more electrical discharges as they discuss the problem silently.

...until one of the symbionts sends an electrical finger out to gently touch Keru's stomach. He closes his eyes, receives the communication, smiles, turns to the others...

KERU

It seems my superiors have just been over-ruled. I think you're going to get your answers.

DAX

(excited)

What do I have to do?

KERU

Just swim to the very bottom of the pools. Where nobody's ever gone before.

Keru smiles... the other Guardians are shocked...

27 EXT. LERAN MANEV STREETS - DAY

Bashir enters and walks down a dim and narrow alleyway...

A gang of Trill YOUTHS enter from the other end, heading towards him. They've clearly been caught in the fighting...

Bashir keeps his head down, steps aside to let them pass. But as they reach him --

-- a FIST shoots out, smashes into his jaw, knocks him back to the wall. PUNCH - another blow to the stomach. PUNCH - another in the ear. He goes down, coughing blood.

The youths grab the med-kit off his shoulder, KICK him in the ribs one last time, run off down the alleyway laughing.

Bashir slumps to the ground, vision darkening, the youths melting back into the shadows as he goes...

28 INT. CAVES OF MAK'ALA

Dax now stands by the side of the pool, wearing a Starfleet environment suit from the runabout. Keru stands beside her, checking the settings on the suit...

KERU

You know, this might not work.
Starfleet environment suits are
designed to keep to keep the air
in, not to keep the water out.

DAX

I know. I have to try.

KERU

(chuckle)

That sounds like something Sean
used to say right before he did
something brave but stupid.

DAX

Speaking of which... if I don't
make it back, you'll give Julian
my message, right?

KERU

You'll come back. Just watch the time. You'll be racing against your air supply and the water pressure. Not to mention whatever else might be living down there.

DAX

Okay then... I'm ready.

KERU

I'll be waiting.

DAX

I have a better idea. Since you have a Starfleet background, how about you get out there with Cyl and make sure these caves remain defended for my triumphant return?

KERU

Yes, sir.

Then he stands back, as Dax gingerly steps into the pool and begins to wade deeper. Deeper... deeper... and with a last glance over her shoulder, she submerges completely.

29 **UNDERWATER**

Lit only by the lights of her environment suit and the rapidly fading glow from the entry to the pool, far above her head, Dax descends deeper into the water.

Moving deeper and deeper, the light getting further and further away, until eventually she reaches the point of no return... and is swallowed in the darkness of the depths.

BLACK OUT:

THE END