

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

13x22 - "Disconnect"

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 18x22 - "RECONCILED"

With the sudden power vacuum in the Romulan government, Senator Gell Kamemor (TNG "Puzzle Box") is made the new Praetor. Spock gains an audience with her - she has no love for the Vulcan unification movement but sees no reason to ban it either. Worf and Picard suspect that Tal'Aura arranged Donatra's death, but Tal'Aura's own death appears to be completely natural. With no evidence otherwise and no further role to play, *Enterprise* is forced to withdraw. The reunification makes Romulus the biggest power within the Typhon Pact, and denies the Khitomer Accords another ally. Alizome reports back to the Tzenkethi Autarch that her mission was a success - having killed both Xarian and Tal'Aura, their own favoured candidate is now Romulan Praetor. Unlike most of her predecessors, Kamemor is a reasonable and peace-loving woman, and her presence can only bring stability to the Typhon Pact - and thus benefit the Tzenkethi.

TTN 2x22 - "SHIELD OF THE GODS"

Titan contacts the Ferengi criminal Lant (SCE "Buying Time"), as they believe Daiyar will buy a missing part of the Time Drive from him. But Daiyar simply steals the device, kidnapping Ranjea and whisking him away to the past. Turns out they have both met Jena Noi, something that helps him convince her to give up her plans and literally "live in the past". Ranjea decides to stay there with her to help her heal, much to Garcia's sorrow. Riker worries that losing an agent will upset the DTI's vital work in protecting the Federation, not to mention get him in trouble with the admirals. At his secret meeting with the galaxy's most colourless functionaries, Lucsly reveals that Ranjea's report regarding future time agent Jena Noi included some data about a Temporal Defence Grid, a distributed technology that blocks temporal incursions. Noi did not know who created the grid, but Lucsly has decided it will be them. Thanks to Agent Ranjea's work, the galaxy's history and future will both be safe.

VOY 11x22 - "DESTINY'S CHILD"

Q explains to his son that the anomaly *Voyager* faces is the Omega Continuum, a balancing force to their own existence. In the other timeline, Janeway's solution to stopping Omega also

destroyed the Q; bringing Janeway back means she will likely do it again. Realising that Eden is the key, Q goes to *Voyager* himself and attempts to kill her - but she absorbs his power. As a child of Omega, she is effectively an anti-Q. Janeway realises that only a child of a Q can stop her... as Junior arrives, prepared to sacrifice himself to save the multiverse. His parents try to stop him, but Janeway convinces them to let him go - his sacrifice will restore the balance. Eden and Junior touch, there is a big flash of light... and it's over. Omega is gone, and the Q Continuum is saved, but Q declares Janeway an enemy for the death of his son. Janeway is finally reunited with Chakotay, but with more than half of the fleet lost, the future of the Full Circle project is in question...

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - ANDOR ORBIT

The majestic USS *Robinson* soars over the blue-white moon that is the Andorian homeworld, with its gas giant parent in the background...

2 EXT. PARLIAMENT ANDORIA BUILDING - DAY

A new day at the centre of Andorian government. The mess of the riots has been cleared away, and the place looks back to normal. Andorian citizens flow back and forth into the building past the uniformed Andorian Guard officers.

3 INT. PARLIAMENT ANDORIA - PRESIDER'S OFFICE

SHAR stares at himself in a mirror, takes in the image of himself in his Starfleet dress uniform, the long white form contrasting sharply with his rich blue skin. His expression is distant, unreadable. He looks to one side...

...where SISKO is also in dress whites, fastening the pips and making sure he looks smart. With him are ROGEIRO, UTELN and RELKDAHZ, also dressed likewise (though in the latter's case, a unique design to fit his highly non-humanoid body).

Shar takes in that view for a moment, burning it into his memory. Then he turns again, and sees...

...his friends from Deep Space Nine. TENMEI fiddles with NOG's collar, he slaps her hand away, while BASHIR just rolls his eyes in amusement. They too wear dress whites.

Taking a moment to smile at the image, Shar straightens himself and walks over to join his friends...

SHAR

Well... how do I look?

TENMEI

You look magnificent, Shar. It suits you. How do you feel?

SHAR

...I like it.

The Starfleet officers are ready. Sisko steps forward, the formal Starfleet captain representing the Federation...

...to address Presider SH'THALIS, wearing a similar formal outfit and being fussed at by her own personal assistants.

SISKO

I believe we're ready, Presider.

SH'THALIS

Thank you, Captain. My guards will escort you to the Enclave Chamber.

SISKO

We're honoured by your invitation to join the Enclave, Presider.

SH'THALIS

Just remember - this is a session of the Parliament Andoria, this world's democratic authority. Starfleet is invited to observe, not to participate.

SISKO

You must not feel obligated to have us there at all, Presider. We have no desire to cause problems for you, politically speaking.

SH'THALIS

Nonsense, Captain. There have been many positive accounts of you and your officers' conduct during this crisis. Doctor zh'Yemre from the Aenar city, Supervisor ch'Perine at the atmosphere plant, Officer th'Zarista of the guard, and of course Professor zh'Thiin. All have sung your praises. But I am Presider, and whatever happens is my business. Do not interfere.

SISKO

You have my word, Presider.

Sisko looks around the other Starfleet officers, silently ordering them to behave themselves. Tenmei speaks up...

TENMEI

Presider, if I may ask...?

(sh'Thalis nods)

You said "whatever happens". Do you expect something to happen?

sh'Thalis takes a moment to consider the question...

SH'THALIS

I honestly cannot say, Lieutenant. My... former... security minister implied that the machinations of the *Treishya* were not yet at an end. Perhaps that was simply an attempt to rattle me. Perhaps not. I imagine I will find out shortly.

The doors of sh'Thalis's office open, and Commodore THIRIN enters, also dressed in a formal version of his uniform. He makes the traditional shallow bow - a little gingerly, as he is still feeling the after-effects of his knife injury.

THIRIN

sha Presider - the Parliament awaits. Shall I escort you?

SH'THALIS

(kindly)

No, Commodore th'Deminesh, you shall not. You're supposed to be on medical leave.

THIRIN

Yes, Presider, but -

SH'THALIS

You may join our Starfleet guests and sit on the observation level. My personal guard will escort me.

THIRIN

As you wish, Presider.

Thirin steps aside. sh'Thalis takes a deep breath, readying herself, then strides forward into the corridor beyond.

4 INT. PARLIAMENT ANDORIA - CORRIDOR (CONTINUOUS)

The armoured guard peel off from the sides of the corridor, beneath the statues of legendary Andorian warriors, and escort their Presider to enclave.

Sisko leads the Starfleet officers to follow her, *Robinson* crew first, DS9 crew last, Shar caught between them...

Thirin joins the procession, walking next to Bashir.

BASHIR

It's good to see you up and about again, Commodore.

THIRIN

Doctor Bashir, you have witnessed my internal organs, and sewn them back together. I think you can call me Thirin now.

The two men smile in good humour...

5 INT. PARLIAMENT ANDORIA - ENCLAVE CHAMBER

The large room which had been set up to host the conference but has now been returned to its usual purpose - gathering together Andor's political leaders.

Those leaders sit in seats around the circular lowest level of the Enclave, MUTTERING between themselves as Presider sh'Thalis stands in the centre of the circle. A MODERATOR stands from his own seat, announces...

MODERATOR

Iravothra sh'Thalis, Presider and leader of the Progressive party, we thank you for your testimony.

sh'Thalis bows and takes a spare seat in the circle.

MODERATOR

We now welcome Ledanyi ch'Foruta,
Visionist party leader and deputy
presider in opposition, to speak.

Against the MUTTERING of the gathered politicians, the
Moderator takes his seat and a previously unfamiliar *chan* -
CH'FORUTA - stands to take the centre of the circle.

CH'FORUTA

Greetings, representatives and
honoured guests. Events of recent
days trouble me, as I know they
trouble you. What took place here
two days ago was nothing less than
a criminal act, intended to sow
the seeds of fear in our society.
It was, quite simply, terrorism.
And we allowed it to happen.

More muttering in the crowd. ch'Foruta speaks effectively.

On the highest level sit the Starfleet guests. Tenmei, then
Shar, then Nog, then Sisko (then the rest). Nog especially
listens intently, his attention caught by something...

CH'FORUTA

Nevertheless, I know there are
those of our people, even in this
room, who agree with at least some
of the ideals the *Treishya* claim
to espouse, even as they abhor
their methods. And though we must
hear divergent voices in civilised
fashion, the important thing is
that we hear them... and act.

Nog is still listening closely, twisting and turning his
big ears to the right angle. Shar notices, whispers...

SHAR

Nog? What's wrong?

NOG

I'm not sure... something...

Sisko shushes them both. Below, ch'Foruta continues, but Nog continues to try to figure out what is bothering him...

CH'FORUTA (o.s.)

We have a sacred responsibility - to preserve order, and to ensure the safety of our people. Our actions must be swift, bold and decisive. We must show that we, not the *Treishya*, are in control.

As the MUTTERING of the crowd grows ever louder, Nog's eyes flare in horror - he has figured it out.

NOG

His voice... it was his voice. On the runabout, on the *Robinson*. The one who spoke for the *Treishya*.

Shar, Tenmei and Sisko hear, but dare not react...

SHAR

The deputy presider... was behind it all along. He is the *Treishya*.

TENMEI

So this is all just... theatre. Stirring up the gullible masses.

SISKO

Quiet, all of you. You heard the Presider - we can't interfere.

The crowd dies down, ready for ch'Foruta's next tirade...

CH'FORUTA

There is also the matter of the controversial research into our fertility crisis, being performed by such gifted individuals as Professor Marthrossi zh'Thiin of the Andorian Science Institute, and Lieutenant Thirishar ch'Thane of Starfleet.

Suddenly all eyes in the room are on Shar and his Starfleet colleagues. They are forced to sit quietly under intense scrutiny, even knowing they are all being manipulated...

CH'FORUTA

While it's worth noting that their work was assisted in large part by a former enemy, the greater issue is the very lack of assistance from our friends. By their own admission, Starfleet held the same knowledge given to us freely by the Tholians - held it in secret - for more than a century. Were they simply ignorant, or was this a deliberate choice? It no longer matters - the damage is done.

ch'Foruta finally turns back to glare at sh'Thalis...

CH'FORUTA

And yet... Presider sh'Thalis would have us continue to court the Federation's good graces. Our streets are filled with people looking for guidance. We must show it to them now, without hesitation or evasion. For the sake of this Parliament, and of the people it represents, I must regretfully move for a vote... on the matter of Presider sh'Thalis's continuing fitness to retain her office.

As the gathered politicians BRAY, riled up by ch'Foruta's rhetoric... SHAR can do nothing but watch helplessly...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6 EXT. SPACE - ARGAYA ORBIT

The green-brown world of Argaya, with the colonist convoy hanging in orbit, the trio of Cardassian ships blocking their way, and the *Defiant* holding position between them...

7 INT. DEFIANT - READY ROOM

RO sits behind the desk, talking via the comm screen...

RO

Thank you, Admiral. Please let me know how it goes.

She closes the line, and immediately the door CHIMES.

RO

Perfect timing - come in!

The door opens, and CANDLEWOOD enters. The science officer is trying to look composed and professional, standing to attention... but he has something weighing on his mind.

RO

Thanks for coming, John. Sit.

He does, but it doesn't relax him.

RO

Just got off the comm with Admiral Akaar - he's gonna take my idea to President Bacco. Meanwhile Macet is gonna talk to his government, and we'll see what they decide.

CANDLEWOOD

That's good news, Commander.

RO

So... how was your first time in command of the *Defiant*?

CANDLEWOOD

Perfectly smooth, Commander.
Nothing I couldn't handle.

Ro can see he is hiding something - she probes gently.

RO

No problems with the Cardassians,
or the refugee ships?

CANDLEWOOD

Oh, well - some moans about having
to deal with a junior officer,
demanding to speak to someone in
authority. I think I managed it
about as well as you'd expect. No
deaths, and very few injuries.

That's a deadpan joke - Ro smiles. But there's more...

RO

Then why do you look so nervous?

Candlewood hesitates... Ro is sympathetic.

RO

John... if there's something
wrong, I wanna know.

CANDLEWOOD

It's nothing to do with the ship
or the refugees. It's just... I'm
afraid I may have let my personal
life get in the way of my work.

RO

(smile)

Oh that. I do that all the time.
Tell me what happened.

CANDLEWOOD

I called the station... I guess I
wanted to brag a bit to Hetik that
you'd left me in command. He took
it... really badly.

RO

Ah.

CANDLEWOOD

Started yelling at me about being insensitive and sucking up to the Cardassians...

RO

(nods)

I think this whole refugee thing has brought up some old demons for our favourite *dabo* boy.

CANDLEWOOD

Yeah, he told me how you were the one who helped him off the streets back in the day. I've been wanting to thank you for that.

(Ro smiles)

But after that fight, I couldn't keep my mind on my job. Kept going over it, thinking about everything I should or shouldn't have said... I'm sorry - I guess I'm not cut out for command after all.

RO

John, it happens to us all. Vaughn told me nobody gets it right first time, and he wasn't lying. You said nobody died, right?

CANDLEWOOD

Yeah, but -

RO

Then you did fine. It was just a baby-sitting mission, so there was plenty of time for your mind to wander. I'm confident that if the ship ever did catch on fire, you'd be up to the challenge.

CANDLEWOOD

You really think so?

RO

Yep. Even the most experienced commanders let their emotions get in the way sometimes. Hell, look at me and Akaar.

She reaches across the desk, pats his hand comfortingly.

RO

Trust me, you'll be fine.

Candlewood accepts that gratefully. She's probably right.

8 INT. ROBINSON - READY ROOM

SISKO sits behind his desk in his own ready room, holding the small DEVICE that ch'Lhren placed in engineering. Cmdr Rogeiro stands before him (both back in standard uniform).

SISKO

How did you find it?

ROGEIRO

I didn't - Crewman Scalin did.

Sisko looks up sharply, recognising the name of the Bajoran who called him the Emissary in 13x19. Rogeiro continues...

ROGEIRO

The battery's made of zantraetium, a mineral native to Andor but not used in Federation technology.

SISKO

So an Andorian put it there.

ROGEIRO

It seems the likeliest conclusion given the evidence. What remains unclear is how they managed to do it - the Andorian dignitaries were escorted by security at all times.

SISKO

No they weren't.

ROGEIRO

Sir?

Sisko stares at the device in his hand, imbues it with all the self-hatred he can manage. He is talking to it - and to himself - more than he is to Rogeiro.

SISKO

This is my fault, Commander. I let ch'Lhren get in my head. He knew I was here at Andor when the Borg came, of course he did - he read my file just like I read his. He knew that claiming Starfleet gave up on Andor... or Bajor... would drive me away. And that gave him the chance to plant this.

Rogeiro stands mute - he can't argue with any of that. Sisko sits back, looks up at his first officer...

SISKO

You were right about me, mister. I have been letting my personal life interfere with the job. And as a result, the *Treishya* were able to take control of my ship. All part of their plan to paint both us and their own government as cruel and incompetent, so they could launch their political coup. And I let it happen. It has to stop.

Rogeiro hesitates, not sure if he is overstepping here...

ROGEIRO

Sir... I'm available if you want to talk about anything. I told you that before, and it remains true now. And I can keep confidences.

SISKO

I appreciate the offer, Commander. But I'm not sure I'd ever be able to make you understand.

ROGEIRO
If it's about Captain Vaughn, I
know you two were close...

SISKO
That's a part of it. But it goes
back so much further than that.
So much deeper.
(deep breath)
And it's up to me to resolve it.
Return to the bridge, Commander.

ROGEIRO
Aye sir.

Disappointed but accepting, Rogeiro turns to EXIT...

9 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE (CONTINUOUS)

...to the bridge. UteIn looks up from the tactical station
at his appearance, Shar beside him at sciences...

UTELN
Commander, I was about to call.

ROGEIRO
Is there a problem?

UTELN
No sir, it's just that Presider
sh'Thalis sent us a message. The
Parliament Andoria has completed
its vote, and she's invited you,
the captain, Lieutenant ch'Thane
and Commander Nog down to the
surface to discuss the result.

Rogeiro looks back through the still open door into Sisko's
ready room, where Sisko overheard this. He stands warily...

Then back to an equally daunted Shar at sciences...

ROGEIRO
Please tell the Presider we'd be
honoured to accept her invitation.

UTELN
Understood, sir.

UtelN sets to his task. But Sisko, Shar and Rogeiro are all worried about the result of the vote...

10 **INT. PARLIAMENT ANDORIA - PRESIDER'S OFFICE**

Sisko, Rogeiro, Shar and Nog ENTER the Presider's office, all offering her the standard shallow bow.

SISKO
Presider.

SH'THALIS
(chuckle)
Straight to the point, I suppose.

SHAR
Sha?

SH'THALIS
The vote went against me. I am Presider no longer. This will be my last day in this office, and you will be my last guests.

SISKO
I'm sorry. Truly.

SH'THALIS
Thank you, Captain. But the fact is, less than half the Parliament supported my desire to move away from apportioning blame and back towards the important issues -

She gestures politely to Nog...

SH'THALIS
...Pursuing the reconstruction of Andor in the wake of the Borg...

...and then to Shar.

SH'THALIS

...and resolving our reproductive crisis. Sadly, too many of them were led astray by the *Treishya's* deliberate misdirection. And I let it happen. Perhaps I deserve this.

Sisko and Rogeiro exchange a silent look...

ROGEIRO

Presider... As Starfleet officers, we are pledged never to interfere in the affairs of member worlds. But neither can we hide what we know. Commander Nog has determined that your own deputy presider is secretly the leader of the *Treishya*. He manipulated this entire situation to remove you.

SH'THALIS

(sad smile)

I suspected as much. He claims to be against the *Treishya*, but he already announced his intention to pardon Minister ch'Lhren. Either way, the damage is done.

(beat)

But before I go, I just wanted to say thank you, for all that you've done and all that you tried to do. Despite what's happened, you will always have a friend on Andor.

As Shar absorbs these words, they give him something very deep and personal to think about...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 EXT. PALAIS DE LA CONCORDE - DAY

The centre of Federation government in Paris...

12 INT. PALAIS - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Ambassador GARAK sits around the coffee table in the casual area of Bacco's office. He stares unwaveringly at...

...President BACCO, who sits opposite him, holding Garak's disconcerting gaze, refusing to be the first to blink...

GARAK

You say this suggestion comes from
Commander Ro of Deep Space Nine.

BACCO

That's correct, Ambassador. I must
say it's an idea I never would
have come up with myself. But it
may be the way out of our impasse.

Still processing behind his pleasant facade, Garak turns to Admiral AKAAR, who sits with them, stony-faced...

GARAK

And you, Admiral... this proposal
also meets with your approval?

AKAAR

If it brings us all the results we
seek, I will endorse it from the
roof of the Palais itself. Loudly.

GARAK

A spectacle to entertain us all.

BACCO

Ambassador, the quantum slipstream
is a technology the Federation has
zealously kept to itself. We don't
even share it with the Klingons.

GARAK

Yet now you offer it to us.

AKAAR

In return for your giving us back control of the Lyshan, Argaya and Solarion systems...

GARAK

...allowing you to settle your refugees there without encroaching on Cardassian territory to do so.

BACCO

It's better than that, Ambassador. I sold you those systems a year ago so that you could use their resources. You've made strangely little progress in doing so -

Garak is about to object, but Bacco anticipates, hands up -

BACCO

- and I grant that may be my own misunderstanding of the Cardassian mindset. With slipstream drive, instead of being forced to take handouts from a former enemy, you would be empowered to go out and find those resources for yourself.

GARAK

Using a technology you gave us.

BACCO

Yes, but that's all we're doing. It's up to you to make use of it.

AKAAR

The Cardassian people's reluctance to accept charity is transformed into a new national pride, and the familiar hard work that comes with a new wave of expansion beyond the Union's current borders...

BACCO

...plus, with Legate Macet and your good self at the forefront of that effort, I feel confident that it can be accomplished without the unpleasantness that characterised your people's previous expansions.

Garak smiles, amused by Bacco's playful understatement.

GARAK

It's an intriguing proposal, Madam President. I'll withdraw to pass it on to my government, and inform you of their decision.

He makes to finish his tea and get up from the table...

BACCO

Not so fast, Mister Ambassador. Those three systems are not the full price. Such a generous gift will cost you one more thing...

GARAK

And what would that be?

BACCO

Your signature.

Bacco hands him a padd - he takes it with sly admiration.

GARAK

The Khitomer Accords.

AKAAR

It's a fair deal, Ambassador.

BACCO

With membership in the Accords, Cardassia proves to the galaxy at large that it has learned its lesson - that it can live in harmony with its neighbours.

AKAAR

Conversely, the Federation proves to the Typhon Pact that it can be trusted to work alongside former enemies, hopefully convincing them they can work alongside us too.

BACCO

You'd have the prestige of joining the alliance that has kept this corner of the galaxy more or less stable for the last hundred years - the original, not the copy.

Garak has been silently absorbing all this...

GARAK

I doubt the Klingon Empire will be pleased at you sharing such a closely held technology with us before you share it with them.

BACCO

K'mtok's on board with you signing up already, at least in general. I can have both him and Derro here in a matter of minutes if you want. What do you say, Ambassador?

Garak takes the measure of Bacco again, ponders...

GARAK

I say, Madam President... that you understand the Cardassian mindset better than you realise. I will encourage the Castellan to accept your proposal post-haste.

Bacco sighs with relief, and stands to hold Garak's arms in fellowship. Akaar stands as well.

BACCO

I'm thrilled to hear it, Mister Ambassador. As for understanding the Cardassian mindset, you can thank Commander Ro for that.

Garak nods to Bacco and Akaar, and turns to leave.

Ending on Akaar, as he considers Bacco's words about Ro...

13 **INT. ARGAYA BASE - PUBLIC AREA**

POP - the Spring Wine bottle overflows, and Cmdr Ro (in uniform), EVIK (not) and Cardassian Legate MACET all rush to get a glass before it spills, laughing in delight.

RO

Whoa, careful with that!

EVIK

How in the world do you have a bottle of Ovarani Valley spring wine just sitting around?

MACET

Purchased from our good friend Ambassador Quark on my last visit, for just such an occasion.

Macet turns to the GLASSES laid out on the refreshments table and pours the rest of the wine into those.

MACET

Let's just say... I had faith. That this would all work out.

RO

Well, turns out your faith was not misplaced. Welcome to the Khitomer Accords, Legate. Congratulations.

MACET

(clinks glasses)

And to you, on coming up with the idea that allowed it to happen.

RO

Ah no - the thanks should go to Mister Evik here. It was his... philosophy... that led us here.

Ro turns to toast Evik instead, but he politely demurs.

EVIK

Please, it's just gratifying to
see these people happy at last.

He gestures to the rest of the room, where we see...

The public area is filled with REFUGEES from the convoy,
all HUGGING and greeting each other with relief. Children
of various races run around enjoying the space, shouting
and playing in their newfound freedom.

RO

Oh come on, Nath - there's gotta
be a part of you that's proud.

EVIK

Well, I will say it's the first
time my method has worked on such
a grand scale. I'm accustomed to
resolving petty disputes on the
Promenade, not facilitating the
alliance of interstellar empires.

RO

It's a hell of an achievement,
Nath. Enjoy it while you can,
because Major Cenn is going to
want you back on that Promenade.

EVIK

(clinks glasses)

I look forward to it.

Out of the crowd of civilians emerges KASIDY, tired but
satisfied. She comes to join Ro and the others...

KASIDY

Right - that's the last of my lot.
In fact, I think that's all the
refugees from the entire convoy.

RO

Thanks so much for putting up with
the delays, Captain Yates.

EVIK
(passes her a glass)
Here - you deserve it, Captain.

KASIDY
I'm glad I could help. Although I
do need to get back to Bajor - I
told Rebecca I'd only be a week.

She looks at the crowd, and sees UWO, the Xepolite woman
from 13x20, hugging her newly arrived relatives in fierce
relief. One of them is a young girl about Rebecca's age.

KASIDY
Still... could be worse.

Now the Cardassian Gul MOGAD strides out of the crowd. He
is not happy about being forced to back down, barely able
to control his sneers. He presents a PADD to Macet...

MOGAD
Legate... the reclamation of all
Cardassian materiel from the
Argaya system is almost complete.

Macet and Ro are sorely tempted to gloat, but they likewise
manage to keep it professional...

MACET
Thank you, Gul Mogad. Would you
care for some spring wine?

MOGAD
Not while on duty, Legate.

RO
You know, Gul... your people are
welcome to stay if they want. The
Federation has no desire to kick
anyone out of their homes.

MOGAD
That will not be necessary, thank
you, Commander.

MACET

Very well. Dismissed, Gul.

Hating every second of this, Mogad turns and heads for the exit. Ro and Macet clink their glasses together again...

14 INT. PALAIS - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

President Bacco stands staring out of the window across the Paris skyline - a bit drizzly, but otherwise pleasant.

AKAAR (o.s.)

Madam President?

BACCO

(doesn't turn)

Join me, Leonard.

Admiral Akaar appears by her side, looks out of the window.

AKAAR

The settlement of the refugees is proceeding as expected.

BACCO

And the Cardassians?

AKAAR

Proudly declaring their new status as Khitomer Accords members.

(beat)

This does not seem to please you.

BACCO

Oh it does, it does. It's just... We lost the Talarians thanks to Tzenkethi interference. We lost the Gorn before we even knew what was going on. Now we've lost the Romulans too, thanks to Tal'Aura reunifying under the Typhon Pact.

AKAAR

The Romulans were never a likely prospect, ma'am. And now we have the Cardassians and the Ferengi.

BACCO

(scoff)

The Ferengi - so intimidating.

(off Akaar's look)

I know, I should be grateful. But you know it's just what everyone else thinks. And the Cardassians - a former fascist state that never recovered from the war, and we had to hand over our prized possession - the only thing that gave us any technological superiority - to get them to not be fascists anymore.

Suddenly they are interrupted by the voice of SIVAK:

SIVAK (comm)

Madam President. The councillor for Andor has arrived, and she requests an audience.

BACCO

Interesting... four days of comm silence, ever since they kicked sh'Thalis out of office, and now they show up out of the blue.

(off Akaar's look)

Stop - don't make me laugh.

(taps comm)

Please show her in, Sivak.

Bacco and Akaar turn from the window to face the door, just as Agent WEXLER opens it and admits ZH'FAILA, the Andorian council member (last seen 12x11 "Death of a Salesman"). Wexler closes the door but remains in the room, in case.

ZH'FAILA

(shallow bow)

Madam President. Admiral.

BACCO

Councillor zh'Faila, this is an unexpected surprise. I know things have to be hectic for you right now. What can I do for you?

ZH' FAILA

The media blackout will be lifted shortly, but the new presider believed you were deserving of advance notice in this matter.

AKAAR

What matter is that, Councillor?

ZH' FAILA

I have been sent here to inform you that, during the last four days, my government approved and conducted a global referendum. All the votes have now been counted, and the Parliament has in turn cast their own vote.

BACCO

(getting impatient)

A vote on what, Councillor?

ZH' FAILA

All that will be made clear when the Presider makes our secession declaration via the Federation News Service, ma'am. Effective with that announcement... Andor will no longer be a member of the United Federation of Planets.

Off Bacco and Akaar's amazed reactions...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

15 INT. PALAIS - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Reacting to zh'Faila's news, Akaar is disguising a rage of frustration, while Bacco is openly losing her cool...

BACCO

What?! You can't be serious.

ZH'FAILA

I'm afraid I am, Madam President. I have been honoured to serve as Andor's representative these four years, but like many of my people, I was most distressed to hear of this... Shedai meta-genome. To keep such information from us in our moment of need is hardly the behaviour one expects of allies.

BACCO

It's not as simple as that.

ZH'FAILA

From Andor's perspective, ma'am, it seems quite straightforward. The Federation has, for more than a century and in full knowledge of the problems faced by my people, kept secret information which is proving to be of great benefit.

BACCO

We didn't know! Admiral Akaar and I only learned about this a matter of hours before the Tholians told you. Now that we do know, there's no reason not to explore it to its fullest potential. And I promise you that Professor zh'Thiin will enjoy far more success and support working with us than on her own.

ZH' FAILA

The time for that has passed, Madam President. Our government has already extended overtures to the Tholian Assembly in the hopes of opening a continuing dialogue. As such, we will no longer require Federation aid or assistance. All Federation citizens and Starfleet personnel will be expelled, though non-Andorian civilians may stay with the understanding that they are subject to Andorian law.

BACCO

Your government would throw away everything we've worked for, for more than two hundred years? Over a secret that's been buried for a century, an error we can correct right here, this very minute?

ZH' FAILA

My government is simply acting in accordance with the will of our people, Madam President.

BACCO

(pleading)

Councillor... Andor is a founding member of the Federation. We've been allies for centuries. Do you realise the precedent this sets?

ZH' FAILA

Indeed we do. Our action will send an unambiguous message to all the worlds of the Federation that they are not obliged to subordinate themselves to a government that would place dubious secrets over the welfare of those in need. They will know there are alternatives to such blind devotion. Thank you for your time, Madam President.

zh'Faila nods curtly to Akaar, then turns to leave. At Bacco's sad nod of permission, Wexler opens the door, lets zh'Faila out, closes it again, but stays in the room...

And Bacco's frustration EXPLODES. She SWEEPS things off her desk with a furious ROAR. Picks up other things and HURLS them at the wall, where they SMASH. With every SCREAM and SMASH, Akaar flinches, feeling her powerlessness and rage.

By the door, Wexler witnesses his President falling apart. Silently, unnoticed by either Bacco or Akaar, he steps to the door and removes himself, giving her her privacy.

16 INT. PALAIS - RECEPTION AREA

As Wexler closes the door quietly against another SMASH, Councillor zh'Faila has already departed.

But Bacco's secretary SIVAK has obviously heard the uproar from the other room, and silently raises an eyebrow.

Wexler just shakes his head without saying a word. Sivak's Vulcan calm nevertheless reveals sympathy for his employer.

Understanding, Sivak returns to his desk, while Wexler stands silent guard outside the President's office.

17 INT. PALAIS - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Daring at last to approach her, Akaar reaches out a hand...

...and Bacco takes it, collapsing against the admiral's enormous barrel chest in exhausted tears.

BACCO

Damn it. Somewhere, that bitch
Tezrene is laughing her ass off.

AKAAR

Ma'am?

BACCO

They beat us, Leonard. They've
been trying all year, pressing on
our weak spots, and now they've
gone and done it. They beat us.

Akaar says nothing, lets Bacco weep against his chest.

BACCO

How did this happen, Leonard? How
did we let things get this far?

AKAAR

I have no answer, Madam President.

BACCO

You know, Leonard, I think it's
okay for you to call me Nan now.

AKAAR

As you wish, Madam President.

She doesn't even chuckle at his joke. She's too tired.

18 EXT. SPACE - ANDOR ORBIT

The *Robinson* in orbit over Andor...

19 INT. ROBINSON - TRANSPORTER ROOM

A Galaxy-class transporter room, last seen in the person of
the *Venture* (12x22a "Lost Souls"). The coils POWER UP...

...and six Starfleet officers MATERIALISE - non-Andorians,
including STANNIS and ROGERS. Cmdr ROGEIRO greets them.

ROGEIRO

Welcome back to the *Robinson* crew.
Those of you travelling with us
back to Earth, please consult the
computer for temporary billets.
Everyone will have to double up
for the duration of the journey.

He gestures them off the transporter platform and out into
the corridor. Then turns to SCALIN behind the controls...

ROGEIRO

Next group please, crewman.

Scalin works the panels, and the coils POWER UP again...

20 INT. ROBINSON - MAIN SHUTTLE BAY

Shar stands gazing sadly at the *Rio Grande*, parked among *Robinson's* many smaller shuttles. As the Andorian turns back to the room, we see that he is now out of uniform. Tenmei gazes sadly at him, then pulls him into a hug....

TENMEI

Bastards... I'm so sorry, Shar...

Shar pulls back with a sad smile, and turns to include Nog. Bashir and Sisko stand apart, observing.

NOG

Your own government forcing you to resign from Starfleet. Incredible.

SHAR

I made this choice willingly, Nog. I cannot exile myself from my world again - not now, when they need me more than ever.

TENMEI

Yes, but -

SHAR

Prynn, it's okay. I first joined Starfleet to help my people. That was the goal - I served the one in order to serve the other. Things are not how I would prefer them... but if these are my options, then I can live with them.

Sad for his friend, Nog hugs Shar as well. The formerly standoffish Andorian accepts it warmly, revels in it.

NOG

Where will you live? Your home...

SHAR

I'll stay with Professor zh'Thiin for the moment. But Sessethantis also contacted me...

TENMEI

(unimpressed)

What did she want?

SHAR

She said I am welcome at Cheen-Thitar Keep if I should ever need somewhere. She has also formally resigned from the Visionist party, in protest at their actions.

TENMEI

What about you, Nog? You can't go back to the atmosphere plant.

NOG

Captain Sisko's gonna take me back to Earth first of all. And then... I think I need to go home.

SHAR

To Ferenginar?

NOG

(nods)

Haven't been since the invasion... But seeing all the refugees on DS-Nine, then being here on Andor...

(beat)

Too many people don't have any families to go home to. I've got a lot of leave saved up - I think I should spend it with mine.

Sisko absorbs this silently from afar... Meanwhile Shar and Tenmei both have their own emotions about this...

TENMEI

My only remaining family is lying brain dead, back on Bajor.

SHAR

Then you should go to him, Prynn.

Tenmei nods, accepting that.

Shar has concluded his business here. He turns to Sisko and Bashir, shakes their hands...

SHAR
Permission to disembark, Captain.

SISKO
Permission granted, Lieutenant - reluctantly. Starfleet is losing a talented and valuable officer.

BASHIR
I promise I'll help however I can, Shar. You only have to ask.

SHAR
Thank you, Doctor. And goodbye.

TENMEI
If I may do the honours...?

SISKO
Be my guest, Lieutenant.

At Sisko's nod, Tenmei heads into the runabout, with Shar and Bashir behind him. Nog stays with Sisko.

21 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Inside the runabout, Bashir moves to the front to give Shar and Tenmei privacy.

Shar steps aboard the mini-transporter while Tenmei prepares the settings. They share a moment, both knowing they might never see each other again.

TENMEI
Someday, Shar.

SHAR
Someday.

Tenmei works the controls... and Shar DEMATERIALISES.

She gulps down her feelings and turns to join Bashir.

BASHIR
He'll be fine, Prynn.

TENMEI
I know. Just... hard to let go.

22 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE

Rogeiرو sits in the centre chair, the usual senior staff around him. A turbolift arrives, and Sisko and Nog ENTER. Rogeiرو stands to surrender the chair...

ROGEIRO
Captain. All Starfleet personnel previously stationed on Andor are now aboard. The *Rio Grande* has requested clearance to depart. And... former presider sh'Thalis is hailing us from the surface.

Sisko takes the centre chair, fully professional. Rogeiرو takes his XO seat, while Nog takes the third position.

SISKO
Thank you, Commander. Please put the *sha* through.

Rogeiرو nods to Utehn, who works his console...

VIEWSCREEN

...reveals sh'Thalis, Professor zh'Thiin, and now Shar, all standing together.

SISKO
Sha Presider. How can we help?

Sisko knows that is no longer accurate, but he is saying it as a mark of respect. sh'Thalis accepts this gratefully.

SH'THALIS (screen)
I wanted to wish you safe journey, Captain. And to thank you again for your support through this difficult time.

SISKO

The pleasure was ours, Presider.
I hope we have the opportunity to
work together again in future.

SH'THALIS (screen)

I have no doubt my people will
come to regret the decision they
have made today, Captain. And when
they do, Starfleet will be welcome
here again. For now... Andor out.

The signal drops. Rogeiro speaks up...

ROGEIRO

Helm, set course out of the Andor
system. Then to Earth - let's get
these people home.

Sisko reacts to Rogeiro's use of the word "home"...

SIVADEKI

Aye, sir.

The Tyrellian woman at helm works her console...

23 EXT. SPACE - ANDOR ORBIT

The *Robinson* pulls away from the blue-white planet, leaving
its dark smudges of damage unrepaired.

As it moves, the rear hatch to the main shuttle bay OPENS,
and the runabout *Rio Grande* emerges.

The two ships take separate headings, and move off...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

24 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The *Defiant* slowly approaches the station... and carefully docks at its usual spot on the docking ring.

25 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

A CHEER goes up as the *Defiant* crew enters the room. They move into the crowd, who are all celebrating to see the heroes return - especially their beloved security chief.

RO and EVIK make it to the bar, where QUARK is already pouring drinks with a big welcoming smile.

QUARK

There they are. Welcome back, you two - these are on the house.

EVIK

How uncharacteristically generous of you, Ambassador.

QUARK

It's not every day you meet the two Bajorans who managed to get the Cardassians to sign up to the Khitomer Accords. Besides, it's only the first two that are free.

RO

That sounds more like Quark.

Ro and Evik take the drinks, CHEERS them together, and sip them contentedly. Then Major CENN forces his way through the crowd to greet them as well...

CENN

Thank the Prophets, you're back.

RO

Major! Did you miss us?

CENN

More than I ever thought possible.
I've got criminal activity reports
stacked up, seven cargo bays need
unloading, four freighter captains
demanding maintenance teams...

EVIK

Desca, you old softy - I missed
you too. And I'm glad to be home.
It was important work there, and
I'm proud to have done it...

RO

...But we're happy to have you
back where you belong, Nath.

Ro clinks her drink to Evik's and Cenn's again. Then she
looks out across the crowd, towards the *dabo* table...

...and CHOKES on her drink at the sight of TREIR teaching
the Nausicaan refugee, SEBRIGAR, how to use the *dabo* wheel.

RO

Quark, what in fire is going on at
your *dabo* wheel?

QUARK

Oh, that. Treir's training up my
new *dabo* boy slash bouncer.

RO

New one? What happened to Hetik?

Off Ro's confusion...

26 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Candlewood trots happily down the corridor, travelling bag
on shoulder, eager to get home and see his boyfriend. He
reaches the right door, taps to OPEN...

27 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS

...and marches on in, tapping the *mezuzah* at the door.

CANDLEWOOD

Honey, I'm home!

But silence greets him. Only then does he notice...

...that Hetik's prayer mandala is not in its usual place. There is no *dabo* outfit hanging, waiting to be worn. In fact, no sign of Hetik's possessions at all. The room looks half empty without them. Candlewood is totally confused...

CANDLEWOOD

What the...

Eventually, Hetik appears from out of the bedroom. Serious and sad, but calm and determined to push through with it.

HETIK

Hi, John.

CANDLEWOOD

What's going on? Where's all your stuff?

HETIK

It's packed up, ready to go.

CANDLEWOOD

Go? Go where?

HETIK

I'm leaving. I'm going to join the refugees on Argaya, help them set up their new colony.

CANDLEWOOD

You're... leaving the station?

HETIK

(deep breath)

I'm leaving you, John.

Candlewood's jaw drops, utterly stunned. Can't process it.

CANDLEWOOD

...why?

HETIK

Because I don't think we're a good match anymore. Treir said I was just worried about you being in danger... but that's not it. This refugee situation -

CANDLEWOOD

But that's fixed now - they've got homes and they're not living under the Cardassians. You got your way.

HETIK

That's not the point! We were on opposite sides this whole time. Doesn't that disturb you?

CANDLEWOOD

Not really... We've argued before, and we've always figured it out -

HETIK

Not this time. I can't be with someone who doesn't feel like I do about something so fundamental to who I am. I just... I can't do it.

CANDLEWOOD

But... Hawaii! And, and Chicago... and my mom, and...

HETIK

I know. I was looking forward to seeing them too. But you showed me that I don't have to settle.

CANDLEWOOD

Settle?! I thought you loved me.

HETIK

I did. I loved you so much. But... we both know that isn't always enough. I don't have to stay with a man who isn't right for me. I'm stronger than that. So I'm going.

While Candlewood stands there still stunned, Hetik walks up, places a quick kiss on his cheek and heads to the door. In desperation, Candlewood defiantly calls after him...

CANDLEWOOD
I won't kill myself over you!

At the door, Hetik turns back and smiles sadly...

HETIK
Good. I wouldn't want you to. I
want you to be happy, John. It
just won't be with me. Bye.

He leaves, letting the door close behind him. Candlewood is rooted to the spot, unable to grasp what just happened...

28 EXT. VANADWAN MONASTERY - SHUTTLE PORT - EVENING

With the gorgeous mountain SUNSET as a backdrop, the *Rio Grande* touches down gently onto the docking platform...

29 INT. VANADWAN MONASTERY - RAIQ'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The door peeks open, and Tenmei and Bashir (who is carrying a medkit bag) poke their heads through...

BASHIR
May we come in?

KIRA rises and hugs Bashir and Tenmei in welcome...

KIRA
Julian! Prynn! Come in, please!

They do, tentatively, not wanting to disturb RAIQ, who lies in the bed, resting but awake.

BASHIR
How's our new mother?

RAIQ
I am well, thank you, healer.
Tired, but well.

BASHIR

Good. I wonder if you'd consent to a post-natal scan? Just to be sure everything's in working order.

At Raiq's too-tired-to-argue nod of permission, Bashir pulls out a medical tricorder and begins to scan...

BASHIR

I see the bio-armour split in some strategic places - round the lower abdomen, and across the chest.

KIRA

Actually, I was wondering about that. Ascendant babies are placed right into a ship, and it feeds them. But with no ships anymore...

BASHIR

I'd guess the armour splits over the chest precisely so that the mother can nurse the baby. Like a vestigial physical process - the body does it automatically, even if culturally it's not needed.

RAIQ

But now... it will be.

TENMEI

So where is the little one?

VEXH (o.s.)

Here she is...

They all turn to see VEXH carrying the baby out of the bathroom back to its mother. The father is enchanted, cradling the baby with total love and fascination...

KIRA

Everyone, please meet Aniq.

BASHIR

Oh, she's beautiful.

KIRA

Vexh has been the perfect doting father. Hasn't been able to take his eyes off her. Have you, Vexh?

VEXH

She is my child. My child.

Kira marvels at the change in the male Ascendant, who cared about nothing until his baby came. Now he's in love.

Tenmei takes Kira aside, speaks *sotto*...

TENMEI

Is it okay if I check on my dad?

KIRA

Of course it's okay, Prynn. You know where his room is?

Tenmei nods, and slips quietly out of the room...

30 INT. VANADWAN MONASTERY - HOSPICE ROOM - EVENING

OPAKA keeps watch over the supine VAUGHN and his support machines. At the CREAK of the door, she looks up...

OPAKA

Prynn! Oh my dear, please come in.

Tenmei enters quietly, creeps to the bed, takes his hand.

TENMEI

Just wanted to make sure he was still with us.

OPAKA

Oh yes. Very much so.

TENMEI

I was worried... that he might not be. What with the baby coming, and all. You know, the old cliché - a new life starts, and an old life departs to make room for it.

OPAKA
Elias is not done with this world
just yet, Prynn.

TENMEI
How can you be sure?

OPAKA
Because I felt his *pagh*.

FLASHBACK - 12x20 "DISINFORMATION"

-- As Opaka grips Vaughn's earlobe, then stands back in
delighted amazement...

BACK TO SCENE

OPAKA
Your father's spirit may be weak,
but it is still clinging on. The
Prophets have work for him yet.

Off Tenmei's reaction...

31 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A moment, to indicate time passing to the next morning...

32 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Major Cenn walks down the corridor. He reaches a certain
door, taps the comm... there is no response.

CENN
Commander Evik? Are you in there?

Still no response.

CENN
Computer, locate Lieutenant
Commander Evik.

COMPUTER
Lieutenant Commander Evik is in
his quarters.

They why isn't he answering? Cenn senses something wrong...

CENN

Computer... security override to
open Commander Evik's quarters.
Authorisation Cenn pi-four-eight-
two-nine-green.

The computer BEEPS, and the door OPENS...

33 INT. DS9 - EVIK'S QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM

Cenn tentatively enters the room - it is dark as if for
bed, but no sign of any problems. He calls out...

CENN

Nath...? Everything okay? I was
expecting you in the security
office for our morning meeting...

No reply...

34 INT. DS9 - EVIK'S QUARTERS - BEDROOM

Cenn pokes his head in, not wanting to disturb.

CENN

Computer - lights.

The bedroom lights come on...

...revealing EVIK in bed, calm and peaceful, no sign of any
problems. But clearly cold and grey and lifeless.

Off Cenn's devastated realisation...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

35 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Bashir pulls a sheet over Evik's face, as the chief lies still on a bio-bed. Ro and Cenn look on, numb with shock...

RO

I don't understand. We had a great night together in the bar... he wasn't up late, went back to his quarters, he seemed fine... maybe a little tipsy...

BASHIR

He was fine... mostly. He had a minor heart condition that we'd been managing together.

RO

Why didn't I know about that?

BASHIR

It wasn't severe enough to affect his job performance, so doctor-patient confidentiality applied. He might have lived out his whole life without it ever...

RO

And then one day - boom. Dead.

BASHIR

From what Major Cenn described, he died peacefully in his sleep. There would have been no pain. He just went to bed after a nice night out with his friends...

CENN

And woke up with the Prophets.

Ro's anger sparks at that... but before it can explode...

CENN
Thank you, Doctor.

Cenn takes Ro by the arm and gently guides her out...

36 **INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM**

Tenmei pokes her head in... and sags in sympathy...

TENMEI
Oh... John...

Candlewood sits on the deck, surrounded by the debris of a hurricane, exhausted and quietly weeping. Table knocked over, books on the floor, candlestick on the deck under a dented wall. Tenmei steps over the mess towards him...

TENMEI
Their told me everything.

No answer from Candlewood. Tenmei spots the picture of John and Hetik together in Vic's lounge. Bends down, picks it up, brushes off the smashed glass, puts it somewhere safe.

Tenmei stands and looks at her friend for a moment, then gets down to the deck and sits next to him, puts her arm around him, gently pulls his head onto her shoulder.

CANDLEWOOD
It's not fair. Everything sucked,
everything was horrible...
(re the room)
But this, this was safe, and good,
and happy. And everything else...
was supposed to get better.

TENMEI
It will. It will get better.

CANDLEWOOD
But when, Prynne? We were good. We
were all... good. You and me, and
him... both of them. And now...

TENMEI
I know. None of it's fair.

(about Shar)
None of it.

Candlewood cries quietly on Tenmei's shoulder...

37 **INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE**

A WALL SCREEN shows an MOS Federation News Service report, including a speech by the new Andorian presider, CH'FORUTA.

RO
Looks like the Typhon Pact were playing the long game all along.

CENN
What do you mean?

RO
They interfere with our rebuilding plans... chase us off potential colony worlds... make sure we're left without any allies, then just to finish off... tear the very heart of the Federation apart.

Ro switches off the news report in disgust, and goes back to her desk. CENN follows her...

CENN
The Andorians voted to leave the Federation. Democratically.

RO
Only because the Tholians used the anger, the frustration of one of our most deeply wounded members, to hurt us. And now Andor might become the newest member of the Pact? Hell of a PR victory.

CENN
That's the downside of democracy, I guess - sometimes, people make the wrong decision, and we have to live with it. But thanks to you, we're stronger than ever before.

RO

And look what I got out of it.

Unhappy, Ro reaches into her desk drawer, and pulls out... a single RANK PIP. Cenn is genuinely happy for her...

CENN

You got promoted?

RO

(in disbelief)

Courtesy of Admiral Akaar himself.

(pompously)

"In recognition of my outstanding work on behalf of the Federation's refugees, and ensuring Cardassian entry into the Khitomer Accords."

CENN

Congratulations. So... why haven't you put it on?

RO

Because it's not fair! I don't deserve this - Nath does. And now he'll never get it.

Cenn is sympathetic to Ro's struggle - he feels it too. But he tries to drag her out of her doldrums...

CENN

He didn't want it. He was always ready to help, not for any reward, but just because it was the right thing to do. Trust me, he went to the Prophets happy with his life.

RO

(scoff)

The Prophets. I took off that damn earring because I was ready to stop hating them and start hearing what they had to say. And now look - I take the earring off, I get to put this on instead.

She brandishes the rank pip angrily. Cenn is confused...

CENN

Isn't it a good thing? You opened your mind to other ideas, enough to befriend a Cardassian, and believe me, I know how hard that must be. And this is your reward.

RO

I didn't want a reward. I didn't do it to get some dumb promotion. I did it... to be more like Nath. To do the right thing. But this just ruins it. Cheapens it.

Cenn gently takes the pip from Ro's hand...

CENN

No. You've earned this. A dozen times over.

RO

Aren't you the one who says the Prophets and Starfleet don't mix?

CENN

I was. Nath opened my mind. Turns out, you don't have to choose. And if you really want to honour him, then you should wear this proudly. It's the right thing to do.

Cenn reaches across to Ro, and gently affixes the extra pip to her collar, making a total of four.

CENN

Congratulations, Captain Ro.

Off Ro's ambivalent response...

38 **EXT. SPACE - ROBINSON**

The Galaxy-class ship travels at warp...

39 **INT. ROBINSON - READY ROOM**

Sisko sits behind his desk, Rogeiro standing before him.

ROGEIRO

Lieutenant Commander Sivadeki has confirmed our course back to the Sierra sector. We should be back on our standard patrol route along the Romulan border within the day.

SISKO

Thank you, Commander. Dismissed.

Rogeiro nods and turns to go... but then turns back.

ROGEIRO

Captain...

SISKO

(knows what
he will ask)

I'll join you on the bridge soon, Commander. There's just one thing I need to finish off here first. I've left it too long already.

ROGEIRO

Aye, sir.

Rogeiro EXITS back to the bridge. Sisko gets up, goes to the replicator, is about to order something...

...then realises he is just stalling, and comes back to the desk. He taps a few entries on the computer, then...

SISKO

Computer. Record a message for delivery to Kasidy Yates, Kendra Province, Bajor.

40 **MONTAGE - ACROSS THE FEDERATION**

-- Kasidy Yates MATERIALISES on the path to her house on Bajor. Within moments, the door FLINGS open and REBECCA pelts out to greet her mother with a fierce hug...

SISKO (v.o.)
Kasidy, it's Ben. I know it's been
almost a year since I left. And
before I say anything more... I
want to tell you that I'm sorry.

-- Vanadwan Monastery on Bajor. Raiq lies in bed, watching
in vaguely happy bemusement as Vexh sits nearby and gazes
with adoration at their baby daughter, held in his arms...

SISKO (v.o.)
I know I've hurt you. And in many
ways I can't possibly understand
what you've been through. But in
others... I know all too well.

-- The Bajoran shrine on DS9. A *duranja* lamp burns while
Vedek CAPRIL chants. Ro, in captain's pips, grabs a handful
of sand from a nearby brazier, throws it into the lamp. The
rest of DS9's senior staff stand in line to follow her...

SISKO (v.o.)
What I went through after Jennifer
died - I wouldn't wish that on
anyone, especially not someone I
love. And I do love you, Kasidy.
I think I always will.

-- The Nagus's residence on Ferenginar. ROM and LEETA greet
the prodigal son NOG's return, with hugs and proud fondling
of his Lt Cmdr's pips. (Can be recorded during 13x05.)

SISKO (v.o.)
You know that family means more to
me than anything. I'll do whatever
it takes to protect my family. And
that's why I had to leave.

-- The Roth Dining Room in the Palais. Bacco and Akaar host
a celebration for the new members of the Khitomer Accords.
Numerous dignitaries including boisterous K'MTOK, garrulous
DERRO, and quietly smiling GARAK. As those three move on,
Bacco's glance with Akaar reveals that her public smile
hides a private sadness. (Can be recorded during 13x15.)

SISKO (v.o.)

I told you before we were married
what the Prophets told me - if I
spend my life with you, I will
know nothing but sorrow.

-- Vanadwan Monastery on Bajor. Opaka takes care of Vaughn,
cleans his old lined face with a cloth, straightens his
sheets, talks to him as if he can hear and understand...

SISKO (v.o.)

They weren't threatening me. They
were just telling me what they'd
already seen, in my future. And
it's already begun. Look at what
happened to Elias...

-- Sisko's restaurant on Earth. RENA hands two plates to
JAKE. He carries them out to customers, passes the memorial
of JOSEPH on the wall... (Can be recorded during 13x15.)

SISKO (v.o.)

...or my father. I know what
you'll say - they were both older,
they both had health problems.

-- The Vedek Assembly chamber on Bajor. Another passionate
discussion is taking place, KIRA holding her own among the
more experienced Vedeks... (Can be recorded during 13x03.)

SISKO (v.o.)

The Prophets had nothing to do
with either of their deaths. But
it doesn't matter why these things
happened - just that they did.

-- Sisko's house on Bajor. Kasidy sits on the sofa while
Rebecca eagerly shows her a padd - what she did in school
recently. Meanwhile JASMINE brings her a mug of tea...

SISKO (v.o.)

And the sorrow is getting closer
all the time. We already nearly
lost Rebecca once. I couldn't bear
for anything to happen to her
again. To either of you.

-- Professor zh'Thiin's laboratory on Andor, where she and Shar now work feverishly to save their species...

SISKO (v.o.)

I was just at Andor, where things were already bad enough because I failed to protect them from the Borg. Now they're even worse, and they don't have the Federation to help them...

-- Candlewood's room on DS9. Emotionally empty, he tidies up the mess that he himself made. He picks up the picture of him and Hetik together in Vic's lounge, gazes at it...

SISKO (v.o.)

...They're on their own. It just goes to prove that I was right. I'm the bad luck charm, Kas. That's why I had to leave. I had to save you... from me.

-- The public area at Argaya base, still in happy chaos as the many refugees wait in lines to pick up their official documents, instructions, supplies. HETIK is one of those providing the help - he is busy and tired, but content...

SISKO (v.o.)

I thought that getting away, as far as I could, would be enough. But my feelings for you just made everything worse at Andor, and now I hear you were almost killed by the Cardassians.

-- Bridge of the *Aventine*. DAX confers with HELKARA and KEDAIR at their stations, before heading back to the centre chair and sitting next to BOWERS, in full and confident command of her ship... (Can be recorded during 13x10.)

SISKO (v.o.)

That's why, before recording this, I sent a petition to the Mylea courthouse... filing for divorce. I think it's the best thing.

-- Sisko's house, Kasidy's office. She sits as the computer screen flashes MESSAGE FROM CPT BENJAMIN L SISKO - PLAYING. Outside the window, in the garden, Rebecca runs around with Jasmine. Kasidy watches - how can she possibly tell her?

SISKO (v.o.)

It will keep you safe, and it will help us both to move on. I hope this message makes some kind of sense to you, and that it'll make sense to Rebecca too, when you're ready for her to hear it.

41 END MONTAGE - BACK TO SCENE

Sisko has returned to his desk...

SISKO

I love you, Kasidy. And I'm sorry.
End recording.

(computer beeps)

Computer, transmit message.

Another BEEP, and the screen shows MESSAGE TRANSMITTED.

Sisko takes a deep breath, stands from his desk, pulls his uniform straight, and heads out to the bridge.

42 EXT. SPACE - ROBINSON

The *Robinson* carries its captain away into the distance...

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW