

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

8x03 - "Avatar, pt 3."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novel

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Avatar, Book 2

by SD Perry

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 MONTAGE FROM EPS 8x01 & 8x02

-- Vaughn caressing the Orb box, Picard in background

VAUGHN
Strange things happen, Jean-Luc.

-- As Vaughn closes the Orb box on the freighter

VAUGHN (v.o.)
Things that can't be explained.

VOICEOVER
Last time, on Deep Space Nine.

-- Istani handing the pages to Jake at B'Hala

ISTANI
My name is Istani Reyla. It was
written for you.

-- As Jake reads the prophecy.

JAKE
"The first child, a son, enters
the Temple alone. With the Herald,
he returns."

-- Kira looks down on Istani's body in DS9's Infirmary

BASHIR
Nerys... did you know her?

KIRA
At the camps, when I was a child.

-- Ro pulls the book from the hole in the corridor wall

RO (v.o.)
The book was Istani's.

-- Ro brings the book to Kira's quarters

RO

She took it from B'Hala, and was
killed for it... And here it says,
absolutely, that ten-thousand
people have to die before Kasidy
Yates gives birth to her baby.

-- The wormhole opens and the Jem'Hadar come out firing

-- The *Aldebaran* is destroyed. *Defiant* fires on the ships

-- On the *Defiant* bridge

DAX

Get ready, we're about to go on
the offensive.

-- New Jem'Hadar arrives, attacks first ship, both explode

-- The meeting in the DS9 Wardroom

KIRA

The plan is to send a well-armed
fleet through the wormhole, into
the Gamma Quadrant and confront
any Dominion forces.

BASHIR

They can't be serious!

-- Shar reveals Kitana'klan at Quark's and everyone reacts

KITANA'KLAN

I am Third Kitana'klan, here on an
errand of peace. I was sent as an
emissary to you... by Odo.

- Nog and Vic in the casino lounge

NOG

They're bred to kill, it's all
they know how to do. And it seems
like everyone suddenly forgot.

-- Jake's shuttle drifts through the wormhole

-- In the cockpit

JAKE

Help me, Dad. Help this happen.

-- Picard and Vaughn emerge from the DS9 airlock

KIRA

Captain Picard, welcome to DS9.

PICARD

Colonel Kira, it's a pleasure to see you again. And may I present Commander Elias Vaughn, on special assignment by Starfleet Tactical.

-- Bashir approaches Kitana'klan, who watches him closely

BASHIR

I've brought you a new white cartridge.

-- The four-way argument in the Security office

RO

Someone with access to the Ohalu translation uploaded it, in its entirety, to the Bajoran comnet. Questions are coming in from every province.

YEVIR

A crisis has been deliberately unleashed, and all because an admitted opponent of the Vedek Assembly was given access to sensitive materials.

KIRA

I did it! I uploaded Ohalu's book.

-- Shocked reactions...

VOICEOVER

And now, the conclusion.

EXT. FOUNDERS' PLANET

A long, sweeping shot of the Great Link, gradually coming upon the islet of rock in the middle of the amber sea. ODO stands upon it, still wearing his Bajoran security uniform.

Slowly CLOSE on Odo, gazing over the Great Link. A column of liquid rises out of the sea, forms into LAAS, who steps towards Odo. When he doesn't get a reaction, he speaks...

LAAS

We still don't think anything will
come of your plan.

ODO

(nods, resigned)

Do you speak for the entire Link
now, Laas?

LAAS

Most of it. They're willing to
wait and see. But they believe the
Alpha Quadrant will strike, as
soon as they see an opportunity.
The treaty was our death warrant.
Solids are incapable of changing
their prejudices.

ODO

(wry)

It's as if they forgot who started
the war.

LAAS

We didn't try to murder them all
with disease.

ODO

No, just with wars, abduction,
terrorism, invasion... The disease
was the work of extremists, a very
few among very many, and only then
because the Link had aroused the
very fears and prejudices you
ascribe to them.

(pause)

ODO (cont)

The Founders sent us out, you and I, to seek and discover, so that we would bring knowledge back to them. This is the knowledge I've brought. Why do you reject it now?

LAAS

Your knowledge is being heard. Even after all we lost to them. We do this for you. And yet still you plead for them. Now you send away a Jem'Hadar to gain the knowledge all over again. We fail to see what can possibly be gained from this.

ODO

We gain trust, both ways. I trust the one I chose. He will learn to trust them, and they will learn to trust him. I assure you, it will work. Nothing will go wrong.

On Odo's confident, smiling face...

CUT TO:

3 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

On EZRI DAX, as she SCREAMS...

Standing in the open doorway of the cargo bay, she sees the damaged and bleeding body of JULIAN BASHIR unconscious on the deck. There is a bandage already pressed to his shoulder where there was none before.

As Dax runs to his side, grabs his medkit and sets to work, ELIAS VAUGHN slaps his combadge urgently.

VAUGHN

Security alert. The Jem'Hadar soldier has killed at least two people and is no longer in containment.

4 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

KIRA, RO, KASIDY and YEVIR are stood where they were at the end of 8x02 as Vaughn's call comes in.

 VAUGHN (comm)
Starfleet medical officer down,
needs immediate transport to
medical facilities. Dax is with
him. We're at cargo bay 41-C or
C-41, this is Commander Elias
Vaughn, acknowledge.

 RO
 (taps comm)
Vaughn, this is Ro, acknowledged.
Ro to Sergeant Shul, security alert.
The Jem'Hadar is out, repeat, the
Jem'Hadar is out. All available
security converge on cargo bay 41-C.

Kira is instantly in action before the call's over, talking over Ro and striding out of Security...

 KIRA
Kira to Ops, Red Alert. The
Jem'Hadar has broken free.
Emergency medical transport right
now from cargo bay 41-C to
Infirmary. Lock down the station
and begin all emergency protocols.

Kasidy and Yevir just keep out of her way...

5 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

SHAR, NOG and BOWERS at their usual stations. They look to each other in shock...

 BOWERS
Acknowledged, Colonel.

At Bowers' firm nod, they all get to work. RED ALERT lights flash, Shar works the transporter controls, and NOG's face shows the utter panic he feels...

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

QUARK looks up from cleaning glasses behind the bar as the Red Alert alarms go off and he sees Kira and Ro running urgently out of the security office...

QUARK
Aw hell, what now?

7 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

Yevir is just confused, doesn't know what to do. Kasidy gathers herself, and she walks out, leaving Yevir stunned.

8 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Dax is working feverishly on Bashir, whose eyes flicker.

DAX
Julian, can you hear me? Julian?

As Dax and Bashir disappear in a TRANSPORTER BEAM, Vaughn strides into the room and assesses the situation. He spots a dropped TRICORDER and PHASER, grabs them both.

RO (comm)
Commander Vaughn, stay where you are, try to secure the situation as best you can. Security and Colonel Kira are on their way.

VAUGHN
Acknowledged.

After a few moments of scanning, Kira, Ro and five Bajoran guards ENTER.

VAUGHN
Colonel, I've been scanning for any sign of the Jem'Hadar's shroud. It emits gravitons just like a ship's cloak, so they are traceable, but the trail dissipates rapidly. At least that's the theory - I never actually tried it first hand.

KIRA

Start scanning every direction
from this door. Co-ordinate with
Ops. Once you have a trace, let
Ops take over with the station's
internal sensors.

(taps combadge)

Shar. We're tracking Kitana'klan
via graviton emissions. Be ready
to take over once security gives
you the go-ahead.

SHAR (comm)

Yes, Colonel.

VAUGHN

Colonel, I'd like to apprise
Captain Picard of the situation,
and ask him to stand by to assist.

KIRA

Please. And tell him I'm open to
suggestions about how to resolve
this before it goes any further.

GUARD

I've got it!

KIRA

Let's go.

The guard starts heading down the corridor. Vaughn takes a
last look at one of the dead guards, throat slit and eyes
glassy, knowing there will be plenty more to come...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

The station is still in disrepair; the lower core's lights are dim. Debris floats about, the *Enterprise* is docked at an upper pylon, the *Defiant* berthed on the docking ring, and the Klingon ship *Tcha'voth* is nearby.

10 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Crowds dash about as Red Alert alarms go off.

DEANNA TROI is walking down the Promenade when she is hit by the heightened emotions around her and steps into an alcove to centre herself. She taps her combadge.

TROI

Troi to *Enterprise*. What's going on?

PICARD (comm)

Counsellor. A Jem'Hadar soldier is loose on the station. He's killed two people and injured the CMO. We've gone to Red Alert.

TROI

If the CMO's down, I'll stay here and see if I can help, if that's okay, Captain.

PICARD (comm)

Very well, Counsellor. Be careful.

She heads across the Promenade to the Infirmary. The doors open to show lots of medical personnel running about, both Starfleet and Bajoran...

11 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Shar works at his sciences station. He is not panicked, rather has become super-calm and focused under pressure.

His panel shows a schematic of a station corridor featuring seven dots of one colour and one of another, proceeding down the corridor. Shar watches their progress, removing parts of the station from the scan zone as they pass them.

12 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Kira, Ro, Vaughn and five Bajoran security move together down the corridor, waving tricorders about.

KIRA
Shar, are you still with us?

SHAR
Yes sir.

KIRA
Take upper pylon one off the list,
and start - wait, just a minute...

13 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Against the wall stands Dax, shirt covered in blood, shaken and crying. Troi sees a fellow officer in distress, and approaches... then as she makes out the Trill spots through the blood smudges, she realises who this must be...

TROI
Ezri...?

DAX
Deanna!

A whirl of emotions, Dax throws herself onto Troi in a tear-filled hug. Troi steadies herself...

TROI
What's happened, Ezri? Is there
anything I can do to help?

DAX
I don't know... Julian...

Over Dax's shoulder, Troi watches the medical staff rush around an unconscious and bloody Bashir on a biobed. Troi gently leads Dax away into a quieter part of the infirmary.

14 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Shar, Nog and Bowers work feverishly. Nog's face shows his utter horror...

BOWERS

Ensign, make sure you stay on the colonel's trail. Lieutenant, get ready to transport the security team to the Jem'Hadar's location the moment Shar pinpoints him.

NOG

I'm on it.

15 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

The team including Bajoran sergeant SHUL continue to scan, all looking worried...

RO

Stay sharp, people.

SHUL

Sir, we've crossed off all the paths to the docking ring and the pylons. I don't think he can escape the station.

KIRA

Who says he wants to escape?

16 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Troi sits with Dax, letting the younger woman get it out.

DAX

What if he dies? The things I said to him. I told him to give me space, that I needed to step back from him... that I had some things I need to work out and I couldn't do it with him. But what if he dies? I shouldn't have said that, it's all my fault...

TROI

Shh, they'll take care of him, you know that. You won't lose him.

DAX

Oh Gods... there was so much blood. How can he lose that much blood and be okay? I need to be with him.

She tries to get up again; Troi pulls her back down.

TROI

No. He trained this staff himself - they must be the best there is.

Dax snuffles and tries to pull herself together.

DAX

Of course, you're right. I won't lose him. I won't.

(looks down)

Look at me, I'm a mess. I'm meant to be the counsellor here, I'm not supposed to need counselling.

TROI

It's okay - I'm glad to help.

DAX

Heh - just imagine if Worf was here. The ex-girlfriend and the ex-wife sitting together. He'd have a meltdown.

(pause)

Are... we okay? About the Worf thing, I mean.

TROI

Oh, of course. Worf and I only dated a couple of times. It never amounted to much, especially after the *Enterprise-D* was destroyed. I was glad when I heard he'd married Jadzia. He deserved happiness.

DAX
And I'm not Jadzia, I'm Ezri. A
fact I think Julian may still be
unsure how to deal with.

TROI
It's very clear you love him.

DAX
I do. Ezri Dax loves Julian
Bashir. And I will make room for
him in my life.

Off Dax's newfound determination among the red alerts...

17 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Kira, Ro and their security team prowling the corridor...

RO
Colonel, I'm afraid it's getting
less and less possible to ignore
the obvious...

KIRA
I know.
(taps combadge)
Kira to Shar.

18 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE (INTERCUT)

Shar at his sciences station, watching the blinking dots...

KIRA (comm)
Focus your scans on the lower
core. Concentrate on paths to and
from the reactors, and around the
fusion core.

Nog groans as he overhears the news, knows what it means...

NOG
He's going to blow up the whole
station...

SHAR

What makes you say that?

NOG

Why else would he go to the fusion core? It was their plan all along. The ships were firing at the core right from the start. I knew it. He's going to kill us all.

Shar gets to work...

19 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Kira taking charge...

KIRA

Ro, heads to Ops, begin emergency evacuation procedures on the way. Call in everyone you need to get it done as quickly as possible. Have Bowers contact every ship in the vicinity and tell them to get out of blast range, and coordinate with *Enterprise* and *Tcha'voth* for whatever help they can provide. We've got seventy-five hundred on board that need to get out...

She trails off as something horrible occurs to her...

At the look on her face, Ro catches on as well...

RO

Seventy-five hundred on DS-Nine. A thousand on the *Enterprise*. Nearly two-thousand on the *Tcha'voth*...

KIRA

Ten thousand... It said, ten thousand must die.

RO

I thought it was supposed to be all Bajorans.

KIRA
Does it matter? The number's too
close to be a coincidence. Go.

Ro rushes off; Kira turns to Vaughn.

KIRA
Commander, it might be a good idea
if you...

VAUGHN
All due respect, Colonel, but I
may know more about the Jem'Hadar
than anyone else here.

20 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

Close on a SCHEMATIC of the lower core, gradually closing
in on a flashing icon. Shar slaps the comm system urgently.

SHAR
Colonel, I have him. It appears
that he's at the fusion core, on
grid twenty-two.

NOG
Right where the primary reactor
banks are.

KIRA (comm)
Get us to twenty-one. Set phasers
on maximum.

With trembling lip, Nog works the transporter, sending his
friends into battle, and possibly to their deaths.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

21 INT. DS9 - FUSION CORE AREA

A grand sweeping shot of a part of the station we have never seen before. A huge TOWER of energy, much bigger than a standard ship's warp core, pulses gently with bluish-white light, a deep HUM of power filling the space.

It is suspended vertically through a series of grid-metal platforms that ring it at regular periods along its height. These platforms are large enough to contain work areas.

As we sweep onto one of the more open areas, six figures BEAM into place - Kira, Vaughn and four Bajoran security guards with phasers drawn.

Kira and Vaughn edge towards the rim of their platform and look down to the level below. They see opened panels, a Bajoran tech dead on the floor, his neck twisted.

A little further around, and KITANA'KLAN comes into view, crouching before a panel with his arms thrust inside, his phaser to one side. Kira beckons one of the Bajoran guards forward, an older male. The guard takes aim with his rifle.

POV - RIFLE SIGHTS

Kitana'klan perfectly centred in the crosshairs...

ECU - RIFLE TRIGGER

...As the guard's finger tightens on the trigger...

BACK TO SCENE

Kitana'klan rolls and grabs his phaser in a split-second. The guard's shot misses. Kira seethes with frustration...

Kitana'klan pops out from behind a machine, FIRES, hits the guard square in the chest, and is gone again in a second.

KIRA

Back! Everyone back!

They scuttle back from the edge to cover. Kira looks down at the charred guard. Nothing to be done but forge onwards.

VAUGHN

He'll stay there, to protect his work for as long as he can. Or as long as he thinks is necessary. If you can distract him, draw his fire up here, I might be able to circle down and get behind him.

KIRA

My thoughts exactly. But I'm the one who's going.

VAUGHN

We should both go, or three of us, but not together. He'll expect us to go straight at him, not two or three coming from different directions.

Kira nods, accepting Vaughn's advice; turns to the guards.

KIRA

Make it look good. Revolving shots, not a constant barrage. Keep firing until we get to the banks. If we don't make it, call for additional security. We have to stop him, we have to disable whatever he did to the controls.

Kira braces herself, shares a look with Vaughn, who is much more calm and controlled. He's done this for decades. Then they head off in opposite directions...

The remaining guards take up positions... and begin FIRING down onto the lower level to cover their movements...

22 INT. DS9 - FUSION CORE AREA - LOWER LEVEL

Vaughn quietly creeps down a metal staircase to the lower level, edges further around...

...and sees the open panel with the dead tech nearby...

...runs towards it, head-down to avoid the cover fire...

Elsewhere, Kira is doing the same. She pokes her head out, sees Vaughn making a run for the panel, steps out...

And an invisible force GRABS her around the middle, PINS her arms to her sides in a bear hug, LIFTS her up...

...and SQUEEZES. Ribs CRUNCH, and she SCREAMS. The shrouded shape THROWS Kira aside, right into the bank of consoles...

...BONK as her skull crashes hard against the metal.

Vaughn hears the noise, peeks out from cover, horrified...

...and can only see Kira's BOOTS in a jumble.

VAUGHN
(whisper)
Damn it! Colonel...

Vaughn fires into the space around Kira, of course doesn't hit anything. No sign of Kitana'klan.

It's obviously a trap, but he has to take this chance...

...so he steps out from cover and moves to the console, planning to try to undo the Jem'Hadar's sabotage.

And the moment he does, the invisible SHAPE appears right behind him.

Vaughn feels the breath on the back of his neck, and closes his eyes, knowing he is dead. But then --

-- OOF. A second shrouded SHAPE leaps out of nowhere, lands on top of Kitana'klan, and THROWS him to the deck.

Vaughn is shoved harmlessly against the console, turns, and sees in amazement...

...two Jem'Hadar UNSHROUDING as they tumble to the deck, struggling with each other like two raging beasts. Vaughn backs away from the vicious fight to something like safety.

The newcomer has Kitana'klan by the throat, pinned to the deck. Kitana'klan SPITS and GROWLS with fury, PUNCHES and KICKS back, but the newcomer shrugs off the blows.

Finally the larger, more experienced newcomer WRESTLES his way on top, straddles Kitana'klan and holds him down.

TARAN'ATAR

Accept death.

Kitana'klan just ROARS back his defiance...

...so the newcomer regretfully reaches down and TWISTS his enemy's head, effortlessly breaking his neck with an audible CRUNCH. Kitana'klan falls slack.

Vaughn watches, wary, as the new Jem'Hadar pulls himself up straight and tall, quite calm. His name is TARAN'ATAR.

VAUGHN

I take it you're on our side.

TARAN'ATAR

I am.

VAUGHN

Good. We can talk about it later.

(shouts upwards)

Security, this is Vaughn. Hold
your fire, that's an order.

The covering fire stops. But in the new silence around them, the main power core begins to PULSE brighter and the HUM grows in pitch and volume.

Suddenly reminded, Vaughn crouches in front of the panel and starts to inspect it. Taran'atar crouches with him...

VAUGHN

Damn it! He forced the core to
increase density twenty percent,
and then shorted out the control
panel. The fusion reactors are
building to an overload.

TARAN'ATAR
Can anything be done?

VAUGHN
Maybe, if I can get to the venting
system, I might be able to release
the pressure.

TARAN'ATAR
I will aid you.

Vaughn runs to another bank of consoles, Taran'atar with
him. Vaughn shouts up to the security officers.

VAUGHN
Evacuate!
(to Taran'atar)
See if Kira's alive.

The Jem'Hadar goes. Vaughn checks this new panel, works a
couple of keys... until the whole console goes dark.

He RIPS open an access port, sees a mess of tangled and
torn cables, SLAMS his fist against the console.

VAUGHN
No! There's got to be something I
can do.

In a heap on the ground, Kira struggles to open her eyes --

-- and sees a Jem'Hadar looming over her. Terrified, she
flinches away, but SQUEALS in pain as blood blooms across
her side from the cracked ribs.

Vaughn appears by her side, and she latches on to him. She
doesn't know what's going on, but Vaughn seems to be okay
with this Jem'Hadar, so...

KIRA
Help... up...

At Vaughn's nod of instruction, Taran'atar crouches down
and, more gently than you'd expect, manoeuvres her into a
sitting position. She is too groggy to really protest.

VAUGHN

Kitana'klan sabotaged the fusion reactors. We're looking at a core overload in a matter of minutes, and the reactors won't vent.

KIRA

Get me up... lift... eject it from the top... my voice.... jettison. Up... we go up...

VAUGHN

We have to get to the top of the shaft, now. Can you pick her up?

Taran'atar reaches down and effortlessly picks Kira up, careful to be gentle with her.

VAUGHN

Hurry, to that lift.

Vaughn and Taran'atar - carrying Kira - hurry over to a Cardassian-design lift platform, which slowly begins to move vertically up the shaft, following the power core, which continues to GLOW brighter and HUM louder...

COMPUTER

Warning. Plasma temperature is unstable. Engage liquid sodium loop at emergency venting. Capacity overload will occur in five minutes. Warning. Plasma temperature...

VAUGHN

Come on, come on...

As the lift rattles on up, Vaughn looks over with worry at Kira, who hangs semi-conscious in the Jem'Hadar's arms...

23 INT. FUSION CORE AREA - TOP LEVEL

The platform finally reaches the top, and they step out. The glaring WHITE from below mixes with flashing RED ALERT panels. It's hard to hear Kira over the growing HUM and noise of overloading machinery...

KIRA
Master con...

VAUGHN
Over there!

They run over to a panel, Kira grimacing in pain against the jostling...

KIRA
Down...

Taran'atar lowers Kira to the floor, where she half-collapses, fighting to stay conscious...

COMPUTER
Capacity overload will occur in
three minutes. Warning...

KIRA
Hit three-one-four-seven-zero.
(Vaughn does)
Computer, this is Colonel Kira
Nerys, Bajoran Militia. Initiate
-- initiate lower core emergency
separation. Authorisation Kira
Alpha... One Alpha.

COMPUTER
Identity confirmed. Request
additional authorisation.

KIRA
Override, Kira zero-nine.
Disengage and initiate emergency
launch... on my mark. Mark.

That done, Kira's head lolls back, on the verge of losing consciousness...

From beneath them, a loud WRENCH indicates things breaking free. The station SHUDDERS with the force of it. Cacophony of screeching metal and noise, and the core is EJECTED.

Vaughn watches as the giant tower launches downwards...

24 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The brightly glowing lower core SHOOTS away from the bottom of the station...

25 INT. FUSION CORE AREA - TOP LEVEL

Kira manages a small, half-conscious smile...

KIRA

Did it...

And then is gone.

26 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The core continues to shoot away into space, leaving behind the station, the *Enterprise*, the *Tcha'voth*...

...and finally EXPLODES in a blinding flash. The shockwave hits the station...

27 INT. FUSION CORE AREA - TOP LEVEL

The station ROCKS from the shockwave...

...but Vaughn slumps against the console and sighs with relief. The station and its people are saved.

He looks up at Taran'atar, confused but grateful for this strange Jem'Hadar's help.

But then he looks down at Kira -- and she is unconscious on the deck. Did she save the station at the cost of her life?

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

28 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Quiet and dark. Bajoran doctor GIRANI watches over KIRA, unconscious on a bio-bed. Exhausted, she YAWNS...

BASHIR
Doctor Girani?

Girani hauls herself over to Bashir, who occupies another bio-bed, with Dax standing by him and stroking his hair...

GIRANI
Yes, Doctor?

BASHIR
My BP and hematocrit are both normal, and I'm certain the tissue stitch has set by now. I would release me.

GIRANI
And if you were in charge right now, you could do that. Another half hour, Julian. Post-surgical standards apply to everyone.

Bashir sighs dramatically, looks up to Dax. She looks back down, loving but firm. He'll get no help there.

At a noise from across the room, Girani leaves them be and walks back over to Kira...

KIRA
The station. How's the station?
Was anyone hurt?

GIRANI
Easy, Colonel. Everyone's fine. You saved the station. You were badly hurt by the Jem'Hadar, a concussion plus several fractures, but you've been treated --

PICARD (comm)
Picard to Doctor Girani.

GIRANI
(taps badge)
Go ahead, Captain.

PICARD (comm)
Is Colonel Kira awake?

GIRANI
Yes, Captain. She just woke up.

PICARD (comm)
Please tell her the Starfleet task force will be arriving in a few minutes, and Commander Vaughn has called for a meeting as soon as she's able. We're meeting in the station's wardroom.

Kira stretches up and speaks into Girani's combadge...

KIRA
Captain, this is Kira. I'll need a few minutes to confer with my staff before I can be there.

PICARD (comm)
Of course, Colonel. Picard out.

KIRA
Am I good to go, Doctor?

GIRANI
Absolutely. But if you feel any nausea or vertigo, I want you back here right away.

KIRA
I promise. Thank you, Doctor.

Kira gingerly manoeuvres off the biobed, and walks over to talk to Bashir and Dax...

29 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS**

Kira enters, peels off her jacket with a WINCE at the pain, heads towards the bedroom for a change of clothes...

But on the way, she catches a look out of the WINDOW --

-- at the task force. A large fleet of STARFLEET, KLINGON and ROMULAN ships looking powerful and threatening.

She looks on with dismay. It's not an encouraging sight.

30 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

The station is dimmed with the lack of a power core...

...debris of the Aldebaran still tumbles through space...

...and the large fleet of Allied ships looms forebodingly.

31 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Kira walks across the Promenade. Various Bajoran EXTRAS greet her warmly, thank her for saving the station, tell her how she's blessed by the Prophets, ask about the book of prophecies. She accepts it all with humility.

But as she reaches the stairs by the Replimat, she is caught up short as she notices KASIDY standing, watching, arms crossed. The tension between the two is clear.

KASIDY

How could you do this to me, Nerys?

KIRA

Kas, I'm so sorry. It was just the right thing to do. I had to do it.

KASIDY

That's fine, good for you. So now you and the Vedek Assembly have both made a grand statement of how right you are. I appreciate that. But I didn't ask how you could do this. I asked how you could do this to me.

Kira tries to reach out. Kasidy isn't sure she wants that.

KIRA

But Kas, it's okay. I figured it out. The ten-thousand, it was going to be the residents of the station. But I stopped it - everyone's safe.

KASIDY

I thought it couldn't be stopped - the book said it was destined.

KIRA

Which just goes to show how wrong the book was. There's not going to be any sacrifice.

KASIDY

Really? Because I woke up this morning to something like eleven-thousand messages to me on the comnet. Nerys, those people were offering to die for me. To kill themselves for me, to be part of the sacrifice for my baby.

KIRA

Oh Kas...

KASIDY

I can't handle this, Nerys. I guess I can understand why you did it. In your position I might even have done the same.

(pause)

But I really wish you hadn't done it. Because all of this means that if I want a moment's peace for the rest of my pregnancy, I'll... I'll have to leave. In fact, I'm already packed.

And she walks away, hugging herself. Kira is crestfallen...

32 **INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR**

Still miserable, Kira walks down the corridor towards the Wardroom. Two Starfleet, one Klingon and one Romulan guard stand outside, eyeing her. The door opens, she enters...

33 **INT. DS9 - WARDROOM (CONTINUOUS)**

...And is understandably surprised to see Taran'atar standing at the head of the table, unrestrained, alongside Vaughn. ADM ROSS and CAPT PICARD, two male KLINGON CAPTAINS and a female ROMULAN COMMANDER sit around the table.

VAUGHN

It's good to see you on your feet,
Colonel, but you may want to sit
down. This is First Taran'atar.

Kira warily walks in, dumbfounded. On the way she takes note of the phaser resting on a nearby guard's hip...

VAUGHN

It was Taran'atar who dispatched
Kitana'klan, Colonel, and helped
you and I eject the core. I'm
reasonably certain he's on our
side. I had him shroud for the
walk here, so as not to alarm the
station's residents. And I called
for this meeting so you could all
hear what he has to say.

(pause)

Which brings us to the story of
how he came to be here in the
first place, which I haven't heard
yet myself. Taran'atar, will you
speak to us now?

TARAN'ATAR

Yes. The account Kitana'klan gave
was partly accurate. There was an
envoy sent to your station, who
was attacked by rogue Jem'Hadar.
I am that envoy, chosen by the
Founder Odo to live among you and
learn peaceful coexistence.

General reactions and harrumphing around the table...

TARAN'ATAR

I had almost reached the Anomaly
when I was struck. There are some
who dislike how the war ended,
and seek to redeem themselves.

KLINGON 1

How many?

TARAN'ATAR

Few. Among us, disobedience is
dealt with quickly and decisively,
once detected. The Founders have
not sanctioned any hostilities
since your treaty was signed.

(pause)

Although my ship was damaged, we
were able to pursue the strikers
into your space. When I understood
we were about to be destroyed, I
transported here. However, I soon
discovered that Kitana'klan had
also transported here. He gained
time to achieve his goal by
claiming that my mission was his.
I underestimated his abilities.
There was a human in the bay who
was bleeding to death.

FLASHBACK - INT. DS9 CARGO BAY

Bashir lies bleeding on the floor. Taran'atar crouches by
him and presses the mysterious bandage to Bashir's neck...

TARAN'ATAR (v.o.)

A Starfleet doctor. I tried to
stop the bleeding before I went
in pursuit of Kitana'klan.

BACK TO SCENE

TARAN'ATAR (cont)

Did he live?

KIRA

He did. Why were you chosen?

TARAN'ATAR

On his return to the Dominion, Odo instructed the Vorta to begin a search among the Jem'Hadar for... deviants. He believed, based on knowledge he learned while living here, that some Jem'Hadar are capable of surviving without the white. When the search was done, they found only four. I was one.

He pulls back his collar, reveals there is no white tube...

VAUGHN

But why you out of the four?

TARAN'ATAR

I am not certain. Perhaps as the oldest among them, he thought I would be best suited to the task. Among my kind, I am an Honoured Elder of twenty-two years.

ROMULAN

This is a charming tale, but this creature has yet to offer any evidence that he is what he says he is. Where is the proof?

TARAN'ATAR

(holds out data chip)

Here. I was instructed to give it to you, so you might share the message with the Alpha Quadrant.

Kira is wary, looking from the chip to Taran'atar's face.

TARAN'ATAR

I tell you truthfully, Colonel Kira, I still do not understand what I am meant to achieve here.
(more)

TARAN'ATAR

I was told that understanding would come in time, and perhaps that will be so. For now, all that matters is that a Founder has given me a mission. It is not necessary that I understand, only that I obey. And you may be certain that I will do as the Founder has instructed me, or die in the attempt.

Slowly, warily, Kira reaches out and plucks the chip from the Jem'Hadar's hand. She plugs it into the reader in the table, and they all turn to the view screen on the wall.

On it, ODO appears, wearing his Bajoran security uniform. Kira stares at him with longing as he speaks...

ODO (screen)

This message is for Colonel Kira Nerys of Deep Space Nine. Nerys, I hope you're well.

(beat)

If you're watching this, you've most likely met Taran'atar by now, and he's probably explained himself. But I thought you should also hear it from me.

(beat)

Ever since we learned how and why the Dominion had created the Jem'Hadar, I've felt a certain responsibility. Their lives have only one meaning here - to fight and die for the Founders. And because the majority die young, few ever imagine anything else.

(beat)

Since arriving here, one of the ideas I've tried to introduce to the Founders is that the Jem'Hadar deserve to be freed of their dependency on ketracel-white, and allowed to evolve without further genetic manipulation. You can imagine their reaction to that.

He smiles, shakes his head a little.

ODO (screen)

I have no illusions. I know I can't transform the Dominion overnight. But it has to begin somewhere. And you have nothing to fear from Taran'atar. He's not dependent on the white, and he never fought in the war with the Federation. My hope in sending him to you is that... it's a first step.

(beat)

I also want to tell you, and the leaders of the Alpha Quadrant, that you have nothing to fear from the Dominion either. I've given them a lot to think about, and they'll be considering it all for some time to come, I expect.

(beat)

So I want you to pass the message along that if the Federation and its allies want to resume peaceful exploration of the Gamma Quadrant, the Dominion won't interfere. All the Link asks is to be left alone, until it's ready to make contact.

With a final, more intimate look, Odo signs off...

ODO (screen)

Take care, Nerys.

The screen goes blank, but Kira continues sadly staring...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

34 INT. DS9 - WARDROOM

Kira, Ross, Picard, Vaughn, the Klingons and Romulans take in Odo's message. Taran'atar remains stony-faced.

KIRA

Is there anyone here who doesn't believe what Odo and Taran'atar have told us?

ROMULAN

I have strong reservations. I wish to speak privately with the others in my forces before answering.

KLINGON 1

We also choose to confer among ourselves.

ROSS

Considering the evidence, I find myself leaning towards Taran'atar's version of events. But we should all confer with our teams. Shall we reconvene here in, say, an hour?

KLINGON 1

Agreed.

Everyone gets up to leave, except for VAUGHN, who sits gazing thoughtfully into the distance...

VAUGHN

Think of it - as long as we don't bother the Dominion, we'd be free to explore vast new territories. Unknown worlds, new cultures... and think of all the untapped resources available to us.

Taken with that idea, the Klingons and Romulans leave. It's clear that Vaughn has just made their decision for them...

PICARD
Well played, Commander.

VAUGHN
Thank you, Captain.

KIRA
Since this is a Federation matter,
and you already know where I stand
on it, I'll take my leave now.
Taran'atar, until I have a chance
to explain your presence on the
station, I'm going to ask you to
stay in one of our guest quarters.
I'll take you there now.

TARAN'ATAR
Shall I shroud?

KIRA
(considers)
No. We might as well let people
start getting used to the idea.

They leave...

35 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS

Vaughn sits at a comm terminal, the screen is split into
three images, each of a high-ranking Starfleet ADMIRAL...

ADMIRAL 1 (screen)
...And security risks aside, it
smacks of sheer recklessness.
Really, Elias, I think you ought
to take some time to think this
through. You're one of our best
intelligence operatives, and that
isn't something you can expect us
to simply do without.

VAUGHN
I'm more than qualified, I have
the background, the diplomatic
awareness, and the desire.

ADMIRAL 2 (screen)
I'm sorry, Elias, this isn't open
to discussion. You're too valuable
to us, especially now.

VAUGHN
Then I tender my resignation from
Starfleet, effective immediately.

ADMIRAL 3
That's a joke, right?

VAUGHN
Try me. I know this puts you in an
awkward position. But this is my
life we're discussing. I've made
my decision, and if you don't like
it, I'll retire and go through
with my plans as a civilian.

ADMIRAL 1
Will you excuse us for a moment,
Commander?

VAUGHN
Take your time.

The screen goes to standby, and Vaughn sits back, satisfied
that he's got his way. After a moment, the Admirals return.

ADMIRAL 3
Congratulations, Elias. Pending
approval from your new CO, I'll
have the official order put
through within a day.

VAUGHN
Thank you all, sincerely.

And he signs off, a huge grin filling his face.

36 EXT. STATION ESTABLISHING

As before - no lower core, *Enterprise* and *Tcha'voth* nearby.

37 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

Ro stands viewing the screens; they show the profiles of the three officers killed by Kitana'klan. Distracted, she doesn't see Quark ENTER with a steaming cup of tea...

QUARK

Good morning, Lieutenant. Forgive my presumption, but I've noted you have a fondness for hot jumja tea, and I'm told this is an excellent blend. It's very expensive.

RO

Does that mean I have to pay for it?

QUARK

No no, of course not. It's a gift! Call it a token of my appreciation for your superb work with the evacuation last night.

She takes the tea, sits down at her desk, sips it.

RO

This is good. Thank you, Quark, that's very considerate of you.

QUARK

(in a rush)

You're welcome would you have dinner with me?

RO

... Quark --

QUARK

(dejected)

Never mind, forget I asked.

RO

No, wait. Listen... I'm flattered by your invitation, but the truth is, I really don't want to be involved with anyone right now.

QUARK

(jumps on the opening)
Involved? Who said anything about
getting involved? I'm talking
about eating together, you know,
as friends.

RO

Oh... in that case, yes. Not
tonight, though, I'll be too
tired. In fact, maybe we should
wait a couple of days, until
things calm down around here.

QUARK

Heh - can tell you're new. Things
never calm down around here.
Always some new crisis threatening
life as we know it. But a couple
of days will be just fine.

RO

As friends, though, right?

QUARK

Friends, absolutely, got it. You
won't regret this.

He bounces out of the room, and Ro bemusedly turns back to
her screens, again not noticing a new body approaching...

PICARD (o.s.)

May I come in?

She spins round at his voice, almost knocking over her tea.
He's looking uncomfortable in the doorway. She's stunned.

RO

Captain - yes, of course.

PICARD

So... Bajoran Militia Lieutenant,
special forces, and chief of
security. It's good that you're
putting your tactical training to
good use.

RO
Yes, sir. The rank is honorary. I
was appointed here, after the war.

PICARD
I see. Do you think you'll stay?

RO
I don't know. Sometimes I'm not
sure if it's what I want.

PICARD
Commitments can be difficult. But
there are benefits to following
through. You've done well for
yourself - perhaps you should stay
for a while.

RO
Captain, about what happened -

PICARD
Everyone has regrets, Lieutenant.
I only stopped by to say I hope
you won't let your past dictate
your future, and to wish you well.

RO
Thank you, Captain.

He leaves, and she collapses back into her seat, almost in
tears. She can't believe how nice everyone is being to her.

38 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Picard steps out of the security office, straightens his
uniform, and begins walking towards the turbolifts. Vaughn
steps up along side, and they walk the Promenade together.

VAUGHN
Mind if I walk with you, Captain?

PICARD
Not at all. Quite an exciting few
days, wouldn't you say?

VAUGHN

I suppose you know what I did.

PICARD

I had suspicions. This puts you in an extraordinary position, Elias. Assuming Starfleet approves.

VAUGHN

Hell, even if they don't approve. But... there is one last thing before the *Enterprise* leaves...

PICARD

Oh my goodness, yes of course. I'd almost forgotten in all the fun. Let me know when you're ready.

VAUGHN

I will. Please say goodbye to Deanna for me.

PICARD

It's been a pleasure, Elias. I hope we get the chance to work together again soon.

VAUGHN

As do I, Jean-Luc. Thank you for everything.

They shake hands and part as Picard enters the airlock. Vaughn turns and heads towards the Bajoran shrine...

39 INT. DS9 - BAJORAN SHRINE

Vaughn enters quietly, sees Kira kneeling near the podium, eyes closed in prayer. She senses him, opens her eyes...

KIRA

Hello, Commander.

VAUGHN

Sorry to interrupt. Perhaps we could meet when you're finished?

KIRA

That's alright. I'm having trouble concentrating anyway. Have a seat.

(he does)

I never got a chance to thank you for what you did last night. If you hadn't been there, a lot of people would have died. You were invaluable in saving the station.

VAUGHN

I really just helped you save it. But as long as you're thinking well of me, how would you feel about keeping me around? I've noticed you have an opening for an executive officer...

KIRA

(frown)

You're over-qualified for the job, if you don't mind me saying. I was under the impression your background is primarily tactical...

VAUGHN

It is. But I had an experience recently that made me want to try something else. May I have something beamed directly to our position from the *Enterprise*?

She nods; he taps his combadge.

VAUGHN

Vaughn to Picard. Please have the object in Cargo Bay two beamed to my current location.

After a moment, a transporter effect twinkles, depositing the ORB BOX that Vaughn found in the Badlands. Kira moves to it in awe, thoroughly astonished...

VAUGHN

We believe it's the Orb of Memory.

KIRA
Where did you find it?

VAUGHN
On a derelict, in the Badlands.
It... changed me, made me realise
I didn't want to be doing what I
was doing. On that freighter, I
remembered who I'd wanted to be,
rather than who I'd become.

KIRA
Freighter? A Cardassian freighter?

VAUGHN
That's right, the *Kamal*. It was
trapped, had been for at least
three decades.

KIRA
Were there Bajorans on board?

VAUGHN
...Yes?

KIRA
Did you...

FLASHBACK - CARDASSIAN FREIGHTER

Kira walks through the scene in her dream, sees the shining
light in the cargo bay...

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA
...Did you find the Orb in a cargo
bay? With Bajoran prisoners and
Cardassian soldiers?

FLASHBACK - CARDASSIAN FREIGHTER

Vaughn walks through the bay in his space-suit, past the
Bajoran prisoners and Cardassian soldiers...

BACK TO SCENE

The two of them begin to realise the strangeness of this...

VAUGHN

Yes. We did.

KIRA

I dreamed it, the same day the
Jem'Hadar attacked the station.
I dreamed that I was in a lost
freighter, in a cargo bay, and all
around me were Bajoran refugees
and Cardassian soldiers, and they
were dying...

VAUGHN

Suffocating...

KIRA

And there was a light in the back
of the bay...

VAUGHN

And Benjamin Sisko was there.

They stare at each other, at the amazing non-coincidence.

KIRA

Welcome to Deep Space Nine,
Commander.

Stunned, he gets up and slowly leaves her.

She turns to the Orb, goes to it, and slowly, reverently,
opens the box. The LIGHT flows out and we...

WHITE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

40 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS

YEVIR restlessly stalks his quarters, muttering to himself. The signal on his companel sounds, and he accepts the call, astonished to find that it's Kira...

KIRA (screen)
Vedek Yevir, would you come to
Runabout pad C, as soon as you
can? You may want to bring your
things - we're going to Bajor.

She disconnects before he can respond. He is not pleased.

41 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Yevir stomps towards the airlock, surprised to find KASIDY standing with Kira at the doorway. Kira's manner is calm, tranquil, at peace - which only annoys Yevir all the more. RO pops her head out from inside the ship...

RO
Ready to go.

KIRA
I'm glad you decided to join us,
Linjarin.

YEVIR
What's this about, Colonel?

KIRA
Funny you should ask, because I'm
not really sure myself. We're
going to B'Hala, I know that much.
For the rest... I'll know when we
get there. Shall we?

42 EXT. SPACE, NEAR BAJOR

A RUNABOUT approaches Bajor...

43 INT. BAJOR - B'HALA CAVES

Kira, Kasidy, Yevir and Ro BEAM into the same caves where Jake was working. Kira holds a torch and a hammer...

KASIDY

What now?

KIRA

Now we go where the book was found.

YEVIR

Why? And why the hammer? B'Hala is sacred ground, it's not open to anyone who feels like digging.

KIRA

I just know there's an answer here. Come this way.

She forges on. The others have no choice but to follow, single file into the darkness...

The tunnel goes steeply down into the earth...

...until they come to an eroded wall of stone.

KIRA

Here. This is as far as they've dug down. We're at the very bottom of the lowest level of B'Hala.

KASIDY

Do you know why yet?

KIRA

I think so. It's about you, Kas. And the book, and your baby.

She begins HITTING the wall with her hammer, Yevir utterly appalled behind her, until it finally breaks through. Then she CLAWS the hole open with her hands...

When it is big enough, she crawls through, and they all follow, even Yevir...

44 **INT. B'HALA CAVES - MAUSOLEUM**

...into an enormous room filled with stone crypts going way back into the darkness. Alcoves carry decayed and mummified bodies, thousands of years old. As Kira shines her torch around the cavernous, they all understand at last...

RO

The prophecy of the ten thousand.

KIRA

These are the remains of the men and women who kept Ohalu's book safe. They all sacrificed themselves for the sake of the book, all long before B'Hala was lost. Ten thousand of them.

YEVIR

So many...

KIRA

Despite the prevailing orthodoxy of the time, all of these people knew that Ohalu had been touched by the Prophets.

(to Kasidy)

They lived and died so that your child could represent a new age for Bajor. When people could be free to understand the Prophets in new ways. The birth itself will be a catalyst, but your baby is your own, Kas. There's nothing to fear.

Kasidy notes an empty alcove nearby, and walks over to it.

YEVIR

Why is that one empty?

KASIDY

It's for the last guardian of the book. It's for Istani Reyla.

On their reactions...

45 **EXT. BAJOR, CAPITAL CITY - ESTABLISHING**

Just a moment to establish where we are...

46 **EXT. BAJOR - VEDEK ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS - DAY**

A news conference; YEVIR stands at a microphone with the suggestion of cameras and crowds watching him...

YEVIR

Two days ago, an unverified book of prophecy was uploaded onto Bajor's worldwide communications network... anonymously. The Vedek Assembly had heard of this book, but none of us had read it - and I must admit, we were afraid to. Afraid of the Bajoran people learning we knew of this book but had never spoken of it.

(beat)

I want everyone to know, it was I who pushed for this book to be condemned. Because for a moment, I forgot how strong our people are. To my shame, I didn't want the Vedek Assembly's authority to be challenged. I thought that would mean people turning away from the Prophets. I was wrong.

47 **INT. DS9 - SISKI'S QUARTERS**

KASIDY sits unhappily among crates of belongings, watching Yevir's speech on the screen and hugging her belly...

YEVIR (screen)

I might have continued on this narrow path, if not for the miraculous return yesterday of the Orb of Memory. The Orb showed us the truth of the book's final prophecy - the prophecy of the Avatar, the Emissary's second child, who is not yet born.

48 **INT. DS9 PROMENADE - REPLIMAT**

VAUGHN sits eating quietly, while he and a crowd of adoring and nodding Bajorans watch Yevir's speech on a monitor...

YE VIR (screen)

But I believe that the Orb stands for more than the Prophets' love. I believe that it's also a sign - a sign that the Prophets choose for us to be open to change. They want us to look into our pasts, to learn from our experiences, and to use that experience to rise to the challenges of the future.

49 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE**

KIRA sits alone at her desk, watching the speech on her desk monitor. Bustle continues out in Ops, but Kira sits quietly, much less confident and assured than before...

YE VIR (screen)

Rest assured, I am not saying we should tear down the very system that has allowed me this voice. All I mean to say is that like all of you, I am here to serve the will of the Prophets. And those among us who turn away from their light have no place in the Bajor of tomorrow. Because our lives and our world, every thing we do, we do for Them.

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

QUARK watches on a monitor behind his bar...

YE VIR (on screen)

Thank you for listening, and may we all walk with the Prophets.

The speech having finished, Quark turns off the monitor and turns to Morn, who occupies his usual place at the bar.

QUARK

What a load. At least Kai Winn didn't try to hide her insatiable craving for power. But he sounds like he's going for some kind of humility award with that little performance.

Morn raises his glass in agreement, and BELCHes loudly.

Quark sighs and wanders down to the Promenade end of the bar, to gaze down towards Ro's office again...

51 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

RO, however, is not there. She is stepping off the arriving turbolift into Ops, and heading over to Kira's office.

NOG, SHAR and BOWERS are all at their stations. She nods at them, looks through the office doors to see Kira working busily with a stack of padds. She toggles the alert, Kira looks up and lets her in without a smile.

52 **INT. DS9 - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)**

RO

Sorry to bother you, Colonel...

KIRA

That's alright, come in.

RO

I just wanted you to know that I sent my report on Istani's murder to the Ministry of Justice. I kind of figure with the killer dead, no-one's going to look too closely at the Assembly's involvement. But they may have some questions for you before they close the file.

KIRA

Thank you. Listen... I meant to tell you that you did an exemplary job with the evacuation. With the investigation too. Outstanding.

That takes Ro unawares, but Kira's manner is rather empty.

RO

I - thank you.

KIRA

I was too quick to judge you, and
I hope you'll accept my apology.

RO

Colonel, I should apologise too.
Being too quick to judge runs both
ways, and I haven't made it easy
for you.

KIRA

Maybe there comes a point when we
all need to start again...

She absently brushes her hair back, and it REVEALS that she
is not wearing the earring we have always seen on her.

RO

Colonel, your earring...

KIRA

I took it off. It seems that Vedek
Yevir got the last word after all.
I've been... Attainted.

RO

You mean...

KIRA

I mean I am no longer welcome
within the Bajoran faith. I'm
forbidden from entering any
shrine. I can't study any of the
prophecies, or wear my earring,
or look into an Orb, or even pray
with other Bajorans. Ever again.

Ro knows how much this must be killing Kira, even though
she is trying valiantly to hold it together...

KIRA
Ro, I have work to do...

Ro nods with sad understanding, and turns to leave. Kira goes back to her padds and buries herself in work.

53 EXT. SPACE - ESTABLISHING

The station can be seen in the foreground, with *Tcha'voth* nearby and lots of shuttles and repair crews. But we're looking off in the direction of the wormhole...

54 EXT. SPACE - INSIDE THE WORMHOLE

Jake's shuttle bobs about in the wormhole, surrounded by all the streams and eddies of light...

55 INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT

JAKE sits slumped at the controls, a downcast look, empty ration packs around him. He has been waiting a long time, and nothing has happened. He makes a decision.

JAKE
Computer, continue recording Jake Sisko personal log. It's been long enough. Nearly three full days, and all I have to show for it is a pinched nerve in my neck. I'll go back. And I'll tell everyone - Nog, Kas, Kira, Dax... I guess I just let my own wild hopes talk me into this silly fantasy that I could bring back my dad.

(beat)

But why should he come back? He's off enjoying his wondrous destiny. And I'm left here. I shouldn't be mad at him, I suppose. But that's okay. I don't have to be perfect. And neither does he.

He sits up straighter in the chair, presses some buttons.

JAKE
Going home.

As he hits the final buttons, the ship suddenly SWERVES,
and a bright light BURSTS all around the ship.

He clings to the consoles, desperately gazing out the
window, hope returning to his face...

56 INSIDE THE WORMHOLE

Jake's shuttle is spinning wildly and being thrown around
by the currents of the wormhole, surrounded by bright,
swirling colours, moving faster and faster...

57 INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT

Jake still clings desperately to the console, no longer
quite so excited, as things fly about the cabin.

JAKE
Stop it! Stop it!

The SHAKING gets more violent, until finally Jake is
KNOCKED unconscious, and the bright LIGHT grows until...

WHITE OUT

then **FADE IN**

Jake gradually comes to, still in a fog. An indistinct
shape is hovering over him, and a deep, vibrant voice
(which may or may not be Benjamin Sisko) speaks.

VOICE
I've got you. You're going to be
alright. I've got you.

BLACK OUT:

THE END