

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x22 - "Back to Life."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novel

*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Fearful Symmetry*

by Olivia Woods

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

**KIRA** - Captain Kira Nerys of Starfleet, currently on Deep Space Nine, trying to figure out what's going on.

**ILIANA** - Our Universe's version of Iliana Ghemor. Born Cardassian but surgically altered to appear Bajoran. She was then imprisoned as the toy of Gul Dukat.

**GHEMOR** - The Mirror Universe's version of Iliana Ghemor. Previously known as simply the Cardassian Woman. Currently on Deep Space Nine and under investigation.

### TEASER

FADE IN:

**1**    EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Establishing shot of the station at rest.

**2**    INT. DS9 - VAUGHN'S QUARTERS

Last seen 8x14 "Twilight." VAUGHN sits on his couch, a glass of Capellan *grosz* in his hand. Uniform jacket is off, cast messily across the back of the couch. Quiet classical-style MUSIC plays. Downtrodden, his thoughts far away.

The door signal chimes. Surprised, Vaughn grabs a remote control and silences the music. Puts down his glass, gets up, goes to the door. It opens to reveal SISKO, in civilian dress. He looks unsure, awkward, uncomfortable to be here.

VAUGHN

Captain - this is a surprise. Is everything alright?

SISKO

Sorry to disturb you, Commander.  
May I come in?

VAUGHN

Of course.

Vaughn steps aside for Sisko to enter. Sisko walks around the room, searching for a way to start the conversation.

VAUGHN

Can I offer you a drink?

SISKO

Whatever you're having is fine.

Vaughn grabs a second glass and pours some *grosz* into it. Sisko stops at an object in Vaughn's room - a GUITAR. He picks it up from its support, admires it. Vaughn returns and hands the glass to Sisko, raises his own.

VAUGHN

Ad astra.

Sisko smiles, clinks the glasses together, and sips.

SISKO

(re guitar)

Hand-crafted or replicated?

VAUGHN

Replicated, unfortunately. It's not an instrument you hear much of these days, and real ones are hard to come by. Most of them are in private collections.

(a sip)

What's your instrument?

SISKO

Piano. My father has one, back on Earth. I grew up with it.

(a sip)

How long have you played?

VAUGHN

Nearly twenty-six years, on and off. I took it up not long after Prynn was born. Whenever I could make it home, I'd play it for her. Nothing serious, just a few songs she seemed to enjoy.

SISKO

How is Prynn?

VAUGHN

She's recovered, thank you for asking. No lasting injuries.

SISKO

I'm glad to hear it. I read her report on what she went through. You should be proud of her.

VAUGHN

I am, sir. Thank you.

Vaughn turns and sits back on the couch, inviting Sisko to do the same. Sisko sits opposite him. It is obvious that Sisko is here for more than small talk, but Vaughn is not going to pressure him. He'll get to it when he gets to it.

SISKO

Elias, you know that I'm still on temporary leave from Starfleet, so what I'm about to say can't be viewed as an order. Nevertheless, I've become aware of an aspect of our current situation that needs to be dealt with, and I'm here to ask you to see the matter through.

VAUGHN

I'd be more than happy to help any way I can, Captain, but I guess you haven't heard the news. I've been relieved of duty.

SISKO

I heard. How are you handling it?

Vaughn gazes back into his drink - quiet, pensive.

VAUGHN

It's given me plenty of time to think. And what I can't seem to get out of my mind... is that fight I had with Doctor Girani.

Sisko gives a questioning look. He doesn't know about that.

VAUGHN

I was putting off my annual exam because I didn't want to hear about how I was another year older and another year weaker. I didn't want to deal with the possibility - the very likely possibility - that I'm getting too old for running around the galaxy chasing bad guys. That's been my identity for so long, I couldn't face giving it up.

Sisko sits back, sips his drink, lets Vaughn talk.

VAUGHN

But after Kira relieved me, and after sitting here thinking about why, I can't help but wonder if that time has finally arrived. Maybe I am a liability. Only it wasn't my body that gave up on me... it was my heart. My emotions, my love for Prynn...

SISKO

Elias...

Vaughn looks up, encouraged that Sisko is being informal.

SISKO

(continuing)

You never need to apologise for loving your family. And I know things are... strained right now. But your captain is going to need you soon, whether she realises it or not. This thing with the alternate universe is coming to a head, and however it plays out between you and Kira, eventually she's going to decide that making another crossover is unavoidable.

When that happens, you need to be ready to act.

Vaughn blinks, not sure he understands what is going on.

SISKO

Obviously, this isn't an official assignment. It's off the record, extremely sensitive, and risky... and it requires a leap of faith on your part. You should therefore consider it completely voluntary.

Vaughn takes a deep breath, a sip of his drink. He decides he trusts Sisko, and he will do whatever he asks. More than that, it is a chance to be useful, to be needed.

VAUGHN

What do you need me to do?

As Sisko plucks up the courage to tell him...

FADE OUT:

**END OF TEASER**

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

### **3**     INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

A PADD shows the faces of the four main mercenaries caught at Harkoum - the Efrosian, the Romulan, the Lissepian, and the Kressari. Each image has official information with it.

Major CENN is reading the padd, sat at the bar. He sighs with frustration - he is not getting very far with his investigation. Tries to concentrate, gazing at the images.

TREIR (o.s.)

Hi, handsome. Get you anything?

He looks up from his absorption and sees TREIR leaning over the bar towards him, all buxom and seductive. Cenn gapes, never having seen anything like Treir before.

CENN

Umm...

TREIR

How about a drink to start with?

CENN

Umm, sure... synthale?

TREIR

Coming right up.

Treir turns away. Cenn gazes in awe - her Orion pheromones are working on him, big time. He turns to his side, where MORN sits guzzling from a stein. Then Treir is back.

TREIR

Here's the menu. If you're looking for something Bajoran, it's in the front. Personally, I recommend the *foraiga*.

CENN

*Foraiga* sounds... wonderful...

TREIR

Good choice. I'm Treir, by the way. I'll be back in a minute.

Treir slinks away. Cenn turns to Morn.

CENN

Please tell me there aren't any more like her.

Morn answers with a shake of the head and a thumbs-down. Shaking off the woman's effects, Cenn looks to his padd.

QUARK (o.s.)

You're Major Cenn!

Surprised, Cenn looks up at Morn, who is still guzzling. Then he turns and sees QUARK sidling up to him, grinning wide and ingratiating, ready to schmooze a new customer.

CENN

You know who I am?

QUARK

Always know your customers before they walk in the door. I wondered when you'd find time to visit my establishment. Welcome to Quark's.

CENN

Thank you.

QUARK

Perhaps, after you've eaten, you'd care for a round of dabo?

Cenn is trying to pay attention to his padd. He wants to solve this mystery, and Quark's prattling isn't helping.

CENN

It's not really my thing.

QUARK

Then maybe a holosuite program? We cater to every conceivable taste -

CENN  
(getting annoyed)  
No thanks. I'm trying to work.

QUARK  
Oh, of course, the investigation.  
How's it going?

CENN  
I can't discuss it.

QUARK  
Looking into those mercenaries,  
right? I understand most of them  
were transferred to Bajor this  
morning. The ones you kept hold of  
must be very interesting.

CENN  
I said I can't discuss it.

Cenn tries to go back to his padd. Quark blatantly leans over the bar to try to get a better look at the screen.

CENN  
Do you mind?

QUARK  
Not at all.

Quark WHIPS the padd out of his hand and retreats, reading it quickly. Angry, Cenn GRABS Quark by the lapels.

QUARK  
Hey, easy on the material. Jackets  
like this don't come cheap.

CENN  
Give me back the padd, now.

QUARK  
Alright, alright. Here you go.

Quark hands the padd back - Cenn snatches it from him. Quark turns to his comm panel and begins pressing buttons.

CENN

No *foraiga's* worth this. Tell  
Treir I cancelled my order.

Cenn angrily gets off his stool and prepares to leave.  
Quark pushes an isolinear rod into a slot on the companel.

QUARK

You haven't paid for your drink.

CENN

(grits teeth)

Fine. Take my thumb scan so I can  
get out of here.

QUARK

No need. As much as I hate the  
tradition, the first round is  
always on the house.

CENN

Then why did you -

QUARK

Because I needed another moment to  
show you this.

Quark takes the rod and hands it to Cenn. Cenn is confused,  
but at Quark's urging, he slots the rod into his padd. The  
screen fills with new information. Cenn's jaw drops...

QUARK

You were having trouble finding  
anything to connect those four  
mercenaries, weren't you? Well,  
there it is.

CENN

(amazed)

They were all at Letau prison. How  
did you do this? The Cardassians  
weren't able to tell me anything.

QUARK

Yeah, that's a shock. They're so  
organised these days. It's a

wonder Laren is able to get as much out of Gul Macet as she does. Lucky for you, I still have a few links to a little-known records office in the Cardassian justice system. And in my experience...

(re padd)

... people like this usually meet in prison.

Cenn is speechless, poring over the new information. He retakes his stool just as Treir returns with his meal.

QUARK

Looks like it's too late to cancel your order.

CENN

No problem. Thank you, Quark. I mean that. I owe you one.

QUARK

(big grin)

I'm so glad we got off on the right foot.

CUT TO:

#### **4 INT. LETAU CELL**

The dark, stone walls, lit only by a dim bulb and the blue glow from the force field that blocks the doorway.

ILIANA (as Kira), lies asleep on the thin cot. She is older now, having been here many years. She is lean and thin, her hair shorter. Her sleep is fitful, rolling back and forth, her eyes twitching with dreams. CLOSING IN on her face...

#### **5 SERIES OF SCENES**

A hazy, dreamlike effect falls over everything, the memories fading across each other.

-- Kira Taban dying on the floor of the cave, as his daughter Nerys sits nearby (5x19)

TABAN  
Nerys, don't leave me...

KIRA  
I'll make them pay for this, I  
promise.

-- Dukat hovers ominously over Iliana, unfastening (9x21)

DUKAT  
I know exactly who you are...

-- Tekeny Ghemor delivering the bad news to Iliana (9x21)

TEKENY  
News came from Bajor this morning.

## 6 BACK TO SCENE

As Iliana-as-Kira's eyes continue to flutter in her sleep,  
and her body jerks with the memories...

## 7 SERIES OF SCENES

-- Dukat entering her cell on a different day. An older  
Cardassian man, ROKAI, opens the cell force field for him.  
Iliana struggles as Dukat approaches, but he injects her  
neck with a hypospray until she becomes more pliant...

DUKAT  
I can't tell you how much I've  
missed you...

-- Entek watching her as she kills the Bajoran (9x21)

ENTEK  
Are you really so ashamed of the  
person you were? Is there nothing  
left of her in you?

-- Kira's friend Furel, after a successful mission (5x19)

FUREL  
At least fifteen Cardassians dead.  
Now that's not a bad day's work,  
eh? We should celebrate!

KIRA

Yeah, they kill us, we kill them.  
It's nothing worth celebrating.

-- Dukat STORMS into the cell in an absolute fury. He grabs Iliana by her thin prison fatigues and YANKS her up to his face. She doesn't resist, just flops like a rag doll.

DUKAT

It isn't over! Do you understand me?! I won't allow it!

He THROWS her against the wall, and she just goes with it. She acts as if her body is empty of a mind. Dukat barely notices. He KICKS her in the gut - she rolls with it.

DUKAT

Let them think they've won. Let them take my station, drive me off their soil, go crawling to their insipid Federation. Let them think Cardassia is ready to make peace. They'll all learn how wrong they were to underestimate me!

Suddenly, she raises her eyes, making contact with him.

ILIANA-as-KIRA

Bad day, Dukat?

He is taken by surprise, and she breaks free and SLAMS him in the nose. He stumbles back, and she launches off the cot. But suddenly Rokai is there with a hypospray...

While she sags to the floor, drugged, Rokai helps Dukat.

DUKAT

You'll pay for that, I promise you...

ILIANA-as-KIRA

(re Rokai, sneering)

You'll always need help to extract that payment, though, won't you?

8 **BACK TO SCENE**

Iliana still jerks in her sleep...

9 **SERIES OF SCENES**

-- Back with Kira and her dying father (5x19)

TABAN

I can hear the Prophets calling  
me. I can feel my *pagh* slipping  
away...

-- Dukat in his Bajoran disguise as Anjohl from 7x18, walks  
into the cell, as Rokai closes the force field behind him.

DUKAT

Look at us - we're a perfect  
match.

She shrieks with renewed disgust, but he grabs her and  
injects her again. She sags, and he begins to undress.

DUKAT

I may not see you for a little  
while, Nerys, so I wanted to make  
sure we had a proper goodbye...

-- Entek leaning over her in the medical suite (9x21)

ENTEK

Iliana... I'm going to miss you.

10 **BACK TO SCENE**

As Iliana JERKS awake from her horrible dream. She pants  
until the panic wears off, and she remembers where she is.  
The same blank room where she has spent the last 15 years.

She gets up, sits on the bed, looks around. She stands and  
jumps up to hold on to an exposed PIPE in the ceiling. She  
yanks herself up on it, doing a series of pull-ups.

Then the whole room RUMBLES, and she falls back to the  
floor. The room RUMBLES again, and the small bulb in the  
ceiling flickers. Dust drifts down from the ceiling.

Feeling the big rumble coming, Iliana scrambles to hide under her thin metal cot, bolted to the wall. Just in time.

The room SHAKES, rocking with a distant but huge explosion. Cracks appear in the stone walls, pieces fall from the ceiling, and the entire room is plunged into DARKNESS.

Finally, silence. Iliana pokes her head out from under the bed, coughs from the dust, and tries to see what happened. The blue force field is gone. Dim orange lighting snaps on.

COMPUTER (comm)

Warning. Main power failure in  
cell blocks three and four.  
Emergency lockdown systems  
unresponsive. Security personnel  
to riot positions.

Iliana crawls out, heaves fallen debris out of the way, steps gingerly over others. She finds the metal PIPE again in the rubble, grabs it, hefts it - it'll do for a weapon.

Not sure what she will find, she creeps towards the open doorway. She pokes her head round the corner, sees nothing. She steps out fully, and looks down the corridor...

**11 INT. LETAU CORRIDORS (CONTINUOUS)**

...And it is nothing but a long corridor, empty stone stretching into the distance. No other doors, no other prisoners, nothing. Just her and the dark, empty stone.

At the end of it, Iliana reaches two doors - one for an elevator like on DS9, the other a heavy security door with a retinal scanner. Which one would get her out of here?

She presses for the elevator, and to her happy surprise, a GRIND of machinery suggests it is actually working. She hefts her weapon, takes a defensive stance, just in case.

On her face as a memory comes...

**QUICK FLASH**

-- Iliana brandishing the metal pipe as she fights Dakhana.

**BACK TO SCENE**

She frowns - where did that come from? It makes no sense.

The doors open. There is nobody inside. She steps in.

**12 INT. LETAU OPS CENTRE**

A central control room, as in 3x09 "Defiant". Half the screens are dead, others show views from around the prison - fires, prisoners rioting, Cardassian soldiers shooting.

Alone with back turned, Rokai dashes back and forth between panels, trying to keep things under control, frustrated.

VOICE (comm)  
Dal Rokai, come in!

ROKAI  
(taps wrist comm)  
This is Rokai - report.

VOICE (comm)  
Total loss of containment, sir.  
We've killed at least a hundred  
prisoners, but some have managed  
to overwhelm our people and  
they're arming themselves. You  
have to send us help!

ROKAI  
There's no-one left up here!

VOICE (comm)  
Then contact Cardassia! Tell -

ROKAI  
I can't tell anyone anything! I  
haven't been able to raise anyone  
since Weyoun unleashed the  
Jem'Hadar!

VOICE (comm)  
With respect, sir, somebody needs  
to do something soon, because -

ROKAI

Listen to me. I don't care what it  
takes, but you and your men get  
the situation down there under -

Turning away from his panels, Rokai JERKS to a stop as he  
finds Iliana-as-Kira standing there, her sharpened metal  
pipe aimed perfectly for his eye. Her intentions are clear.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Your sidearm. Remove it. Slowly.

Sensing she means business, he slowly moves to take the  
phaser pistol from his belt and hands it to her.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Now turn off the comm-cuff, and  
drop it on the floor.

He does it. She tucks the pipe into her own belt and points  
the phaser into his face.

**QUICK FLASH**

-- Iliana pointing the completed phaser into Entek's face.

**BACK TO SCENE**

She shakes off the memory, confused by it.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

I won't waste your time or mine,  
Rokai. You can help me, or I can  
kill you. Because thanks to you, I  
have absolutely nothing to lose.

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

FADE IN:

**13 INT. LETAU OPS CENTRE**

Iliana holds Rokai's own weapon on him, up against the wall, while one eye watches the panic on the screens.

A door OPENS, and Iliana turns to see other prisoners enter. There is the Kressari woman, SHING-KUR, the Romulan man, TELAL, and a Tellarite male, ZHAG. They are all armed with whatever they were able to pick up along the way. They immediately point their weapons at Iliana and Rokai.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Easy. Let's not make any mistakes here, alright? We're on the same side, I think.

TELAL

Why should we trust you?

ZHAG

Don't be a fool, Telal. You think a Bajoran in a Cardassian prison has any less hatred for our jailers than a Romulan?

TELAL

You're the fool, Zhag, if you think -

SHING-KUR

Quiet, you two. Do as she says.  
(to Iliana)  
Alright, Bajoran. Now, what exactly are your intentions?

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

To get off this moon. I wouldn't mind some help. Interested?

SHING-KUR

Provisionally. What's your name?

ENTEK (v.o. from 9x21)  
(ghostly)  
...Iliana...

Iliana closes her eyes a moment, pushing away the memory.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA  
Nerys. Kira Nerys.

TELAL  
What kind of resistance can we  
expect at the shuttle hangar?

ROKAI  
None. Look at the external feed -

The Cardassian tries to reach towards one of the control panels, but everyone raises their weapons on him again.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA  
I'll do it.

Iliana nods for Shing-Kur to keep her weapon on Rokai, then she begins to work on the panels, hands flying smoothly.

SHING-KUR  
You seem to know your way around  
Cardassian computers.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA  
I learned in... in the Bajoran  
resistance.

She is a little confused again - she didn't learn that in the resistance at all. So where did she learn it? She pulls up an image that shows the outside of the moon.

**INSERT - THE SCREEN**

The image shows green-painted wreckage, crashed and burning on top of external buildings on the moon's surface.

TELAL (o.s.)  
A Romulan vessel.

**BACK TO SCENE**

ROKAI

We took several particle beam strikes before the ship crashed. The Romulans were forced down. We just happened to be in the way.

TELAL

Go in tight on the upper left. Extreme magnification.

Iliana works the control again, zooming in on the upper left corner. The picture resolves itself clearer.

**INSERT - THE SCREEN**

Cardassia Prime itself, and the last great battle of the Dominion War. Starfleet, Klingons, Romulans, Cardassians, Breen and Dominion ships, all in one big fire fight.

**BACK TO SCENE**

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Who are they?

SHING-KUR

The Dominion.

(off Iliana's  
blank look)

Invaders from the Gamma Quadrant. The Cardassians joined them, gave them a foothold in this part of the galaxy. But for the allies to have made it all the way to Cardassia Prime, this has to be it. The Dominion's last stand.

ZHAG

And none too soon. This is the worst war the quadrant has ever known. And all because Dukat thought the Dominion was his key to conquering the galaxy.

Iliana sneers at the mention of Dukat.

ROKAI

Not anymore. My people rebelled against the Dominion. And now they're punishing us for it.

TELAL

Typical. Count on Cardassians to be fickle in their allegiances.

ROKAI

Amusing, coming from a Romulan.

Telal steps forward and grabs Rokai by the throat.

TELAL

You should not provoke me, Warden.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

That's enough, Telal!

TELAL

I don't take orders from you!

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

It's not about who's in charge. We still need him alive.

TELAL

What use is he?! That ship landed right on the shuttle hangar. There's no way off this place!

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Yes, there is. There's a door with a retinal scanner on one of the sub levels. I believe the warden here was about to head down there when we met.

ZHAG

A way out? What if you're wrong?

ROKAI

She's not. I can get you out of here. But I want some assurances.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

No. No assurances. No deals. I already told you, Rokai - you either help us, or you die.

ROKAI

I can give you Dukat.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

What? He's here?

ROKAI

No. But I can show you where.

COMPUTER

Warning. Multiple unauthorised transporter signatures detected.

As they all turn in surprise, three Dominion transporter signatures form in the room, depositing armed JEM'HADAR.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Get down!

She grabs Rokai, PULLS him down with her behind a console. Shing-Kur and Telal dive for cover as well. But Zhag is too slow - he is SHOT down as the Jem'Hadar begin firing.

Phaser shots go back and forth. Iliana peeks out from behind cover, and stares horrified at the Jem'Hadar.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

What are they?

ROKAI

Jem'Hadar. The soldiers of the Dominion, engineered to kill you. You have to keep firing. If you let up, if you give them time to concentrate, they turn invisible.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

You have got to be kidding me.

She goes back to firing at them, hiding from their fire.

CUT TO:

**14 INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS**

RO sits in her wheelchair at her massive bank of computers, working her files. The exo-frame sits unused on her couch.

The doorbell sounds. Ro growls at the interruption.

RO

Go away!

A different sound chimes.

COMPUTER

Medical override engaged. Privacy  
locks deactivating.

The door opens, and ETANA enters, in her Bajoran uniform.

RO

Dammit, Simon, I don't have time  
for - oh, it's you. What do you  
want?

ETANA

Is that any way to treat your old  
friend and deputy?

RO

You quit, remember? How do you  
expect to be treated?

ETANA

I'm glad to see your bad attitude  
is back. But believe it or not, I  
didn't come for the yelling. I'm  
here as your physical therapist.

RO

(scoff)

Tarses gave up, did he?

ETANA

If he had, I wouldn't be here. You  
need to get back on your feet.

RO  
I don't need my feet right now.  
I need some peace so I can work.

ETANA  
What's that smell? When was the  
last time you showered?

RO  
Goodbye, Kol.

Etana has had enough. She walks over and snatches the padd  
right out of Ro's hand. Ro is furious.

RO  
Give me back the padd. Now.

ETANA  
Let me lay this out for you,  
Laren. Doctor Tarses pulled off a  
minor miracle so you'd have a  
chance of walking again, and  
you're squandering it.

RO  
I don't report to Doctor Tarses!

Ro tries to leap out of her chair to grab the padd from  
Etana. But she doesn't quite make it. Her legs buckle, and  
she collapses against the console. Panting with anger and  
humiliation, she manages to struggle back into the chair.

ETANA  
I get it, Laren. You need to prove  
something. You want the universe  
to see nothing's holding you back.

RO  
It's not about me.

ETANA  
Then what the *kosst* is going on?

Seething to herself, Ro finally forces the admission out.

RO

I liked him.

ETANA

Who?

RO

Taran'atar. He was always himself. He wasn't trying to assimilate, or be more like us. He only ever wanted to be a better Jem'Hadar. I couldn't help but admire that about him. And I really thought he felt the same way about us. Me. I thought we were friends. As much as either one of us could actually make friends anyway. We understood each other. Now someone has turned him into a weapon, and people are dead. And I don't know how any of that can be made right again. But I have to do something, Kol.

(re computers)

And this is all I know.

Etana listens to all that, takes it on board. She speaks in the low, quiet, soothing voice of a friend.

ETANA

Look, I'll make a deal with you. Let me help you with your physical therapy - and I mean regularly, every day. You start taking better care of yourself, and I'll help with the investigation. I'll help with the research, I'll be your sounding board -

RO

You don't have to do that.

ETANA

I want to. I just want to help, Laren. I shouldn't have to beg.

Ro sits and broods, but it is clear she can't win this one.

RO  
And how are you going to clear  
that with Tarses?

ETANA  
I'll just tell him you're crazy  
and I'm the only one who can deal  
with you. He'll believe that.

RO  
(chuckle)  
Yeah, he probably will.  
(genuinely)  
Thank you, Kol.

ETANA  
Alright, then. Let's get started.

Etana places the padd in her hand aside, and Ro prepares to face her demons.

**15    INT. DS9 - VAUGHN'S QUARTERS**

Vaughn sits alone in his quarters again. He is gazing into his drink again, but now he is even more troubled. He is thinking about what Sisko asked him to do. He is extremely disturbed by it, but he has agreed to it.

The computer signals - he has been expecting the call.

COMPUTER  
Incoming transmission from the USS  
Yolja.

A deep breath. He prepares himself.

VAUGHN  
Put it through.

KIRA (comm)  
Vaughn, this is Kira.

VAUGHN  
Go ahead.

KIRA (comm)

I'm on my way back from Bajor, Commander. You and I have a lot to talk about, but unfortunately, now simply isn't the time. So I'll come right to the point. Are you ready to return to duty?

VAUGHN

Absolutely.

KIRA (comm)

Good. Lieutenant Dax will bring you up to speed. Report to Ops at the start of alpha shift tomorrow morning.

VAUGHN

Yes, Captain. Thank you.

KIRA (comm)

Kira out.

The line drops. Vaughn sits there, staring into his drink. Eventually he hangs his head. Troubled, but determined. As always, he has a mission.

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT TWO**

### ACT THREE

FADE IN:

#### **16**    INT. LETAU CORRIDORS

The lift door opens, and Iliana, Shing-Kur, Telal and Rokai exit into the corridor. They now have two more ex-prisoners with them - the Efrosian female FELLEN, and the Lissepian male MAZAGALANTHI. They are all a bit singed and scarred.

Rokai is still at the point of Iliana's weapon. Iliana looks down the length of the corridor, off into the dark.

SHING-KUR

How long were you down here?

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

I stopped counting a long time ago. What year is it?

ROKAI

In the Cardassian calendar? Four-two-nine *walai*.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Fifteen years... how could it be fifteen years?

SHING-KUR

I'm so sorry, I had no idea...

While the rest take up defensive positions just in case, she pushes Rokai towards the door with the retinal scanner.

CENN (o.s.)

It must have been very difficult to endure.

#### **17**    INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS

Each cell is occupied. On the left is Telal, and on the right is Mazagalanthi. In the middle cell are Shing-Kur and Fellen. Major Cenn stands in the middle of the room, holding his padd and talking to them.

CENN (cont)

The brutality and the degradation, the denial of your dignity as a sentient being... I can't imagine anything more horrible than being held in a Cardassian prison.

MAZAGALANTHI

It sounds terrible. Perhaps we should think ourselves lucky to have landed in the custody of the newly Federated Bajor.

CENN

Oh, don't thank me yet. There's still the extradition questions that need to be sorted out -

FELLEN

What do you mean, extradition?

CENN

Well, as well as your suspected complicity in the murder of more than two-hundred-seventy Bajorans, the Cardassian government is petitioning for you to be handed over to them for suspected acts of piracy, theft, trafficking, and a whole host of other things. And then there's the Romulans...

TELAL

What about them?

CENN

(shrug)

They're irritated with Starfleet for violating their protectorate to go after that rogue Jem'Hadar. Plus, neither they nor the Cardassians were overly happy to find out that your group had been operating under their noses the entire time. An embarrassment for both of them, frankly.

(faux confidential)

Just between us, I think that to avoid two diplomatic incidents, they'll probably hand one of you over to the Romulans, and give the rest of you to the Cardassians.

FELLEN

You vile piece of - I'll kill you!  
You and your false captain! I'll kill you for Kira!

Cenn conceals his reaction - that is an interesting little piece of information right there. Shing-Kur steps closer and tries to comfort the emotional woman.

FELLEN

I can't go back to a Cardassian prison, Shing-Kur. I can't!

SHING-KUR

Shhh. Don't worry. He won't give us to the Cardassians. Remember your vow. Focus on that.

CENN

So you all took a vow to your leader. I can respect that. I suppose it's that kind of belief that allowed you to survive all those years in Letau. Is that where you met Iliana Ghemor?

SHING-KUR

Ignore him. He's just trying to divide us.

Cenn listens to everything, ponders his next move. Shing-Kur is the key here. He turns back to the Romulan.

CENN

Your name is Telal, correct? An assassin for hire, wanted by the Cardassians, the Federation, the Klingons, even your own people.

TELAL

You left out the Talarians and the Breen. Who's Iliana Ghemor?

SHING-KUR

I said ignore him!

TELAL

You don't command me, Shing-Kur. None of you does. I've had enough of this madness. None of this was part of the plan.

MAZAGALANTHI

You're a fool, Telal. You always have been.

CENN

(turns to him)

Mazagalanthi, isn't it? Smuggler specialising in classified tech. So Telal's a fool, then. Is that because he's fed up with covering for your absent leader? Then what does that make the rest of you? She lied to you, abandoned you, and yet some of you seem to think you still owe her your loyalty.

FELLEN

She never lied! She saved us!

CENN

She let you believe she was Kira Nerys.

FELLEN

(are you stupid?)

She is Kira Nerys!

CENN

No, she's not. She isn't even Bajoran. Her name is Iliana Ghemor. A Cardassian, an ex-agent of the Obsidian Order. You swore your allegiance to a lie.

(re Shing-Kur)  
And she knew it all along.

FELLEN  
You're the liar. Or the fool. Your  
captain is the imposter. Shing,  
tell him...

But the Kressari woman says nothing. The others begin to realise. They turn to her, disappointed. She steps back, folding her arms, and sits down on the cell's bunk.

MAZAGALANTHI  
Shing-Kur... he's telling the  
truth. Isn't he?

TELAL  
(to Cenn)  
I want to make a deal.

MAZAGALANTHI  
As do I.

FELLEN  
Shing... Shing, why?

Shing-Kur looks sadly but calmly into Fellen's eyes.

SHING-KUR  
I'm sorry.

With her thumbs pressed into the crooks of her elbows, Shing-Kur PRESSES some kind of implanted switch. The other three prisoners immediately collapse and begin to violently CONVULSE. Cenn realises too late what is happening.

CENN  
(slaps comm)  
Cenn to Infirmary! Medical  
emergency in security holding area  
two! Three humanoids down!

SHING-KUR  
(calm, resolute)  
It's too late.

18 INT. DUKAT'S BUNKER

A lavish, well-appointed palace in comparison to the rest of the prison. The door opens with a solid HISS-THUNK, and the ex-prisoners enter, their jaws dropping in amazement.

Iliana keeps Rokai under control as the others fan out to excitedly explore. Computers, sofas, a luxurious bathroom, medical supplies, a full pantry, and a weapons locker.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

But why? Why would he need a place like this?

ROKAI

Dukat understood that the universe is a capricious place. He built this room when he was warden here, early in his career. He returned when he felt a need for sanctuary. A place to renew himself.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Renew himself? That's what you call what he did to me?

ROKAI

You were... one of his excesses.

Shing-kur has settled in to the computer station, and has called up DISPLAYS from around the prison.

SHING-KUR

The Jem'Hadar... they're killing everyone.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Then we need to get out of here as soon as possible. Fellen, make sure the door's sealed. Telal, Mazagalanthi, you're with me. Alright, Rokai - show us.

Iliana pushes Rokai at gunpoint, and he leads them towards a DOOR at the back of the apartment. It OPENS to reveal...

19 **INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (CONTINUOUS)**

A complicated transporter platform, and its attendant consoles. Iliana steps up to check the readings...

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Is this a joke? You expect me to believe you transported Dukat more than twenty light years away?

ROKAI

One of the reasons the Dominion has come as close as it has to conquering the Alpha Quadrant, is that they have technology that is vastly superior to ours.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

And they just gave this to him as a reward for being a good puppet?

ROKAI

They knew nothing about it. During their alliance, Dukat undertook a significant number of secret projects that involved quietly acquiring samples of "misplaced" Dominion technology.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

(bitter laugh)

He was planning to turn against them all along. More schemes. More deceptions.

20 **INT. DUKAT'S BUNKER**

Shing-Kur is still sat at the computers. She calls out...

SHING-KUR

Kira - I think I've found something you need to see.

Iliana re-enters from the transporter room and comes to lean over Shing-Kur's shoulder, looking at the screens.

**INSERT - THE SCREEN**

It shows Kira's Bajoran Militia service file. The real Kira, in uniform, as she appeared in season 7.

**BACK TO SCENE**

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

(to Rokai)

Explain this.

ROKAI

I don't know anything about it.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

You're lying. And I think that's the first lie you've told us. Why would you need to lie about this?

Rokai still doesn't answer. Iliana turns back to Shing-Kur.

SHING-KUR

There were also several files about Starfleet and Bajoran personnel, and a Cardassian intelligence summary on Bajor.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Show me the summary.

Shing-Kur works the panels. Iliana leans over to read.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

The occupation's over... the Emissary came to us... but he's an alien! And it was because of him that the Dominion invaded in the first place. And now Bajor is going to join the Federation?

(disbelieving)

How can they get rid of one set of overseers, only to walk right into the arms of another?

(reading on)

And... me. Colonel Kira Nerys,  
Bajoran Militia. Working for them.  
Betraying everything I fought for.

She turns back to Rokai again, seething with anger.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

An agent. Your people sent an  
imposter to pretend she was me,  
didn't they? That's who that  
person is. It's all some kind of  
insane conspiracy.

Rokai still doesn't answer.

SHING-KUR

There's a restricted file area  
too. And it's huge. But I can't  
access it without the key code.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Give her the code.

ROKAI

I don't know it.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

That's another lie.

She raises her phaser and SHOOTs him in the leg. He falls  
to the floor SCREAMing. Everyone else has gone quiet.

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

The code. Now.

ROKAI

Doka-eight-two-one-zero... Meru.

While Iliana glares at him, Shing-Kur enters the commands.

SHING-KUR

That's odd. All the files have the  
same name - "Iliana." Just the  
date to distinguish them.

On Iliana as she remembers...

**FLASHBACK - 9x21 "FEARFUL SYMMETRY"**

As Entek leans over her, on the biobed...

ENTEK

Iliana... I'm going to miss you.

**BACK TO SCENE**

Iliana jerks at the memory. She is confused, her heart pounding. Shing-Kur notices her reaction.

SHING-KUR

Kira?

ILIANA-AS-KIRA

Open one of them.

Shing-Kur presses buttons. The screen changes.

**ON SCREEN**

It shows a video recording, taken from a high angle. It is of Iliana's cell, and Iliana herself is there, naked and crying, as Dukat moves towards her, undoing his uniform.

DUKAT (screen)

I can't tell you how much I've missed you...

**BACK TO SCENE**

As Shing-Kur reacts with horror to what is on the screen.

SHING-KUR

My Gods, Kira... are you alright?

But Iliana is silent. The onslaught of memories are coming to her now, the flood barriers have broken. She shakes, eyes wild. Her entire identity is being rewritten on the spot. Shing-Kur gets up and goes to her.

SHING-KUR

Kira!

ILIANA  
(whisper)  
Kira... Kira Nerys...

She turns and walks to Rokai. She lifts her foot and STAMPS hard on his already damaged leg. He SHRIEKS with pain.

ILIANA  
Say it! Say my name!

ROKAI  
Iliana... Iliana, please...  
I can help you...

ILIANA  
I'm Kira Nerys! I'm Kira Nerys!  
I'm Kira Nerys!

She SCREAMS it over and over, firing her phaser over and over right into Rokai's face. As the screaming goes on...

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

FADE IN:

**21 INT. DUKAT'S BUNKER**

Iliana is huddled in the shower of the bunker's bathroom, cold water running over her naked body. She looks down at her shivering hand, at the pink skin. She scratches at it.

Shing-Kur cautiously steps near, holding out a tricorder. She takes readings of Iliana, nods with sad understanding.

SHING-KUR

Mazagalanthi thinks he's got the transporter working. Safest to just re-use the last coordinates it was set for - some place called Harkoum. We should get going before the Jem'Hadar find us.

Iliana can't respond. She just stares, shivering.

SHING-KUR

I haven't told the others anything. And I won't. I thought that after everything, you should be the one to make those choices. But I want you to know I'm still with you. No matter who you are.

ILIANA

Why?

SHING-KUR

Because I think we want the same thing - to get your life back.

ILIANA

My life...? Which life? Bajor is turning into the very thing I fought to prevent. Cardassia is being obliterated as we speak. They both deserve their fates. Nothing left for me on either.

She spreads her arms, demonstrating the cold, pink skin.

ILIANA (cont)

This is what I have left.

SHING-KUR

But Iliana -

ILIANA

(sudden shout)

Don't call me that!

SHING-KUR

I'm sorry, I don't understand.  
I thought you remembered...

ILIANA

I do. I remember everything. I remember growing up in the ruling elite on a planet so poor we had to invade other worlds just to feed ourselves. And I remember being a child on a world of brutal enslavement, where our lives were valued by how much ore we could mine for our alien overlords.

(beat)

I remember Ataan, the man I loved, who was murdered by terrorists on a pathetically backward planet. And I remember creeping through the shadows to set the explosive that took his life.

(beat)

I remember Dakhana, one of the best fighters in the resistance, and how blaming myself for her death almost killed me too. And I remember my satisfaction when I killed her for the Obsidian Order.

(beat)

But do you know what I remember more than anything? I remember being locked in a box for fifteen years as the plaything of the most sadistic creature in the galaxy.

And it wasn't just my body he raped, was it? It was my mind - both of them. He took everything. My freedom, my friends, my faith, everything except my identity.

(beat)

I'm not giving it up now, Shing-Kur. Not after everything I've been through. I'm Kira Nerys, and no-one - no-one - is taking that away from me.

Shing-Kur quietly takes that in and accepts it. Then she reaches in and turns off the running water. She takes Iliana's hand and helps her to stand. Her face is silently promising that she will help. She's with her.

CUT TO:

**22**    **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS**

Shing-Kur now sits, quiet and withdrawn, alone inside one of the cells. When Kira and Ghemor walk in together, she quickly stands, gazing with fascination at Ghemor. She almost completely ignores Kira.

SHING-KUR

You're even more beautiful than I imagined.

GHEMOR

You're really not my type. Do you know who I am?

SHING-KUR

Of course. You're the other one.

KIRA

Why did you kill your friends, Shing-Kur?

SHING-KUR

They were going to break their vow to her. I couldn't allow that to happen. Besides, I wanted to spare them her pain.

KIRA

Her pain? What pain?

SHING-KUR

The pain she hid from them.

KIRA

But not from you. You knew her pretty well, didn't you?

SHING-KUR

Better than most.

KIRA

Then what does she want?

SHING-KUR

The same as any of us. The right to exist.

KIRA

And she had to kill nearly three-hundred Bajorans to assert that right?

SHING-KUR

Her worlds abandoned her. She owes them nothing.

GHEMOR

Whereas you think you owe her everything.

SHING-KUR

My life belongs to her.

(to Kira)

I have a message for you.

KIRA

I'm listening.

SHING-KUR

Trakor's First Prophecy.

This simple phrase seems to stun Kira. She stares silently at Shing-Kur, who stares right back. Whereas Ghemor doesn't seem to react at all.

KIRA  
(quiet, intense)  
I'll stop her.

SHING-KUR  
No, you won't.

The staring contest continues. Kira is scared here.

KIRA  
Why are you doing this? She fled.  
She abandoned you. She used you.  
All for her own twisted -

SHING-KUR  
If she's twisted, then it's only  
because of you. You... and all the  
other corpses.

KIRA  
Is that supposed to be a threat?

SHING-KUR  
Call it a prediction. She's not  
going to rest until all the  
pretenders are gone.

KIRA  
She's the pretender. You already  
know that.

SHING-KUR  
No. What I know - what I've come  
to understand - is that she's more  
deserving of being Kira Nerys than  
you, or that Intendant, or any of  
the others out there could ever  
be. No-one has the right to take  
that from her. Not even you.

Kira stares for a moment longer. Then she turns and walks out. Ghemor turns to follow, but Shing-Kur calls after her.

SHING-KUR

I understand why she's threatened.  
But you - how could you be against  
her? You of all people?

Ghemor stops and looks back over her shoulder.

GHEMOR

She's an egomaniac. My side has  
enough of those already. We don't  
need one from your universe.

She turns and walks out.

**23 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

As Ghemor enters from the cells area, Kira is waiting. The room is otherwise empty, though there are Security outside on the Promenade. Kira is fuming, but Ghemor holds her own.

KIRA

You knew all along, didn't you?

GHEMOR

Yes.

Kira aims a backhand PUNCH to Ghemor's face. The Cardassian woman blocks it easily. Kira grabs the blocking arm, spins Ghemor on the spot, and SLAMS her against the office wall. Kira whispers furiously into her ear through gritted teeth.

KIRA

So what was your job? To keep me  
and my people running around in  
circles while your counterpart  
fulfils Trakor's First Prophecy?

GHEMOR

Just the opposite, actually. I  
want to stop her, same as you.

KIRA

And you didn't think I needed to  
know this?

GHEMOR

Look at yourself, Captain. You're way off your game. You're still recovering from your injuries, you're letting your emotions get the better of you, you don't even trust your own crew. And you can never be objective when it comes to your precious Prophets. You're too close to the problem.

Kira is still furious, but unable to deny that Ghemor is right. She lets go and steps back. Ghemor slowly turns, rubbing her sore shoulder.

KIRA

You should have levelled with me from the start. But you're always holding something back. Tell me now, once and for all, why I should trust you.

GHEMOR

It's complicated.

KIRA

You're the alternate universe double of a woman who was altered surgically to replace me, but who has instead replaced my alternate universe double. How simple do you think I expect it to be?

GHEMOR

(smirk)

Fair enough. Alright then. I was assigned by the Terran rebellion to eliminate the Intendant. In order to do that, I needed to make contact with the religious authority on my universe's Bajor.

KIRA

I thought the Bajoran religion - the one I know, at least - didn't exist in your universe.

GHEMOR

It would be more accurate to say it doesn't exist anymore. For the most part. Underground enclaves still exist, in secret, hoping to someday unshackle Bajor from the Alliance and return their world to the way it used to be. As you can imagine, this movement is sympathetic to the rebels on Terok Nor. I was sent to one of those enclaves, hoping to confirm a rumour that the Intendant would soon be making a rare special trip to Bajor, so that I could plan her assassination.

(pause for breath)

What I got instead was a... a revelation I wasn't expecting.

KIRA

You... you've looked into an Orb, haven't you?

GHEMOR

(awkward, evasive)

Not exactly. The enclaves do have certain artefacts that fuel their faith. My exposure to one of them is where my information comes from. It's how I learned about my counterpart in your universe, and what she was planning to do.

Ghemor takes a moment to catch her breath, allowing Kira to absorb all the revelations.

GHEMOR

You see, Captain... unlike your world, my Bajor is still waiting for its redeemer. The one who is supposed to lead them into a new era. According to the enclaves, the time of the Emissary is now.

Understanding dawns on Kira's face.

KIRA

Benjamin Sisko. The Sisko of your universe was supposed to have become your Bajor's Emissary, just like mine. But he's dead.

GHEMOR

That's right. There's a void in my continuum that demands to be filled. Under the right symbol - the right person - my Bajor could become the centre of a benign new order. It could strengthen the rebellion against the Alliance, and bring about a revolution that could usher in a new age. But if my counterpart - your Iliana Ghemor - is the one to take up the mantle of Emissary, then there's a very good chance that the new age will be even worse than the present one.

On Kira's troubled reaction to that pronouncement...

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT FOUR**

**ACT FIVE**

FADE IN:

**24 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Everything looks peaceful from the outside...

O'BRIEN (v.o.)

Iliana... I'm not sure how much of  
this I can believe.

**25 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Kira and Ghemor stand together at the central Ops table, serious and earnest. Vaughn, Dax and Bashir stand nearby, with Nog and Bowers working at their stations.

On the screen, the alternate O'BRIEN, KEIKO and EZRI stand around Terok Nor's central Ops table. All three are trying to get their heads around what seems a preposterous tale.

(NOTE: For the purposes of later episodes, we will need full coverage from all sides of the following conversation, even though we only see it from DS9's POV for now.)

O'BRIEN (screen)

You're telling me that you didn't manage to kill the Intendant, but she might already be dead, but not really, because an alternate universe version of you is pretending to be her to fulfil some obscure Bajoran prophecy?

GHEMOR

I realise it's a lot to take in. But you have to understand - if this woman succeeds in doing what she intends, Bajor will follow her like some kind of messiah. She could even start a holy war within the Alliance.

EZRI (screen)

Would that be a bad thing?

KEIKO (screen)

It would be. A war like that would devastate the region. People like us would be its first victims.

GHEMOR

Exactly - the faithful versus the infidels. With a madwoman calling the shots.

KIRA

You see now why we felt the need to warn you. General O'Brien, I also have a stake in seeing this woman stopped. She's proved herself to be a threat on our side as well as yours. My people and I stand ready to assist you.

O'BRIEN (screen)

I appreciate the offer, Captain, and I accept. You can start by explaining exactly where...

(reacts to panels)

...what the bloody hell?

On the screen, we see that ALARMS are going off all over Terok Nor. As O'Brien, Keiko and Ezri check their panels, other rebels run around in the background, panicked. On DS9, all the crew can do is stand and watch, powerless.

KEIKO (screen)

Multiple warp signatures on approach vectors. Looks like Klingons. ETA two minutes.

O'BRIEN (screen)

Raise shields. Ezri, prepare for planetary bombardment. I want a torpedo lock on Ashalla in the next thirty seconds.

Kira and Bashir's jaws both drop, shocked. Did they really hear what they thought they did? On the screen, O'Brien is now the hardened rebel soldier, doing what he has to do.

KIRA  
General... what are you doing?

O'BRIEN (screen)  
Exactly what I warned them I'd do  
if they moved against us, Captain.

KIRA  
You can't attack Bajor! Millions  
of innocent lives -

Static is coming over the signal, breaking it up.

O'BRIEN (screen)  
(static)  
Captain... how do you think we've  
managed... hold Terok Nor all this  
time? By... convincing the Alliance  
that... pushed me too far, Bajor  
won't... suffer the... consequences...

KIRA  
Nog - he's breaking up! Do  
something!

Nog is at his engineering station, urgently hitting panels.

NOG  
I'm trying! But something's  
interfering with the signal lock,  
overriding the link... wait, I  
think I've got it back...

They look hopefully back to the screen, where the screen is  
starting to clear. But it reveals a new face - Kira's own.

But it is ILIANA, impersonating the Intendant, wearing her  
iconic black bodysuit and silver headdress. She is standing  
beside General KURN's command chair on the bridge of the  
alternate Klingons' flagship, the *Negh'Var*.

This is the first time Kira has directly faced the woman  
behind all this, the woman who was supposed to be her. She  
glares, hardening. Iliana gives a thin, amused smile.

ILIANA (screen)

Well hello... Captain. What an unexpected surprise. And how clever of you to have devised a way to communicate with Terok Nor. You've no idea how pleased I am to see you alive.

KIRA

I sincerely doubt that.

ILIANA (screen)

Oh believe me, I wasn't happy to learn what Taran'atar had done to you. That was a task I'd reserved for myself. It's reassuring to know I get to come back for you... once I'm done here, that is.

KIRA

You won't succeed.

ILIANA (screen)

Of course I will. Haven't you heard? I walk with the Prophets.

Iliana brings up her hand, and she has the *pagh-varam*, the bracelet with its Orb fragment, wrapped around her palm. She wiggles her fingers in a taunting wave, and then the comm link drops, replaced by the standard starfield.

KIRA

Nog, can you get Terok Nor back?

NOG

It's like there's an expanding wall between us and the alternate universe - some kind of scattering field. The effect is spreading.

KIRA

Can we beam across?

NOG

Not a chance. Not to Terok Nor anyway. But maybe...

KIRA

What?

NOG

If I'm reading this right, the field hasn't overtaken Bajor yet. I may be able to beam over two people now, if we act fast.

BASHIR

Two - what good would that do?

DAX

It's better than nobody. Captain, I volunteer to go.

KIRA

Your attitude is commendable, Lieutenant, but last I checked, I'm the only member of this crew who can pass for the Intendant. We may need to use that.

(turns to Ghemor)

That religious enclave you told me about - where was it?

GHEMOR

Mylea - a small coastal village in Kendra province. I can guide you to it.

Kira shares a thunderstruck look with Vaughn, Nog, Sisko. This can't possibly be a coincidence. Ghemor sees the look.

GHEMOR

What? What is it?

KIRA

We're familiar with it. Come on.

At Kira's beckoning, Ghemor begins to follow the captain up the stairs towards the transporter.

Sisko turns to Vaughn, and gives him a silent, significant look. Something passes between them, and Vaughn steps up.

VAUGHN

Wait. Captain, take me instead.  
You don't need a guide, you need  
someone who has your back.

Kira pauses, turns to look at Vaughn. Ghemor also turns,  
confused at this turn of events. Finally...

KIRA

Alright, Commander, you're with  
me.

Vaughn pauses to grab two phasers out of a weapons locker,  
then trots up the stairs with Kira to the transporter.  
Ghemor lets them pass, but she is still a little confused.

GHEMOR

Captain -

KIRA

I'm sorry, Ghemor, but he's right.  
Nog, I don't want to spook the  
locals by beaming down right in  
the middle of Mylea high street.  
Can you put us somewhere isolated?

NOG

I think so...

SISKO

What about Yyn? An archeological  
site that's been unchanged for  
thousands of years. It's only a  
couple of hours' walk from Mylea.

Ghemor looks again to Sisko, intrigued as to why this is  
the only thing Sisko has said throughout the whole scene.

NOG

I've got it. The interference is  
getting stronger. We've only got a  
few more seconds.

Kira and Vaughn stand side by side on the transporter,  
armed and as ready as they can be for the mission.

KIRA  
Take care of our station, Ezri.  
Mister Nog, energise.

In the moment before the transporter signal forms, Vaughn shares another intense, significant look with Sisko...

VAUGHN (v.o.)  
What do you need me to do?

**26    INT. DS9 - VAUGHN'S QUARTERS**

Continuing the scene from where we left it in the teaser. Vaughn is promising to do whatever it is that Sisko needs.

SISKO  
I need you to find my counterpart  
- the other Benjamin Sisko - and  
convince him to find the wormhole,  
so that he can become Emissary.

VAUGHN  
My understanding was that your  
counterpart died years ago.

SISKO  
Some... intelligence has come my  
way that suggests he faked his  
death to get out of leading the  
rebellion. And that he's been in  
hiding on Bajor ever since.

VAUGHN  
I see. I don't suppose I could  
have access to your intel?

SISKO  
It isn't that kind of source.

VAUGHN  
I suppose that's where the leap of  
faith comes in. Can I at least  
assume that the success of this  
mission will neutralise Iliana  
Ghemor as a threat?

SISKO

No, it won't. But it may minimise the damage she does.

Vaughn puts down his glass, sits back to think this out.

VAUGHN

If your counterpart fulfils his destiny, the alternate Bajor is likely to be profoundly affected. I'd be effecting a fundamental change in that universe. Surely the Prime Directive applies.

SISKO

That's where the "off the record" part comes in. I was supposed to have accomplished all this myself some time ago. But because I never considered our crossovers with the other universe within the context of my own role as Emissary, a mad-woman now has a chance to pull the whole tapestry apart.

VAUGHN

If that's the case, then surely this task is meant for you.

SISKO

Not anymore. Confronting him now, after all I've been through, would only drive him deeper underground. I need a proxy - someone who knows what it is to be touched by the Prophets, but is still in the process of working out what it all means. It has to be you.

VAUGHN

And Kira?

SISKO

You can't tell her any of this, Elias. Please don't ask me why.

Vaughn sits back and silently thinks about it. He doesn't like the idea of lying to Kira. But Sisko needs him.

VAUGHN

I'll do it.

Sisko stands up. Vaughn follows his lead, and the two shake hands on their secret pact. On Sisko's troubled face...

**28**    **INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

As Vaughn and Kira stand on the transporter, Ghemor notices the look between Vaughn and Sisko, and wonders what it means. Then the complex inter-dimensional transporter effect forms, and Kira and Vaughn twist out of existence.

Ops bursts into activity. Dax takes firm command.

DAX

Yellow alert. Sam, whatever ideas you have about safeguarding the station from trans-dimensional incursions, now's the time. Nog, keep trying to re-establish the comm link and the transporter lock. Julian, get down to the Infirmary, just in case. And make sure Ro's kept in the loop.

Everyone gets moving to their jobs and stations. Sisko is standing still, pensive in the chaos.

DAX

Benjamin... you okay?

SISKO

Fine. It's time I got going.

DAX

Okay - I'll get Ensign Tenmei to warm up the *Brahmaputra* -

SISKO

No need. I'll just get passage on the afternoon transport.

(beat)  
You've got good instincts, old  
man. Trust them.

DAX  
I will. Thanks for everything.

Sisko nods, and heads up to the turbolift platform with Quark. He reaches it, turns around as he steps aboard, and catches Ghemor's eye. She is staring at him, looking right into him. He feels self-conscious. Does she know?

The turbolift lowers. Ghemor's accusing eyes watch it go.

FADE OUT:

**THE END**