

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

8x01 - "Avatar, pt 1."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novel

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Avatar, Book 1

by SD Perry

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. B'HALA CAVES

The B'Hala dig site on Bajor. A few monks working, lots of equipment strewn about, lights hung on the stone walls. We move slowly through the caves until we find JAKE SSKO, quietly working at digging something out of a wall. Beside him, an elderly Prylar EIVOS is chatting away obliviously. Jake is not really paying attention, continuing his work.

EIVOS

...But there was one figurine among the rest that was carved out of jevonite, which is nothing short of extraordinary. It has long been thought that jevonite could be found only on Cardassia. But quantum dating confirms that it predates even the First Hebitian civilisation...

JAKE

I think I've found it.

EIVOS shuffles over to check the piece of pottery that Jake has extricated. He takes it, inspects it lovingly.

EIVOS

Ah yes! Very good, Jake! It's kejelious, one of the most vital materials of the Sh'Dama Age. Have I ever told you about kejelious? I don't know if anyone appreciates how truly versatile it can be...

Jake has heard this all before, but politely nods along.

2 INT. ANOTHER CAVE

Jake's personal space at B'Hala. He is working at a small computer console, cataloguing the pottery piece, muttering specs to himself without much interest. He remembers...

3 **INT. DS9 - SISKO'S QUARTERS**

KASIDY YATES and Jake sit together in her quarters. Kasidy is reading a padd screen, unimpressed.

KASIDY

Yet another invitation to bless somebody's crops.

JAKE

That's what, the eighth today?

KASIDY

I know! It's like they think I'm some miracle worker just 'cause I'm pregnant with the Emissary's baby. Ugh. If I tried blessing anybody's crops, I'd probably just end up vomiting over them.

They laugh quietly. Not much of a joke, but it helps.

JAKE

I... got my own invitation today, actually. To go and visit the archaeological dig at B'Hala.

(beat)

I'm thinking of going.

KASIDY

That's good, Jake. I hear it's fascinating. It'll do you good to get away for a couple of days.

JAKE

Actually, it'll be a few weeks. They have a program for monks to help out with the digging. I asked if they'd let me join them for a while. Keep myself busy.

Kasidy nods thoughtfully.

4 **BACK TO SCENE**

Jake continues tapping away at his console.

5 **INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR**

Jake and EZRI DAX are walking solemnly towards an airlock. Jake is carrying his travelling bag.

DAX

Don't expect too much, Jake. Just let whatever happens happen.

JAKE

Thanks, Dax. I'll see you soon.

They hug goodbye, and Jake steps through the airlock.

6 **BACK TO SCENE**

As Jake continues to work quietly...

ISTANI (o.s.)

Jake Sisko?

Jake turns, surprised. Another prydar stands in the entry. This is ISTANI REYLA - older, female, nervous and reverent.

JAKE

Yes?

ISTANI

My name is Istani Reyla. I am...
(correction)

I was one of the overseers with Site Extension.

JAKE

(bemused)

Nice to meet you. What can I help you with?

Istani approaches, hands Jake a package. She seems nervous, glancing over her shoulder as if fearing being caught.

ISTANI

It's a... document of sorts. Very old. I believe it's important that you...

(emotional)
I'm sorry, it's been a long week.

JAKE
I understand. I have these dishes
to go through, but I can run it
through the translator after that.

ISTANI
No, it's for you. It was written
for you, the son of the Emissary.
I believe that unequivocally.
Don't share it with anyone until
after you've read it. Whatever you
decide to do after that...

Jake takes the scroll, curious, passes a tricorder over it.

ISTANI
Read it. Trust your heart. You'll
know what to do.

Jake looks down to read the tricorder display, frowning.

JAKE
"Very old" is an understatement.
This is more than 23 millennia -

He looks up - Istani is gone.

7 INT. CAVE - SOME TIME LATER

Jake has been working on his translation for some time. He
rubs his shoulders, easing the tension of being hunched,
and tries to make sure he's getting this right.

JAKE
(reading aloud)
"Battles fall and fail, and there
is a time of waiting, the space
between breaths as the land heals
and its children retire from war.
The Temple welcomes many home, the
faithful and the chosen.

"A Herald, unforgotten but lost to time, a Seer of Visions to whom the Teacher Prophets sing, will return from the Temple at the end of this time to attend the birth of Hope, the Infant Avatar. The welcomed Herald shares a new understanding of the Temple with all the land's children. Conceived by lights of war, the alien Avatar opens its eyes upon a waxing tide of awareness.

"The journey to the land hides. Prophecies are revealed and hidden. The first child, a son, enters the Temple alone. With the Herald he returns, and soon after, the Avatar is born. A new breath is drawn and the land rejoices in clarity and change."

Jake tries to take in what he has read. Can this really say what he thinks it does? He checks the computer again...

JAKE

Herald... Another word for "herald" is... "Emissary." A son enters the Temple. And returns with the Herald.

(realises)

Dad... I'm coming to get you.
I'm coming to bring you home.

On his amazed, hopeful expression...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 INT. CARDASSIAN FREIGHTER

A boxy, low-tech freighter. Vapours, emergency lights and electrical sparks. A dreamlike haze covers the scene.

KIRA NERYS walks into this, ducking the sparks and gasses. She's in a large cargo bay, and around the room are dead bodies, Cardassian soldiers and Bajoran prisoners. Men, women and children. They were suffocated and frozen. The outfits clearly say "Occupation." In one case, a Cardassian soldier and Bajoran prisoner hold each other in death.

Kira continues, horrified. A brighter light begins to appear, bluish-white. The source is obscured, too bright to look at. Kira approaches, wary. A silhouette of a familiar figure hovers somewhere behind the light.

SISKO (v.o.)

Nerys...

9 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS

Kira jerks awake in bed to her dark room.

MALE VOICE (comm)

...is Security. Colonel?

KIRA

Go ahead.

MALE VOICE (comm)

Sorry to wake you, Colonel, but there's been an attack on board the station.

KIRA

What happened?

MALE VOICE (comm)

I don't have the details, but at least one person was killed,

possibly two. The Lieutenant said she'd meet you in the infirmary.

KIRA

On my way.

Filled with a strange foreboding from her dream, Kira quickly pulls herself out of bed.

10 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Kira enters the infirmary. Lieutenant RO LAREN is waiting in a grey Bajoran Militia uniform. She is the station's new chief of security. The atmosphere between Kira and Ro is professional if a little cold.

KIRA

Report, Lieutenant.

RO

At this point, it appears to be a botched robbery attempt. Two dead, the victim and perpetrator, both Bajoran civilians. Doctor Bashir is conducting the autopsies -

KIRA

Where did it happen?

RO

Promenade, in front of Quark's.

(off Kira's
reaction)

There was a strong security presence in and around Quark's, as you... aah, suggested... but it didn't seem to matter. He stabbed the woman in front of a crowd, took her bag and ran. My deputies chased him to the second level. He jumped, he fell badly, he died.

KIRA

Who was he?

RO

No ID yet. He came to the station under a false name. The woman was a monk, a Prylar Istani Reyla. She'd only been here a couple of days; makes me wonder if he came after her specifically...

Kira's stunned reaction makes it clear she knew the woman.

KIRA
(whispers)
Reyla? Istani Reyla?

RO
Colonel... are you all right?

Kira doesn't answer, but walks towards the autopsy room, where BASHIR is working over the body.

ANGLE DOWN

Looking down onto Istani's body, with bloody wounds.

CLOSE ON KIRA

as she stares numbly down, barely hearing Bashir's report.

BASHIR
...Several times. The atrio-ventricular node was destroyed. Even if I'd been standing by with a surgical team, it's unlikely she could have been saved.

Kira reaches out and touches Istani's face.

BASHIR
Nerys... did you know her?

KIRA
At the camps, when I was a child. At Singha. After my mother left... she was a good friend. She looked out for us.

BASHIR

I'm so sorry. If it helps, I don't believe she suffered.

KIRA

I've been meaning to contact her. It's been... five years? The last time we spoke, she was on her way to an archaeological dig.

RO

Did you know she was coming to the station?

Kira shakes her head, then pulls herself together, her face full of determination.

KIRA

I expect a full investigation, Lieutenant. And I want to know what you find as soon as you find it. I'll expect your initial report by the end of the day.

RO

Yes, sir.

BASHIR

If there's anything I can do...

KIRA

Thank you, Julian. I'll be fine.

Kira walks out without looking back.

11 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE (CONTINUOUS)

As Kira walks quickly to the nearest turbolift. Starfleet and Bajoran work crews are performing repairs and upgrades to station systems all over the place.

12 INT. DS9 - TURBOLIFT (CONTINUOUS)

KIRA

Ops.

As the lift moves, Kira's face begins to crumble, but then she pulls herself together again.

13 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Kasidy, pregnancy slightly visible, sits on a biobed. She is talking to Bashir as he enters the room from behind.

KASIDY

...And I'll want to do some planting in the spring. If I'm not too fat to bend over by then.

BASHIR

Bending over shouldn't be a problem. Standing back up might take work.

(begins to examine her)

So, no more bumps, I see. You staying away from Rakalian fruit?

KASIDY

Absolutely. In fact, I'm staying away from the cargo holds altogether. I feel pretty good, I guess. No more morning sickness. I'm a little tired. Oh, and I've developed a craving for anything made with ginger root. I guess I shouldn't be surprised. Ben always loved ginger. He said...

(drifting)

He said there was no such thing as a good stir-fry without ginger.

BASHIR

(gently)

I remember. He made it for us.

KASIDY

I've been thinking I should take up cooking. I set up the kitchen at the house just like he wanted. Be a shame to let it go to waste.

BASHIR
It's finished already?

KASIDY
You'd be surprised how quickly things go when everybody on the planet wants to help you move in.

BASHIR
That's alright with you, isn't it?

KASIDY
Most of the time.
(beat)
The station seems different now. There's just so many strangers here lately. I really think this move will be good for me. For us.

BASHIR
I think anything that makes you happy will be good for you. And the baby.

KASIDY
Me too. We'll be visiting a lot - I'm still part-time with the Commerce Ministry - but Bajor will be home.
(breezily)
So... how are things with you and Ezri?

BASHIR
Fine. Well... I think.

He considers whether to say more.

14 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

QUARK is in his customary place behind the bar, which is not busy. Ro enters and approaches.

QUARK
How about you tell your people to stop scaring my customers away? If

I recall, the incident took place
outside, not in my bar.

RO

And a good morning to you, Quark.
Do me a favour and look at this.

Ro drops a slip of paper onto the counter. Quark ignores it
for a moment and studies her instead, before picking it up.

QUARK

Anything for you, Lieutenant -
(reads paper;
smiles freezes)
Doesn't mean a thing to me. Where
did you say you found it?

RO

I didn't.

They wait each other out.

QUARK

I really have no idea. Maybe she
was going to meet someone here,
that's why it says my name. And
these numbers could mean a time...

Ro smiles, and Quark realises his mistake.

QUARK

(stutters)
I mean, I assume this is about
that murdered woman, right?

RO

Give it up, Quark. I found it in
her bag and you know it, and you
also know what it means. You owe
me for not telling Kira about that
shipment of phaser scopes...

QUARK

What phaser scopes? Really,
Lieutenant, I don't know what -

Sharp as a whip, Ro reaches across the bar and grabs Quark's lapels, yanking him close.

RO

Listen carefully, Quark. I don't have a problem with your petty schemes. I'm not Kira and I'm not Starfleet, and a victimless crime is just that, right? But if you don't tell me what I want to know when I want to know it, I'll teach you whole new meanings of the word "sorry." And what I want to know right now is what you know about Istani Reyla. Make no mistake - this is not open to negotiation.

QUARK

Okay, okay!

He reaches under the bar, and produces an isolinear rod.

RO

Thank you.

She takes the rod and stalks out of the bar. Quark watches her go, half terrified and half in love.

15 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Bashir and Kasidy are talking, sat on opposite biobeds.

BASHIR

I just want her to be happy. I don't want things to become dull for her. Or for me.

KASIDY

Julian, believe me, these are not problems. There is no way to set up everything in advance. No way to avoid mistakes before they happen. You have to just take the time to get to know each other, let everything develop at its own pace. You're just in love, that's

all. Now stop worrying so much and
enjoy it.

Kasidy pats him goodbye on the shoulder, and leaves.

16 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Kasidy walks down the corridor past more work crews, lost
in her own world. Various emotions play on her face - love,
loss, amusement, resolution. She enters her quarters.

17 INT. DS9 - SISKO'S QUARTERS (CONTINUOUS)

Solemnly, she moves into the room, feeling the emptiness.

KASIDY

Hmmm... Maybe some tea. And a
couple of those ginger cookies...

Her stomach grumbles in anticipation. She pats her belly.

KASIDY

Oh kid... you're something else.

As she heads to the replicator, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

18 EXT. STATION - ESTABLISHING

The *Defiant* is docked, as are numerous freighters and other ships. Work crews dot the exterior of the station, working on repairs and upgrades. Hanging nearby is a Nebula-class Starfleet vessel, the *Aldebaran*.

19 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE

Kira is on the lower level, talking MOS with a young male (although somewhat androgynous) Andorian Starfleet Ensign. This is SHAR, the station's new chief science officer. Kira is tense and distracted, unhappy with Shar's report.

Kira leaves for her office, and Shar sits down on the floor to continue work, surrounded by open panels and cables all over the place. After a while of futzing around with them, he pauses and looks off towards Kira's closed door.

JAST (o.s.)

Taking a break from your troubles,
Ensign?

Shar looks up to see TIRIS JAST, a Bolian female in a Starfleet Commander's uniform. Tall and elegant, friendly but professional. She is the new Executive Officer.

SHAR

Commander, no sir. I'm just a
little tired, nearing the end of
my shift.

JAST

Your second, I imagine. What have
I said about working doubles?

SHAR

(smile)

That I'll end up freeze-dried if I
don't get back to my quarters
occasionally. Sir.

JAST

That's right. I know things are in disarray, but I think you could probably slip away if you hurry. No-one's looking.

SHAR

If it's alright, sir, I think I'll stay. The colonel wanted to get as much finished today as possible.

JAST

Carry on, Ensign. But no more extra shifts for while, alright?

SHAR

Yes, Commander. Thank you, sir.

Jast leaves and heads towards the Commander's office. Shar returns to work.

20 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira is on the comm screen with a human Starfleet female, Lt Cmdr JANNA from the *Aldebaran*.

KIRA

I'm sure Quark has a program. We had a freighter crew come through a few months ago, and they had a Denebian on board. He spent a lot of time at Quark's.

JANNA (screen)

The ensigns will be very relieved, Colonel. One of their suits started leaking slime all over the Captain's ready room yesterday...

KIRA

I... should go, Janna. Duty calls.

JANNA (screen)

Of course, Colonel. Thanks again.

She signs off. Jast ENTERS, takes the seat opposite Kira.

JAST

Good morning, Colonel. Sorry I didn't get here sooner, I spent the last few hours dealing with the *Defiant's* computer refit. Have you had chance to look over Nog's proposal for expanding tactical capacity? You know, I was worried when I first met him, he's so young to be a Chief Engineer. But his ideas are quite innovative.

KIRA

He inherited something of his father's technological genius.

JAST

The Grand Nagus. Rom, isn't it?

(Kira nods)

I haven't had a chance to read any reports on what happened this morning. But Ezri mentioned it. Terrible thing. Is there anything Starfleet should know, or was it a civilian matter?

KIRA

Ro's looking into it. At this point there doesn't seem to be any motive beyond robbery.

JAST

Good. It's a sad affair, but with things as they are we don't need another Federation complication. I've already worn out my welcome with Starfleet on our behalf. They keep telling me we'll just have to wait for more techs, and that with the *Aldebaran* out there keeping watch we're in no hurry with the weapons arrays...

Kira looks uncomfortable. Jast trails off as she notices.

JAST

Colonel? What is it? What's wrong?

KIRA

I don't know if Ro can handle the investigation. She's never done anything like this before. And what if it wasn't a robbery? I thought security would work out for her, but I may have been wrong. She hasn't even been able to identify the killer yet.

JAST

She is new... but maybe you should see how things progress before replacing her.

KIRA

(surprised)

You're in Starfleet!

JAST

Yes, and I know her history. Her Starfleet file makes interesting reading, especially once you realise what's missing from it. For all of Ro's...

(euphemism)

... mis-steps, she's not afraid to cause a disturbance to reach her objective. It would seem to me that you'd want a Security Chief to be headstrong, even aggressive. Plus she does have the tactical background.

KIRA

I do want to be fair. And it's not as if we have anyone to replace her with.

JAST

Well, it's your territory, of course. As for our ongoing upgrade frustrations, why don't we take an

early lunch and go through a new schedule?

KIRA

Maybe we can have Quark make us a couple of Black Holes. Just to enhance our creativity, of course.

Jast smiles - it's a plan.

21 EXT. STATION - ESTABLISHING

Focusing on the *Aldebaran*.

22 INT. ALDEBARAN - MAIN BRIDGE

Janna sits in the centre chair. A male officer in sciences blue, CHANG, sits nearby. He has a padd, but is daydreaming rather than reading it. Young trainees at many positions.

JANNA

You're just pretending to read, aren't you?

CHANG

What an odd question. What else could I possibly be doing?

JANNA

(smirking)

Thinking about Shannon.

CHANG

Lieutenant Eidelmann and I are just good friends, Commander.

JANNA

Tom, it's no secret. Besides, I think it's sweet. There seems to be a rash of new romances all over the ship. The Captain says it's an "end of the war" thing.

CHANG

(feigning innocence)

I think you're just seeing things
because of you and Lieutenant
Hopping Bird.

Janna's eyes bulge as she looks automatically back to the tactical officer, who must be Lt HOPPING BIRD, before trying to cover. Chang chuckles. Among this good humour, Hopping Bird reacts to something on his panel.

HOPPING BIRD
Commander! The wormhole's opening!

As Janna stands and everyone reacts, we see the wormhole begin to bloom open on the *Aldebaran's* viewscreen.

23 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE

Just as Kira and Jast are exiting the command office, both their combadges go off, and they look to Shar at the master Ops table. People are beginning to rush all across Ops as they realise what is happening.

SHAR
Colonel, Commander. Three
Jem'Hadar strike ships have just
come through the wormhole in
attack formation. Their weapons
and shields are up and they're -
they're heading for the *Aldebaran*.

The enormity of this hits Kira. This can't be happening!

KIRA
Red alert, battle stations. Shar,
send out a general distress call.
Lock off non-essential systems and
get me everything on our weapons.
I need to know exactly where we
are. Implement emergency shelter
protocols, try to get us visuals
on the main screen, and tell Nog
to get the *Defiant* ready, now.

Kira nods to Jast, who heads across Ops to the transporter stage and beams off. Alarms begin to go off all over Ops

and she considers all the systems that are still in mid-repair and tries to calculate their chances.

24 **EXT. SPACE**

As the wormhole opens fully and three Jem'Hadar ships come barreling out, weapons firing straight at us.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

25 EXT. SPACE

The Jem'Hadar ships head across camera as we turn to see the *Aldebaran* begin to come to life.

26 INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE

NOG and DAX are chatting over repairs, blissfully unaware. Being young and new at the job, Nog is trying to impress.

NOG
But you think it'll work?

DAX
(patiently)
I don't see a problem with your numbers. You should write it up and show it to Kira at the next -

NOG
You're right, that would give me a chance to iron out the details. I still haven't calculated the density of the subsequent particle cloud, which could interfere with shield harmonics...

Nog's combadge chirps, and he answers. Shar's voice filters through, already half way through his sentence...

SHAR (comm)
...is on her way, but power up now. I repeat, the station has gone to red alert. We need the *Defiant* online, and a full status report. Commander Jast is beaming over, but the colonel says to get ready now, the attack ships are - they're firing on the *Aldebaran*!

27 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE

Shar is at the central table, working feverishly to get the main viewscreen working while talking to Nog. The screen bursts to life just in time to see the Jem'Hadar FIRE...

The *Aldebaran* moves to respond, but it seems slow and lumbering in comparison. Around Shar, reports and instructions are being called out all over Ops.

28 **EXT. SPACE - THE BATTLE**

The three Jem'Hadar ships are attacking the *Aldebaran*, looping away and coming back, going for the vulnerable underbelly like cats attacking a wildebeest. They avoid the starship's phaser blasts, until one Jem'Hadar scores a hit and an explosion racks the lower portion of the ship.

29 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Shar's panel goes blank as Kira steps up to the Ops table.

SHAR

We've lost contact with the
Aldebaran.

KIRA

Tactical, can we get targeting for
quantum torpedoes?

Fast pan over the Tactical station, manned by a beefy dark-skinned human male, Lieutenant SAM BOWERS.

BOWERS

Negative. Launchers three, four
and seven are down, and the locks
on the rest are unreliable.

KIRA

Shar, get me the *Defiant*, and try
to get the *Aldebaran* back. If we
can get them close enough to a
docking pylon -

But it's too late - the *Aldebaran* explodes in a blinding flash, and everyone in Ops shields their eyes.

30 **EXT. SPACE**

As pieces of the *Aldebaran* fly outward and the Jem'Hadar ships swerve to avoid them...

31 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Stunned expressions all around as everyone is silent, with only the sounds of computers and the view on the screen.

SHAR

Sir, we're receiving a response to our distress call from the IKS -

KIRA

How far away?

SHAR

Ah... twenty-two minutes.

KIRA

Too late.

(taps combadge)

Commander Jast. The *Aldebaran* has been destroyed. The *Defiant* is the station's best hope for defence. Are you ready?

32 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

As Jast steps out of the doorway towards the centre chair and people rush to stations behind her...

JAST

We're ready.

KIRA (comm)

Do what you can.

And the *Defiant* viewscreen shows the Jem'Hadar ships heading towards the station.

33 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

Ro is just locking the data rod away when the alarm sounds.

COMPUTER VOICE

This is a priority one red alert.
Please implement emergency shelter
protocols immediately. This is a
priority one red alert. Please
implement emergency shelter
protocols immediately. This is -

Ro slaps the comm panel to silence the computer. She looks about in shock - she doesn't know what those protocols are.

RO
Computer, display priority one
emergency shelter protocols.

34 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Security agents are trying to control panicking people as Ro steps out of the office. Bashir rushes towards her from out of the crowd, clearly worried.

BASHIR
Lieutenant, do you know what's
happening?

RO
Don't you?

The station shakes around them as they are fired upon.

BASHIR
We're in trouble.
(Ro nods)
Ezri...

RO
Ah, Doctor... I have to make sure
the shops have been evacuated...

BASHIR
Of course, I... Good luck, Ro. Be
careful.

This seems to surprise Ro. Bashir heads to the Infirmary.

35 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

Nog fights off panic as he works both the Tactical and Engineering stations. Dax is trying to get Communications working, while Helm is being run by PRYNN TENMEI, a young human female Ensign of Japanese descent. Jast is projecting calm command, although they're clearly not ready.

JAST

Ensign, take us out. The armour over the warp nacelles is still temp, so try to keep the targets below and in front of us. Nog, what can we do about the lag on beam launch?

NOG

Not much, sir. Point-six-five seconds minimum.

JAST

We'll just have to fire early, then. Shields up. Stay with tactical, Lieutenant.

The screen stays blank for a moment until it swerves around to see the Jem'Hadar score hits against the station. All three ships are focusing on the Lower Fusion Core.

JAST

Positions, Lieutenant. Run course probabilities. Without targeting it may be the best we can do. Dax, how's the station doing?

DAX

Their shields are down by at least forty percent.

JAST

Let's see if we can tempt them away. Ensign Tenmei, get as close as you can, full impulse, bearing two-two-seven mark nine, and be prepared to run evasive pattern Theta Sixteen. Dax, when we're twenty kilometres out of range, lay down a phaser spread in front

of the lead ship. Who knows, we
may get lucky.

Dax and Tenmei set to work, scared but resolute.

36 **EXT. STATION - THE BATTLE**

As the *Defiant* turns towards the attackers, who continue to
fire on the station, which shudders under the impact.

37 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

As Nog's panel goes wild.

 NOG
 (urgent)
The RCS thrusters are bleeding
power from the electrical system!

 JAST
Compensate! Cut impulse to half
and run a tap.

 NOG
Sir, if we boost it from here
without checking the source -

 JAST
I know, we risk an overload, but
we don't have a choice.
 (steps towards
 engineering)
Never mind, stay at your post,
Lieutenant. I'm on it.
 (to Tenmei)
Ensign, report.

 TENMEI
Intercept in eleven seconds.

Nog watches his panel until they are in optimal position,
then fires phasers. They drift wide for a while until they
connect with one of the Jem'Hadar fighters, which veers off
course, sputters for a while, then explodes.

 NOG

Yes! Got one!

TENMEI

Sir, the lead ship is changing course, heading straight for us -

38 EXT. DEFIANT - THE BATTLE

The lead Jem'Hadar ship fires again, scoring a direct hit on the *Defiant*.

39 INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE

Explosions rack the bridge. Nog hugs his console to stay upright, but Jast is thrown backwards with a YELP, landing hard. After a moment of silent shock, Dax steps up.

DAX

Nog, report!

NOG

Shields down to eighty percent. There was an electrical charge straight through the ship's superstructure. Warp injectors are down, and we've lost the comm link with the station.

Dax crouches over Jast, touches the ridge on her face to feel her pulse. Jast's eyes are wide and glassy - she is dead. A moment to steel herself, and then Dax steps towards the centre chair, command instinct taking over.

DAX

Tenmei, execute evasive pattern Theta Sixteen. Nog, shut down the engineering console. Is ship-wide working?

NOG

Negative.

DAX

Then comm them directly. Tell them to put everything into phasers - we need them more than we need

shields or propulsion. And keep trying to get the station back. Tenmei, get ready - we're about to go on the offensive.

40 **EXT. SPACE**

The *Defiant* swings back towards the station. The two remaining Jem'Hadar ships are continuing to attack.

41 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

CLOSE on Ezri in the centre chair, all business.

DAX

Hard to port, close in, and fire as soon as we're in range.

42 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

The bar is empty as Quark makes sure everything is locked safely away. The station continues to SHUDDER under the attack, and Quark cowers. Ro enters on an upper level.

RO

Quark! What the hell are you still doing here?

QUARK

Lieutenant Ro! I was just making sure everything is secured here. You know, it's my responsibility to maintain safety standards during all emergency procedures...

RO

Fine, don't tell me. But whatever it is, it's not worth risking your life over. Now if you don't mind, I think we should get -

A huge SHUDDER rocks the station, knocking them both off their feet. As Quark pulls himself up, he looks around and sees Ro is gone. Then he hears a GROAN from the floor, and realises Ro has fallen off the balcony.

QUARK
Lieutenant?

As he begins to struggle towards her, the station is rocked again. Once it stops, Quark continues crawling over to Ro.

QUARK
Lieutenant? Can you hear me?

RO
(muddled)
Quark? Hit my head... on the stairs...

QUARK
Yeah, I figured. Come on, we've got to get out of here.

He slips his arm around her, helps to her feet and they hobble out of the bar.

43 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE

Ops shakes as the station is HIT again. Lights flash and worried voices call all over.

KIRA
Divert as much power as you can away from the Lower Core. Evacuate everyone there to the Upper Core.

Shar is impressed with Kira, drawing strength from her calmness in the chaos. On the screen, the Jem'Hadar ships veer away and *Defiant* follows.

KIRA
Defiant's status?

SHAR
Unable to lock sensors - that last hit wiped out the interface.

44 EXT. DEFIANT - THE BATTLE

Defiant chases one of the raiders, pummelling them with phasers. The second raider comes up behind and FIRES on

Defiant, but *Defiant* maintains attack on the first. Just as *Defiant's* shields visibly drop, the first raider EXPLODES.

Defiant angles up and over the last raider, but that ship breaks off and returns to the station. *Defiant* tries to follow, but suddenly goes completely dark, dead in space.

45 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

They all see the *Defiant* drifting, coasting along without power. This is it - no defence left.

KIRA
(quietly)
Put everything we've got into
shields. Everything.

46 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

Ezri and Nog gather behind the Tenmei at the helm. There is nothing they can do but watch as the last Jem'Hadar raider approaches the station in the distance on the screen.

NOG
The impulse fusion reactors blew,
everything's dead. Except the view
screen, of course. We still get to
watch.

Ezri says nothing, but reaches out and takes Nog's hand. Then a new light blooms on the screen.

47 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

KIRA
Evacuate the station. Civilian
priority for runabouts and escape
pods. Make sure all the freighters
are full and prepped for warp.
Seal off everything else.

BOWERS
Colonel, we've lost shields. We
can't expect more than a few
minutes before a full breach -
Sir! The wormhole's opening again!

KIRA
(hopeful)
On screen!

The screen sputters but shows the wormhole opening...

48 **EXT. SPACE**

...And another Jem'Hadar ship comes out. It is badly scarred and damaged, but still prepared to fight.

49 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Seeing this...

KIRA
(to herself)
Damn it, no! Not even time for an evacuation...
(louder)
Shar, send a final report to Starfleet. Anything on sensors?

SHAR
Negative, external banks are all down. We can attempt to transfer power -

KIRA
No, we have to evacuate right now. Everyone stand down and get to the transporter -

BOWERS
Colonel, the second ship!

50 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

NOG
It's fighting them!

Nog pulls closer to the view screen. Behind him, Ezri suddenly gets an idea.

DAX

Nog, I have an idea.

51 EXT. STATION - THE BATTLE

The damaged ship is attacking the last fighter, the two ships darting around and dog-fighting each other, equally matched. The new ship tries for a suicide run but the attacker pulls away at the last second.

52 INT. DS9 - OPS

Amidst the chaos of people evacuating Ops, Kira stands gaping at the screen, unable to believe what she is seeing. Quietly, under her breath, she begins to pray.

53 INT. DEFIANT - JEFFRIES TUBE

Dax and Nog clamber through a Jeffries tube. They exit into a small below-decks control room.

DAX

Don't worry, we're almost there.

54 EXT. STATION - THE BATTLE

The two Jem'Hadar ships continue to beat away at each other, but it looks like the new arrival is losing ground. Finally, the defending ship's warp nacelle is blown off. It veers, sputters, and finally explodes.

55 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE

The last few people gasp, and Kira hangs her head in defeat. Until something else catches her eye on the screen - a small light heading away from the *Defiant*.

56 EXT. STATION - THE BATTLE

The small light is a torpedo, streaking towards the last Jem'Hadar ship. It finds its target, and the ship EXPLODES.

57 INT. DEFIANT

Nog and Dax watch the small screen in the cramped auxiliary control junction where they are working.

NOG
Got it! We got it!

58 **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

KIRA
Hold on!

As the final shockwave from the nearby explosion ROCKS the unshielded station. Once the shaking stops, no-one says anything for a while, not daring to believe it's over. Looking around at her people, Kira catches her breath.

KIRA
Bowers, launch the *Rio Grande* and the *Sungari*. I want the *Defiant* crew beamed off before they freeze to death. And arrange for the ship to be brought back for repairs.
(Bowers nods)
Shar, status report.

SHAR
The hull is breached in several places in the lower and mid cores, two of the fusion reactors are shut down, and at least thirty-four people confirmed dead, many more still unaccounted for.
(beat)

Colonel, I should report that the internal sensor array suggested a transfer of energy to the station as the last ships were destroyed.

KIRA
"Suggested"?

SHAR
I can't verify the readings. It's likely they were false, created by the power surge -

KIRA
You probably picked up radiation spikes from the explosions, or

like you said, random surges
through the network.

SHAR

I think so too, sir, but I felt it
was my duty to tell you.

KIRA

Thank you, Ensign. If there's
nothing else?

DAX (comm)

Colonel, this is Dax on *Defiant*.

KIRA

Good to hear from you, Dax. Good
work. Runabouts are on the way.
Tell Commander Jast and Nog to
report to Ops when you get here,
and have Nog look at our damage
reports en route. We need to work
out a repair schedule immediately.
How's everyone on the ship?

Uncomfortable pause.

DAX (comm)

Two people were killed, three
others were wounded. Commander
Jast is dead. I'm sorry, Nerys.

As Shar and Kira react, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

59 EXT. BAJOR CAPITAL CITY - ESTABLISHING

The usual pleasant greenery, elegant buildings, calm feel.

60 INT. VEDEK ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

Seven Vedeks are seated at a larger table than necessary; a variety of ages, genders, races. It's an emergency meeting, to which the entire Assembly are not invited. As each Vedek in turn wishes to speak, he places his hands on the table.

LEAD VEDEK

I thank you for coming at short notice. I'm sure you understand why I've called this session. Before we discuss our options, I would ask your impressions of the crisis before us.

VEDEK NO 2

Early this morning, Deep Space Nine was attacked. The last report I received told of sixty-one dead in all, not including the crew of the guardian starship, making it, I believe, the deadliest offensive yet waged against the station. Even in the war there was not so much damage, or so many lives lost. My firm conviction is that the heresy was destroyed during the battle, and therefore that the battle itself was sanctioned by the Prophets. After all, did the attackers not travel through the Temple gates? I believe we have acted with unnecessary haste, presuming too much, and that we should now await further guidance from the Prophets.

This generates the expected flurry of hands-on-table and raised voices.

VEDEK NO 3

I believe the matter should be opened to the entire Assembly.

VEDEK NO 4

We should consult the Orb of Contemplation.

VEDEK NO 5

No, the Orb of Wisdom.

VEDEK NO 6

We should send a covert team to the station to gather more data.

LEAD VEDEK

Perhaps we should bring Kira Nerys into our confidence.

VEDEK NO 4

Absolutely not. We all know how difficult Kira has been for this Assembly in the past.

VEDEK NO 6

We mustn't trust any information we don't collect ourselves. Kira knew Istani, from Singha. For all we know they were in it together.

LEAD VEDEK

You think she wouldn't come to us if she had talked with Istani? We need Kira. She runs the station. People trust her. Granted she can be obstinate, but her faith and loyalty aren't in question...

VEDEK NO 3

Faith perhaps, but loyalty? You know the stories of her and Winn.

VEDEK NO 2

Forget about Kira, and Istani. The Prophets will show us the way!

As voices continue to raise and cross each other, the final Vedek places his hands calmly on the table. This is YEVIR LINJARIN, male, 40s, projecting a tangible air of peace and self-assurance. He waits to be noticed.

LEAD VEDEK
(respectfully)
Vedek Yevir, you wish to speak?

YEVIR
Thank you, I do. We all want to do what we think is right. Because we love the Prophets, and we love the people of Bajor.

Yevir now has the entire room's attention.

YEVIR (cont)
As we have all agreed, the heresy must be contained. But our course so far has not been worthy of us, and I feel regret for what has happened. I grieve, I feel shame. But I know too that the Prophets forgive us, because They know our hearts, and They know we meant only to express our love for Them.

LEAD VEDEK
What would you propose?

YEVIR
As you all know, I once served on the station during my days in the Militia. I could approach Kira as a friend, discreetly. I wouldn't reveal so much that she would face the kinds of decisions we face, of course. But if the book is on board, and she has knowledge of it, I'm certain she would tell me. I know it's asking a lot, but if you would all place your trust in

me, I believe I could further our interests here, and thus all of Bajor's interests.

Everyone nods - they all admire Yevir, and are glad to have the matter taken out of their hands.

61 EXT. STATION - ESTABLISHING

A Klingon ship and a few Bajoran vessels are in the area. Lights on the lower half of the station are dead. Debris from the *Aldebaran* and *Jem'Hadar* ships drifts about.

62 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

It's quiet. Bashir walks sadly among the busy biobeds in the surgery ward, looking rumpled and tired, his face making clear there's nothing he can do for these people.

In the main room, Shar stands holding a large bunch of FLOWERS and talking with a Bajoran NURSE.

SHAR

...Then perhaps I should come back another time. How long will she be here?

NURSE

I really can't say. The doctor wanted her to wake up on her own. The concussion wasn't severe, but we don't take chances with head injuries.

SHAR

I understand. Would it be alright if I left these with you?

From a nearby bio-bed, Ro comes to fuzzy consciousness.

RO

Shar? What happened?

NURSE

There was an attack on the station, and you were brought in

with a head injury. But your readings suggest a full recovery. I'll get the doctor.

Shar passes the flowers to Ro as if he doesn't really know why they should be of any interest.

SHAR

These are from Quark. He insisted I deliver them. He says that flowers are a customary gift for the ill or deceased. These are Argelian, I think.

RO

I'll be sure to thank him. Shar, what happened to the station? What happened to me?

Bashir finishes what he was doing and approaches.

BASHIR

Lieutenant, Ensign. I have a few questions, if you don't mind.

RO

So do I. Like for one, why is Quark sending me flowers?

BASHIR

(grinning)

Oh, I can imagine. Tell me, what's the last thing you remember before waking up?

RO

There was a murder on the Promenade. I remember meeting with you and Kira. And then I... talked to Quark about it. I remember that. I don't know what else.

BASHIR

I'd say you've lost less than an hour of your memory. It's normal with this type of injury, nothing

to worry about. Blood pressure is stable and your neurographic scan shows no disruptions. You can return to duty, but if you find yourself feeling nauseous or dizzy, you're to report back here immediately, all right?

RO

(nodding)

How did I get hurt?

BASHIR

You fell from the stairs in Quark's. He brought you here. Good thing, too. The way the station was bouncing around, you could have been seriously injured. But I'll let the Ensign fill you in on all that. If you'll excuse me...

Bashir steps away, and Shar helps Ro off the biobed and out of the infirmary.

63 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

As Shar and Ro walk together towards Security...

SHAR

So with incoming comms basically inoperative, the only messages from the Federation have been relayed through Bajor, telling us to wait. Colonel Kira has all the senior officers on standby for a briefing as soon as she gets word.

RO

What are we doing for defences?

SHAR

The IKS *Tcha'voth* got here just after the attack, and six Bajoran assault vessels arrived a few hours ago. But there's tension on the station. It doesn't help that

the wormhole has opened three
times in the last hour, triggered
by fragments from the *Aldebaran*.
There's to be a service at 0700
tomorrow for all those lost.

They reach Security, and pause.

SHAR

I should return to Ops. The sensor
arrays are operational, but Kira
wants them at peak efficiency now
they're focused on the wormhole.

RO

I'm glad you came to see me, Shar.

SHAR

And I hope you will continue to
mend properly.

They part, the worry clear on both their faces.

64 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Kira walks among the coffins, urns and other death markers
that fill the bay. She inspects the labels blankly. She
sees Tiris Jast's casket, some humans, a packet of blood
from an unnamed alien. It has not been a good day.

65 **FLASHBACK - DREAM SEQUENCE**

As Kira walks again among the dead bodies in her dream.

66 **BACK TO SCENE**

As Kira reaches the coffin of Istani Reyla.

KIRA

(softly)

Why did you come here, Reyla?

BOWERS (comm)

Colonel Kira, there's an incoming
message from Bajor, routed from

the USS *Cerberus*. Should I send it to your office?

KIRA
(tensing)
Yes, I'm on my way.

67 **INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM**

Senior staff are gathered around the table as Kira enters. She is tense, knowing they won't like what she has to say. She takes her seat at the head of the table.

KIRA
I've just come from speaking with Admiral Ross. At this time, Federation and Allied forces are on full alert throughout the quadrant. Members of the Romulan and Klingon governments are joining a Federation task force to investigate the attack, and everyone is sending military back-up. They plan to send a well-armed fleet into the Gamma Quadrant to contact any Dominion forces.

Reactions around the table are generally not good.

DAX
When are they coming?

NOG
And what does this mean for us?
What are we supposed to be doing?

KIRA
Three days from now, and because of our status, we're not expected to do anything beyond continue repairs and relief to Cardassia, and cleaning up the mess. Bajor is sending several teams of Militia engineers to help.

SHAR

Do they really think the Dominion is about to wage another war?

BOWERS

Ridiculous. If they really wanted to start something, they would have sent more than three ships. It was a rogue attack. We've seen that before with the Jem'Hadar.

DAX

And there was that fourth ship that tried to stop them. None of it makes sense.

KIRA

There is currently a motion before the Council to establish a peace-keeping force in the Gamma Quadrant. Which doesn't leave this room, for the time being. It's just a rumour, officially.

BASHIR

They can't be serious! They can't believe the Dominion will tolerate an armed force that close to their borders for even a single day. It could spark another war.

DAX

It's definitely not going to promote diplomatic relations. They already don't trust us.

KIRA

I made all these points to the Admiral, but the situation stands. He has his orders. I've registered my protest, I'll urge the Bajoran government to do the same, but there's nothing we can do.

(to Ro)

Anything yet on the investigation into the Promenade deaths?

RO
It's ongoing. I'll file a report
as soon as there's any progress.

KIRA
Do you have any leads? Anything?

RO
(more firmly)
Colonel, as soon as there's any
progress, I'll file a report.

KIRA
(irritated)
Fine. Let's move on. I almost
forgot - Starfleet commendations
are pending for Ensigns Nog and
Prynn Tenmei, and Lieutenant Dax's
name has been submitted for -
let's see if I can get this right
- the Starfleet Citation for
Conspicuous Gallantry.

BASHIR
(to Dax, teasing)
I assume you'll be switching to
command now, Captain.

KIRA
Listen... This is a difficult
time, but we'll get through it.
We've come through worse. I just
wanted you to know that I'm glad
you're all here.

Nodding, she dismisses them.

68 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

Kira and Kasidy sit at one of the quieter tables on an
upper level. Kira is gazing forlornly into her drink while
Kasidy tries to keep the mood a bit more upbeat.

KIRA

...But other than that, things are looking up. The Militia techs will stay at least a week, maybe more.

KASIDY

Things will go much faster with all the help. And by the time the task force gets here, everything will be different. They'll have to reconsider once they cool down a bit. Look at the bright side - at least there'll be a few more Starfleet engineers running around while the brass sorts everything out. Then maybe you can finally get away for a few days, like we talked about.

KIRA

I don't know, Kas. It sounds wonderful, it really does. But you'll be getting settled in, and there's just so much for me to do now that Jast is gone...

KASIDY

Forget about getting settled in, you know I'd love the company. Really, you deserve to come down and just spend a few days sitting.
(beat)

The strain is showing, Nerys. You haven't had a break since the day you took command. I know things are a mess right now, but you're going to have a schedule a few deep breaths every now and then, or you'll burn yourself out.

KIRA

(drifting)

I hadn't seen Istani Reyla in years. I didn't even know she was here until after she was killed.

KASIDY

That must have been terrible.

KIRA

And she was such an amazing woman. She was a prydar then, and she must have known what I was doing with the Resistance, but she didn't care. I mean, here was this woman who truly believed that all life was sacred, and I was just a child, and I'd already killed. She taught me how to braid my hair, of all things... she encouraged me to be a child, in spite of what my life was. Maybe because of it.

KASIDY

(changing subject)

So, are you going to be godmother to this baby, or am I going to have to find someone else 'cause you're too busy?

KIRA

(brightening)

Don't you dare. I promise I'll take a vacation, okay?

(beat)

I have to get back to Ops. But thank you, Kas. Really.

Kira finishes her drink and stands to go. She walks down the steps to the lower level, and Kasidy watches her go.

Just as Kira reaches the doorway to the Promenade, she stops, and looks around her as if she heard something. Then she realises what she must look like, and carries on.

Kasidy notices this, and looks worried for Kira.

69 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Ro sits at her desk working. There are no personalising effects around the office at all. Quark enters, not used to seeing anyone but Odo behind that desk. He looks nervous.

RO

Quark! Come in, have a seat. I was going to come and see you later.

Quark gives her his most winning smile.

QUARK

I can't stay long. I just wanted to stop by and see how you were doing... and to see if you got the tube orchids.

RO

I did. And I'm feeling fine, thanks to you. Doctor Bashir said you rescued me after I fell.

QUARK

It was a considerable risk, of course. But even with the station falling to pieces all around us, I couldn't just leave you to die...

(gauges her, decides
to go for it)

...Because that would have been a tragedy beyond all measure, Laren. May I call you Laren?

RO

(still smiling)

I believe you just did. Seriously Quark, thank you. You may have saved my life, and I'm grateful. Of course, I'm not going to let you get away with anything because of it. In fact, I may just have to watch you even closer. We wouldn't want anyone to suspect there was some kind of favouritism going on.

Quark scrambles to recover, performing for all he's worth.

QUARK

You're probably right. I know the Colonel would love nothing more

than to catch us both falling
short of her high moral standards.

RO

(wary)

I suppose I don't know her well
enough to say. Is there a point to
all this, Quark?

QUARK

No no, of course not. Just making
conversation, I suppose.

(beat)

If it's not too personal, may I
ask why you wear your earring on
your left ear?

RO

May I ask why you're asking?

QUARK

Honestly, because I've noticed
that it seems to bother some of
the other Bajorans on board.

RO

I've never been very religious.
Not all Bajorans are, you know.
Wearing my earring on the left was
the best way to discourage the
occasional Vedek from wandering up
to feel my *pagh*. For different
reasons, of course, the practice
was also taken up by the *pagh*-
Wraith cultists...

QUARK

(nodding)

...which explains why people don't
like it.

RO

Right.

QUARK

Well, I suppose I'd better let you get back to work. Drop by the bar later, if you like... I'll buy you a drink.

RO

Thank you, I'll do that.

And Quark leaves, excited about this woman, daunted at everything that could possibly go wrong for him here.

70 **INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS**

It's late. Bashir and Dax are cuddled up in bed. Bashir is daydreaming, Dax begins tickling his arm playfully.

BASHIR

And what do you want?

DAX

What do you got?

BASHIR

I hope that's a rhetorical question.

They kiss deeply, and begin to get more intimate. Just as they are getting into it, Dax's eyes open, and somehow it is no longer Ezri there, but Jadzia.

JADZIA (v.o.)

Julian...

Bashir gasps and pulls away. He sits up, pulling the bedclothes about him as if to protect himself.

DAX

Are you okay?

BASHIR

What just happened? The way you looked at me, I - what happened?

DAX

I was... I'm not sure.

Dax does the same, pulling herself inwards. Suddenly they are very far apart.

DAX

I was thinking about that time you let Jadzia sleep in your cabin, on the *Defiant*. Remember? When you gave up the top bunk for her. She thought about that later, and I was... I felt like Jadzia would have felt, just for a few seconds. I mean, it was me, but she was... it was different... it was...

BASHIR

"Different."

DAX

I'm sorry.

BASHIR

I was making love to you. Can you understand that I might not want to change partners in the middle of it?

DAX

You didn't, Julian. I'm Ezri Dax. Can you understand that?

BASHIR

Right, got it. Why don't you bring Tobin along next time, see how he feels.

DAX

(getting frustrated)

Why don't you grow up, and try to see past yourself? I'm a joined Trill, and that's not ever going to change. Why can't you see that I don't have to limit myself to some species-specific concept of individuality?

BASHIR

Sorry to be so simplistic, Dax.

DAX
You should leave.

BASHIR
My thoughts exactly.

As he gets out of bed and starts to gather his clothes, and
Ezri huddles into the bedclothes...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

71 EXT. STATION - ESTABLISHING

Favouring the Lower Core area, still dark.

72 INT. DS9 - LOWER CORE AREA

A grubby, smoky, dark area of the station, where people don't normally go, like in 3x07 "Civil Defence." Nog sits among a mess of cables and broken stuff, dirty with oil.

SHAR (o.s.)

Sir?

Nog looks up to see the Andorian Ensign holding a tool kit.

NOG

I thought we agreed you'd call me Nog, Shar. I'll never get used to being called "sir," especially from someone who was in the same year at the Academy as me.

SHAR

You're right, Nog, forgive me. Colonel Kira thought you might be able to use me down here.

NOG

I thought you were working on the sensor arrays.

SHAR

I was, but only because no-one else was available. I miswired the secondary cilia circuits - it was an accident, but it will take some hours to repair. The colonel said that replacing circuit boards might be easier for me.

NOG

Okay, you can help me with these.

SHAR

Why are you working alone here?

NOG

Nobody else wanted to do it. They shouldn't have to. The smell...

They quietly begin working, developing a good rhythm together. After a while of comfortable silence...

SHAR

Nog, may I ask you a question?

NOG

Sure, Shar.

SHAR

Were you a witness to Commander Jast's death?

This is not what Nog was expecting. He pauses for a while.

NOG

Yes.

SHAR

Nog, are you all right?

NOG

What's your question, Shar?

SHAR

I only wanted to ask if you thought she died without pain. But I see that I have upset you. I'm sorry. Were you and she close?

NOG

No, we weren't, but it's my fault she's dead.

SHAR

How is that possible? I thought she was killed by an electrical

surge when the *Defiant* was under attack...

(realises)

Ah. You're attempting to assume responsibility because the upgrades were unfinished. I believe Colonel Kira feels the same way. Also Lieutenant Bowers, judging by his behaviour.

NOG

(surprised)

Why do they feel guilty?

SHAR

Why do you? It was the Jem'Hadar who attacked us.

Nog has no answer for that. After another while...

NOG

(faux casual)

Have you ever dealt with the Jem'Hadar, face to face?

SHAR

Not directly. I know something about their chemical and genetic make-up, through the Vorta research we did on the *Tamberlaine* during the war. But I've only ever seen them from a distance.

NOG

If you're lucky, you'll never have to get any closer. They shouldn't even exist, anyway, they're not a real species, they're... They're abominations. They're bred to be merciless killers, murderers.

Shar looks around suddenly, and Nog hears something.

NOG

It's just all the new materials getting settled.

SHAR

No. That's the third time today.
It's gone now, whatever it was.

NOG

You heard something?

SHAR

(scratches antenna)

No, felt it. Andorian antennae can detect electrical fields, changes in air density and temperature. But it's not exactly reliable... strong emotions, adrenaline, even overheated equipment can register. Twice yesterday I felt something, and there wasn't anything close enough to have caused it.

NOG

Maybe you're just getting old.

Another pause, and then Shar attempts to make small talk.

SHAR

I've read that in popular Ferengi culture, attaining material wealth is one of life's predominant goals - is that correct?

NOG

(chuckling)

Yes, I'd say that's correct.

SHAR

Would you mind if I ask, then, why you chose to join Starfleet?

NOG

It's kind of a long story. But it isn't an easy choice to make when, for the most part, you're going against your culture. What they expect of you, you know?

(sigh)

My uncle says it's just a phase.
"Many a young entrepreneur has to
face destitution before he grasps
the necessity of expansion." But
I'm betting he's wrong.

SHAR

Because you feel it's important,
what Starfleet and the Federation
are doing.

NOG

Right, exactly!

SHAR

I'd like to hear the long story,
if you want to tell it. I was
going to take a meal break soon at
your Uncle Quark's establishment.
Would you like to join me?

NOG

You're on, Shar!

They carry on working for the moment.

7. INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Kira is walking determinedly towards the Security office.
Suddenly she stops, and again looks around her, as if
feeling someone breathing down her neck or watching her.

Worrying that she's breaking under the pressure, she turns
and carries on into the Security office.

KIRA

Kas is right, I need a vacation.

74 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

...Where Ro is sitting behind the desk. Kira enters, trying
her best to start on a friendly footing. Ro looks up and
her defences visibly go up, which in turn exasperates Kira.

KIRA

I thought I'd stop by, see if

you have a few minutes to talk.

RO

By all means.

KIRA

I'm going to be honest with you, Lieutenant. I'm not happy with how your posting here is working out, and I think a few changes are in order.

RO

(stiff)

I see. You're relieving me of duty. Any specific reason?

KIRA

Why do you make things so difficult, Ro? Is it me? Or are you just absolutely determined to make everything impossible?

RO

Of course it's not you. It's me, I'm the one with the problem because I don't look to you every time I make a decision.

KIRA

What are you talking about?

RO

I understood when I took this job that how I conduct day-to-day operations would be up to me. But by the way you've been acting, you seem to think I'm a complete incompetent.

KIRA

I know you have the skills, but you have to understand, we live in a community, and it's important that everyone at least tries to work together. Especially senior

staff. But if you've made any effort to fit in, I haven't seen it. And you act like I'm some sort of monstrous authority figure who's out to oppress you.

RO

Maybe if I was human, it wouldn't be a problem.

KIRA

Human? I don't see how that...

RO

Yes you do. Without accepting the Prophets as divine, I'm not a real Bajoran, isn't that right?

That's it. Kira snaps.

KIRA

That's right, Ro! That's it exactly, I can't work with anyone who doesn't believe exactly the same as I do, and it has nothing to do with your constant, obvious disrespect for me as commanding officer of this station!

(pause to
catch breath)

Look, this obviously isn't working out. I think it would be best if you put in for a transfer.

RO

I couldn't do my job, so I put in for a transfer. That's ironic, when if you would stop second-guessing my every move I could actually get something done.

Kira is about to boil over with frustration when she stops to think, and realises - Ro is passive-aggressively trying to get herself fired. But why?

KIRA

Why are you here, Ro? Why did you
take this job?

(no response)

What do you want? What did you
expect?

Ro sees that Kira has rumbled her, but tries to keep the
anger going. The confusion is clear on her face.

KIRA

Part of this job means that you
will have to work with people, me
included. And it means that you
aren't always going to have things
the way you want them. I've been
there, I know it's not easy.

RO

Colonel, I don't need your advice.

KIRA

Lieutenant, I think you do.

Kira leaves. Ro slumps in her chair and ponders.

75 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Bashir sits at a table on the lower level, reading a padd
over a simple vegetarian lunch. Nog and Shar enter.

NOG

Doctor! May we join you?

BASHIR

Of course. Have a seat.

SHAR

What are you reading, Doctor?

BASHIR

Call me Julian, Shar, please.

We're not on duty.

(re padd)

It's a letter from a friend of
mine.

NOG
(sneaking a look)
You're on page 256 of a letter?
Who wrote it?

BASHIR
Garak.

Bashir enjoys Nog's reaction.

BASHIR (cont)
So, what are you two up to today?

NOG
Ah, nothing. Just dealing with the
mess in the Lower Core when Shar
suggested lunch.

BASHIR
Shar, if you don't mind me asking,
how old are you?

SHAR
Twenty-three.

BASHIR
Are you married, then?

SHAR
No, I'm not.

Shar is clearly uneasy with the question, so Bashir drops
it. Quark interjects, carrying a tray with glasses.

QUARK
How would you boys like to try a
little *fa'ntar*? It's an exotic
blend of fruits and spices from -

NOG
From a vat in the storeroom. Last
week you called it *tar'fan*, but
it's still what you make from
rotten fruit shipments.

QUARK

(hissing)
Keep your voice down, will you?
What's wrong with you? Starfleet!
They are sucking the Ferengi right
out of you, Nog, you know that?
And do you think they've given any
thought to how another war would
affect the tourist trade in this
area? No, of course not...

Under this, Shar is itching his antenna again. Suddenly he is on his feet, grabs a pitcher off Quark's tray and throws it into the centre of the room. The liquid hits a SHAPE, which shimmers and decloaks, revealing a JEM'HADAR soldier.

Quark squawks, and everyone jumps to their feet in fear. Shar instinctively drops into an attack posture but Nog desperately pulls him away. The Jem'Hadar does not react, only observes them dispassionately.

JEM'HADAR

I am Third Kitana'klan, here on an
errand of peace. I would like to
speak to Colonel Kira. You may
tell her I was sent... by Odo.

On everyone's reactions to that, we...

FADE OUT:

THE END