

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x10 - "Fragments and Omens."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novella

"Fragments and Omens"
by J Noah Kym

appearing in

Star Trek: Worlds of Deep Space Nine
Book 2 - Trill / Bajor

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SIDAU VILLAGE - DAY

A hand scoops up a handful of ash and brings it up - it is General LENARIS, crouching. He stares sadly at the ash before letting it drift back through his fingers...

RO (o.s.)

General?

Lenaris stands and turns - the SMOKE clears to reveal RO, picking her way over the cinders towards him, wearing her new yellow-collared Starfleet security uniform...

LENARIS

Thank you for coming, Lieutenant.
I apologise for the sudden change
in venue for our meeting.

RO

Under the circumstances I would
never expect an apology, sir. To
be honest, I was surprised you
didn't cancel altogether.

Ro comes to stand near, gazing around at the wreckage too.
She is holding a padd with Starfleet and Bajoran reports...

LENARIS

How much do you know about what
happened here?

RO

I read the incident report on the
way over from the station. It's
tragic. I understand there were
nearly three-hundred people living
here. For all of them to lose
their lives to something so easily
preventable as a gas leak...

Lenaris shakes his head - not a gas leak. Ro continues...

RO (cont)
They were an odd bunch...

LENARIS
...Oh?

RO
There's not much about them in the central archives. But from what I can gather, they were a pretty insular community. Out here in the middle of nowhere, shunning any outside contact. And they had this weird annual tradition where the whole village got together to fight off something called a *Dal'Rok*, whatever that is.

LENARIS
(darkly)
They were Bajorans, Lieutenant. That they were maybe a little more eccentric than most is irrelevant. Whoever these people may have been, they deserve better than to be remembered as objects of scorn.

Ro blinks, surprised that he took her words so badly...

RO
I assure you, General, I intended no disrespect.

LENARIS
I don't give a damn what you intended, Lieutenant. What I know is how you came across - arrogant, dismissive and condescending.

Ro is about to dig in for a fight -- but she stops herself, deliberately cooling her jets...

RO
You're right. That was completely inappropriate. It won't happen again, sir.

Lenaris nods his acceptance. Another male Bajoran Militia officer - JAZA - jogs up, handing a padd to Lenaris...

JAZA

You asked to see this, sir?

LENARIS

Thank you. Lieutenant, I'd like you to meet Sergeant Jaza Najem, one of my scientists. Sergeant, Lieutenant Ro Laren.

JAZA

A pleasure, Lieutenant. I've been hoping to meet you.

RO

Really? Why's that?

LENARIS

This is Sergeant Jaza's last week under my command. He's decided to join Starfleet.

JAZA

I submitted my application a few days ago. I understand you and Commander Vaughn are overseeing the evaluation process?

RO

The ones who qualify for direct transfer to active Starfleet duty, yes. Are you hoping to remain in-system, Sergeant?

JAZA

Actually I indicated a preference for starship duty. I realise there are no guarantees, but I've grown a bit restless on Bajor.

RO

(smile)

I know the feeling. I'll remember we spoke, Sergeant.

JAZA

I appreciate that, Lieutenant.

LENARIS

That'll be all, Sergeant.

JAZA

Yessir. Lieutenant.

With a polite nod, Jaza heads off back to base. Ro watches him go, thoughtful...

RO

I imagine you're getting a lot of that lately, aren't you?

LENARIS

We've known all along some Militia personnel would be absorbed by Starfleet once Bajor joined the Federation. It's just... a lot of change to accept all at once.

RO

They're good changes, though...

LENARIS

Are they? I thought so too, at first. But then this happened...

Ro is confused for moment -- until Lenaris hands her the padd. She takes it, reads with increasing anger...

RO

(growling)

Deliberate?

LENARIS

Traces of triceron explosive at the centre. Satellite information shows a single skimmer leaving the area shortly after, headed towards Jalanda... followed by a Besinian freighter leaving the spaceport... a freighter that had arrived on Bajor only hours earlier...

RO
Son of a --
(slaps combadge)
Ro to *Brahmaputra*, patch me
through to Captain Kira --

LENARIS
(interrupting)
Kira already knows, Lieutenant. We
confirmed the new readings only an
hour ago, while you were en route
to Bajor.

Acknowledging, Ro taps her combadge to close the line.
Lenaris is a tiny bit resentful...

LENARIS
I contacted the station, of
course. Once the freighter left
the system it was out of my
jurisdiction. My understanding is
that the *Defiant* set out in
pursuit immediately.

RO
But what kind of agenda could
anyone have against these people?

LENARIS
That, Lieutenant, is why our
meeting wasn't cancelled. Captain
Kira expects you to investigate
the matter personally.

Off Ro's reaction...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 INT. MOBILE COMMAND CENTRE

A planet-bound temporary set-up, filled with half a dozen computer stations. Ro sits at one, working through reports, tired and frustrated from not making much progress...

RO

Computer, search telemetry from Deep Space Nine for information on all incoming and outgoing traffic in the Bajoran system for the past twenty-six hours. List any non-Bajoran and non-Starfleet vessels.

CENN (o.s.)

You're looking at it from the wrong angle.

Surprised, Ro turns to look at CENN, a male Militia officer sat at another of the stations, tense and unimpressed. She had been so absorbed she barely noticed he was there...

RO

(bemused)

Were you speaking to me?

CENN

The Besinian freighter. You think if you figure out who they are and where they came from, you'll figure out what they wanted. But you're wasting your time.

RO

Is that so.

CENN

Yes, it is. Whoever was on that ship knew it wouldn't matter what we did or didn't find out about them, or they would have done a better job covering their tracks.

RO

And I suppose you have a better suggestion, Major...?

CENN

Cenn Desca. And yes, I do. But I doubt you'd be interested.

Ro is getting annoyed now. What is this guy's problem?

RO

Since you're obviously hoping I'll take the bait, let me oblige. Why wouldn't I be interested, Major?

CENN

Because it involves looking at Bajor, not away from it.

RO

The perpetrators aren't on Bajor.

CENN

The crime is. Why else destroy the village so completely, unless they were trying to hide something?

(turns away)

I don't know why I'm wasting my time. You've made turning your back on Bajor into an art form.

Ro has had enough now. She STANDS sharply, sends her chair skidding and crashing backwards, *fuming*...

RO

I don't know who the hell you are, but I am not required to put up with this.

CENN

Go on then, leave. Again. That's what you do best, isn't it? I'm sure now that half the Militia is following your example, you must feel vindicated for giving up on Bajor during the Occupation.

LENARIS (o.s.)
Major Cenn!

Cenn jerks to his feet and to attention as Lenaris appears in the doorway, clearly having overheard Cenn's tirade...

LENARIS
(steely)
Report to Colonel Doul, Major.
Tell him I said you're to assist
in sweeping the western slope for
additional evidence.

CENN
Yes, sir.

Without a glance at Ro, Cenn scurries for the exit. Lenaris steps aside to let him pass, closes the door, approaches Ro carefully. She is full of anger, embarrassment, confusion.

LENARIS
I'm sorry about that. Do you want
to file a complaint?

RO
No. But... do you... Do you think
he's right about me?

Lenaris sighs, unsure how to answer. He straightens Ro's chair for her, invites her to sit, takes a seat himself...

LENARIS
I remember the day you testified
before the Ministers about your
activities with the Maquis. It was
a struggle just to keep them from
letting Starfleet arrest you, much
less give you a job. In their
minds, you'd turned your back on
Bajor when it needed you most.

RO
Maybe they were right.

LENARIS
I didn't think so.

RO

Why not?

LENARIS

Well, you never said why you came home. That lack of explanation told me more than anything you could have said out loud. I think that deep down you regret leaving Bajor, and you've carried that guilt with you ever since.

Ro stares blankly, unsure how to process all this...

LENARIS

Joining the Maquis gave you the chance to do what you hadn't for your own world. When the Dominion wiped out the Maquis, you switched the fight to them. And once you ran out of fights, and you thought you'd finally atoned, you came home. That's what you didn't say.

(pause)

For what it's worth, Major Cenn isn't usually such an ass. It's just that, to some people in the Militia, the transfer of so many people to Starfleet is a shock.

RO

And I suppose that my being here, back in Starfleet at such a time, just pushed him over the edge.

LENARIS

I'm just asking you to understand what some of us are going through. We're not stupid, Laren. We know Bajorans need to be in Starfleet. But there needs to be Bajorans who will put Bajor first, and their voice needs to be heard too.

With that, Lenaris stands and walks out without another word. She ponders a moment, then turns to her computer...

RO
Computer, access the Bajoran
Central Archives and search all
databases for all references to
Sidau village.

The computer BEEPS and Ro gets back to work, reenergised...

3 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - DAY

VAUGHN strolls comfortably along a flower-lined path with OPAKA. He asks a question MOS about the flowers; she bends to cup one in her palm, answering MOS. He reaches down to courteously help her up. They are so content just strolling that Ro has to clear her throat to announce her arrival...

VAUGHN
Lieutenant! There you are.

RO
Commander. Ranjen.

OPAKA
(warmly)
It is good to see you again,
Lieutenant.

RO
Likewise.

Ro turns to gaze upon the MEMORIAL in the centre of the park - a single broken building girder in a stone base. Vaughn follows her eyes, smiling...

VAUGHN
It's quite moving, isn't it? When
Sulan offered to show me this
place, I wasn't prepared for the
tranquillity it evokes.

OPAKA
This memorial was just being
started when the Prophets called
for me to leave Bajor. I'm glad to
see how well it turned out.

VAUGHN

Sulan, I must be going. But I want to thank you for a most enjoyable time. I look forward to speaking with you again.

OPAKA

As do I, Elias. Be well.
(to Ro)
Good day, Lieutenant.

RO

And to you, Ranjen.

Ro and Vaughn leave Opaka, walk over to a bench, and sit.
Vaughn gazes happily out across the sunny green...

VAUGHN

You come from a remarkable world, Lieutenant. The more I experience Bajor, the more I understand Captain Sisko's feelings for it.

RO

I'm starting to learn a few things myself.

VAUGHN

(to business)
You have a report for me?

RO

(hands him a padd)
The current figures on Starfleet's absorption of Militia personnel. Close to one-hundred-and-ninety-thousand personnel from all Militia divisions have submitted transfer applications.

VAUGHN

I was hoping to meet each of them individually before they got their assignments, but that's obviously not going to work. We'll have to make other arrangements.

COMPUTER (comm)
Brahmaputra to Commander Vaughn.

VAUGHN
(taps combadge)
Go ahead.

COMPUTER (comm)
Incoming communication from Doctor
Girani Semna aboard starbase Deep
Space Nine.

VAUGHN
(resigned sigh)
Very well, put her through.

GIRANI (comm)
(stern)
You've missed your appointment
again, Commander.

VAUGHN
And I apologise again, Doctor.
Perhaps we can reschedule?

GIRANI (comm)
Oh no you don't. The annual crew
exams are due at Starfleet Medical
tomorrow. You're the last one,
Commander. I may not be Starfleet,
but I still have medical authority
over any member of the crew. So
you're to return to the station
immediately and report to the
infirmary. That's an order.

Ro smothers a smile, unaccustomed to seeing Vaughn brow-
beaten. He catches it, and scowls at her...

VAUGHN
Alright, Doctor. I'll be on your
biobed in two hours. Vaughn out.
(taps badge)
Damned doctors. If she wasn't
already transferring dirtside...
(pause)

VAUGHN (cont)

I spoke with Dax a while ago. She filled me in on the latest about the situation at Sidau.

RO

Any word from the *Defiant*?

VAUGHN

Only that they managed to pick up the scent. It was leading towards the Badlands. I imagine Lenaris must be feeling pretty frustrated.

RO

(nodding)

Having to turn the matter over to Starfleet galled him. He's worried the Militia is becoming obsolete.

VAUGHN

He knows that's not true.

RO

Intellectually, sure. Hard to remember when you're standing in the ashes of three hundred people you failed to protect.

VAUGHN

It wasn't his failure. And if he believes it was, then that's our failure. We're in this together.

RO

Then I think we need to make an effort to make sure that those who aren't joining Starfleet understand they still count.

VAUGHN

What are you suggesting?

RO

That we re-establish the position of Militia Liaison Officer.

VAUGHN
(dubious)
A token Bajoran?

RO
(bristling)
A voice specifically for Bajoran
interests within the predominantly
Starfleet command structure.

VAUGHN
Lower your shields, Lieutenant. I
think it's an excellent idea. I
just want you to be prepared for
how others may react.

(standing)
Let's continue this discussion on
the *Brahmaputra*. I don't want
Girani sending out search teams.

(she stands too)
You probably haven't heard this
from enough people, Lieutenant,
but I for one am glad you decided
to put the uniform back on.

RO
Thank you, sir. But... why?

VAUGHN
Because I know what really
happened on Garon Two.
(taps combadge)
Vaughn to *Brahmaputra*. Two to beam
up...

Ro looks shocked as the transporter beam takes them...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

4 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Vaughn perches unhappily on a biobed, shirtless. Bajoran doctor GIRANI (9x24 "Unity, pt 1") runs the scanners...

GIRANI

Oh, before I forget... happy birthday, Commander.

VAUGHN

Thank you. But I haven't celebrated my birthday in about forty years.

GIRANI

Not even your hundredth?

VAUGHN

Where I was that day, celebrating was the last thing on my mind.

Deciding to let his harsh, impatient tone pass for now, she moves on, finding a large white scar on his neck...

GIRANI

Where'd you get this scar? I'm detecting foreign DNA, but I can't find a match in the database.

VAUGHN

Expand your search to include Q-class lifeforms. You'll find it belongs to *draco berengarius*.

GIRANI

Your medical file says you had a cardiac episode six years ago.

VAUGHN

A mild one. Nothing since.

GIRANI

What about your energy levels?

Vaughn turns to face her, feeling invaded and resentful...

VAUGHN

I'm old, Doctor. Starfleet knows that. Putting a microscope on every creaking bone and aching muscle won't tell them anything they're not already aware of.

GIRANI

(patient, delicate)
I'm just saying --

VAUGHN

Is it your medical opinion that I am unfit for duty, that my health is a liability to this crew?

GIRANI

No, but --

VAUGHN

Then we're done here.

He gets off the biobed, reaches for his shirt, dressing...

GIRANI

For someone of your experience,
I'd expect a little more wisdom.

Vaughn SLAMS his hand down on the biobed, making Girani jump. Seeing that, he tries to rein in his emotions...

VAUGHN

I apologise, Doctor. I'm just not ready to give up this life yet.

GIRANI

Like it or not, the time is coming when you will have to stand down. My hope is that you'll recognise it when it does, or someone will make that decision for you, and I suspect you're the type to find that humiliating. I doubt that's how you'd want your career to end.

VAUGHN

(quietly)

No. I can't say it is. Thank you,
Doctor. Your candour is sobering.

She steps to the back of the room to allow him to dress.
But as he does, QUARK appears in the doorway...

QUARK

There you are, Commander! I heard
I might find you in here.

VAUGHN

Mister Ambassador. What a pleasure
it is to see you.

QUARK

Ah, you say that, but you don't
mean it. But I'm willing to
overlook your insincerity,
Commander, given your situation.
At your age, another birthday
would make anyone cranky.

Vaughn sends a sharp look back at Girani, who responds with
a shrug of "don't blame me."

QUARK

As it happens, I was picking up a
shipment of Kaferian lilies, just
as Mister Modo was processing an
order - for you! A birthday gift
from someone on Bajor. As a good
citizen, not to mention the senior
Ferengi diplomat in residence, I
volunteered to bring it to you.

Quark brings out a single FLOWER wrapped in presentation
paper, hands it to Vaughn - it's an *esani* blossom, the ones
he admired with Opaka earlier. Vaughn softens, reads the
card with a wistful smile...

There's also an ISOLINEAR ROD attached - he detaches it...

VAUGHN

What's this?

QUARK

Compliments of the Ferengi
Embassy. An hour of holosuite time
at our special birthday discount
rate, and two free drinks.

VAUGHN

Top shelf?

QUARK

Ha-ha! Good one! Oh, for a small
fee, you can get an official
proclamation from the Ferengi
Alliance naming this Elias Vaughn
Day. Comes with a certificate.

VAUGHN

You're enjoying your diplomatic
appointment too much, you know?

QUARK

Take joy from profit, and profit
from joy. Rule of Acquisition
number fifty-five.

VAUGHN

Some other time, perhaps, Quark.
But thank you for the gift.
(to Girani)
Doctor.

Vaughn walks past Quark and out onto the Promenade. Quark
realises for the first time that Girani is even there...

QUARK

Doctor! When's your birthday?

Girani barely honours that with a response...

5 EXT. SISKO'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

SISKO sits on the ground, up against a large tree in his
property. His baby daughter REBECCA is cuddled up against
his chest, fast asleep. He is pleasantly miles away, just
enjoying a warm rest in the sun. He looks up at one of the
larger branches, hanging near to the ground...

ON THE BRANCH

LEAVES wave gently in the breeze... a tiny INSECT crawls along the bark of the tree, finding its way peacefully...

ON SISKO

...as he watches these events closely, seemingly fascinated by them, by their simplicity...

CLOSER ON THE BRANCH

...the leaves wave, the insect crawls... and things seem to slow down, becoming more focused, lines more defined...

ON SISKO

...as if he understands something about the tree, about the life within it. But then a SHADOW crosses his face, and --

BACK TO SCENE

-- Sisko looks up to see that KASIDY has joined them both, oblivious to his trance-like state. He smiles up at her...

SISKO
I should make lunch.

KASIDY
Just heat up that gumbo.

SISKO
Excellent idea.
(to baby)
But none for you, little girl.
Maybe when you're older. And none
of that replicated school lunch
food. I'll send you jambalaya.

KASIDY
Will you? Pack her lunch on school
days? You see that in our future?

SISKO
What makes you think I can see the
future?

KASIDY

Then what do you want to happen next? You must have some plans, some hopes for how you want our lives to unfold...

Sisko looks back to the tree, a different branch, where a mother bird is feeding her baby birds...

SISKO

What I want... is to be here with you and the baby.

(sigh)

But you know the truth. It's never going to be about only what I want. I still have a duty.

KASIDY

To whom?

SISKO

(considers)

To the Bajorans. To the people who have placed their trust in me. To the Prophets who allowed me to return here. To Starfleet.

(frowns)

And to those others...

KASIDY

What others? Who else is more important than your family?

Realising he is worrying her, Sisko brings all his attention back to Kasidy and scoots closer...

SISKO

None of them is more important than my family. But consider this - what do you think we need to do to protect our daughter?

KASIDY

What do you mean, Ben? Is someone going to try to hurt Rebecca?

SISKO

Not specifically Rebecca, but
yes... something is coming. The
Prophets tried to explain it to
me. I wish I could be plainer than
that, but it's difficult.

KASIDY

But it's something that could harm
Rebecca?

SISKO

It's something that could affect
us all, every Bajoran, yes.

KASIDY

...Bajoran, Ben? Is that what we
are now?

SISKO

(smile)

Aren't we? If Rebecca could
answer, what would she say about
this place?

Kasidy looks around, at the same tree, the same birds, the
house, the countryside, the hills far away...

KASIDY

It's home, Ben. It's our home.

SISKO

Yes. And if we need to defend it...

KASIDY

...we'll do what we have to.

(pause)

So, what do we do now?

SISKO

First, we should have lunch. Then,
when we're done... I think we
should plan a dinner party.

Kasidy thinks that sounds weird - but it could be *fun!*

6 INT. FREIGHTER INTERVIEW ROOM

CLICK - a light flicks on, harsh, glaring. Reveals HOVATH, the young Sidau Storyteller from 1x14. Lying on the deck in a huddle, cheek against the cold metal, beaten bloody...

NAUSICAAN (o.s.)

Up.

Rough hands GRAB him, DRAG him upright, THROW him roughly into a thin metal chair, the light right in his eyes.

The growling NAUSICAAN thug stomps to stand by a computer monitor on the wall of this bare, featureless room.

Hovath's CAPTOR sits behind the light, silhouetted across the cold metal table, impossible to see clearly...

CAPTOR

Ke Hovath.

Hovath realises - he is in major trouble. They know who he is, and they killed his entire village to get to him...

HOVATH

(croaky, whisper)

What do you want with me?

CAPTOR

The same thing you want. Answers.

HOVATH

I won't help you.

CAPTOR

I think you will. Show him.

The Nausicaan presses a button on the monitor...

ON THE MONITOR

A young Bajoran WOMAN, beaten even worse than him, huddled in the corner of an airlock hugging her knees, weeping... Behind her is a WINDOW showing stars at warp...

BACK TO SCENE

Hovath recognises her, and blood drains from his face...

CAPTOR (o.s.)

As you can see, your wife lives.
If you wish her to stay that way,
I require your full co-operation.

HOVATH

How can I possibly help you? I'm
no-one.

CAPTOR (o.s.)

Oh, but that's hardly true. Until
this very morning you were the
sirah of Sidau village.

HOVATH'S POV

From what little shadow we can see, the Captor seems to be quite relaxed, sitting back from the table, speaking calm and level as if having a pleasant conversation...

CAPTOR

But that's not all, is it, Hovath?
You've also spent the last six
years at Musilla University, where
you pursued what can only be
described as an atypical course of
study for one of your upbringing.
You also published a rather
remarkable document...

Still hidden in shadow, the Captor throws a PADD across the table to Hovath. It comes to rest in front of him...

ON THE PADD

It is a university dissertation. Bajoran characters in the top half. In the bottom half:

SPECULATIONS ON THE ARCHITECTURE
OF THE CELESTIAL TEMPLE
by KE HOVATH

BACK TO SCENE

Seeing this, Hovath begins to weep, starting to understand what this is all about. He pushes the padd away...

HOVATH
This is nothing.

CAPTOR
I very much disagree. I find it quite compelling. Your approach is not merely imaginative - it's... inspired! You believe the wormhole is not what it appears to be.

HOVATH
No... I believe it is more than it appears to be.

CAPTOR
Explain.

HOVATH
If you've read my paper, you already know the explanation.

CAPTOR
(tensing)
Indulge me.

Still unsure and scared, Hovath says nothing. Taking that as a refusal, the Captor turns to the Nausicaan thug and his screen, which shows his wife in the airlock...

CAPTOR
Space her.

As Hovath's eyes widen in horror...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

7 INT. FREIGHTER INTERVIEW ROOM

As the Nausicaan reaches for a button on the monitor...

HOVATH

Wait!

CAPTOR

(to Nausicaan)

Stop. Is there something you wish to say, Hovath?

HOVATH

Please don't kill her. Please!
I'll tell you whatever you want to know. Just don't kill my wife.

CAPTOR

Then we have an understanding?

(he nods)

Begin, then. Tell me your thoughts about the wormhole.

HOVATH

Bajorans do not question why the Temple opens above our skies. We merely accept it as validation of our connection to the Prophets. But to learn that the Temple opened in two directions puzzled us. It left us to wonder if Bajor was as unique as we believed. And the next question is obvious... what if Bajor and Idran are not the only two points at which the wormhole may open?

CAPTOR

How can that be? The termini we know about are triggered at an event horizon. If the wormhole can open anywhere in the universe...

HOVATH

The Alpha and Gamma openings are unlocked. My speculation is that, while the Temple may have an infinite number of doors, most of them are locked from the inside.

CAPTOR

Which suggests you would need a key to open them.

HOVATH

No such key exists. Don't you understand? My ideas were fantasy. They have no credibility. They're merely philosophy, not theory.

The Captor's hand places an object on the table - the ORB FRAGMENT from 1x14, in its bracelet. Hovath recognises it.

CAPTOR

(gently)

What if I were to suggest... that you have had the key all along?

Too scared and traumatised to understand anything, Hovath simply buries his head in his arms and cries...

CAPTOR

(smooth, cajoling)

You disappoint me, Hovath. The Prophets have rewarded your vision. The death of Sidau village is not a condemnation, but an affirmation. A sign from Them that you are on the verge of something new and wonderful.

HOVATH

(through tears)

The death of nearly everyone I love is not a sign from the Prophets! You are twisting my faith to justify mass murder. You know nothing of my faith!

HOVATH'S POV

Calmly, confidently, the Captor stands. Leans forward out of the darkness. Just before her face is revealed...

ANOTHER ANGLE

From behind the Captor, looking towards Hovath, as she emerges into the light. *We still do not see her face...*

CAPTOR

Are you so certain of that?

Hovath recognises her, and he gapes, utterly stunned. He simply cannot understand how this can be...

HOVATH

Why would you do this?

CAPTOR

Because like you, I thirst for understanding. I burn to see what only the Prophets can reveal.

Suddenly, the room SHAKES and loud BOOMS sound. The ship they are on is under attack. The Nausicaan checks...

NAUSICAAAN

Attacked. *Defiant*.

CAPTOR

How timely. Report to the bridge.
I'll be there shortly...

The Nausicaan leaves... The ship continues to shake... The Captor picks up the bracelet, recedes into the shadows...

CAPTOR

Now comes the fun part.

8 EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS

A standard cargo hauler, nothing special, warps towards the plasma storms. It shudders under PHASERS from off screen --

-- preceding the *Defiant* with pulse phasers blasting...

9 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

RED ALERT lights flash. BOWERS is at tactical, TENMEI at helm, and Ensign T'RB (8x19 "Cathedral") at sciences.

KIRA sits confidently in the centre seat, staring angrily at the evading ship on the main screen...

BOWERS

Their shields are still holding...

T'RB

I believe I know why. Their shield harmonics are Dominion.

BOWERS

That makes no -- Captain! They're charging weapons!

KIRA

Evasive!

Tenmei's fingers work nimbly to avoid the first yellow beam from the freighter - but not the second. The ship ROCKS...

BOWERS

Direct hit to starboard nacelle.
And now they're using Cardassian spiral-wave disruptors...

KIRA

I've had enough of this.

10 **EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS**

Defiant suddenly surges closer to the freighter, closing the distance. PHASERS rip out --

-- and the freighter's shields finally SPARK and evaporate. The next phasers hit the hull, and small explosions wrack the ship. A third round catch a warp nacelle.

The ship shudders and drops out of warp. *Defiant* curves around, dropping out of warp itself and coming back around to meet the crippled freighter...

11 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

As before, viewing the drifting freighter on the screen...

T'RB
They're on emergency power...
weapons systems are off-line.

KIRA
Life signs?

T'RB
Twelve. Five on the bridge, the
others in engineering. I thought I
saw a slight power spike under the
ship... it's gone now.

BOWERS
I can't confirm it. Could easily
have been a ruptured conduit.

KIRA
Lieutenant, if they so much as
twitch, remind them why they
shouldn't. Open a channel.

(Bowers nods)
This is Captain Kira Nerys of the
USS *Defiant*, representing the
United Federation of Planets.
You're ordered to surrender and
prepare to be boarded.

A garble of STATIC, possibly with a voice in there...

KIRA
T'rb, can you clear that up?

T'rb works his panels, shakes his head in frustration...

KIRA
Alright, have Gordimer take three
security to the bridge. Nog and
Neeley can join me in engineering.
I'll take Doctor Tarses too, in
case there are injuries. You have
the bridge, Lieutenant.

She gets up, heads for the door, but Bowers approaches...

BOWERS

I respectfully remind the captain
that Starfleet regulations call
for the commanding officer to stay
on board, not lead away teams.

She smiles, appreciating what he is trying to do. But she
won't be swayed. As she walks to the exit...

KIRA

Sorry. I guess I haven't gotten to
that part in the manual yet.

12 **INT. FREIGHTER ENGINEERING**

An entirely functional and ordinary-looking ship's engine
room. The door opens, and NEELEY (female human, security,
6x02 "Rocks and Shoals") pokes her head in...

NEELEY

Clear!

She enters, leading Kira, NOG and Doctor TARSES (male, one-
quarter-Romulan, TNG 4x21 "The Drumhead"). All are armed.

The room is silent, and Kira soon sees why - dead bodies
everywhere. Two TELLARITE females, a male HUMAN, a male
ROMULAN and a male ARKENITE in drab paramilitary garb.
Tarses approaches to inspect the closest...

...and spots a PHASER BURN on the back of his neck. The
next body is the same. No other phaser burns around the
room - they were all executed, quickly and bloodlessly.

TARSES

All dead. Shot by a phaser within
the last thirty minutes.

KIRA

Any life signs?

TARSES

Just us. Wait - something in that
direction... it's Bajoran.

NOG
Maybe the one who killed the crew?
A survivor, getting their revenge?

KIRA
Tarses and I will check it out.
Neeley, stay with Nog. Let me know
if there's anything new. Doctor?

Tarses follows his tricorder, and Kira follows...

13 **INT. FREIGHTER AIRLOCK**

Tarses' tricorder leads him up to the window...

TARSESES
Oh my God...

The door opens - Tarses enters to see Haveth's wife huddled in the corner. Clothing torn, skin burned in patches, hair matted with blood, half-catatonic with pain and terror. Tarses approaches cautiously, careful not to alarm her...

TARSESES
We're here to help you. I'm a
doctor. My name is Simon. Can you
tell me your name?

Snuffling and mumbling, the woman pushes herself further into the corner. Then Kira gently steps forward too...

KIRA
Easy. You're safe. We're not going
to let anything else happen to
you. My name's Nerys. Kira Nerys.

...and the woman SHRIEKS, scratching at the outer hatch as if trying to escape through it. Shocked at the reaction, Tarses takes a chance to touch a hypo to her neck. One more terrified scream, and she collapses...

KIRA
(taps combadge)
Kira to *Defiant* - beam Doctor
Tarses and the Bajoran with him
directly to sickbay.

BOWERS (comm)
Acknowledged. Stand by...

Kira watches Tarses and the woman BEAM OUT...

KIRA
Sam, have T'rb scan again for life
signs. What do his readings show?

T'RB (comm)
(pause)
Nineteen, sir. The seven remaining
members of the boarding party,
plus the original twelve...

KIRA
Problem is, everyone else we've
found on this ship is dead.

BOWERS (comm)
Captain, I strongly suggest you
abort the mission.

KIRA
Not yet. Kira out.

She heads out of the airlock...

14 INT. FREIGHTER BRIDGE

Kira enters - Ensign GORDIMER (security, 8x12 "Demons") and
three extras are already there. Plus more bodies...

GORDIMER
All dead, sir. A phaser in the
back, point blank...
(re Nausicaan)
...except for him.

A female ARKENITE in command, a female human and male
BOLIAN elsewhere, all executed like the others. Only the
Nausicaan made any attempt to fight back - his wound is to
the chest and his weapon in his hand. A PHASER BURN on the
opposite side of the bridge suggests he got off one shot.

Kira observes all this, puts the pieces together...

KIRA

The killer began here. Engineering wouldn't worry if they lost touch with the bridge for a few moments. Then he made his way down to the engine room and killed everyone there. But for him to get the drop on all of them like this... he had to be familiar. One of them.

Gordimer brings Kira a small box of wires and circuits...

GORDIMER

We also found this attached to the helm. There's a sophisticated autopilot program, able to respond to external stimuli. It was also sending out the false life signs.

KIRA

I bet it sent that garbled comm signal too. Designed to keep us busy while he escaped. All of which means the crew were already dead before we even got here.

NEELEY (comm)

Neeley to Captain Kira. I've found a shuttlebay, large enough for one vessel. The doors are open and the bay's empty. I'm also reading atypical graviton emissions.

KIRA

A cloaking device...
(realising)
T'rb's power spike.

Kira ponders, knowing something is horribly wrong here...

NOG (comm)

Captain, I've begun a restart sequence on the warp drive. We should be able to get this thing back to the station for analysis by oh-one-hundred tomorrow.

KIRA
Thank you, Lieutenant. Stand by.
(thinks it through)
The killer expected, even wanted
the ship to be caught. He killed
the crew to stop them talking. But
why not just destroy the ship?
(suddenly realises)
Kira to Nog, shut down the restart
sequence, right now.

NOG (comm)
Aye sir. Initiating core shutdown.
(pause)
Uh-oh.

KIRA
What is it?

NOG (comm)
The injectors aren't responding.
They're cycling up to overload...

KIRA
Defiant. Get us out of here, now!

Transporter beams take everyone - just as panels begin to
EXPLODE behind them on the bridge...

15 **EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS**

The freighter buckles as its warp core overloads, and it
EXPLODES in a massive conflagration.

Holding station right next to it, the *Defiant* is hit hard
by the shockwave, TUMBLING deeper into the Badlands...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

16 EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS

Rolling from the explosion of the freighter, the *Defiant* soon rights itself and SURGES away from the Badlands...

17 INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE

Tenmei is in the zone again, deftly keeping the *Defiant* safe. Kira enters; Bowers vacates the centre seat...

KIRA

(bitter)

We were played. Someone's throwing down a gauntlet, and we need to figure out who, fast. Helm, set course for DS-Nine, warp eight.

TENMEI

Aye sir, warp eight.

BOWERS

(confidentially)

Sir, I want to apologise. I never meant to challenge your authority earlier. Only to remind you, you have others you can depend on to walk into danger on your behalf.

KIRA

No apology necessary, Sam. But you need to remember that even though this uniform is new, I've sat in the *Defiant's* centre seat before. I'm no stranger here.

BOWERS

Understood. I suppose some of us veteran Starfleet people need reminding from time to time. It won't happen again, sir.

Kira nods, accepting that, and Bowers returns to his post.

18 **EXT. BAJOR - ESTABLISHING - DAY**

The Ashalla monastery in the capital, a lovely sunny day...

19 **INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY - GARDEN - DAY**

VEDEK SOLIS (8x20 "Twist of Faith") sits on the stone bench in the garden, where we have seen Opaka sit before. He is thrilled and privileged to be here - it is his first visit. After a moment, Opaka enters and greets Solis warmly...

OPAKA

Vedek Solis, welcome to Ashalla.
Please forgive my lateness. I was
delayed in Janir, where the
Oralian temple is being built.

SOLIS

The work goes well?

OPAKA

Well enough that services may be
held, as of today. Cleric Ekosha
invited me to join the first
gathering. It was a most moving
experience. So like, yet unlike,
our own devotion to the Prophets.

SOLIS

Which is closer to the truth, I
wonder?

OPAKA

(smiling)

Why, Tendren... they're all
equally true. And equally false.

SOLIS

Because if one world's religion is
true, then all must be?

OPAKA

No, though I believe there is some
merit to that argument. Rather, it
is because any religion is about
trying to comprehend the universe.

Though we may scratch the surface,
we each see only a fragment of a
larger and more complex reality.
Different religions see different
fragments - none of them wrong,
but none the entire truth either.

SOLIS
But together...

OPAKA
...together, we gain a clearer
picture than ever before.

SOLIS
You know why I have come... I know
I am not the first to ask, but I
must add my voice to the others...
will you be Kai for us again?

She shakes her head sadly, sorry to have to disappoint him,
but resolute and serene...

OPAKA
No, Tendren, I will not.

SOLIS
The Assembly never recovered from
your loss, Sulan. It fell into
discord, politics, corruption...
we lost our way, and we need
desperately to find it again. Can
nothing persuade you?

OPAKA
It is not a matter of persuasion.
I will continue to walk the path
on which They have set my feet,
as we all do. But I have come to
understand that my path does not
lead back to the Vedek Assembly.

SOLIS
(softly)
Bajor needs you, Sulan.

OPAKA

Bajor has me. Just not in the way
it perhaps imagines it should. A
true kai does not lead. He does
not wield power, nor decide for
others what the Prophets require
of them. He merely helps them to
find their own way, and not to
fear the journey.

SOLIS

But if you will not become kai
again... then what should we do?

OPAKA

What the Prophets teach us to do,
when faced with doubt - look for
solutions from within.

Solis blinks, realising her implication - she means him...

OPAKA

Come, join me in my chambers.
We'll take tea.

She is on her feet and moving - he has to rush to catch up.

20 **INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY - PASSAGE**

They walk together down a long stone hallway, past open
archways, towards a door at the far end...

SOLIS

(taken aback)

You're saying... you're saying I
should seek the chair?

OPAKA

(smirk)

I don't believe I said any such
thing. Although I have heard you
gave the matter thought before...

SOLIS

Only to challenge Yevir.

OPAKA

So that you could help our people.
As a Vedek of Lasuma, you have
guided a great flock for years. As
an Ohalavar, you have advocated
for new ideas. And you fought for
Kira Nerys before the Assembly, to
have her Attainder lifted.

SOLIS

I failed in that last endeavour...

OPAKA

But you spoke from your *pagh*. What
does your *pagh* tell you now?

They reach the door, and pause before it. Solis smiles...

SOLIS

That there is much good I can yet
do for our people.

Nodding her approval, Opaka opens the door and steps into
her chambers. She walks in, but then stops in shock --

-- at the hundreds of *esani* blossoms filling the room in
bunches and baskets and displays. Opaka's amazed but
radiant smile suggests she knows who they are from...

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

VAUGHN stands smiling, his thoughts far away. But as Kira
strides through the airlock from the *Defiant*, he snaps back
to attention...

VAUGHN

Welcome back. Heard you had some
trouble.

KIRA

It was a trap. Someone's toying
with us. What makes it worse is
that I didn't learn a damn thing
about why this is happening.

They walk down the corridor. She hands him a padd...

KIRA

Nog's analysis of every reading we took during the encounter. See if you can reach Gul Macet. The fact that the ship was equipped with Cardassian weapons and Dominion shields should be of interest.

VAUGHN

Ro's made some progress. She also experienced some problems with Militia officers feeling... left out. She suggests we reinstate the liaison position to allay their fears. Lenaris agrees. She has someone in mind already, and she'd like them to start right away to help with the investigation. With your permission, of course.

KIRA

Send Ro to my quarters in thirty minutes with his file. But unless there's something on there I don't like, I think it's a sound idea.

(reach turbolift)

Hey, did I hear right? Is today your birthday?

VAUGHN

(sigh)

Gossip. It's the only sound that travels at warp.

KIRA

So, what does someone get a hundred-and-three year old human for his birthday anyway?

VAUGHN

Girani would probably suggest a few organ replacements.

KIRA

Much too practical. How about dinner and a drink at Quark's?

VAUGHN
Tell you what...
(re isolinear rod)
Quark gave me this. It's good for
a couple of free drinks at least.

KIRA
Top shelf?

VAUGHN
Don't ask Quark that.

Vaughn chuckles as they step into a turbolift...

22 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

A normal afternoon, with numerous pedestrians milling. One of the circular pressure doors rolls open, and Major CENN steps out. He looks around at the strangers, the Cardassian architecture - he does not enjoy being here. Taking a deep breath, he walks on and heads to the security office...

23 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

The doors open and Cenn walks in, to find Ro sat behind her desk. She holds up a finger to tell him to wait a moment, because she is busy on the comm screen with BASHIR...

BASHIR (screen)
...wish I could be more helpful.
But as odd as the incident was, it
barely seemed of any consequence
eight years ago, let alone after
everything that's happened since.

RO
I understand, Doctor. Would you be
willing to open your personal logs
for that stardate? Any additional
details could prove significant.

BASHIR (screen)
Of course. But the one you really
want to speak to is Chief O'Brien.
I dare say his memories of that
event are more vivid than mine.

RO

I've got a call in to Cardassia already. Thank you again. And sorry for interrupting your leave.

BASHIR (screen)

Oh, not a problem. The *Alexandria* is departing Earth for the Bajor sector this evening. I should be back on the station in a week.

RO

See you then, Doctor. Ro out.

The signal ends. Ro looks up at Cenn, who is standing at attention, expecting a thorough chewing out...

CENN

Lieutenant, I'd like to apologise for the manner in which I spoke to you this morning. I was out of line. Although I do have genuine concerns about the future of the Militia, I was wrong to take my frustrations out on you. I hope you can forgive my disrespect.

RO

Apology accepted, Major. Please sit down.

He does, a touch flummoxed. That went easier than expected.

RO

You were half right.

CENN

I'm sorry?

RO

About my natural instinct to look anywhere but Bajor for answers. I didn't even realise it until you threw it in my face. And if you hadn't, my investigation might have continued going nowhere.

CENN

You mean you found something?

RO

I'll get to that in a minute. The thing is, I thought about what you said. And some things Lenaris said too. And that's why you're here. You've been assigned to DS-Nine as our new Militia Liaison Officer, effective immediately.

CENN

...Is this a joke?

RO

I'm completely serious.

CENN

But... Lieutenant, I understand what you're trying to do. And I realise that we who serve seldom have the choice of where we serve. But... I have no desire to live and work aboard Terok Nor.

RO

Then stop thinking of it as Terok Nor. This is Federation Starbase Deep Space Nine.

CENN

I realise everyone has accustomed themselves to that. But this was the Cardassian seat of power during the Occupation. That it's been allowed to operate all this time is, quite frankly, offensive.

RO

Get over it. You think because you have a few chips on your shoulder, you're unique? That the people who work here just casually put aside what went on between these walls? Are you really that arrogant?

CENN

Wh... I...

RO

The point is, it's easy to be dismissive when you're ignorant. Which you are. You're as ignorant of DS-Nine as I was of Sidau.

CENN

Maybe I am. But this place --

RO

-- is just that, Major. A place. It's defined at any time by the people in it. Yes, its past is important, no doubt about that. But its present and future matter more. And you can help to define those things. So what do you say?

She stands hopefully, holding out her hand to him. After a moment, he slowly stands and takes her hand, shakes it...

CENN

I say that I don't think I have the slightest idea what I'm getting myself into.

RO

Then you'll fit in perfectly. Welcome to Deep Space Nine.

Off Ro's wry smile - *this guy is so screwed...*

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

24 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

SISKO knocks back a tiny snifter of Capellan grosz - and GASPS as the powerful drink burns down his throat...

SISKO
(croaky)
Cheers...

From their places around the coffee table, the others raise their glasses and knock them back too - KIRA and ASAREM in the armchairs, VAUGHN and OPAKA (who just has water) on the sofa. Vaughn chuckles at Sisko's reaction...

VAUGHN
It does have something of a kick.

Kasidy sits in the rocking chair feeding the baby. Sisko takes a seat, coming to the reason for the evening...

SISKO
I know it's been a difficult day.
But all of us gathered here...
it's going to be up to us to
handle whatever's coming. If Odo
hadn't gone back I'd want him here
too... but he's needed elsewhere.
Nerys... the Sidau situation?

KIRA
Nothing new yet. Ro's on it.

ASAREM
I've made sure all our resources
are available to the Lieutenant.
That someone could come to Bajor
and kill so many, and get away
with it... we can't allow it.

SISKO
Sulan, how is the Vedek Assembly
taking the news about the Eav'oq?

OPAKA

Cautiously. It is potentially a cause for great celebration, to learn the Prophets have touched others. But it has shaken them, perhaps more than the rediscovery of the Ohalu prophecies.

SISKO

And the other side of the coin...

OPAKA

(understanding)

The Ascendants. I'm afraid it is only a matter of time before they return to seek the Temple...

ASAREM

We need to prepare for the worst.

VAUGHN

And we need to do it quickly - reach out to the Eav'oq, build a relationship with them... and hopefully learn more about the Ascendants in the process.

OPAKA

I will go.

They all turn to look at her, surprised by the speed of her decision. Vaughn is troubled, reaching to take her hand...

VAUGHN

Sulan...

OPAKA

This is where my path leads. Towards opportunities for hope, as it was with the Ennis. The Eav'oq are children of the Prophets, as are we. Perhaps together we will see the tapestry more clearly.

She is firm, unmovable. The others nod their agreement... but they are still daunted by the possibilities.

26 **EXT. SISKO'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY**

Sisko emerges from the house, down the steps, across the garden towards the great tree. Leans his hand against it, takes comfort from its solidity, its realness. Troubled by knowledge that is just out of his grasp...

KIRA (o.s.)
You alright?

SISKO
Just keep thinking about how close
I was to missing it all. Seeing my
son again. My wife. Being there as
my daughter came into the world...

He stares out into the distance, across the fields. Two dark FIGURES can be seen at the far edge of vision - two people walking towards them...

SISKO
But even when I was with the
Prophets, there was always this
thread, this lifeline connecting
me to the people I love.

KIRA
And now?

SISKO
Now that thread is running the
other way. And I feel it tugging
me. Part of me is still there,
Nerys. With Them, in the Temple.

KIRA
(realising)
You're going back to Them...

SISKO
Not now... I'm where I need to be,
for my family, for myself, and for
Them. This place and time...
(to the sky)
...what's happening out there...
they're important to the Prophets.

KIRA
Benjamin... what exactly is
coming? If you know something --

SISKO
It doesn't work like that, Nerys.
I wish it did.

KIRA
Well... whatever comes, we'll be
ready.

Sisko shakes his head sadly - no, they won't.

KASIDY (o.s.)
Nerys?

They turn to see Kasidy calling from the doorway...

KASIDY (cont)
There's a comm from the station.
It's Ro. She says it's urgent.

SISKO
Take it in the study.

Kira nods, passes Kasidy on her way back inside. Kasidy
comes over to Ben by the tree, smiling warmly. The walking
figures are growing closer in the darkening night...

KASIDY
Everything okay?

SISKO
You tell me. How was dinner?

KASIDY
The Emissary's cooking lights the
way, as always.

SISKO
Suck up.

KASIDY
Hey, they get to leave. I have to
live here.

They reach in to kiss and hug -- then Kasidy pulls away, looks with shock and surprise out across the fields...

KASIDY

Jake...?

Sisko turns in amazement, sees that the figures are JAKE and RENA (9x03 "Waiting for the Mist to Clear"). Grinning wide, Jake jogs the distance throws himself into a hug...

SISKO

Jake-o, what are you doing here?

JAKE

Sorry I didn't call ahead, but I wanted to surprise you. There's someone I wanted you to meet...

He takes Rena's hand, gently pulls her closer, and turns back to Ben and Kasidy, nervous but with a huge smile...

JAKE

Dad, Kas... This is Azeni Korena.
My wife. We just got married!

Ben and Kasidy are gobsmacked with elated surprise...

RENA

It's wonderful to meet you, Mister
Sisko, Captain Yates.

SISKO

Married... Jake, that's...

Unable to express himself, he simply pulls Rena into a hug, grinning wide himself. Kasidy grabs Jake for another hug...

KASIDY

Oh Jake, congratulations!

Sisko gazes into Rena's face, ponders it... then realises that's a bit weird, and shakes himself out of it...

SISKO

Go on inside. Nerys and Sulan and
Elias are all here...

Jake leads Rena to the house. Sisko holds back, watching them go. Kasidy sees the odd expression on his face...

KASIDY
Ben, what is it?

SISKO
Korena...

FLASHBACK - 4x03 "THE VISITOR"

Older Jake introduces his wife to his father...

ADULT JAKE
This is Korena... my wife.

BACK TO SCENE

SISKO
He's married... to the same woman
I met in an alternate future. One
that Jake doesn't even remember.

KASIDY
And that means... what?

SISKO
I don't know. That some things are
unavoidable? Inevitable?

KASIDY
Ben. You're a father-in-law now.
Don't overanalyse it, just be
happy. Not everything's an omen.

SISKO
Of course. You're right.

Taking Kasidy's hand, Ben leads her back into the house...

27 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

They re-enter to find the house in happy uproar. Vaughn, Opaka and Asarem greet Jake and Rena with joy. Jake holds the baby, Rena is star-struck to see the First Minister and former kai here. Vaughn grabs the *grosz*, pours a toast...

VAUGHN

To young Mister Sisko and his
beautiful new lady wife. May they
have a long, happy life together.

SISKO

Hear, hear.

Kira emerges from another door. Sisko turns to her, too
happy to notice her worried expression at first...

SISKO

Nerys, Jake just returned. He's
married, can you believe it?

VAUGHN

Captain... is something wrong?

KIRA

Sorry to interrupt... but I need
you all to join me in the study.
Right now...

28 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - STUDY

The group (excepting Jake and Rena) files in, and see RO on
the screen, calling from the station's security office...

KIRA

Lieutenant... will you go through
it all again, please?

RO (screen)

Yes, Captain. As you all know, the
village of Sidau was attacked and
destroyed this morning. Sidau was
unremarkable in all respects
except one - its annual ritual of
fighting a mythical creature, the
Dal'Rok. I'd assumed it was all
nonsense, but Doctor Bashir's logs
convinced me the *Dal'Rok* was real
- it was a psionic manifestation
of their own fears, channelled by
the village's shaman, the *sirah*.

OPAKA
(translated)
"Storyteller."

SISK0
I remember this now. The doctor and
the chief visited years ago, while
we were negotiating with the Paqu.

VAUGHN
Were these *sirah* telepaths, then?

RO (screen)
Sirahna. And good guess, but no.
They used an artefact to conjure
and control the *Dal'Rok*. They
called it the *pagh-varam*. It was a
bracelet, at the centre of which
was a small green stone, reputed
to be a fragment of an Orb.

VAUGHN
An Orb fragment? I didn't think
that was possible.

Surprised and confused, the room all turns to Opaka for an
explanation. But she says nothing, only frowns...

RO (screen)
Neither did I. And for what it's
worth, I haven't had any luck
confirming the legend. But if it
really was a piece of an Orb...
it might explain why the village
was destroyed.

VAUGHN
Someone learned about the bracelet
and went after it. Wouldn't it
have made more sense to go after
one of the actual Orbs, though?

ASAREM
The Orbs have all been hidden
away, after the close call we had
with the parasites.

ASAREM

Bajor is determined that they will never be misused again.

RO (screen)

Besides, a missing Orb would be noticed right away. Almost no-one outside the village knew about the *pagh-varam*. By incinerating the place, the perpetrators presumably hoped to stop us learning about it, or at least slow us down.

(pause)

As it was, I only found all this out after an exhaustive search through every archive we have.

SISKO

Then how did the destroyers of Sidau find out about it?

Kira takes a deep breath, reveals the point of all this...

KIRA

The same way. The only conclusion we can come to... is that this information was obtained from Deep Space Nine itself.

(significant look
with Sisko)

We have a mole.

Off Kira's troubled face...

BLACK OUT:

THE END