

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x20 - "Slave."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novel

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Warpath

by David Mack

NOTE: This episode features three different versions of Kira Nerys. For clarity, we will refer to them as follows:

KIRA - Captain Kira Nerys of Starfleet, currently in the infirmary after being attacked by Taran'atar.

INTENDANT KIRA - The Mirror Kira, Intendant of Bajor, on board a Klingon Alliance vessel, formulating plans.

GENERAL KIRA - A mythical figure from Bajor's ancient past, leading her armies, a vision experienced by our Kira.

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 POV - HI-TECH VIEWER

A vast expanse of DESERT, so hot and dry that the ground has cracked, creating great ravines in the ground.

SCAN slowly sideways, indicators changing accordingly at the side of the image. We are searching for something...

A PUFF of dust moving through one of the ravines. The image immediately centres, ZOOMS in, tracks the dust through the ravine, its source still hidden for the moment. At an intersection with another ravine we finally see --

-- a FIGURE riding a hover-bike, kicking up the sand of the desert. The image FREEZES, zooms in closer on the rider.

A program scans the image... resolves it further... until it becomes clear this is the CARDASSIAN WOMAN from 9x19.

2 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The viewer is actually the targeting sight on a massive long-distance WEAPON, gripped calmly but firmly in the hands of a NAUSICAN male, a coldly professional assassin.

He's been lying flat camouflaged among the rocks for hours, but now he GRINS cold - his prey is finally in his sights.

On the Nausicaan as he remembers...

3 INT. PRISON

Cardassian design, dark and claustrophobic. Three figures sit against the wall, all looking into camera. There is the Nausicaan, the KLINGON WOMAN from 9x19, and the CHALNOTH male from 9x19. All listen intently as someone speaks...

KIRA (o.s.)

She'll be trying to get here, to me. I want her stopped. What you do with her is up to you, I don't care - although personally I prefer dead. Just as long as she doesn't get anywhere near me or this facility.

The arrayed assassins and mercenaries nod acknowledgment.

4 BACK TO SCENE

The Nausicaan leans in to look through his targeting sensors again...

5 POV - HI-TECH VIEWER

The image SCANS sideways, following the ravine ahead of the Cardassian Woman. Further along her path, there is another intersection, where the Nausicaan will get a clear shot.

We stay on the intersection - the indicators super-imposed on the image change, centring on that position, until the system says TARGET ACQUIRED.

6 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The Nausicaan calmly, smoothly moves his fingers to rest on the weapon's firing control. There's no way he can fail --

-- until an enormous RUMBLE from outside his hiding place. Something is kicking up a huge cloud of dust and sand...

7 POV - HI-TECH VIEWER

...leaving the system to say TARGET LOST.

Then the great cloud of sand billows towards us...

8 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The Nausicaan drops his weapon, brings up both arms, wraps them around his head as protection --

-- just in time for the sand cloud to BLAST over him, knock over the weapon, covering him head to toe in sand and dust.

It passes... and the Nausicaan jumps to his feet, ROARS with frustration, looks up for the disturbance --

-- and sees a SHAPE roaring through the air. Empty space defined only by the dust it kicked up. Then it UNCLOAKS --

-- and reveals the Klingon runabout, the *noH'pach*.

The Nausicaan ROARS again, but the ship ignores him, heads directly for one of the larger hills. The Nausicaan turns to follow its progress...

...and the Klingon ship flies on, never slowing, heading directly for a deadly crash against the rock face...

... but then it passes THROUGH the side of the mountain - just a holographic projection - and disappears...

9 INT. PRISON - TUNNEL

With the fuzzy image looking back through the holographic shield behind it... the Klingon ship flies down a long dark passage, into the core of the mountain...

10 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

...until it emerges into the centre of the prison facility. Lowers gently on anti-gravs... LANDS on a docking platform.

PAN UP - to reveal that the docking platform is actually a bridge over a massive chasm down into the depths of the mountain. A huge, cylindrical excavation, cold metal walkway spiralling around the edge, down into the darkness.

11 INT. NOH' PACH - COCKPIT

TARAN'ATAR stands at the controls. This is his destination. He takes a deep breath, turns towards the rear cabin...

12 INT. NOH' PACH - REAR CABIN

...and steps into the rear cabin, where TENMEI still hangs by her wrists. He is oddly hesitant, at a crossroads...

TENMEI

Now what?

TARAN'ATAR

I have arrived at my destination.
For the rendezvous.

TENMEI

Rendezvous? With who?

TARAN'ATAR

I... don't know.
 (tired, confused)
No... I do know. But I am not
meant to. I was told to forget...
to forget her.

TENMEI

Is that why you left DS-Nine?

TARAN'ATAR

No. I left the station because I
had attacked Captain Kira and
Lieutenant Ro. It is very likely
that I killed them.

TENMEI

(blanches)

Are you going to kill me, now?

TARAN'ATAR

No. I will remand you to whatever
authority is in control here.

TENMEI

Great. You're a real prince.

TARAN'ATAR

Goodbye, Prynn Tenmei.

He turns and leaves...

13 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

The ship's hatch opens - and Taran'atar emerges. Crossing the bridge towards him is another alien - a NALORI male, pitch black skin, purplish ritualistic scarification marks, rifle slung over his back. His name is JAID.

Behind Jaid, at the edge of the docking platform, a dozen other ALIENS of various species wait in a huddle - more mercenaries. For the purposes of later episodes, we need to be able to identify among them the following:

- An Efrosian female [Efrosians from TOS movies 4 and 6]
- A suspicious-looking Romulan male
- A large, hulking Lissepian male [Lissepians from 1x15]
- A Kressari female [Kressari from 2x02]

JAID

You must be Taran'atar. I'm Jaid.

TARAN'ATAR

There is a prisoner on my vessel.
Do with her and the ship as you
see fit. I'm done with them.

Taran'atar hands Jaid the controller for Prynn's handcuffs, then pushes past him and into the depths of the prison...

JAID

Where are you going?

TARAN'ATAR

(doesn't turn)

To meet my new god.

On Taran'atar's stern, yet uncertain face...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

14 INT. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

VAUGHN stands by the transporter platform with six security - human females NEELEY (6x02) and MOORE, Vulcan male SEVAK, Andorian *thaan* THRON, and human males MINECCI and HEINS.

They are all wearing Surface Operations Blacks, handing out equipment and weapons between themselves. Transporter chief CHAO (last seen 8x26) is working the console...

BOWERS (comm)
Bridge to Vaughn. We're in orbit
over Harkoum.

VAUGHN
Any company?

15 INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE

BOWERS moves between the staff at other positions - T'RB at sciences, ALECO at tactical, ZUCCA at helm - all on alert.

BOWERS
A handful of freighters. No sign
of the *Verithrax*.

VAUGHN (comm)
Do we have a lock on the *noH'pach*?

T'RB
Negative, sir. I've got a clean
ion trail to the surface, but then
it just stops.

VAUGHN (comm)
Could she still be cloaked on the
surface?

T'RB
No, sir - we'd still be reading
neutrinos from her cloaking field.

BOWERS
(to T'rb and Aleco)
Run a level-one tachyon scan on
the coordinates where the trail
stops. Look for a lag in the
return signal.

They do as he says. After a few seconds...

ALECO
You were right, sir. Signal lag,
fourteen nano-seconds.

BOWERS
(into comm)
Commander, readings suggest there
is a sensor-shielded facility on
the surface. I'd guess that the
noH'pach is inside that facility.

ALECO
It makes sense. If the Obsidian
Order were using this place as a
prison, they'd want to hide it
from prying eyes.

16 INT. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

As the security team finishes its preparations...

VAUGHN
Alright - send the coordinates to
the transporter and upload them to
the security team's tricorders.

CHAO
(off panels)
There's no way to beam directly to
those coordinates, sir. There's a
transporter block along with the
sensor blind.

BOWERS (comm)
I recommend you beam down a couple
of clicks to the south. There's
plenty of open desert nearby.

VAUGHN

And just when I thought all the fun had gone out of this job...
Vaughn out.

(to team)

Alright, everyone - listen up. I know you've all fought Jem'Hadar before. You've been on the ground, you know how to handle yourselves. But this is something different.

(grave)

Taran'atar is the oldest Jem'Hadar that's ever lived as far as we know, but don't think for a second that's our advantage. Jem'Hadar don't get weaker with age. They just get stronger, and faster, and smarter. Taran'atar has spent the last twenty years doing nothing but fighting or training to fight. And he has won every single time. He's going to know tricks you haven't even dreamed of. And if he really isn't under the Founders' control any more, then he's more dangerous than ever. And just to make our jobs more interesting, we also have to take him alive.

They nod acknowledgement - rather nervously. The door opens and PERMENTER jogs in, carrying the Cardassian device that Nog designed. She hands the unwieldy object to Vaughn...

PERMENTER

As requested, sir.

VAUGHN

Thank you, Ensign. Chao?

CHAO

Site locked in. Your cover's a bit low though.

Nodding his understanding, Vaughn crouches to one knee, his old joints creaking. The others follow his lead...

VAUGHN
Goggles down.

They all pull GOGGLES down over their eyes. Vaughn nods to Chao. Vaughn and the team dissolve in transporter beams...

KURN (v.o.)
We've reached orbit over Harkoum,
Intendant.

17 **INT. NEGH'VAR - BRIDGE**

As seen in 9x07 "Saturn's Children." Klingon general KURN has turned to address INTENDANT KIRA, who just entered...

INTENDANT KIRA
Move us into geo-stationary orbit
over Grennoka Detention Centre.

Kurn nods to a subordinate, who does as he is told. Then the Klingon general approaches Kira, speaking sotto...

KURN
My engineers want to know why your
quarters require so much power
from the main reactor. As do I.

INTENDANT KIRA
An experiment. That's all you need
to know.

KURN
And is the regent aware of this...
experiment?

INTENDANT KIRA
No... and if he remains unaware...
you may find yourself a step
closer to taking his place and
restoring your family's honour.

KURN
I can keep a secret if you can.

Kurn grins - he can't resist such an offer. The Intendant smirks seductively, then slowly turns and slinks out...

18 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

RO slowly opens her eyes, unable to move on her biobed. She looks to the side - QUARK is asleep in a chair. He hasn't left her side. She can't help but smile at that...

RO
(gently)
Quark... Quark?

He comes awake, realising that she is awake too...

QUARK
Laren. Are you okay?

RO
As well as can be expected. My
toes are a little cold.

QUARK
You want me to get a blanket?

RO
No, that's okay. I'm just glad I
can tell the difference.

He takes her hand - she manages to grip it lightly. She cranes her head to look down at her feet, just manages to wiggle her toes under the covers. Quark watches, grins...

QUARK
Quite a workout you've got there.
You should keep your strength up.
But between you and me, the food
in this place is terrible, and the
service is even worse. Can I bring
you something from the bar?

RO
I'd like that.

Quark gets to his feet, thrilled to do anything to help...

QUARK
I know just the thing. I'll be
right back. Don't go anywhere.

RO
Did I ever say how funny you are?

QUARK
No.

RO
Ask me why.

Sharing her grin, Quark turns and leaves.

As Ro watches him go, her eye passes over KIRA's biobed. She is still unconscious, and SISKO sits by her bedside, leans in close, holds her hand, whispers quietly to her...

Ro is intrigued... then Sisko looks up... Ro feels guilty for eavesdropping, but Sisko's warm smile reassures her...

SISKO
How are you feeling, Lieutenant?

RO
I've been better, sir.

SISKO
And you will be again.

RO
If it's not too personal, sir...
what were you saying to her?

SISKO
I was telling her a story. An old
Bajoran parable... about three
brothers from Jo'kala.

RO
The one about the kava root? Why?

Sisko looks back down at Kira, tears in his eyes...

SISKO
Because she did this for me once.

Zooming to close-up on Kira's unconscious face, **WHITE OUT**
as we go...

19 INT. / EXT. PAREN TONN - DAY

GENERAL KIRA stands on the battlements, looking out at the Ascendant army. In charge is RAIQ, riding her large lizard monster. She sneers up at Kira, her contempt obvious...

GENERAL KIRA
That's far enough. Speak.

RAIQ
Your presence here is a heresy.
All who dare trespass upon the
fortress must die and burn.
Abandon it now, and your deaths
will be merciful.

GENERAL KIRA
We will not surrender.

RAIQ
Renounce your heresy! Open the
gate!

GENERAL KIRA
Never!

Raiq gives a dark grin, relishing the slaughter that is about to come. Kira turns and shouts down to her troops on the ground behind her, inside the keep...

GENERAL KIRA
Archers! Stand ready! Brace the
gate!

Kira takes a deep breath, prays to the Prophets and braces herself for battle. We hear the low MOAN of arrows coming their way, and Raiq's voice calling out loud...

RAIQ (o.s.)
Die and burn!

Kira looks up, daunted, as the arrows approach...

VAUGHN (v.o.)
How much longer?

20 **EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY**

Vaughn crouches with Thron and Neeley at the mountainside, trying to be inconspicuous, but their black suits are more like targets. Thron works hard with a tricorder...

THRON

Too soon to say. Penetrating the shield without drawing attention to ourselves might be impossible.

VAUGHN

Forget subtle. Just get us in.

Thron turns back to his tricorder. Neeley brings out three small DEVICES from her backpack, hands them to Thron. They program the devices, pull out tripod-like legs on each...

Neeley takes two devices and crouch-runs along the edge of the mountain, setting up one device at the halfway point, another at the far side, where the rest of the team wait.

Thron sets up his own device, nods 'ready' to Vaughn, who nods back. At the other side, the rest of the team tense their weapons... Thron touches the final control...

The hologram FLICKERS. Thron reaches his hand forward and presses it against the rock face - it passes right THROUGH. He holds up his tricorder, reads back the information...

THRON

Tunnel, then a large space beyond that. Multiple life signs... and a lock on the *noH'pach*.

VAUGHN

Good work. Fall back.

Vaughn signals to the far side. Minecci takes point, pushes through the rock with weapon ready. Heins and Sevak follow.

Neeley and Moore run back along the wall to Vaughn. Vaughn takes a deep breath, readies himself, then nods...

VAUGHN

Move up.

21 **POV - HI-TECH VIEWER**

From a higher elevation, we watch Vaughn's security team step through the rock face and disappear...

22 **EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY**

The Nausicaan watches through his targeter from behind a low rock. *What the hell is Starfleet doing here?*

A GLINT of sunlight on the sand net to him - and he drops the rifle instantly, SPINS, unleashes two short blades from his belt, ducks and crosses the blades over his head --

-- just in time to block a deadly blow from above. The Cardassian Woman LOOMS, silhouetted against the bright sun, the Chalthoth's two long, curved blades in her hands...

The Nausicaan PUSHES her away, stands to confront her -- and the blades CLANG and FLASH in the sunlight. They move so fast we still don't see the Cardassian Woman's face...

23 **INT. NOH' PACH - REAR CABIN**

Tenmei hangs by her wrists, toes barely touch the ground. A feat of strength to KICK her feet up, trying to reach the workbenches around the side of the room - but no success.

Then FOOTSTEPS on the cold metal deck. She looks up - and Jaid steps into the doorway. He sees her hanging there, and after a moment of surprise, he grins like a predator...

JAID
Hello. I'm Jaid.

On Tenmei's terrified expression...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

24 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The Nausicaan FEINTS, drawing the Cardassian Woman aside with one blade -- then he LUNGES forward with the other.

She deflects -- and SLASHes at his belly, drawing blood.

He brings up his knee, smashes it into her ribs - CRUNCH.

25 INT. PRISON - TUNNEL

The two Starfleet teams work their way quietly through the dark tunnel, three on one side, four on the other...

26 INT. NOH' PACH - REAR CABIN

Jaid stalks towards Tenmei, knowing she is at his mercy...

JAID

I'll say this for the Jem'Hadar...
he certainly knows how to bring a
lovely gift for his hosts.

Tenmei watches him approach, takes silent note of the Klingon handcuff controller attached to his belt...

27 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

Vaughn and the others reach the mouth of the tunnel. Vaughn signals everyone to pause...

ANGLE

The *noH'pach* sitting in the centre, over the massive empty space that dives down into the depths of the mountain. The remaining mercenaries stand nearby, unaware of intruders.

Vaughn turns to Thron, who still has his tricorder out...

VAUGHN

(*sotto*)

Where's Taran'atar?

INSERT - THE TRICORDER

GRAPHIC of the prison - the deep cavern, spiralling walkway around it, elevators at each quarter, and a large flashing RED DOT indicates Taran'atar riding one of the elevators...

THRON (v.o.)
(*sotto*)
Below us, and descending.

BACK TO SCENE

VAUGHN
(*re noH'pach*)
Can we capture the ship and beam
him out?

THRON
Negative. Signal's getting weaker
the further down he goes. Must be
a scattering field to prevent
exactly that kind of thing.

VAUGHN
Alright then - I guess we do this
the old-fashioned way...

Grimly determined, Vaughn hefts his weapon, and the entire security team follow his lead...

28 INT. NOH' PACH - REAR CABIN

Jaid circles Tenmei, ogles her nasty and lascivious. She conserves her energy, tracks his every step...

JAID
If you please me, you can look
forward to weeks of my personal
attention. Displease me... and
you'll get to know my friends as
well. Maybe all at once.

TENMEI
I don't know what you deserve more
- my disgust or my pity.

JAID
(chuckle)
You're hardly in a position to be
doling out pity. But don't worry.
I'll teach you a few new positions
soon enough.

She SPITS at him - he takes a moment to wipe it away, then
SLAPS her face hard. He reaches and lifts up her chin...

JAID
That was foolish of you, darling.

...then WEAPONS FIRE from outside the ship. Jaid turns,
distracted for an instant - and Tenmei KNEES him in the
groin. He doubles over - she KNEES him again in the chin.

She HAULS herself up, WRAPS her legs around his throat -
and CRUSHES as hard as she can, SCREAMing with the effort.

29 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The Nausicaan KNOCKS a sword from the Cardassian's hand.
She twists, SWIPES the other sword at him --

-- and his right hand FLIES into the air, still holding its
blade, blood dripping from the severed wrist.

He ROARS in pain, stabs forward with his remaining blade,
but she twists - the knife sinks into the mountainside.

He SLAMS his hand-less arm down on her neck bones - CRUNCH,
and she SHRIEKS. He grabs her shoulders --

-- flings her face-first into the rock wall. She staggers
back, hair hanging over her face, blood dripping...

30 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

Vaughn crouch-runs along the wall. A disruptor shot BURNS
the wall over his head - he cringes but keeps running...

ANGLE

Sevak leans out from cover behind a railing, fires his own
phaser rifle. Other phaser shots criss-cross the scene...

ANGLE

The Lissepian mercenary dodges the Vulcan's shot...

31 INT. NOH' PACH - REAR CABIN

Jaid FLAILS against Tenmei's crushing legs... she squeezes tighter... pulls higher... finally kinks one leg up sharply -- and CRACK. He goes limp.

She lowers her legs... drags Jaid's body under herself... stands on his chest... reaches with one foot... presses the controller on his belt... and the manacles SNAP open.

Tenmei DROPS to the floor, lands on Jaid's dead body. She rolls off him, looks into his dead eyes... GROANS with pain as she forces her arms back down from their position...

...then listens to the sound of WEAPONS being exchanged outside the ship. She is a long way from out of this...

32 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

The Kressari female takes aim at Vaughn's running figure...

ANGLE

Minecci takes aim at the Kressari - fires - and dodges back from her return shot. *That was close...*

ANGLE

Vaughn VAULTS over a railing to a lower level - lands with a CLANG of boots on metal, just missing another shot.

He runs towards the industrial elevator, head down to avoid weapons. He reaches it, steps in, SLAMS the door closed...

33 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

...and with a GROAN of long-unused machinery, the elevator begins to rumble slowly down into the depths of the prison.

Another elevator is moving below and opposite. Taran'atar is in there. Vaughn will catch him... *and make him pay.*

34 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

The lighting is dim. Sisko still sits by Kira's bedside.

The door opens... and DAX enters, careful not to disturb. Quark and Ro are occupied with themselves, Quark feeding her food with a fork. But Sisko looks up and smiles...

SISKO

Good to see you, old man.

DAX

I'm glad you could come, Benjamin.
I'm sorry it had to be for this.

Dax takes a seat, and they look sadly down at Kira...

SISKO

You look tired...

DAX

Been up for about thirty hours,
the last twenty-six of those on
duty in Ops. I haven't felt this
dragged out since the war.

SISKO

Sounds like the job I remember.
Requisitions. Transfers. New
protocols from Starfleet Command.
Just one damn thing after another.

DAX

Pretty much. I guess... I just
figured there'd be more action and
less paperwork. Running a space
station isn't where I see myself
five years down the road.

SISKO

(quiet surprise)

Dax... are you talking about a
transfer?

Dax is uncomfortable - this almost feels like a betrayal...

DAX

Maybe. I don't know. Maybe. I just think... I want to get out there, see the galaxy a bit.

(forced cheery)

It's what Starfleet's supposed to be about, isn't it?

SISKO

From what I hear, you and Vaughn made some remarkable discoveries on your Gamma Quadrant mission.

DAX

That was the exception rather than the rule. Three months out of the last three years. And I don't see much chance of that changing.

SISKO

Okay. That all sounds reasonable. Now why don't you tell me the real problem?

Dax sags, knowing that Sisko sees through her...

DAX

That is the real problem. I guess, maybe it's just not the only problem. Benjamin, look at all the things that have happened to me since I was joined. Worf, the war, Julian, the parasites, now this...

(re Kira)

I need to get away. I need a fresh start.

SISKO

Life isn't any easier on a starship, Dax. Just as much heartache. Just as much paperwork.

DAX

I know that... I just think it'd be better... to not be here.

SISKO
(re Kira)
Well, I can guarantee she'd be
sorry to see you go.

Dax looks sadly down on Kira's sleeping face again...

DAX
It's okay to admit you're worried
about her, Ben.

SISKO
I am worried. Mostly about Kira.
But it's more than that...

DAX
Has something happened?

SISKO
Not to me. Not yet, anyway. It's
nothing I can point to and say,
"That - that's what's bothering
me." It's more a feeling of
something coming... something
waiting to happen. Ever since
the attack on Sidau village...

DAX
Do you think the attack on Kira
had something to do with it?

SISKO
I don't know... I'm afraid it's
just the beginning of something
bigger... something worse.

DAX
Okay... say you're right. What are
you going to do about it?

SISKO
I'm not sure... but I get the
feeling this is where I'm supposed
to start...

He looks down to Kira's face...

35 **EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT**

CRUNCH - the Nausicaan's knee buckles under the Cardassian Woman's KICK. He falls to the ground, BELLOWS in pain...

The Cardassian Woman limps around behind him, beaten and bloody. We hear the *snick* of a sword, ready to finish it --

-- but he yanks a KNIFE from his boot with his remaining hand, DRIVES it back into her gut, slices her belly open.

But as she GRUNTS and slumps to the ground, the Nausicaan stiffens, then slumps forward to the ground himself --

-- with her sword in his neck. Paralysed, face down with cheek against burning sand, he watches...

...as the Cardassian Woman struggles to her feet, finds his backpack on the ground, begins rooting through it...

NAUSICAAAN

The surgical pack is under the
bottom flap.

She nods her thanks... finds it, opens it, pulls out a bone fuser. With her one good arm, she reaches up to her neck...

...and SNAPS the neck bones back into place. Tears of agony prick at her eyes, but she does not cry out. The Nausicaan is quite impressed - this is a powerful woman.

She takes the bone fuser, runs it along the neck bone. With both arms active, she grabs another tool, presses it to the wound in her belly, knits her ribs and guts back together.

Through all this, we don't see her face clearly - just her moving hands and panting breath. Mended as best as she can at short notice, she leans back against the rock wall...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN

In a perfect world, I'd rest after
a fight like that. But if that was
Taran'atar on that Klingon ship,
then there's no time to rest. It
might already be too late...

She reaches and picks up the Nausicaan's discarded rifle...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
I'm taking this.

NAUSICAAN
(genuinely)
Good hunting.

The Cardassian Woman acknowledges with a nod, then stands and turns to leave.

But she pauses, thoughtful, and turns back to him...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
Do you believe in gods?

NAUSICAAN
I believe in the Four Winds.

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
If you want, I'll release you to them.

NAUSICAAN
You are a noble adversary.

She takes a hypospray from the surgical pack, crouches down and presses it to his neck.

He sees her stand and begin to walk away, into the blinding sun, until we...

WHITE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

36 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

PHASER and DISRUPTOR shots criss-cross each other...

The Romulan is HIT by a phaser - unconscious but not dead.

Sevak and Minecci crouch together behind some slight cover, Sevak cradling a disruptor wound to his foot. Heins crouch-runs towards them, firing sideways as he goes...

HEINS

You guys okay?

MINECCI

Solid.

SEVAK

My wound is superficial. I can continue.

HEINS

Alright, Sevak - you'll cover us.
Minecci, we'll flank right to that empty guard post. Take point.

MINECCI

Aye sir.

Minecci and Heins get ready to break cover... Sevak gets ready to cover them...

37 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

VAUGHN stands tense as the elevator slowly rumbles into the depths. His tricorder screen fritzes with static, useless. He puts it away, slips the goggles over his eyes, hoists his phaser rifle, and glares down at the other elevator...

38 POV - INFRA RED

The infra-red goggles show a burly humanoid FIGURE standing inside the other elevator...

39 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

Taran'atar stands like stone. He looks up - sees the second elevator following him down. He can also hear the distant sound of phaser fire... and none of it matters to him.

40 INT. NOH' PACH - COCKPIT

TENMEI emerges through the busted door from the rear cabin - battered, bruised, tired and scared, but carrying Jaid's phaser rifle like she means it. She moves to the front panels, starts trying to get them working...

...but the SOUND of the phaser battle outside rings through the walls. Tenmei looks up, surprised, listens closer...

TENMEI

Those are Starfleet phasers.

She looks out of the front window, can't see anything specific other than criss-crossing phaser beams...

TENMEI

If Starfleet's here, it's got to be to stop Taran'atar. But the longer they're pinned down, the further away he's getting.

She pauses, stopping to consider her options for a moment. Then she hoists the rifle, checks its power...

TENMEI

I didn't come this far just to run away now.

She heads towards the open hatch...

41 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

Tenmei emerges from the hatch out onto the central docking platform. She looks down, and gulps at the sight...

ANGLE

Looking right down the mouth of the tunnel...

ANGLE

The sound of PHASERS brings Tenmei back to herself, and she quickly scurries for cover. The Starfleet crew and the mercenaries shoot at each other. None have noticed her.

She runs quick as she can, head down. She reaches the same point where Vaughn jumped to the lower level, jumps down in the same place, runs to the nearest elevator...

ANGLE

Sevak fires his phaser from behind his cover...

ANGLE

The Efrosian woman goes down from the shot...

CUT TO:

42 EXT. PAREK TONN - DAY

General Kira CHARGES out of the gates of Parek Tonn, right into the thick of the Ascendant army. Bajoran Vaughn, Sisko, Ro and half of her army are with her...

Kira SWINGS her sword, cutting down bodies. Flaming arrows TEAR into her legs and back as she strides, but she forges on, determined not to give up...

A loud whispering MOAN - more flaming arrows and fireballs LAUNCH from catapults towards her army...

Kira realises with horror - *they are going to lose.*

Ro is HIT by an arrow, but forces through the pain to keep fighting...

Kira STUMBLES to the ground, flaming arrows piercing her legs and back...

Vaughn moves to face the Ascendant army, standing between them and Kira in an attempt to shield her...

Sisko reaches down, helps Kira up from the ground. But then he is hit too, and falls to the ground...

Around them, soldiers SCREAM and WAIL as they are cut down wholesale by the constantly falling Ascendant arrows...

Kira watches as her army is obliterated around her. Sisko lies bloody and dying beside her...

SISKO
Not... enough. Should have... had
allies.

She nods, knowing he is right. She looks down at her chest, but there is no arrow there...

...it is TARAN'ATAR'S KNIFE, lodged in her heart. She is confused - where did this come from?

As she loses consciousness, we **WHITE OUT**...

43 INT. WHITE SPACE

The white light recedes -- to reveal the real Kira Nerys, alone. She looks around herself, re-accustoms herself to existence. Then Opaka emerges out of the white...

OPAKA PROPHET
Our hand is in motion.

KIRA
I understand. I'm ready.

Sisko places a hand on her shoulder, offers warm support...

SISKO
No, you're not. No-one's ever ready.

Kira looks at him, worried...

CUT TO:

44 INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA

Heins and Minecci crouch-run across some open space, Sevak's PHASER shot follows them...

...but disruptor FIRE hits Minecci in the knee, Heins in the shoulder.

As they both crumple to the deck in pain, sitting ducks out in the open, a mercenary steps out, ready to finish them...

But a new weapon - not Starfleet or disruptors - comes from a high angle, SHOTS the mercenary down. Heins looks up...

ANGLE

A FIGURE slips into the shadows between the metal ceiling beams - the Cardassian Woman, barely visible as a shape.

ANGLE

Heins grabs Minecci, help-drags him to cover at the guard post, both fighting against the pain...

MINECCI

Looks like we've got a new friend.

HEINS

I'll have to remember to thank her. Whoever the hell she is.

MINECCI

Assuming we get out of here alive.

45 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

Taran'atar's elevator GRINDS to a halt in the depths of the prison. He opens the half-gate, steps out...

46 INT. PRISON - CORRIDORS

Dark, metallic corridors - no signs of nature or softness here. Dim lights FLICKER, water DRIPS. Taran'atar walks along the corridor, not caring about any of it...

JEM'HADAR FIRST (o.s.)

Why do you not shroud?

ANGLE

The nameless JEM'HADAR FIRST from Sindorin walks calmly...

TARAN'ATAR

I cannot. Fatigue prevents me.

JEM'HADAR FIRST
Where are you going?

TARAN'ATAR
I do not know where. Or why.

JEM'HADAR FIRST
Do you ever know why?

TARAN'ATAR
Always - because a Founder wishes
it. Because a Vorta commands it.
Because my First gave me an order.

ANGLE

Now instead of the Jem'Hadar First, RO is there...

RO
Then how do you explain me?

FLASHBACK - 9x17 "OLYMPUS DESCENDING 2"

Ro is thrown backwards by the invisible force...

BACK TO SCENE

TARAN'ATAR
I have betrayed the Founders. Odo
wanted me to observe, comprehend
your people and culture. You prize
free will. You act irrationally
and defy authority.

RO
Maybe that's what he wanted you to
learn. Maybe by defying his will,
you've done exactly what he wanted.

47 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

Vaughn's elevator GRINDS to a halt. He pulls out Nog's
experimental neuropulse device, clips it to his belt.

Then he takes a deep breath, steels his nerves, opens the
gate. Raising his rifle, he steps out into the dark...

48 INT. PRISON - LABORATORY

Tall TUBES stand in rows, all connected by thick CABLES to banks of dead Cardassian-styled computers. Each tube holds a naked JEM'HADAR SOLDIER, afloat in thick liquid, splayed in various unpleasant ways. Chest open, brain exposed, etc.

Elsewhere are large slabs of metal, which have been used as operating tables. Stringy bits of blood and guts are still dried onto the surfaces and the various instruments.

Taran'atar walks through, not looking at it or caring about it at all. He has his destination. He is alone, but still speaks as if he is talking to someone...

TARAN'ATAR

Perhaps this has all been a test.
Odo sent me into exile to test my
will. The imprisoned Founder
denied her divinity to test my
faith. Maybe they always meant for
me to be free. To see if I would
remain loyal when I have the
freedom to betray them.

(beat)

But I am not here for Odo. I am
here because she commanded me to
come. And because I cannot refuse.

(beat)

I have come because I am a slave.

He walks on, unable to do anything else, until he is
swallowed by the DARKNESS...

BLACK OUT

Soft beeps. Slow, regular heartbeat. Vague formless figures
drifting in the black. Slowly, they resolve, revealing...

49 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

...SISK0, looking down into camera. Tired, bloodshot eyes.
Holding her hand. He has been here a while.

Kira is just coming round into blurry consciousness, lying
on the biobed. Low lighting - still night-shift.

KIRA

Ben...

SISKO

I'm here, Nerys. You're alright.

She concentrates, trying to put the pieces together...

KIRA

A knife... in my chest...

SISKO

Yes. Taran'atar attacked you and Lieutenant Ro.

KIRA

Why? Why did he do it?

SISKO

Bashir thinks someone was controlling him. Beyond that, nothing's really certain.

KIRA

Where is he now?

SISKO

He fled the station. Vaughn went after him in the *Defiant*. We're still waiting on an update.

KIRA

Ro?

SISKO

She's alright, Nerys. It'll be a while before she can walk again, but she will. Julian promised.

Kira tries to process everything. She reaches up, gently feels the skin over her chest where the knife hit...

KIRA

Feels like Julian had a hell of a time putting my heart back together...

SISKO

Actually... he didn't. He wasn't
able to fix your heart... so he
gave you an artificial one.

Irrationally scared, she presses her palm against her
chest, feeling for her heartbeat. After a moment...

KIRA

Feels just like it always did.

SISKO

(small smile)

What did you expect - a drum solo?

KIRA

Please, don't give him any ideas.
The last time he had an idea, I
had the O'Briens' baby.

Sisko LAUGHS out loud, warm and rich. More than anything,
that reassures Kira that everything is going to be okay.

KIRA

I'm glad you're here, Benjamin. It
means a lot to me... Thank you.

SISKO

Kasidy said you needed me more
than they did. But the truth is...
I probably need you more than you
need me. After all... what good
would I be without my right hand?

The phrase seems to strike something in Kira's memory. Off
her intrigued expression...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

50 INT. PRISON - THE PIT

Staring down into the dark, hopeless depths of the abyss...

51 INT. PRISON - CORRIDORS

VAUGHN edges around a corner, infra-red goggles on... looks down the length of the corridor, alert to every sight and sound... grips tight to his rifle, steps into the corridor.

He walks as quietly as he can, making light SPLASHES in the puddles of nasty, dirty water on the deck. Somewhere a door CREAKS on old hinges, rodents SKITTER in the darkness.

He JERKS, aims his weapon at something out of the corner of his eye -- it's just a dangling wire swinging gently from the ceiling. He takes a deep breath, and presses on...

52 INT. PRISON - LABORATORY

Vaughn creeps quietly into the laboratory, sees the same horror show Taran'atar did. Heads for the computer banks, takes cover, watchful for anyone hiding in the shadows.

He lifts his goggles, pulls out his tricorder, tries it - nothing. He looks up at the dead Jem'Hadar floating in their tubes, revolted by their condition...

VAUGHN

(*sotto*)

The Intendant knew a lot about
Jem'Hadar brainwaves. Seems this
is where she did her homework.

He tentatively touches one computer panel - it springs to spluttery life. He sets his tricorder down, taps a few keys, watches as it copies the data off the computer...

VAUGHN

(*sotto*)

No security protocols. Somebody
didn't expect to ever be found.

The tricorder soon gives an affirmative BEEP. Vaughn picks it up, stows it in his backpack, slips the goggles back on, hoists his rifle, prepares himself to move again.

He heads to the back, towards another door. Sidles up to the opening, quickly glances around it. It opens into...

53 INT. PRISON - GENERATOR ROOM

...a multi-level labyrinth of criss-crossed metal walkways, ladders and staircases, barely lit by flickering lights, thick with smoke and dust from the half-dead machinery. The floor is an inch-deep in brackish water from burst pipes...

...and the tiniest hint of a BODY moving quickly through the smoke.

Vaughn pulls back to safety. Checks his rifle - ready. He crouches down, creeps around the corner again...

...and a PHASER SHOT hits barely inches above his head. He pulls back to cover, curses under his breath - *he knows I'm here*. He takes a deep breath, prepares himself again...

...and DASHES out of cover, across a small gap, to more cover beneath one of the staircases.

He drops to one knee in the nasty, chemical-tainted water, and raises his rifle. He looks around in the darkness...

54 POV - INFRA RED

Scanning around the machinery, looking for any sign -- but the heat from the machines is enough to hide any bio-signs.

55 BACK TO SCENE

Vaughn crouches in the dark and damp. He's alone down here against a possibly crazed killing machine... perhaps this wasn't the best idea he's ever had, but he's here now.

He pokes his head out, looks around the room. Which way to go? No way to tell, so he may as well just make a choice.

He steps out from cover, letting his rifle lead him through the darkness...

56 **POV - INFRA RED**

Advancing slowly through the smoky room, the outlines of machines and catwalks looming out of the gloom. Vaughn's heartbeat THUDS loudly, breath hitching with nerves...

57 **BACK TO SCENE**

Vaughn reaches a wall, flattens against it. Looks down at the water - his own footsteps have left RIPPLES...

...and there is another set of RIPPLES intersecting them. Alarmed, he jumps into the gap between two large TANKS...

...just avoiding a PHASER SHOT to the wall where he stood, lighting up the room with energy and sparks. Protected, he racks his century of tactical experience for what to do...

Vaughn cranes his neck up - narrow ladders lead up the side of the tanks to a catwalk balanced between them.

Slips off his goggles, wedges his rifle between some pipes. Takes out his tricorder, works the controls...

...and the rifle responds with a short pattern of automated SHOTS out into the darkness. Satisfied, he programs more. Prepares himself, hits the 'go' key...

...and the rifle begins FIRING. He uses the cover to make a quick dash for the ladder. Clammers up...

...and just as he reaches the catwalk, the rifle stops. He quickly programs more into the tricorder - the rifle begins FIRING again.

With his cover in place, he grabs Nog's neuropulse device from his belt, holds it out, looks out over the tanker...

...but there's no sign of Taran'atar. Vaughn feels disaster coming. He SPINS, neuropulse weapon at eye level --

-- and Taran'atar SWIPES the weapon aside, knocks it out of Vaughn's hand - it smashes against the metal of the tank.

CRUNCH - Vaughn's hand breaks with it. He groan-screams with the pain...

Taran'atar PUNCHES Vaughn straight in the face, knocking the old human off his feet. He SLIPS on the oily metal --

-- and tumbles off the side of the catwalk. Lands below with a CLANG, twists his ankle, CRIES out in pain.

Taran'atar glares down at him from the catwalk, steps right off its edge --

-- and jumps lithely down to the lower level, SPLASH into the shallow water right in front of Vaughn.

Vaughn tries to back away, hobbling on his twisted ankle...

Taran'atar advances...

Vaughn's back hits another wall - nowhere to go.

Taran'atar raises the phaser in his hand, about to fire...

...and a PHASER SHOT fires from behind, over his shoulder, hits the wall over Vaughn's head. Taran'atar turns...

...and TENMEI stands there, pointing Jaid's rifle at him.

TENMEI

Drop your weapon, and get the hell
away from my father.

Vaughn is elated - *she's alive!*

Tenmei is terrified to face down a Jem'Hadar - especially one who already beat her unconscious - but determined...

TENMEI

I said drop it - carefully. Toss
it away.

Almost cavalierly, Taran'atar tosses the phaser in his hand away into the darkness, never taking his eyes off Tenmei...

TENMEI

Now the *dk'tahg*.

He reaches to the Klingon dagger tucked into his jumpsuit, pulls it out delicately, makes a show of dropping that...

...then folds his hands behind his head, slowly lowers to one knee, closes his eyes, submissively bows his head...

VAUGHN

(panicked)

Shoot him, Tenmei! Shoot! That's an order!

TENMEI

But he's unarmed --

VAUGHN

Damn it, Tenmei - shoot!

In a blur of movement, Taran'atar LEAPS up from his crouch into the air, SHROUDing as he goes...

Realising too late, Tenmei FIRES wildly, desperately hoping to hit something...

...then a pair of boots land in the water right in front of Tenmei, UNSHROUDing to reveal...

...Taran'atar. BATS the phaser rifle out of her hand with ease, SHOVES her hard in the chest...

...and she CRASHES to the opposite wall with a gasp, wind knocked out of her, and crumples to the ground.

Taran'atar stands there, breathing hard, looking back and forth between Tenmei and Vaughn - both broken and beaten.

Then a VOICE echoes out of hidden speakers around the room. Taran'atar does not seem surprised to hear it...

KIRA (comm)

Did you find the hypospray I left?

TARAN'ATAR

I did.

KIRA (comm)

And the beacon?

Taran'atar reaches into a pocket of his jumpsuit, pulls out a DIMENSIONAL TRANSPORT UNIT, like O'Brien used in 3x19...

TARAN'ATAR
I have it.

KIRA (comm)
Then it's time.

TARAN'ATAR
(forcing himself)
Obedience brings victory... and
victory is life.

VAUGHN
(speaks up)
The captain's not dead.

Taran'atar pauses, looks at Vaughn, considers his words.
Like in 9x17 he's caught between, so he fiddles with the
device in his hand to give himself time to think...

Vaughn keeps talking, anything to get Taran'atar to wait...

VAUGHN
I know it wasn't your fault. The
Intendant made you do it. We can
go back - we'll make some kind of
arrangement. It's not too late.
(no response)
You've had Prynn with you all this
time, haven't you? And up on the
catwalk, you hesitated. You waited
for me to turn around. Prynn and I
are both unarmed. Incapacitated.
You could have killed us both at
any time... but you didn't.

Taran'atar again seems to consider Vaughn's words...

TARAN'ATAR
You are not my enemy.

Then he presses the big red button on his device -- and is
overtaken by a complicated TRANSPORTER EFFECT that seems to
twist inside and out before finally disappearing.

Vaughn sags - he failed his mission. Taran'atar is with the
Intendant, and he failed to stop it.

With Taran'atar gone, Tenmei pushes herself up against the wall, crawl-limps through the water to her father...

TENMEI

Dad...

He reaches up to touch her, still amazed she is even alive. They're both on the verge of tears...

VAUGHN

Prynn... baby... help me up. We have to get out of here...

She helps him stagger to his own unsteady feet - he GROANS against the broken ankle. They lean on each other, trudge across the water-logged room, heading for the exit...

But the VOICE isn't done. They look up as it echoes through the comm system again, full of venom and disdain...

KIRA (comm)

What a heart-warming reunion. I'm sure the two of you could go on and on. Unfortunately, my use for this base is about to come to an end - and so are you.

Lights around the dark room begin to FLASH RED - a clear warning. Shrieking ALARMS sound and echo off the walls.

A deep male VOICE begins to intone in a foreign (presumably Cardassian) language. We can't identify the words, but by the rhythm, it's clearly a countdown. Tenmei is appalled...

TENMEI

Who the hell puts a self-destruct in a prison?!

VAUGHN

The Obsidian Order do. Run!

Still supporting each other, Tenmei and Vaughn try to move faster towards the exit..

...as ALARMS sound and the machinery around them begins to cycle up to overload... louder and louder...

58 **INT. INTENDANT'S STATEROOM**

The complicated TRANSPORTER EFFECT forms on the Intendant's fancy new transporter platform, twisting inside and out...

...until Taran'atar stands on the platform. He steps calmly down, stands tall and straight before...

...INTENDANT KIRA, who greets him with a huge satisfied grin, so happy she can barely control herself.

INTENDANT KIRA

Taran'atar, in the flesh. Welcome to my universe. You've already been a better ally than I could have dared hope for. To finally stand here with you is an honour, and a pleasure long overdue.

TARAN'ATAR

Thank you. I, too, have looked forward to this meeting.

...and in an instant, his hand is around her THROAT. LIFTS her off the ground before she even realises what happened.

She flutters at his hand, shocked and scared, choking. Tries to reach for the DEVICE on her belt --

-- but he grabs it, CRUSHES it before she can use it. Cold and remorseless. Stares into her panicking eyes.

The TRANSPORTER powers up again, and the complicated SIGNAL flares on the platform. Twists inside and out, reveals...

...Kira - but not *our* Kira. A fourth version who we'll call NEW KIRA. This one is dressed in civilian Bajoran clothing.

This New Kira steps gracefully off the platform, carrying a Klingon dagger with cold practicality. She looks smugly at the Intendant, struggling in Taran'atar's grip...

NEW KIRA

Put her down.

Taran'atar lowers the Intendant back onto her feet...

NEW KIRA
(to the Intendant)
Now kneel.

The Intendant hesitates - so Taran'atar presses on her shoulders until she is forced to kneel.

The Intendant looks up at the newcomer, grits her teeth. She thinks this is the Kira she knows...

INTENDANT KIRA
My my - haven't you gotten fierce since we last met? More cunning, too. I won't underestimate his loyalty next time. I hate to admit it... but you played this well, Nerys. *Brava.*

The New Kira sneers down at her - nothing but contempt and malevolence. Definitely not *our* Kira...

NEW KIRA
You have no idea who you're dealing with.

And like a flash, the New Kira lifts her dagger and SLASHES Intendant Kira's throat.

The Intendant gapes in simple shock as BLOOD pumps out of her neck and down her slinky black bodysuit.

She loses balance, slumps forward to the ground. Face down with cheek against cold deck, the darkness creeps in...

NEW KIRA
Get rid of the body.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

59 INT. PRISON - LABORATORY

VAUGHN and TENMEI stagger-run between the stasis tubes filled with dismembered Jem'Hadar, past the operating tables with their congealed blood and skin...

Vaughn is in pretty big pain, with his sprained ankle and smashed hand. But adrenaline is pushing him through. The Cardassian VOICE drones, ALARMS shriek, red LIGHTS flash...

60 INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR

Tenmei yanks the elevator's cage door open, guides Vaughn in first, steps in behind him, pulls the door closed.

Vaughn stabs the button with his good hand. With a LURCH of dying machinery, the cage begins to rattle back upwards.

They look UP - the docking platform seems miles above them, out of reach.

They look DOWN - the formerly pitch black bottom of the pit GLOWS an eerie red. Then as they watch...

...a loud EXPLOSION from far below rattles the entire base. A red FIREBALL blooms, sending up pillars of dirty grey smoke. Tenmei clings onto Vaughn tight...

TENMEI

Why did you ask if he'd had me
with him the whole time?

VAUGHN

He set a trap for us... used you
as bait... I thought he'd killed
you. No... thought I'd killed you.

TENMEI

The comet.

VAUGHN

Yes.

Something falls down the tunnel of the pit, STRIKES the top of the elevator, making it ring like a bell.

More EXPLOSIONS rumble from the depths of the base. Vaughn taps his combadge, more out of hope than certainty...

VAUGHN
Vaughn to Neeley.

NEELEY (comm)
Neeley here, sir.

Vaughn and Tenmei both sigh with relief...

VAUGHN
Neeley, the base's self-destruct
is armed --

NEELEY (comm)
We noticed. We're waiting for you.

VAUGHN
Don't. You and Heins take the team
and fall back. Get outside to safe
ground. That's an order.

NEELEY (comm)
What about Taran'atar?

VAUGHN
He got away. Fall back - now.

Massive ELECTRIC BOLTS leap across the chasm, blow apart parts of the spiral walkway, just missing the elevator...

As Vaughn and Tenmei rumble slowly upwards, past the levels of the prison, they see...

...tongues of FLAME roll down the corridors to the central tunnel, ceilings fall and power conduits blow.

Tenmei looks back up to the docking level - it's getting closer. She tries to be encouraging...

TENMEI
Almost there now...

...then another EXPLOSION - one of the bridges buckles, splits from the central docking platform, swings down...

...right towards them. Seeing this, Tenmei pulls Vaughn down to the floor of the cage...

...and the huge slab of metal SLAMS into the cage, throws Vaughn and Tenmei aside. The elevator WHINES to a halt.

Vaughn tries to see through the darkness, smoke, dust and flames. They've stopped halfway between levels...

VAUGHN

Help me force the doors.

They work together to open the gate - there's a metre step up to the next level. More RUMBLES and EXPLOSIONS...

TENMEI

Can you boost me with one arm?

He wraps his good arm around her waist, helps her jump up - she pulls herself up and struggles onto the deck.

She turns, reaches down to help Vaughn - but the elevator LURCHES a few centimetres down, knocking Vaughn back.

TENMEI

Dad, come on! Now!

He gets back to his feet, grabs her arm - she YANKS him up as hard as she can. They collapse together onto the deck.

Then the elevator breaks free, PLUMMETS into the dark and flames - they watch it go, seconds from joining it...

61 **INT. PRISON - DOCKING AREA**

Tenmei leads Vaughn across the one of the remaining bridges towards the docking platform over the chasm, with the small Klingon ship still sitting on it.

FLAMES lick the bottom of the platform, leaping all the way up the imploding tunnel. There's no sign of anyone else here, either Starfleet or mercenary.

VAUGHN

The ship...

BAM BAM BAM BAM - small, timed EXPLOSIONS go off all around the docking platform, severing it from all the bridges. The platform and the ship on it both PLUMMET into the flames.

Now disconnected, the bridge Tenmei and Vaughn are stood on SWINGS down, lurches one creaking step at a time...

Terrified, they turn, try to forge their way back up it...

Tenmei is a few paces ahead, reaches safety first...

Then another CREAK of metal - the bridge bends down more...

Vaughn flails for a hand-hold with his good arm, barely grabs the last railing, legs dangling down to the flames...

Tenmei reaches out to him, desperate...

TENMEI

Dad! Climb!

VAUGHN

I've only got one arm, Prynn! I can't climb!

TENMEI

You can reach me!

VAUGHN

Dammit, I can't! Get out! Run!

TENMEI

No... please, take my hand...

Vaughn looks down into the flames only metres away. Then he looks back up, into Tenmei's eyes. He makes his decision...

VAUGHN

(gently)

Run, baby...

Then he deliberately LETS GO, free-falling into the abyss.

Tenmei instinctively dives after him...

...GRABS his arm with one hand, tries to scrabble for the railing with her other...

She almost makes it. But her hand slips... and they fall.

ANGLE

Tenmei and Vaughn plummet together into the fiery depths, grip tight to each other as they fall.

Then a large dark SHAPE rises up through the flames... and they impact it with a CRUNCH - it's metal, and it's rising.

ANGLE

The shape rises from the flames, up to the docking level...

...revealing the *noH'pach*, with Vaughn and Tenmei riding on its back. Battered and broken, but alive - and confused.

Further EXPLOSIONS all around... some of the arching metal beams above break off... HIT the ship on their way down... Tenmei and Vaughn huddle together, clinging to life...

The Klingon ship turns, heads towards the dark tunnel that leads outside. As it crosses into the darkness inside...

...one massive final EXPLOSION tears up the entire base.

62 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

Loud RUMBLES are muffled by the rock as the facility inside the mountain is destroyed. The holographic shield over the tunnel entrance is flickering, fritzing in and out...

...then the *noH'pach* zooms through the shield and out into the desert. Vaughn and Tenmei huddle together on its roof, clinging to each other fiercely...

The small Klingon ship settles down, kicking up sand. The engines shut down... leaving the whole scene oddly quiet.

Tenmei and Vaughn peel themselves apart, look at each other - he strokes a loose strand of hair from her face...

TENMEI

Why did you let go?

VAUGHN

I had to make you... make you
leave me and save yourself.

TENMEI

I wouldn't leave you, Dad... I'd
never leave you.

They cling together again, crying openly, father and
daughter, never wanting to let go.

A pneumatic HISS signals the Klingon ship opening. Curious,
Vaughn and Tenmei turn to look, as a figure emerges --

-- it is the Cardassian Woman, masked in blood, limping and
nursing her own injuries, hair hanging over her face.

CARDASSIAN WOMAN

Good, you're alive. I waited as
long as I could for you. Almost
too long.

VAUGHN

Then I guess we owe you thanks.
Care to tell us who you are?

CARDASSIAN WOMAN

Listen to me. I failed my mission -
(Vaughn flinches)
- and that means we're out of
time. We have to warn Captain Kira
Nerys that she's in mortal danger.

TENMEI

You're a bit late for that.

VAUGHN

Taran'atar already made an attempt
on the captain's life. And we know
he's working with Intendant Kira
from the parallel universe.

The Cardassian Woman boils over with frustration...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
You have no idea who you're
dealing with!

VAUGHN
Then why don't you enlighten us?

The Cardassian Woman grits her teeth...

63 INT. INTENDANT'S STATEROOM

The complex transporter signature flares on the platform,
swallowing up the Intendant's dead body. Taran'atar turns
away from the panels, having done his job...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN (v.o.)
She's a renegade from the Obsidian
Order. She's a deep-cover agent.
An infiltrator, an assassin who
knows thousands of ways to kill
and torture and seduce you.

Taran'atar looks across the lavish chamber...

...where New Kira stands. The Vulcan handmaiden we've seen
since 9x07, L'HAAN, is helping her to zip up a new slinky
black bodysuit, gently placing the Intendant's silver head-
dress onto the intruder's head...

NEW KIRA
Thank you, L'Haan. Your rewards
will be numerous and extravagant.

The handmaiden bows, backs away to a polite distance...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN (v.o.)
Her handlers altered her to look
like Kira. But before the switch
was made, something went wrong.
The operation was betrayed from
within. Kira escaped, and her
lookalike vanished.

New Kira looks haughtily up at Taran'atar. He hates her...
he would love to throttle her here and now... but he *can't*.
His hands won't obey his wishes. He's under her control...

NEW KIRA
Your service has also been most
impeccable, Taran'atar.
(raises voice)
Kira to bridge.

KURN (comm)
Kurn here, Intendant.

NEW KIRA
Set course for Regulon, General.
It's time to rejoin the fleet...
and then make good on my promises.

KURN (comm)
As you wish, Intendant.

Outside the large picture window, the stars jump to WARP...

64 EXT. HARKOUM - DESERT - DAY

The Cardassian Woman stands by the *noH'pach*, cradling her
wounds, explaining to a suspicious Vaughn and Tenmei...

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
No-one knew if she'd been killed,
went mad, was captured... no-one
but the bastard who betrayed her.
(pause for breath)
His name was Gul Skrain Dukat...
Her name is Iliana Ghemor.

VAUGHN
And you know all of this... how?

The Cardassian Woman takes a hand, sweeps the fallen hair
out of her face, turns it up to them so they (and we) can
clearly see her in the bright sun...

...and she looks like Kira, as a Cardassian. Like Iliana
Ghemor from 3x05 "Second Skin." Yes, a fifth Kira. Sorry.

CARDASSIAN WOMAN
Because my name...
(beat)
...is also Iliana Ghemor.

65 **INT. INTENDANT'S STATEROOM**

New Kira - aka Iliana Ghemor - stands gazing out of the window at the stars warping away. Taran'atar and L'Haan wait patiently for her to speak...

She brings up her hand - she is wearing the *pagh-varam*, the Orb fragment bracelet that she stole from Sidau, wrapped around her hand. She gazes into the stone, transfixed...

NEW KIRA

We stand on the edge... we have
the key to reality itself, and all
we have to do is reach the door.

She seems to turn inside, expression dark and haunted...

NEW KIRA

All those years in exile... all
those years in the dark...

Then she changes again, manic gleam coming into her eyes...

NEW KIRA

...and now we have a battle fleet,
a brutal army at our command, and
the multiverse at our fingertips.

(dreamy)

We have far to go and much to do.
Reality is infinite...

(hateful)

...but it only has room for one
Kira Nerys.

BLACK OUT:

THE END