

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

13x08 - "The Right to Die"

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and on the *Star Trek* tie-in novels
by Pocket Books

TNG 18x08 - "INQUEST"

With the first flush of refugee crises now over, *Enterprise* is recalled to Earth along with *Aventine* to take part in hearings on what happened during the Borg invasion and the actions the Caeliar took to end it. Picard, Dax and many other captains (but not Riker or Chakotay) make their reports to the admiralty and the Federation council. This necessarily brings up bad memories for all of them. LaForge collates reports on how various Starfleet ships fought the Borg, and Worf and Choudhury enjoy *bat'leth*-enhanced sexytimes. When the news emerges that humans were involved in the creation of the Borg (VOY "Alpha"), however inadvertently, accusations explode across the Federation. Picard argues that humans also took responsibility for what happened. It was Federation cooperation and diversity that persuaded the Caeliar to intervene. The Council votes not to assign any blame, so *Enterprise* is sent back out...

TTN 2x08 - "THE AXIS OF TIME"

One of the Department of Temporal Investigations' most important jobs is to roam the galaxy finding troublesome time-related artefacts, confiscating them and locking them safely away in the Eridian Vault to be studied. On this basis, *Titan* returns to the Vomnin Confederacy (TTN "Orion's Hounds") to acquire the Axis of Time, a device which somehow switches the dimensions of space and time. Agent Ranjea takes trainee Garcia as a first official assignment. A council of civilisations from across time controls the Axis, and are happy to demonstrate for their visitors. But Troi, Pazlar and Keru discover that one of the council, Lirahn, has been secretly using her psionic abilities to influence the others so that she can acquire a superweapon and conquer worlds in her own time. Allying with other members of the council, Ranjea and Garcia foil Lirahn's plans. They cannot acquire the Axis itself, but they do at least secure a promise that the council will choose its members more carefully from now on...

VOY 11x08 - "GHOULS"

Seven believes that her Caeliar catoms are picking up a signal from another planet within the Indign system. Seven convinces Captain Eden to let her, Chakotay and Cambridge investigate.

They find an ancient burial ground, but the graves are raided and empty, dozens of Indign bodies recently shot - by Starfleet phasers. A survivor manages to explain that the canister they beamed aboard was not a gift, it was a weapon. Now seven more canisters are missing. Barclay investigates how the Doctor's assistant Meegan was possessed by the Indign - it shouldn't be possible, as Meegan is a hologram. Conlon has reconstructed the codes used to take over *Voyager* - they are Maquis codes. Over Paris's protests, Admiral Batiste orders Chakotay and Seven arrested. But as the pair beams back from the planet to *Galen*, the hospital ship is taken over just like *Voyager* was and sets course out of the system. *Voyager* gives chase...

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A distinctly damaged Excelsior-class ship is just docking at an upper pylon - the USS *Tecumseh* NCC-14934.

RO (v.o.)

Station log, Commander Ro Laren recording. The starship *Tecumseh* has just docked at the station. They've been performing clean-up and rescue ever since the Borg invasion, and this is their first chance for a rest in weeks.

2 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Counsellor MATTHIAS walks down the corridor, not exactly thrilled.

RO (v.o.)

(continuing)

Unfortunately, it means that at least one of my senior staff will be getting no rest for a while.

Matthias reaches a certain door, taps the control to open it, and walks on through into...

3 INT. DS9 - MATTHIAS FAMILY QUARTERS (CONTINUOUS)

...last seen in 10x07 "Instinct". Her husband, SIBIAS, is just tidying away the dinner plates into the replicator. He sees that she is exhausted, comes to hold her.

SIBIAS

Hi, hun. Bad day?

MATTHIAS

Not brilliant.

(nod to replicator)

Did you only just finish dinner?

SIBIAS

I only just finished cleaning up after dinner. The actual eating was several hours ago. The kids are in bed already.

As they move into the room to relax on the couch...

MATTHIAS

(sigh)

Oh, I'm sorry. I hate missing out on family dinner. I guess I just lost track of time.

SIBIAS

I don't mind for my own sake. I just worry about you working all these late nights. Is it anything you can talk about?

MATTHIAS

The *Tecumseh*? Just docked?

SIBIAS

(nods)

I saw it approach out the window. It looked in pretty bad shape.

MATTHIAS

Yeah well, they were assigned to Coridan during the invasion. The only ship to survive the attack, so not only are they filled with their own traumatised crew, they also took on survivors from the ships that weren't so lucky.

SIBIAS

So now they're coming to you for counselling?

MATTHIAS

(shrug)

Most of our refugees have moved down to Bajor, so now it's the officers' turn, I guess.

SIBIAS

Why can't the *Tecumseh's* own counsellor handle it? You have your own crew to take care of.

MATTHIAS

The *Tecumseh's* counsellor is dead.

SIBIAS

Oh... was it the Borg?

MATTHIAS

Indirectly, I suppose. Doctor T'Haro... was killed by one of her own patients three weeks ago.

(Sibias reacts
with horror)

Don't worry, that's not one of the patients they need me to counsel - he's in the brig under sedation. But there are a lot of others who could use a professional's help.

SIBIAS

Okay... but please take care of yourself, Phil.

MATTHIAS

I'll do my best...

Sibias pulls her against his chest, lets her relax...

4 INT. DS9 - TENMEI'S QUARTERS - BEDROOM

BASHIR stands over the prone figure of VAUGHN, who remains unmoving on the bed surrounded by life support machines. Bashir is scanning him, comparing the readings to those on the machines. TENMEI stands back, observing.

After a moment, Bashir concludes his scans, puts away his medical kit, and turns to Tenmei.

TENMEI

Nothing?

BASHIR

I'm sorry, Lieutenant. I believe there is little to no chance of your father ever regaining consciousness. For that matter, of improving in any way from the condition he's in right now.

TENMEI

Believe? You don't know for sure?

BASHIR

I know to the extent of my ability to know these things.

TENMEI

(swallows)

Thank you, Doctor. If you don't mind, it's time for his bed bath.

Nodding his acceptance of that, Bashir moves towards the door to exit. But before he reaches it, he turns back...

BASHIR

Prynn... I know I've said this before. But I really think it's time you try to accept that your father isn't coming back.

TENMEI

What do you mean?

BASHIR

It's my medical opinion that there is nothing to be done for Captain Vaughn, and nothing to be gained.

Tenmei stares the doctor down, forcing him to say what he is trying not to say out loud.

BASHIR

I think it's time to turn off the life support... and let him go.

TENMEI

Don't be ridiculous.

BASHIR

I'm serious, Pryn. As primary physician, I cannot support dragging this out any further. It does neither of you any good.

Tenmei calmly steps forward, considering her response.

TENMEI

Let me be clear, Doctor. If you come anywhere near my father with that attitude, he won't be the one needing life support. I am the next of kin, it's my decision, and I've made it. Now please leave.

BASHIR

(equally calm)

Very well. But you should know I will make it clear in my report that your decision is not in the best interests of my patient, and I fully intend to challenge it.

Bashir turns and EXITS. Tenmei hardens...

TENMEI

Lieutenant Tenmei to Commander Ro.
I need to see you immediately.

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE

RO stands leaning against her desk...

RO

A legal challenge?

Tenmei and Bashir stand before her, both firm and upright, both equally determined.

BASHIR

That's right. As Chief Medical Officer of Deep Space Nine, it is my considered opinion that there is no more to be done for Captain Vaughn, and he should be taken off life support and allowed to die.

TENMEI

And as his only surviving relative I want your support in preventing Doctor Bashir from...

(intentionally crude)

...pulling my father's plug.

Ro pauses to figure out how to handle this delicately. She sympathises, but...

RO

Prynn, Julian is the actual doctor here. I'm inclined to trust his judgement in medical matters.

(to Bashir)

But... Prynn is also correct that if the actual patient is incapable of giving consent, next of kin has the right to make that decision.

TENMEI

Yes, you've successfully restated exactly what we both just said.

RO

(quiet glare)

I'll let that pass considering the emotion of the moment, Lieutenant. But I'm not really sure what it is you're asking me to do here...

BASHIR

I'm asking you to allow me to override Lieutenant Tenmei's familial authority and act in a manner I judge as most medically appropriate for my patient.

TENMEI

And I'm saying that if you want to fight me for that authority, Doctor, I'll give you all the fight you want.

Ro walks around her desk, stressed already. After a moment, she leans across her desk towards them.

RO

Is there not some way you can figure this all out between yourselves? There is quite a lot going on, if you hadn't noticed.

They glance at each other, and back to Ro. They have been fighting a while already, and she is their last resort.

RO

Fine. But we have no lawyers or JAG officers on the station, and with the way the galaxy is right now, I doubt we'll get one out here any time soon.

BASHIR

You're the station commander. It's within your authority to settle a dispute between two of your senior officers.

RO
Alright. Let me talk to Commander
Evik, and I'll get back to you.
Dismissed, for now.

Bashir and Tenmei both turn and leave, clearly still cold
with each other. Ro hangs her head...

6 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Lt Cmdr EVIK reads his main desk screen - a criminal report
on the Ferengi trader SEKKI, as seen in 13x07. With it is a
Starfleet security order with the headline ALL STARFLEET
VESSELS AND INSTALLATIONS TO PLEASE BE AWARE.

He spots someone walking towards his office and the door
OPENS, and he instantly switches the display. But when he
sees that it is only Commander Ro, he relaxes again.

EVIK
Ah, Commander. I was going to
contact you soon, actually.

RO
(thrown off)
Why, what's happened?

EVIK
I just received this order from
Starfleet Security. It's gone out
to all posts, apparently.

He brings the report back and welcomes her around the desk
to look at it. She peers over his shoulder...

RO
Sekki... Wanted for questioning
regarding suspected fraud and
sabotage. Do we know her?

EVIK
There's no record of her ever
coming aboard the station. But
that doesn't mean she won't at
some point in the future.

RO

Interesting... Quark mentioned in passing that Captain Dax called him a couple of weeks ago to get him to track down some Ferengi financial records to do with a case they were investigating. I wonder if it's connected.

EVIK

Should we speak to the Ambassador?

RO

(ponders)

No, not yet. It says to keep this discreet, and Quark's mouth can be bigger than his ears sometimes. He might tip someone off without even meaning to. Let's just increase checks on anyone coming aboard.

EVIK

Understood, Commander. I'll issue modified orders to the teams.

(beat)

Oh I'm sorry, I just launched on top of you there the moment you came in. Did you need something?

RO

Actually yeah - Doctor Bashir and Lieutenant Tenmei have dropped a grenade in my lap. They're arguing over whether to continue care for Captain Vaughn or not, and they want me to decide for them.

EVIK

A delicate situation to be sure. How can I help?

RO

Some advice to start with. I've never had to manage this kind of dispute, not as a commander.

EVIK

And... you're worried you're not up to the task?

RO

I am not blessed with diplomatic expertise, Nath. But I have served under at least one captain who was, and I was thinking of trying to live up to his example.

EVIK

Laren...

(is that okay?

she smiles yes)

...you really need to start having some confidence in yourself. It sounds as if this captain, whoever he was, would be proud of you.

RO

(wistful)

He always seemed to be. I could never really understand why.

EVIK

I could tell you.

Ro smiles shyly...

7 INT. DS9 - COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

Last seen 11x01 "Systems Under Repair". Matthias sits calmly and patiently in the informal couch area while a Latino human male, Lt FANTOMOS, paces around the room...

FANTOMOS

It just doesn't make sense. Sixty-three billion? It can't be right.

MATTHIAS

I'm afraid it's the truth, Mister Fantomos. You're not the only one to have trouble getting your head around the sheer scale -

FANTOMOS

No, I mean it can't be right. I don't believe it. Someone's lying to us. There's no way that many people could just... die.

MATTHIAS

Why would someone lie about it? What would they have to gain?

FANTOMOS

I don't know. But they must be. There's no other explanation...

CUT TO a different session, as now another human male, CPO JAGO, older and portly, sits in one of the chairs...

JAGO

It was just a broken leg! But because I was in sickbay, I was the only one not on deck when my entire repair crew got blown out through a hull breach.

MATTHIAS

Survivor's guilt can be a very powerful thing, Mister Jago.

JAGO

But it's so pathetic! While they were all doing their jobs, I was laid up because I can't climb down a Jeffries Tube ladder like any five-year-old. It wasn't even broken in battle!

MATTHIAS

Accidents happen. And just because you suffered from bad luck or bad timing, doesn't mean you should accept responsibility for bad things happening to other people.

CUT TO a third session, where a Triexian female in security yellow, Lt Cmdr KARA NA MIIN, shifts awkwardly in a chair not designed to accommodate her three legs.

KARA NA MIIN

I'm just exhausted, Counsellor.
I'm not equipped to handle this.

MATTHIAS

I think a lot of us are feeling
the same way, Commander Na Miin.

KARA NA MIIN

But a lot of us weren't thrust
into commanding a starship only
six years out of the Academy. I
wasn't even the first officer.

MATTHIAS

I read your after-action report...

KARA NA MIIN

Eight Borg cubes coming right for
us. The XO gets vaporised in front
of my eyes, and then Captain Tando
has a complete mental breakdown in
full view of the entire bridge.

MATTHIAS

But you did it. You took command
in the worst situation imaginable,
saved a hundred-million lives on
Coridan, led the *Tecumseh* through
weeks of rescue and recovery with
not a moment's break, and did it
all from a captain's chair that's
not even designed for a Triexian.

The little joke has its intended effect - Na Miin smiles
and allows her wriggling, uncomfortable body to relax.

MATTHIAS

So... if you should find yourself
thinking you're not ready for
command, try to think instead of
what you accomplished even despite
not being ready for command. And
of what other triumphs you might
be capable in the future.

KARA NA MIIN

Thank you, Counsellor. But I'm
just keeping that uncomfortable
chair warm for Captain Tando.

Matthias tries to cover her worries about that...

CUT TO a fourth session, this one featuring the Trill male
TANDO - the *Tecumseh's* captain, but currently wearing
little more than a hospital smock.

As Matthias leans forward to try to connect with him, Tando
sits silently throughout, staring blankly, mouth open.

MATTHIAS

Captain Tando... I understand if
you don't want to talk about what
you've experienced. Commander Na
Miin's report said that you had
had several counselling sessions
with Doctor T'Haro before...

(she was murdered)

...coming to Deep Space Nine. And
you didn't speak a word in any of
them. But I want you to know that
you're in a safe place here. The
invasion is over, the Borg are
gone, and to the extent that
winning was possible, we did so.

No reaction from Captain Tando. She might as well be
talking to herself...

MATTHIAS

I think we did, anyway.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

RO sits centred at the conference table, looking out at the space beyond the windows, worried but professional. She taps a control on the padd before her on the table...

RO

Commander Ro Laren, commanding officer Deep Space Nine, stardate 58963-point-2. This log serves as the official record of this legal proceeding, between Lieutenant Commander Julian Bashir, chief medical officer Deep Space Nine -

She looks to her left, where BASHIR sits at one end of the table... then to her right, where TENMEI sits at the other.

RO

(continuing)

- and Lieutenant Prynn Tenmei, senior pilot Deep Space Nine and USS *Defiant*.

She looks back out of the windows, daunted by the prospect. Despite the emotions involved, she has to keep this tight.

RO

The subject of this proceeding is Captain Elias A Vaughn, formerly of the USS *James T Kirk*, and the continuation or otherwise of his medical support following extreme injury in the field.

(beat)

Before we begin, let me say that I intend for this to be a relatively informal process, but I will not let it fall into chaos. Emotions are bound to be high, but please don't let them get out of control.

(beat)

Alright, enough jabber. Doctor Bashir, please present your opening statement.

Bashir takes a deep breath, maintains professionalism... but can't quite look Tenmei in the eye. Tenmei, on the other hand, cannot take her dagger glare off Bashir.

BASHIR

Thank you, Commander. As Captain Vaughn's physician, any decisions regarding his medical status are my responsibility. However, those decisions have been blocked by Lieutenant Tenmei. While I respect and acknowledge the lieutenant's depth of feeling, I ask the court to reaffirm my authority in all medical matters on this station.

RO

Lieutenant, your statement please.

Tenmei also remains calm, but her choice of words is deliberate and pointed.

TENMEI

I acknowledge Doctor Bashir's medical authority. I do not, however, acknowledge the Doctor's implied claim that he knows my father's interests better than his daughter does. As Captain Vaughn's next of kin, end of life decisions are mine to make, and I do not intend to give up that power.

The tension in the room is clear, but Ro carries on...

RO

Thank you both. Now, I have asked Lieutenant Commander Evik Nath to provide some legal background.

(taps combadge)

Mister Evik, we're ready for you.

A moment, then the door opens and EVIK enters. Ro directs him to the seat across the table from her. He sits.

EVIK

Thank you, Commander. A founding principle of the Federation is that each member world be free to govern its citizens however it sees fit. Beyond certain obvious exceptions - murder, for example - the Federation prefers not to regulate its members too closely.

RO

So what effect does that have on this case?

EVIK

Uncertain. My research has found a roughly equal number of worlds who would favour the medical officer's authority in this situation, to those who would favour the next of kin's. Therefore, we cannot rely on legal prevalence or precedence to decide this case for us.

RO

Understood, thank you, Commander. Please remain, if you don't mind.

EVIK

Of course.

RO

My first question is to ascertain the accuracy of Doctor Bashir's prognosis. Doctor, it's correct that you were actually the second medical officer to examine Captain Vaughn and declare him brain dead?

BASHIR

That's correct. The first was Doctor Ibelna of the USS *Venture*.

RO

Plus we have after-action reports from Commander Rogeiro, Lieutenant Magrone, and Nurse Ni-Jalikreii, all of the USS *James T Kirk*. Are those reports consistent with your and Doctor Ibelna's findings?

BASHIR

Yes. They describe a catastrophic injury that resulted in complete lack of brain activity...

Bashir and Ro continue to speak MOS, but we focus on TENMEI as she observes...

TENMEI (v.o.)

And then I had to sit there for what felt like hours...
(more...)

9 INT. DS9 - TENMEI'S QUARTERS - LIVING ROOM

Tenmei sits in the armchair in her quarters...

TENMEI

(continuing)

...while Ro and Bashir wrote my father off as not worth saving.

CANDLEWOOD passes her a pink frothy drink from the tray he has just carried from the replicator. He passes another to NOG (sat in another chair), a third to HETIK on the sofa, then settles in next to Hetik with his own. Over this:

CANDLEWOOD

I seriously doubt that's what they were doing, Prynn. You know Bashir would do anything if he could.

Prynn goes to sip from her drink, but pauses...

TENMEI

This isn't going to explode in my face again, is it?

CANDLEWOOD

No exploding drinks tonight. I am capable of reading the room, believe it or not. Occasionally.

HETIK

It's been at least two weeks since I was last publicly humiliated.

CANDLEWOOD

You know what that is? Growth.

Candlewood CHINKS his drink to Hetik's. Tenmei sips hers.

NOG

So what did you say?

TENMEI

I didn't, really. I asked for a recess. We start again tomorrow morning. Look, you guys are my friends, okay? So give me some advice. Nog, what would you do?

NOG

Honestly, I'm not sure. But I can tell you that on Ferenginar, it would be all down to the money.

CANDLEWOOD

I'm stunned.

NOG

If you can afford the treatment, then you get the treatment, no matter how pointless it is. And if you can't afford it...

HETIK

That's kinda heartless.

NOG

But that's the point. Making it all about money is the only way to take your emotions out of it.

CANDLEWOOD

Jewish law forbids a doctor from doing anything to hasten anyone's death. But... you also shouldn't forcibly extend their life. It's only God's place to give or take a life, not man's.

HETIK

I don't know that there's any one specifically Bajoran perspective on it. Bajorans will happily give their life for a cause - we know we'll walk with the Prophets. But that's not really what this is.

TENMEI

Yeah well, my dad didn't believe in God or the Prophets. There's no particular religious or cultural tradition I should be sticking to on his behalf. It's down to me.

Off Tenmei's uncertainty...

10 **INT. DS9 - COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE**

...to Bashir sat in Counsellor Matthias' guest chair. She is looking a little tired - it has been a long day.

BASHIR

...and so she's sitting there looking at me like I'm trying to actively kill her father. Which is probably exactly how she sees it.

MATTHIAS

Do you think she's right?

BASHIR

The Borg killed him, not me.

MATTHIAS

This can't be the first time you faced a situation like this. How did you handle it in the past?

BASHIR

Well... a doctor will always try to work with the patient's family, help them to understand what's in the patient's best interest. But Prynn... she's just not listening.

MATTHIAS

And how does that make you feel?

BASHIR

You're suggesting I'm digging my heels in out of pique? I promise you that's not it, Counsellor. I don't feel any guilt about my role in this - that's not why I'm here.

MATTHIAS

Then why are you?

BASHIR

I suppose because I have no-one else to talk to about it. I can't go to Commander Ro, I can't put her in that position when she has to remain neutral.

MATTHIAS

So you feel like it's just you against Lieutenant Tenmei.

BASHIR

I understand what she must be going through. And I've tried to convince her with all the logical arguments I can come up with -

MATTHIAS

Is death really a matter of logic, Doctor?

Bashir stops to think about that...

CUT TO another session, as Vulcan male SANEK sits primly in the guest seat. A civilian, over a hundred years old, grey-haired, perfectly calm and unemotional as any Vulcan.

SANEK

It was not logical.

MATTHIAS

I've spoken to many people who feel the same way, Mister Sanek. The loss of life is tough to grasp, not just for a Vulcan -

SANEK

You misunderstand me, Counsellor. The Borg's invasion of Federation space was not logical because it makes no sense for the Borg to behave in such a manner.

MATTHIAS

...I'm not sure I understand.

SANEK

They achieved what Vulcans sought for millennia, and to a degree no Vulcan ever has - the perfect mastery of logic over emotion.

MATTHIAS

It sounds as if you admired them.

SANEK

(flash of resentment)

I did. Until they violated that with an impulsive act of revenge against the Federation. Revenge is not logical. It disgusts me.

Matthias is getting worried - Sanek's emotional control is slipping, and the Vulcan's violent core is showing...

MATTHIAS

Mister Sanek... the Borg were an enemy of the Federation.

SANEK

Of course. That is only natural.
We deserved their enmity for our
insistence on denying their logic.

MATTHIAS

Sixty-three billion people...
deserved... to die?

Sanek shoots to his feet - Matthias flinches back.

SANEK

You misunderstand again. It is...
intensely frustrating.

MATTHIAS

Then what? You're upset because
billions of people died... for the
wrong reasons?

SANEK

(shouts)

Yes! The Borg betrayed their own
logical mandate by invading us.

MATTHIAS

You feel betrayed... by the Borg.

SANEK

(sneer)

I trusted them. And yet in the
end... they were just as emotional
as any human.

The disgust in his voice is leaving Matthias on the verge
of tears...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

11 INT. DS9 - MATTHIAS FAMILY QUARTERS

The door opens and Matthias slumps in, shaken by what just happened. Sibias, who had been napping on the couch while he waited for her, awakes at the sound.

SIBIAS

Hun...?

MATTHIAS

Hi.

SIBIAS

Are you okay? You look wrung out.

MATTHIAS

Thanks.

He gets up, embraces her, and leads her back to the couch.

SIBIAS

You know what I mean. You can't keep going on like this. It's wearing you down.

MATTHIAS

It's my job. I can't just stop.

SIBIAS

I get that... but what about Knezo and Collins? Can't they help out?

MATTHIAS

Oh, there's enough to go around, believe me. We're all busy.

SIBIAS

I know you're not allowed to talk about it. But you're going to have to find a way to get it off your chest before it swallows you up.

MATTHIAS

I can't. Patient confidentiality is absolute. They could suspend my license, and a trained counsellor is more needed than ever right now. Don't worry about me.

SIBIAS

I'm never going to not worry, hun.

She smiles tiredly, and lays her head down on his chest...

12 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Time passing, as we move to the next morning...

13 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Tenmei sits at one end of the table, passionately facing off against Bashir. Ro and Matthias caught between them.

TENMEI

There is a living, breathing man in my quarters. You can't just turn him off like he's nothing.

BASHIR

(patient, considerate)

That's just an empty shell, kept ticking over by machines. Think of it as a shuttlecraft - the engines might be in perfect condition, but if there's no operating system in the computers, it will never fly.

TENMEI

Please don't condescend to me, Doctor. I do actually understand what "brain dead" means.

BASHIR

I'm sorry but it doesn't seem like you do. Brain death is the measure by which we declare someone to be actually, truly dead.

RO

Do we know for absolute certain, without question, that removing the life support would result in Captain Vaughn's death?

BASHIR

It can't not. His brain is not capable of sending the signals to keep his vital organs functioning on its own.

TENMEI

And that's why we can't do it. If there is any chance to save him, and we don't know for sure there isn't, he would want to be saved.

RO

We all know that Captain Vaughn was fully prepared to give his life to save others, Lieutenant. We've all witnessed that on many occasions.

TENMEI

I don't deny that. But that's not what's going on here, is it?

BASHIR

You're right, it's not - because that already happened in the fight over Andor. I'm sorry, Prynn, but to all intents and purposes, your father is already dead.

RO

If that's the case, Doctor, why have you been keeping Captain Vaughn on life support at all?

BASHIR

Well, two reasons. The first was to give myself time. I don't know everything, maybe someone else could think of some way to help.

RO

How have you pursued that option?

BASHIR

By correspondence with my fellow CMOs across the Federation. It's a sad truth that war often results in innovation. Perhaps one of them came up with something on the fly in a crisis that could save him.

TENMEI

And have they?

BASHIR

You would know if they had.

RO

Is there any likelihood they will in future?

BASHIR

Perhaps? But I can't imagine how. By every measure of which I am capable, there is nothing to save. Everything we know of Elias Vaughn - his personality, his memories, his likes and dislikes - is gone.

RO

What about his soul?

Bashir and Tenmei look rather surprised at the question...

BASHIR

I'm a doctor, not a philosopher. I can't let metaphysics influence my decisions.

TENMEI

There, at least, I can agree with you. My father was not a religious person. He wasn't concerned about his eternal soul, he just wanted to enjoy his life.

BASHIR

Prynn... he was a-hundred-and-six years old. How much life could he have had left even in the best of circumstances?

TENMEI

So your solution is to give up? Assume he'd be dead soon anyway, so no need to bother?

BASHIR

(sigh)

No. Captain Vaughn was a vital and active man even at his age. That's why I believe he wouldn't want it dragged out. To be forced to cling on in such a state... I don't for a moment think he'd want that.

Tenmei seems to consider that for a moment... Meanwhile Matthias has been drifting, distracted by her own concerns.

RO

Counsellor Matthias...?

MATTHIAS

(jerks to attention)

Yes, Commander?

RO

I was hoping you could offer us a psychological perspective.

MATTHIAS

In what sense?

RO

Well, theoretically speaking, how would you advise a patient facing this dilemma in a session?

MATTHIAS

I would advise them to consider the other party's feelings.

RO
You mean Captain Vaughn's?

MATTHIAS
Not at all. Frankly the captain's feelings no longer enter into it, beyond the two opposing parties' desire to honour whatever they believe those feelings to be. I'm much more concerned with those of us still here to see the results.

That seems a little harsh. Ro tries to soften it...

RO
Can you clarify that, Counsellor?

MATTHIAS
I have spoken to both the doctor and the lieutenant in the weeks since the invasion. And without breaking confidence, I think I can safely say they are both suffering from post-traumatic stress as much as any of the rest of us.

TENMEI
But we weren't the ones involved in the fighting. We escaped that.

MATTHIAS
Yes... and so we're the ones left looking at the state of the galaxy now and trying to somehow process what happened. Whether that means clinging to impersonal numbers to avoid emotion, refusing to let a loved one go despite all evidence, or leaving behind a century of perfect Vulcan equanimity to turn into a borderline sociopath...

Ro, Bashir and Tenmei look confused and worried. Matthias realises she has let her own feelings slip out, and struggles to find her way back to her point...

MATTHIAS

(continuing)

...what I'm saying is, it's more important than ever that we make an effort to sympathise with people's trauma, and give everyone the time and support they need.

BASHIR

That was my second reason for keeping him on life support, even knowing it was futile...

(to Tenmei)

...for you.

TENMEI

For me? I don't understand.

BASHIR

To give you time as well - time to come to terms with what happened. Instead I'm afraid I've had the opposite effect.

The rest take that on board. Then Bashir's combadge CHIRPS.

RICHTER (comm)

Richter to Doctor Bashir! Please respond.

Richter sounds agitated and worried. Bashir looks to Ro - she nods her permission. He taps to answer...

BASHIR

Go ahead, Kristen.

RICHTER (comm)

We just got an alert here in the Infirmary - it's from Lieutenant Tenmei's quarters. The monitors show that Captain Vaughn's life signs are faltering...

Tenmei shoots to her feet, Bashir not far behind. Ro taps her combadge...

RO

Ro to Ops - is there some problem
with power in the habitat ring?

NOG (comm)

Yes! It's that same EPS issue
again - I'm working on rerouting
it but it'll take a second.

RO

Major Cenn - transport Lieutenant
Tenmei and Doctor Bashir to her
quarters immediately.

CENN (comm)

Aye, Commander. Energising...

Bashir and Tenmei both disappear in the golden swirls of a
Cardassian transporter beam. Ro and Matthias look at each
other with worry...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

14 INT. DS9 - TENMEI'S QUARTERS - BEDROOM

Vaughn lies unconscious on the bed where he was, but the ROOM LIGHTS are low and machines around him have no power.

An off-screen TRANSPORTER sound, and then BASHIR and TENMEI rush into the bedroom, immediately going to Vaughn. Bashir checks the machines...

BASHIR
They're offline.

TENMEI
Well, get them back on line.

BASHIR
I'm trying.

But not getting anywhere. Another TRANSPORTER sound off-screen, but no-one notices. Bashir urgently taps his com...

BASHIR
Bashir to Nog - where's that power?

NOG
Right here. Move!

NOG runs in, quickly hauls his PORTABLE POWER UNIT to the life-support array and starts yanking cables, reconnecting them to the unit as quickly as Ferengi-ly possible.

Bashir and Tenmei stagger back out of the way, where they wait anxiously, his hand on her shoulder...

RO appears in the doorway from the living room - she needs to know, but doesn't want to intrude...

After a few tense moments, power SURGES back into the life support machines, and they all start BEEPing happily again.

Bashir immediately rushes forwards and starts scanning Vaughn's unresponsive body with his medical tricorder...

Nog steps back, sighs with relief, comes over to Tenmei...

NOG

That should do it for now. It'll give me time to come up with a more permanent solution anyway.

TENMEI

Thanks, Nog.

RO

I want him kept on an independent power source from this point on, Nog. Understood?

NOG

Absolutely.

Ro nods her thanks, and Nog goes on his way.

Bashir finishes his scans, turns back to Tenmei and Ro.

BASHIR

No long term damage - or no more than there was. Some slight myocardial bruising caused by the sudden restart of the machines, but nothing I can't fix.

RO

Thank you, Doctor.

BASHIR

You see, this is exactly what I was worried about - you getting the choice taken away from you.

TENMEI

What do you mean?

BASHIR

I mean, would you rather he go in a dignified way when you choose, or have him snatched away thanks to a random EPS conduit failure?

TENMEI

This wasn't my fault. If I hadn't been wasting my time arguing with you in the ward room, I would have been here to watch out for him!

BASHIR

It would have made no difference. You can't be here twenty-six hours a day, none of us can. At least in the Infirmary there'd be a medical professional on duty at all times.

TENMEI

So you can pull the plug behind my back, is that it?

RO

Alright, that's enough!

Ro's command voice pulls the other two up short.

RO

Doctor, if Captain Vaughn doesn't need you, you're dismissed. I'll see you in the morning.

BASHIR

Alright.

Bashir gathers his things and leaves. Once Ro is certain he is gone...

RO

Prynn, that was out of line. I don't know if this is all out of guilt over the years you and your father spent estranged, but you are not helping your case. I will also see you in the morning... when I give my decision.

Ro turns and leaves. Upset, Prynn slowly moves to the bed, sits, and holds her father's hand.

15 **INT. DS9 - COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE**

The office door OPENS and a pleasant, fresh-faced human male Starfleet Ensign in security yellow enters. This is DMITRI NAKAHARA, and Matthias greets him with a smile.

NAKAHARA
Counsellor Matthias?

MATTHIAS
Ensign Nakahara, come in. You're
right on time. Take a seat.

He does. He seems pretty happy, relaxed, a far cry from the horror shows she has seen so far. Matthias relaxes too.

MATTHIAS
So what can I do for you, Ensign?

NAKAHARA
It's nothing, really. It's just
I've been feeling a little guilty
about something I did a couple of
weeks ago... I lied in an official
report to my superior.

Matthias breathes - a basic and simple case, at last.

MATTHIAS
Okay. Why did you do that?

NAKAHARA
Well, you know how Commander Na
Miin has had to step up and run
the whole ship after the XO was
killed and Captain Tando went...
well, you know.

MATTHIAS
Carry on, Ensign.

NAKAHARA
It was during the recovery and
rescue missions after the invasion
was over. There was a distress
call from one of Coridan's moons.

Since Commander Na Miin was busy,
I led the security team down to
the surface to look for survivors.

MATTHIAS

And were there any?

NAKAHARA

(waves it off)

Oh yeah, sure - it turns out the
distress call was from a crashed
Borg ship. One of the little ones.

MATTHIAS

(alarmed)

Borg survivors?

NAKAHARA

Seven of them. After the Caeliar
did whatever they did, they were
starting to remember themselves.
One even told me his name - Soon-
Tek Han, claimed he used to be an
engineer on the *Enterprise-D*.

MATTHIAS

So what did you do?

NAKAHARA

Well, I shot them on the spot,
of course. They were Borg. But I
didn't want to worry Commander Na
Miin with it - she has enough on
her plate - so I told my security
team to stick to the story. There
were no survivors, the distress
call was just an automated beacon.
Seemed easier that way. But now
I'm wondering if I did the right
thing, convincing them to lie.

Matthias sits stunned, not quite sure she has heard right.

MATTHIAS

You... shot the survivors?

NAKAHARA

(shrug)

Yeah, obviously. Like I said, they were Borg. They killed billions.

MATTHIAS

But you can't blame the drones for that. They were under the Queen's control. They needed your help.

NAKAMURA

Come to think of it, this Soon-Tek Han guy literally said "Help me."
As if I'm going to help a Borg.

Nakamura chuckles, rolling his eyes at the ridiculousness. Matthias is almost in tears, the horror of what Nakamura is describing made all the worse by his cheery, casual manner.

NAKAMURA

I don't want to get my security team in trouble, they were just following my orders. But it's kind of eating at me that I made them lie in a report - I mean, you just don't do that, you know?

(beat)

So what do you think I should do?

Matthias is too appalled to answer...

16 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Evik sits in his chair as always, not working but waiting. After a moment, the main door OPENS and Matthias enters - emotionally exhausted, her eyes still red from crying.

MATTHIAS

Did you need me, Commander?

EVIK

Actually I suspect you may need me, Counsellor. Please sit.

Confused, Matthias does so.

EVIK

Your husband contacted me.

MATTHIAS

(worried)

Is he alright? The children?

EVIK

They're all fine. But your husband is worried about you. He thinks you're working yourself too hard.

MATTHIAS

(sigh, hangs head)

Look, it's sweet of you both to be concerned. And I admit it's been a tough few days. But I'm fine.

EVIK

I'm sorry, Counsellor, but that is quite evidently not true.

MATTHIAS

Even if, what can I do about it? I can hardly talk to my own junior counsellors, and there are no other counsellors around to talk to, that's the whole problem.

EVIK

So talk to me. Let me be your counsellor. I can keep a patient's confidence as much as anyone.

Matthias is obviously struggling, wants to give in.

EVIK

Philippa, please. Let me help.

MATTHIAS

It's just... it caught me off guard. I thought I'd heard it all these last few days, but today...

EVIK

Tell me.

MATTHIAS

An ensign from the *Tecumseh*...
just confessed to cold-blooded
murder in my counselling suite.

EVIK

Murder? Of whom?

MATTHIAS

Some ex-Borg survivors. He killed
them without a second's thought.
His subordinates are accessories.

EVIK

That's terrible...

MATTHIAS

But what's worse is that I sat
there listening to him... and I
actually asked myself if he could
have been justified doing it. Was
it murder, really? Or was it just
perfectly reasonable retribution?

EVIK

What do you mean?

MATTHIAS

Sixty-three billion people are
dead, Nath! Thousands of ships,
dozens of planets, entire species
wiped off the face of the galaxy.
How can I judge Nakahara, when his
job is to do precisely what he did
- protect us from the Borg?

EVIK

Starfleet does not permit summary
execution of enemy soldiers, you
know that, Counsellor.

MATTHIAS

Of course I do! But there's still
a part of me that wants to defend
what he did. How sick is that?

EVIK

You're not at fault. We've all been traumatised by what happened, and it's natural to want to look for explanations. But you know we have to report this to Commanders Ro and Na Miin.

MATTHIAS

Can we, though? What about patient confidentiality? He doesn't even think he did anything wrong.

EVIK

Confidentiality does not extend to confessions of criminal activity. It is our duty to have this young man arrested for murder.

Matthias takes a deep breath, centres herself.

MATTHIAS

You're right, of course you are. I'm sorry.

EVIK

No apologies necessary, Philippa. I think the fact that you even considered doing otherwise speaks to your good heart.

MATTHIAS

Really? I was thinking it was a sign of just how bad things are.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

17 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

And the next morning...

18 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Ro sits as the justice of this particular peace, the decision she is about to render weighing heavily on her.

To her left is Bashir, confident of his rightness. To her right Tenmei, hopeful of vindication.

Opposite are the two expert witnesses, Evik and Matthias. A good night's sleep has helped them both.

Ro taps the padd on the table, and begins...

RO

This meeting brings to a close the legal proceeding between Doctor Bashir and Lieutenant Tenmei regarding assignment of medical authority over Captain Vaughn.

(beat)

Having spent many hours listening to testimony of the defendants...

(nods to Bashir
and Tenmei)

...as well as to that of expert witnesses...

(nods to Evik
and Matthias)

...and spent many more hours in private contemplation of the best thing to do for all parties... I have come to a decision. This decision is not intended to have wide application in Federation law, or to establish any kind of legal precedent. It applies to this case and this case alone.

She looks to both sides, ensuring she has their attention.

RO

One more thing... you both came to me to make this decision for you because you were unable to make it for yourselves. So you will abide by it. You already agreed to that, and you can't go back on it now.

In turn they all indicate their acceptance of that.

RO

Alright, then. All of you have made excellent and valid points, and I have tried to take them all into account. But I have finally concluded that medical authority in this case is best placed...

(deep breath)

...with Lieutenant Tenmei.

TENMEI

(whisper)

Yes!

Ro holds her hand up, forestalling any further celebration.

RO

Not so fast, Lieutenant. You owe Doctor Bashir thanks, as it was actually something he said that helped me to make that decision.

Off both Bashir and Tenmei's confusion...

RO

The doctor already kept Captain Vaughn on life support longer than he should, and it's clear that his compassion in doing so was not for the captain himself, but for you. He understood you needed time.

Tenmei swallows, taking that on board.

RO

In many similar cases, questions of resources would sway the decision... but not here. Even in a post-disaster scenario as we are, Starfleet is capable of replicating new life-support equipment as needed, so Captain Vaughn's occupation of one such unit regardless of its long-term effectiveness is a non-factor. In fact, his placement in Lieutenant Tenmei's quarters may actually serve as a positive, since it frees up a bed in the Infirmary. So as long as we can maintain power uninterrupted, which Lieutenant Nog assures me we can despite the recent problems, then there is no reason from that perspective why Captain Vaughn cannot remain as he is.

Ro takes a breath as she faces the worst part for her...

RO

Finally... the part that took me the longest to reconcile in my own heart... was the issue of Captain Vaughn's own feelings. I don't know if he would have preferred to hang on as long as possible, or go out fighting. His own life gave me evidence for both. But eventually I was forced to accept Counsellor Matthias's perspective as correct, if a little blunt. The captain's own feelings are ultimately less important than those of us in the here and now. And it's clear that Lieutenant Tenmei is not ready to let her father go yet. I have my suspicions as to her motivations for that, but the result is the same regardless.

As everyone absorbs all of this, Ro winds it up...

RO

Hence my decision. Prynne needs more time. And if there is no compelling cultural, medical or practical reason not to give it to her, then we should do so.

(taps padd)

This decision is recorded in the log, stardate 58965-point-4, and this proceeding is therefore concluded. Dismissed.

Ro picks up her padd and leaves, wanting to remove herself as quickly as possible. Tenmei and Bashir both get to their feet more slowly, not sure how to handle the decision.

BASHIR

Congratulations, Lieutenant.

TENMEI

Thank you, Doctor. Really.

Before they can both leave, Matthias speaks up...

MATTHIAS

Prynne, Julian... if either of you need to talk, my door is open.

TENMEI

Thank you, Counsellor. We'll see.

Bashir also smiles his thanks, and then they both leave. Evik and Matthias are the only ones left.

EVIK

You seem to be feeling better, if I may say so. I'm glad.

MATTHIAS

I am, Nath, thanks to you. It's good to have a friend to talk to - especially when that friend can actually do something to help.

EVIK

On that subject... Commander Na
Miin is waiting for us.

Matthias nods, not especially eager to do this...

19 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE / QUARK'S BAR

Na Miin stands waiting outside the door to Quark's Bar, as
Evik exits the security office with three guards...

EVIK

At your discretion, Commander. He
is your officer, after all.

KARA NA MIIN

Just another reality of command I
was not ready for. Let's get it
over with.

She turns and ambles on her three legs into the bar, with
Evik and his guards following...

As they move into the breakfast crowd, QUARK intercepts
them with a big smile...

QUARK

Commander! Come for your regular
morning groatcakes, I see. How
about a little syrup of squill on
the side?

EVIK

Not this time, I'm afraid, Quark.
We're here on business.

Evik pats the phaser attached to his hip. Quark blanches
and steps closer to Evik.

QUARK

This is my place of business,
Nath. I don't want any trouble.

EVIK

Hopefully I won't need to give you
any. If you'll excuse me...

At a table on the main level is Ensign Nakamura, sat and enjoying breakfast with his fellows from the security team.

KARA NA MIIN (o.s.)
Ensign Nakamura.

The table goes quiet, and he turns to see his commander and four armed security. He is genuinely confused by this.

NAKAMURA
Commander? What's going on?

KARA NA MIIN
Ensign, I am placing you under arrest. Please come with us.

NAKAMURA
Arrest? What the hell for?

KARA NA MIIN
For murder, Ensign.

Overhearing from the bar, Quark drops a glass - SMASH. In the silence, Nakamura stands slowly from the table. Evik quietly pulls his phaser from its holster, but doesn't aim.

EVIK
We are prepared to use force if necessary, Ensign. Please don't make it necessary.

KARA NA MIIN
(re others at
the table)
Your team are also requested to come to security for questioning.

The others get to their feet too - some clearly know what this is about and are eager to get it off their chests.

Evik points the way, and they file out towards security, the guards surrounding Nakamura on all sides as they go.

Evik nods to Quark, then he and Na Miin EXIT too...

At the door to the security office, Counsellor Matthias waits, and watches Nakamura closely as he is led past...

20 INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE

A wall SCREEN shows a live image of Nakamura in a cell. Ro, Matthias, Evik and Na Miin are gathered to watch this.

KARA NA MIIN

Thank you for your help with this.
Some commander I am - I had no
idea I had a murderer on my ship.

RO

The important thing is, he's in
custody now. Counsellor, you did
the right thing letting us know.

MATTHIAS

Hopefully so. The most worrying
thing is, he still doesn't seem to
understand what he's done that's
worth all this.

EVIK

Ensign Nakamura's desire to avenge
all those who were killed may have
been understandable, but Starfleet
officers must be held to a higher
standard, especially now.

KARA NA MIIN

I'll make sure he gets handed over
to JAG for trial. Your testimony
may be required, Counsellor.

MATTHIAS

Of course. I've referred Mister
Sanek for long-term therapy too -
he hasn't done anything criminal,
least not yet, but his attitudes
warrant some close observation.

KARA NA MIIN

Agreed. Well, thank you all again.
Permission to depart, Commander?

RO
Safe journey, Commander. Nath,
make sure the detainees are safely
transferred to the *Tecumseh*.

Evik nods his acknowledgement, and he and Na Miin head out
to Ops and the turbolift. Ro and Matthias remain...

RO
How about you, Counsellor? How are
you holding up?

MATTHIAS
I've been better. And that was
just one ship out of a fleet of
thousands. It's going to be a
long while before we can put all
the pieces back together again.

Ro nods, unable to argue with that.

21 INT. DS9 - TENMEI'S QUARTERS - BEDROOM

Tenmei sits by her father's side, while Bashir performs
another scan. They are both calmer, accepting.

BASHIR
The myocardial bruising is healed.
No long-term damage.

TENMEI
Thanks, Doctor.
(beat)
You understand I'm just playing
for time, right? Holding out in
case anything turns up.

BASHIR
I understand. If nothing else,
it's better to err on the side of
caution than to end the life of
someone who conceivably could be
saved in the future.

TENMEI

You really think there's a chance?

BASHIR

Stranger things have happened.

(beat)

I was thinking, Lieutenant. Maybe we could come up with some kind of rota. I can spend a few hours with him, give you a break. If you trust me to be alone with him.

TENMEI

I appreciate that, Doctor. John, Nog and Jeanette already offered to do the same. And I might take you up on it in the future... but not just yet.

Bashir accepts that, packs up his stuff, and heads out. At the door, Tenmei calls him back...

TENMEI

Doctor? I do trust you.

BASHIR

(smile)

Goodnight, Lieutenant.

Bashir EXITS. Tenmei turns back to her father, takes a deep breath. She picks up the book off the side table, opens it up, and begins to read...

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW