

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x18 - "The Calling."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the short story

"The Calling"
by Andrew J Robinson

appearing in
*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:
Prophecy and Change*

and on characters from the series
Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Dim and quiet, night shift, and the only person around is a CLEANER polishing the floor with a light beam from a large and clumsy device. As he or she goes about their work...

GARAK (v.o.)

My dear Doctor... I have had to send this communication through a rather circuitous route to prevent it from being exposed to anyone but you. If some unfortunate soul does manage to get his hands on this, it'll be the last thing he'll ever hold.

We move gradually around the room, observing the bio-beds, the instruments, the surgical suite, the pharmacy...

GARAK (v.o.)

All this sounds extreme, I know. But I assure you, I'm not simply sending a poison pen letter because I got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning. I count myself fortunate to have gotten out of bed at all. But more about that later.

The Cleaner moves on to casting the light over the walls, removing grime from simple wear and tear...

GARAK (v.o.)

Despite the fact that you have disappeared without a word, I'm hopeful you're still alive. And though I know you wouldn't abandon me without good reason, I have to admit I'm a little piqued. The last time we met, you promised you would be there to help me. And yet you are nowhere to be found.

The cleaner moves to the CMO desk, upon which a PADD sits. He or she begins polishing the surfaces with a cloth...

GARAK (v.o.)

It's not a question of blame, Doctor. Such a childish word. No, it's about responsibility. If one is encouraged by a dear friend to take on a dangerous, indeed life-changing course of action, and is promised support for this action, how is one to react when that dear friend and his support vanish?

2 FLASHBACK - 10x06 "THE DREAM BOX"

Garak's vision of the cocktail party in the Ward Room, hazy and strange. Everyone is happy, smiling, mingling in peace and companionship. Bashir pushes forward out of the crowd and embraces Garak like a long-lost friend...

GARAK (v.o.)

There are those who have tried to convince me our encounter in the Vinculum was nothing more than a dream I had.

3 FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"

Garak sits inside his shack, looking out at the devastation outside with depression and doubt. The Cardassian doctor Parmak is in the doorway, trying to buck him up...

GARAK (v.o.)

Doctor Parmak among them.

4 FLASHBACK - 10x06 "THE DREAM BOX"

At the cocktail party, Garak watches the mingling figures, curious, intrigued...

GARAK (v.o.)

I can't fault him for it. If one has never been where I have, one can never understand a place where past, present and future combine.

GARAK (v.o.)
(continuing)
Where the neat lines we draw
between dream and reality, between
the living and the dead, have no
more meaning than spices in a
karalian stew.
(beat)
I don't claim to know the how and
why. But I believe it was you I
encountered in that place. And
that's why I'm writing to you now.

5 **FLASHBACK - 10x06 "THE DREAM BOX"**

Doctor Parmak's isolation room. Ferric lies dying on the
bed. Ekosha sits by his side, praying over him...

GARAK (v.o.)
When I first came to the Vinculum,
I was a man on an errand. To find
a cure or vaccine to the virus we
had unwittingly unleashed upon
ourselves by opening the Hebitian
ruins at Gardat. You gave me that
cure, Doctor... and something more
as well.

6 **FLASHBACK - 10x06 "THE DREAM BOX"**

After the vision, Garak walks back up the hill into the
light, with the answer to his questions...

GARAK (v.o.)
So when I left the Vinculum, I was
a man on a mission. I was deter-
mined to step out of the shadows
- as you advised me - and guide
Cardassia back to the light of
civilisation.

7 **FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"**

Garak gazes out of his shed to the destroyed memorial in
which it sits...

GARAK (v.o.)
But that light faded. The harsh
reality of trying to bring order
out of Cardassian chaos brought
me back to the Vinculum on two
further occasions. But I found no
healing or relief. No Federation
support... and no Doctor Bashir.

8 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Back to the Infirmary. The cleaner polishes the surfaces...

... and KNOCKS the padd off the top. They lean down to pick
it up, and as they place it back on the surface, we focus
on its screen... which shows a headshot of GARAK.

GARAK (v.o.)
Whatever has happened to you, my
friend, my fervent hope is that
this communication will find its
way to you one way or another.

The cleaner moves off to carry on with their work, giving
the padd no more thought. But we continue to slowly close
in on the padd and its image of Garak...

GARAK (v.o.)
But still I wonder... where are
you, Doctor?

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 ON GARAK

As he stands, gazing out across his view. His face hangs slack, energy-less. He seems empty, emotionally hopeless. As grey and colourless as the clouded sky behind him.

WIDEN to reveal...

10 EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS - DAY

The large public square. Garak stands on a small stage at the front, a microphone stand before him. He stares out at the gathering crowd of Cardassians that is slowly filling the broken, rubble-strewn space. As he watches...

GARAK (v.o.)

They came from all over Cardassia.

Focusing on one group, wearing worn and scuffed leather working clothes...

GARAK (v.o.)

The Sabutahim, callused and sturdy farmers from across the southern provinces.

Garak's emotionless gaze shifts to another group, thin and wiry, malnourished but maintaining their pride...

GARAK (v.o.)

The gaunt and ghostly Kasmoc, herders and breeders from the north.

Moving to a third group...

GARAK (v.o.)

Ragged, half-mad fundamentalists from Lakarian City, rebuilding among the Hebitian ruins in a desperate attempt to return to simpler times.

And a final group, standing tall and proud in the nearest things they can find to a uniform. They are determined to act like they're in charge, whatever the reality...

GARAK (v.o.)

And of course, those die-hard Imperialists, the base support of the Directorate, from their protected enclaves in Rogarin.

As Garak stares out from his podium...

GARAK (v.o.)

All survivors. Exhausted from the death and destruction. Or demented by loss and grief, looking for a scapegoat for their rage. Since the failure of the Reunion Project to build a Cardassian democracy, our world has divided itself into countless tribes, each one ferociously defending the tiny borders of its pathetic realm.

Suddenly a voice raises in panic and fear...

WOMAN

No! No! Stop! He's blind!

Garak turns to his right, and sees a WOMAN trying to defend an older man as two younger men beat him with fists...

YOUNG MAN

He fought against us at Begata!

OLD MAN

(between punches)

And I'd do it again!

Doctor PARMAK stands off to the side of the stage. He directs two of the dozen or so military OFFICERS, who had been guarding the stage, to move into the crowd and try to stop the fight.

Meanwhile, Garak watches blankly. He can't seem to muster the energy to care...

Garak finally speaks. Not any great speech, more as if he's thinking out loud and the mic just happens to be there...

GARAK

I wonder... what would happen if
we all went blind.

The crowd stops a little, realising he's spoken...

CROWD WALLA

What? ... What did he say? ...
Quiet! ... Listen...

GARAK

How do they exact revenge in the
land of the blind? What do they
take next?

YOUNG MAN

You take until there's nothing
left!

GARAK

"Until there's nothing left..."
Then let me ask you this. Let me
ask you all - how do they exact
revenge in the land of the dead?

The crowd has no response. In the quiet, the mournful call
of a bird echoes across the sky...

GARAK

If there's nothing left, how do we
go on?

As Garak continues to gaze out, and the gathered crowd
considers his question...

GARAK (v.o.)

It has been six months since Alon
Ghemor was assassinated, and since
then, nearly as many have died
from the fighting and the plague
as did during the Dominion
occupation.

11 **INT. CLINIC**

A run-down room, tent or warehouse, being used as a make-shift medical centre. Nothing too technologically advanced - just a case of downtrodden Cardassians standing in line to receive cursory medical checks and injections...

GARAK (v.o.)
Parmak has done excellent work
taking the data you gave me and
turning it into a vaccine to stem
the tide of the disease. Now it's
only a matter of us getting to the
people before the disease does.

One line of patients moves on, rubbing the skin of their arms, injections given. The next line moves up to take their turn with the exhausted clinic workers...

GARAK (v.o.)
And still, one in three die in
agony. A pitiful few actually
recover from the infection. I
imagine they wish they hadn't.

12 **EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS - DAY**

The crowd in the square. One group of Cardassians gathered on their own. No-one else wants to stand near them. They're wearing heavy cloaks that completely hide their features...

GARAK (v.o.)
How brave of these people to come
here today. To risk the resentment
and fear of the others, just to
hear me speak.

CUT TO:

13 **INT. CLINIC**

GARAK
What!... do you think you're
doing, Ereket?

One of the Cardassian nurses, a young male named EREKET, jerks in fear at the knife-edge in Garak's voice. He was preparing to inject an older man, CRONAL, with the vaccine. But he stops as Garak stalks over to him...

EREKET

Excuse me, Docent?

GARAK

These people need the vaccine.
They don't need to be impressed
by your wisdom and expertise.

EREKET

But Docent, I was just trying to
explain --

GARAK

Administer the drug as you've been
taught. We have to finish this
group before we lose the light.
Do you understand?

Garak is being harsher here than the situation really calls for. His nerves are obviously frayed. Ereket flushes with shame at being yelled at, and gets back to work...

EREKET

Yes, Docent.

The older patient, Cronal, has been watching Garak closely all this time, much more interested in him than Ereket's procedure. Garak moves on. Cronal's eyes follow him...

GARAK (v.o.)

To correct the behaviour of a
small man like Ereket was a
momentary distraction. But if my
peers and those in positions of
real, actual power should need
correction...

CRONAL

Excuse me - Elim Garak?

Distracted by his own thoughts, Garak hadn't noticed Cronal approaching him. Now Garak turns to him, and something in the old man's intense gaze puts Garak on his alert...

GARAK

Yes?

CRONAL

My name is Cronal Gys. I want to thank you for the good work you've been doing here... and elsewhere.

GARAK

Thank you. And I apologise for the behaviour of --

CRONAL

No no, not at all. He's young, he has to learn how to work. Sadly for him, all the schools these days are real life.

GARAK

You're very kind.

Garak isn't sure what to make of this man, the clear eyes that never stop looking at him, measuring him...

CRONAL

Your work holds a particular significance for some of us here in Lakarian City.

GARAK

My... work?

CRONAL

I think I can help you find the person you're looking for.

Garak stops, eyes going wide in shock and amazement...

GARAK

Nel...

14 **FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"**

Garak gazes out of his shed to the destroyed memorial. He has the padd O'Brien gave him, containing the instructions of how to access the Vinculum...

GARAK (v.o.)
You see, Doctor, on those other
times I went to the Vinculum,
searching for you, the times you
were not present as promised...
others did appear to me.

15 **EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS - DAY**

...as they used to look years ago, a rare park of green grass and colourful flowers among the grey of the city.

Garak sits on a bench with his secret love, PALANDINE, whose young daughter NEL plays happily to herself...

GARAK (v.o.)
I was young again, enjoying my
secret assignments with another
man's wife. Palandine, the woman
who had held my attention since
childhood.

...and a shadow passes over the scene. The bright sun turns to darkness, only the light of the Blind Moon to see by.

At first Garak cannot see Palandine in the dark. But then she leans slowly forward into the light...

...and reveals a disfigured face, a horror mask burned and warped by the disease. Garak recoils in fear...

GARAK (v.o.)
I tried to believe that her
disfigured appearance in the
Vinculum was a hallucination. Just
as Parmak had tried to convince me
you were. But I couldn't deny that
she was not the only dead soul I
had encountered in that place.

PALANDINE
Careful, Elim. Your enemies are
looking for a way to hurt you.

GARAK
How?

In answer, the disfigured Palandine turns to look at the
child playing at their feet. Garak looks at Nel too... and
as they watch, the young girl slowly fades from view...

GARAK
Nel? They'll kill Nel?

PALANDINE
You will kill her. In revenge
against Barkan. Or so it will
appear.

16 FLASHBACK - 8x09 "A STITCH IN TIME"

The moment where Garak and Barkan struggle to the death in
a military interrogation room...

GARAK (v.o.)
Barkan. He and Palandine used me,
then betrayed me. I killed him.
And now they were going to
discredit me by claiming I had
killed his daughter too.

17 EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS - DAY

Present. From his position on the stage, Garak glances over
to the gathered Imperialists, standing smug and superior...

GARAK (v.o.)
Idiots. Didn't they know by now
that if I wanted anyone killed,
no-one would have ever found the
evidence to prove it?
(beat)
But no-one ever needed proof of a
thing to believe it was true. I
promised Palandine I would search
for Nel. Protect her.

18 INT. CLINIC

All of the above goes through Garak's mind as he processes what Cronal has said to him...

CRONAL

When it's convenient for you, meet me in the grounds adjacent to the Citadel. I'm sure I don't have to tell you... of all people... how delicate the situation is.

With that, Cronal turns and walks away. Confused and thrown off guard, Garak calls after him...

GARAK

It won't take me long to finish up here...

CRONAL

I'll be there.

And then the old man is gone. Garak watches the lines of waiting patients shuffle forward a step at a time for their treatments. He has other things on his mind...

GARAK (v.o.)

Only when he was gone did I think to wonder how he knew I was looking for Nel at all. I hadn't yet had the chance to enquire about her in Lakarian.

Still thinking, worried, Garak turns away and goes back to his work. As he potters around, guiding and instructing the nurses, comforting the patients...

GARAK (v.o.)

When I returned from the Vinculum that third time, I took what opportunities I could to look for her, as I had promised Palandine I would. Always making sure to do so discreetly, of course, so as not to raise the alarms of these hidden enemies.

19 **FLASHBACK - 8x09 "A STITCH IN TIME"**

The secret Oralian Way room, hidden away in a basement. The walls are painted in a frieze depicting the lives of the Hebitians, and Nel herself stands on the dais...

GARAK (v.o.)

The Oralian Temple in Cardassia City where she had performed her duties as guide had disappeared without a trace. And there was really no-one else I could ask.

20 **INT. CLINIC**

The rows of dishevelled, downtrodden Cardassians continue to plod forward a step at a time. Garak continues to guide the nurses and comfort the patients...

GARAK (v.o.)

I knew Lakarian was a stronghold of what was left of the Oralian Way, so I purposely volunteered for the mission so that I could make enquiries as time allowed. Somehow this man Cronal had anticipated my intentions.

Garak looks back over his shoulder, in the direction Cronal had left...

GARAK (v.o.)

But how? How did he know?

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

21 EXT. CITADEL - NIGHT

Very dark, since there is little in the way of artificial light. A large and imposing building looms in the darkness, crumbling from damage and disuse. Surrounding it are sparse and crabby attempts at grass, again blasted and ruined.

Garak stands in the even darker shadow of one of the few remaining trees. He looks up at one of the towers of the Citadel, pondering whether to emerge from hiding...

GARAK (v.o.)

Before Cardassia City was built to be a more appropriate seat of power for the empire, Lakarian served the role of centralising our planetary government in a more subtle and aesthetic way. Many of the buildings dated back to the early Republic, and there were even Hebitian ruins that had somehow survived the almost total eradication of that culture. The old Republican Citadel was one such. I couldn't think of a more suitable place to conceal the remnants of the Oralian Way.

Finally, Garak steps forward out of the deepest shadow of the tree, and towards the stone walls of the Citadel...

GARAK (v.o.)

But was that really what was going on here? Or had I just willingly walked, innocent as a child, into an elaborate trap? Damn it, Elim - has your caution and common sense died along with everything else?

Garak gently, reverently lays a hand on the stone...

CRONAL (o.s.)

The first people also touched that.

Garak looks to the side - Cronal stands in the shadow of another tree, just as he himself had. He's been there all along. Garak isn't surprised - it fits the situation...

GARAK

It has an almost plasmic quality.

CRONAL

We'll never find a better building material.

GARAK

Why wasn't it used for everything?

CRONAL

It's not as imperial looking as obsidian stone from the Toran mountains.

GARAK

But that's on the other side of the planet.

CRONAL

Yes, but they had plenty of... expendable labour. Please, Elim Garak, come with me.

Cronal emerges from the shadows and begins to lead Garak through the grounds, around the building...

22 EXT. LAKARIAN CITY - NIGHT

Cronal leads Garak through dark, beaten down city streets. Buildings jammed together in cramped, hive-like fashion. Despite the many buildings, the streets are deserted...

GARAK (v.o.)

Of course... They would not hide in the Citadel itself. If I knew that was the obvious place, others could figure it out just as easily. Honestly, Elim, you really are losing your touch.

Cronal notices Garak's glances around at the dead streets.

CRONAL

The plague was especially cruel here. Almost no-one remains... except, of course, for those who have no choice.

GARAK

The dead.

CRONAL

Not just the dead...

Cronal stops at a door that looks just like all the others. They cross the threshold, there's a HUM and Garak shivers - he's just passed through a forcefield of some kind.

Cronal goes to another door among many - the door opens as they approach, despite there having been no signal. Garak gasps slightly as he sees who is there - NEL. She smiles at him openly, no artifice or judgement...

GARAK

Nel...

NEL

Elim Garak. Please. Come in. We've been waiting for you...

23 INT. STONE ROOM

The room is small and dark, empty and bare except for half a dozen low stools. Garak steps inside, looks around...

...the walls and floor are built of the same volcanic rock as the Citadel, which almost seems to flow like a visual illusion, forming half-glimpsed shapes, dissolving again.

Garak, Cronal and Nel all take seats...

GARAK

You've become an Oralian Guide...

NEL

When it's not a danger to others. It's difficult for people to gather and celebrate the Fates.

GARAK

That's my fault, isn't it? You're being caught up in a stratagem that's directed against me.

NEL

What a strange man you are, Elim. I assure you, you need not take responsibility for our problems.

GARAK

But I was under the impression --

NEL

Even if you never existed, those people who hunt us now would still be doing so. Of course, Cardassian efficiency would love to eliminate us both at the same time...

Nel chuckles, wryly amused. Garak gazes at her in wonder...

GARAK

You have so much of your mother and father in you... I feel so...

Nel turns to Cronal, as if pondering a hypothetical...

NEL

Has it ever occurred to you, Cronal, that we seek out that person who... how shall I say this... gives us our death?

CRONAL

There is precedent in nature. The *balteen*, at the end of its cycle, offers itself at the lair of its greatest predator. Even Garak's pet *regnar* chooses its time.

Nel turns back to Garak, smiling and clapping with glee...

NEL

Mila! Your tiny lizard at Bamarren Institute, named for your mother.

GARAK

What don't you know about me?

CRONAL

It's only information.

GARAK

My father would have disagreed.

NEL

But he waited for you, before he
died. Just like the *regnar*.

Garak cannot breathe - Nel is saying all the things he has
never dared to admit to himself. Nel seems to understand...

NEL

My father had also been looking
for the one to give him his death.
He chose you for that moment.

CRONAL

Those who want to lead are often
conflicted. Do I have a calling?
Or merely a lust for power? And if
it is a calling, how do I answer?

FLASHBACK - 10x06 "THE DREAM BOX"

At the cocktail party, Bashir hands Garak the padd with the
vaccine information it, urging Garak onwards...

BACK TO SCENE

Garak looks at Nel in wonder...

GARAK

You know about the Vinculum.

NEL

Of course we know. It's a great
gift, Elim. A source of wisdom few
are allowed to experience... and
be able to return and share. And
surely you must know by now the
reason you were sent there.

Garak looks back at her blankly. She chuckles again, amused and exasperated at his naivety, and states the obvious...

NEL

Before an ancient Hebitian could be appointed as leader, they had to make a pilgrimage. The Vinculum is where the living and dead find common ground. After all, unless you've made your peace with the dead, how can you lead the living?

GARAK

I don't understand...

NEL

(passionate)

You made the pilgrimage, Elim. You have been called.

GARAK

If that's the case, why would a human - Julian Bashir - be the one to encourage me to lead the Reunion Project? Shouldn't that message - that call - have come from one of our own?

CRONAL

Are you sure it was really him?

Once again, Garak has the breath knocked out of him...

GARAK

But... why --

NEL

Elim, you are extraordinary. But you are also stubborn. Perhaps you received the information from someone who appeared to be Julian Bashir... because you wouldn't accept it from anyone else.

GARAK

...then who was it?

NEL

Only you can answer that.

GARAK

When I was in the Vinculum, your mother - or someone who appeared to be her - told me to save you.

NEL

Am I in danger?

GARAK

I think we all are.

NEL

Then you have to save us all.

As Garak sits, gazing at the shifting patterns on the stone walls, trying to absorb what she's telling him...

24 EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS

Present. Garak is on the stage, looking out at the gathered Cardassians from all over the planet...

GARAK (v.o.)

And so I called for the speech.
To attempt to reconcile all the
scattered tribes of our world.

He looks at the various groups still separate and wary...

GARAK (v.o.)

As I prepared to thank them for
coming in peace, urge them to lay
aside their differences, the faces
of the past intruded even more. In
the Obsidian Order, we are taught
to operate on two or more levels
of conscious intent at once. The
mind has complete control over
each level. But I had no control
over the imagery now flooding my
mind. The speech I had wanted to
give, the words of healing and
hope... wouldn't come.

He is blank and emotionless, speaking without inflection...

GARAK

We've all gone mad.

They all look up at him, confused...

GARAK (cont)

Or we've reached the final stage
in our evolution, where we've
outlived our reason for being here
at all. Perhaps all that's left is
the final implosion.

Some in the crowd don't like this. They begin to shout and
protest. Garak shouts over them...

GARAK

No no no! Not your fault! You were
only reacting to the circumstances
that he created, and the injuries
and insults that she committed.
Every one of us is so wronged and
insulted, and inflicted with the
deaths of those closest to us that
we righteously believe we have the
right to strike the last blow!

VOICE

Yes! We do!

GARAK

Alright. But let me ask a serious
question, my fellow long-suffering
Cardassian. Have you thought about
what this world will look like if
you do strike the last blow?

Silence. They are actually thinking about what he said...

GARAK (v.o.)

Suddenly I hated them all. I hated
what we had become. The best of us
had already been sacrificed, and
the sooner the end came for the
rest of us the better.

Garak looks down at the crowd, sneering his distaste...

GARAK

It's very simple. Whichever one of you does strike the last blow, imagine the satisfaction as you stand all alone in a wasteland of dead bodies. All the barbarity and madness of our civilisation devolves upon you. At that point, all I can wish for you is that you have the strength to bury the rest of us. That is, if there's a shred of decency left in you.

The crowd is starting to respond, and they are not happy. On stage behind him, Parmak murmurs a gentle warning...

PARMAK

Elim...

GARAK (v.o.)

This was not the calling Nel had spoken of. I knew that. Perhaps it was exhaustion... or perhaps I was seeking my death. But I was facing a reality that defied all political idealism... and it had finally driven me mad.

The crowd boils over. The people surge forwards to attack.

Garak stands there, not caring anymore as they push towards him, baying for his blood...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

25 EXT. TARLAK GROUNDS

Where we left it. The crowd is fighting amongst themselves, but a significant number have targeted Garak himself...

VOICES

Death to Garak! Death to traitors!

Garak watches, barely present. At last he's grabbed from behind by PARMAC and quickly hustled out of the way.

It's not unlike when Jartek did the same for Ghemor. Will it have the same result? Garak no longer cares.

As what pitiful security there is futilely holds back the crowd, Parmak quickly drags Garak down behind the stage.

There's an old grate that once led into a sewer. Parmak pulls it aside, drags Garak into the opening with him...

26 INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGE

A hidden passageway through the bowels of the city. Cold stone, damp walls, no light. Parmak and Garak dash along...

27 INT. BASEMENT ROOM

Parmak shoves Garak into the room. As Parmak makes sure the door is secure, Garak takes a seat at a table. He sits, and looks down at the table, not looking at the other people...

PYTHAS - in his primitive wheelchair, face disfigured and warped with burns from the Dominion genocide. His voice is calm and measured, despite the enormous pain he must be in.

LIMOR - Tain's former aide as in 8x09 "A Stitch in Time." Thin and wiry, the kind of man who barely ever moves or speaks, so that when he does, you know he has a purpose.

PYTHAS

What was that all about, Elim?

GARAK
I couldn't give the speech.

PYTHAS
Obviously.

GARAK
I'm tired of them. They behave
like children.

PYTHAS
So you scold them like children?
Did you think that would bring
them together? They're afraid.

GARAK
I'm sorry. I couldn't control
myself.

Garak looks up, still empty. Limor is staring back at him.

The door opens again, and DEJAR enters (last seen 10x07
"Instinct"). She's listening to a comm chip in her ear, and
reports to Pythas, as if Garak isn't even there...

DEJAR
It's getting worse. The battle
is raging throughout the Tarlak
Sector. It seems the Directorate
had planned on breaking up the
rally in any event. Garak just
made their task easier.

PYTHAS
Send the Paldar and Akleen units.

DEJAR
That will exhaust our reserves.

PYTHAS
What else can we do, Dejar? Give
them the coordinates and stay in
touch.

Dejar accepts the instructions and leaves the room again...

GARAK

How many more fires can we put out, Pythas? This happens every time. Whenever we make some kind of progress, negotiate a truce, a reconciliation... some act of violence destroys it all again.

PARMAK

(quiet, sympathetic)

He's not wrong, Pythas. Mondrig is still out there, whipping up paranoia. And who can blame them for listening? There has to be a reason why so many have died, and Federation genocide makes as much sense as anything else.

GARAK

It's a stalemate, Pythas. There's no productivity, our resources are at a critical low --

PYTHAS

Yes, I know this, Elim. And the fact you know it as well makes me wonder all the more why you were not able to control yourself and follow through with our plan to reconcile those groups out there.

GARAK

Because it's futile! All you had to do was look into their eyes. They want revenge, someone to blame. The thugs were just waiting for their opening to attack us, Dejar said so herself. The only people who want reconciliation are the plague survivors, and who's going to listen to them?

PYTHAS

Then what, Elim? You must have had something in mind when you delivered your lecture today.

GARAK

We have to contact the Federation.

Nobody expected him to say that.

In the silence that follows, Dejar re-enters the room again. She notices the awkward silence, but chooses not to break it. Finally, Pythas clears his throat...

PYTHAS

I quote you, Elim - it's futile.

GARAK

Futile to return to the Vinculum, perhaps. For whatever reason, Doctor Bashir was not able to maintain our contact there.

PARMAK

(patient, said
it all before)

If Bashir was ever there.

Garak glares at him, but Parmak stands his ground. In the silence again, Dejar finally speaks...

DEJAR

The Directorate is pinned down.
They want to negotiate a truce
that would let them return home.

PYTHAS

(derisive)

A truce.

LIMOR

Kill them.

PYTHAS

No. They don't need any martyrs.
Keep them isolated. I want to talk
to their commanders.

Dejar nods her acceptance again, but before she can leave, Garak brings it back to his favourite topic. He's a dog with a bone, and he won't let it go...

GARAK

Maybe Bashir was never in the Vinculum. Maybe it was a dream. But the vaccine I came back with wasn't a dream. Parmak and I have travelled this world administering it, and it works.

PARMAK

Again, I can't deny what Garak is saying, Pythas.

GARAK

And the Federation approved our receiving the formula. Anyone who says that they would try to murder us all with disease doesn't know them the way I do. If I can somehow explain to them what our present needs --

PYTHAS

Must I remind you, Elim, why Ghemor was assassinated?

GARAK

He was assassinated because he trusted the wrong people!

PYTHAS

Precisely. Mondrig wanted him dead because he was friendly towards the Federation. That's part of the reason we rejected their support afterwards. If the Reunion Project were to ally with the Federation, what's to stop the Directorate from allying with the Klingons or the Romulans in response? And then where would we be?

GARAK

What is to stop them doing that anyway? We cannot let fear of what they might do stop us from doing what we know is necessary.

PYTHAS

The risk is too great, Elim. To many of our people, Ghemor was a traitor for even speaking to the Federation. For all we know it was one of our own who killed him.

Garak keeps quiet - he hasn't told anyone the truth about that. Pythas continues, getting almost irate...

PYTHAS (cont)

And what are you going to do, Elim? Announce your departure for Earth with the intention of standing before the Federation Council, and leave us to face the reaction to your treachery?

Pythas is making good points. Garak is a bit petulant about that. But he already has a plan. Quietly, confidently...

GARAK

No-one will know I've gone.

Pythas goes quiet. His scarred face gazes at Garak...

PYTHAS

You're serious about this.

GARAK

Yes.

PYTHAS

Fine. But when you turn up in Paris, who is not going to know you're there? You're no longer some anonymous operative in the Order. You've become the public face of the Reunion Project.

GARAK

(insistent)

No-one will know.

Garak looks to Limor. The way the old man looks back at him implies he knows precisely what Garak is suggesting...

GARAK

How is Timot's health these days?

LIMOR

He's well enough. But I'm not so sure about you, Garak.

PYTHAS

What's this about?

LIMOR

I believe Garak wants to go to Earth... as a *hew-mon*.

PARMAK

That's impossible.

GARAK

No. Pythas, do you remember when Entek abducted the Bajoran, Kira Nerys, and had her transformed into a Cardassian?

Pythas looks back at him blankly. Limor takes pity...

LIMOR

Timot devised and performed the procedure to make a member of one species appear as another. A Bajoran as a Cardassian... a Cardassian as a *hew-mon*.

PYTHAS

Was this done often?

LIMOR

A number of occasions. But the procedure lacked... precision.

GARAK

I'll tell that to Kira the next time I see her.

PARMAK

But why would you want to take the chance, Elim?

GARAK

Because we've run out of other solutions, my friend. And if we don't find one soon, you'll be able to add Cardassians to the interplanetary list of extinct species. ...And because I made a promise to someone.

PYTHAS

And how would you explain your absence?

GARAK

After today's behaviour? Easily.

The room goes quiet as everyone ponders the idea, weighing up the pros and cons.

Pythas looks to Limor and Dejar. Limor gives him an almost imperceptible nod. Pythas sighs...

PYTHAS

How would you present yourself?

GARAK

How else, Pythas? As a plain and simple tailor.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

28 EXT. SPACE - EARTH ORBIT

The great mushroom-shaped Starbase 1 hangs in space. But we're following a shuttle that has just left the station, and is travelling down towards the planet...

ATTENDANT (v.o.)
Faded, hasn't it?

29 INT. SHUTTLE

Looking out of one of the portholes towards the approaching planet... then our POV turns in response to the voice...

...and we see an ATTENDANT smiling down at us. We're sat in a row of happy travellers aboard a bright, clean, advanced and comfortable Federation passenger shuttle...

GARAK (o.s.)
Hmm?

ATTENDANT
According to the accounts of the first astronauts, the intensity of the blue was almost too much to bear. But I think the more often you see it, the more you get used to it.

GARAK (o.s.)
Yes, I suppose so...

ATTENDANT
We'll be landing at Charles de Gaulle in just a few minutes, Monsieur Tranger.

With a polite smile, the attendant moves on. Our POV moves back to the window...

...and reflected in the glass, superimposed over the planet, is a human face. We focus on the reflection...

MATCH CUT to:

30 INT. MEDICAL SUITE

Our POV turns back to look at another smiling face - the affable and chatty older Cardassian surgeon TIMOT. He pulls off his surgical mask, smiles with pride at his work...

TIMOT

Now, Elim, relax. Everything has worked out fine. But before you look at yourself, just remember that humans have an entirely different sense of, how shall we say... physical attractiveness. Now I've taken as a model someone I've been assured is a perfectly average example of the human male.

GARAK (o.s.)

But what am I? There are so many types...

TIMOT

Elim, with these humans, there is no such thing as a pure racial type. Regardless of how repellent the idea may be to us, on Earth any given mixture is possible... especially with the French.

Friendly and cheerful, Timot turns away and grabs a mirror. He holds it up, but Garak doesn't really want to look...

TIMOT

Come now, my boy. You're going to have look at your new face eventually. I'm eager to know what you think of my handiwork.

Grudgingly, Garak looks closely at his reflection, and we finally see Garak's new face clearly...

GARAK

Oh Timot... where am I?

TIMOT

You're right here, my boy! But you look like Emile Tranger of Paris, France. Thankfully I've ironed out some of the kinks since I did this for Dukat. You look marvellous!

CUT TO:

31 INT. PARIS ARRIVALS

Human-Garak emerges into the arrivals hall, a little thrown by the sheer numbers of people rushing back and forth.

He spots a name-card with his name, held by a young female chaperone, MILA. Garak approaches her...

MILA

Monsieur Tranger?

(Garak nods)

Please follow me.

The chaperone turns away, leads Garak through the crowd.

NOTE: This is the same actress who played Nel earlier, although Garak doesn't seem to recognise that...

MILA

I hope you don't mind, Monsieur, but the fastest way into town is the Metro. I've arranged for your baggage to be picked up and delivered to your apartment.

GARAK

What is your name?

MILA

Mila.

Garak stops in the crowd, amazed. A moment - Mila realises Garak is not with her, turns, surprised...

MILA

Monsieur? Are you alright?

Garak fumbles, fakes looking for something in his coat...

GARAK

Yes... for a moment, I thought I'd forgotten... ah, here it is.

(awkward pause)

We haven't met before, have we?
Perhaps it's just that you remind
me of someone...

Giving him a curious look, Mila turns and carries on. Off balance, Garak follows through the throng as best he can...

GARAK (v.o.)

Mila... the name of my mother. The
name of my first pet, my first
friend. And now, this strangely
familiar young woman guiding me
through the tumult of my first
trip to Paris. I couldn't believe
how clumsy I was. It was as if I'd
never known something unexpected
to happen before. Political life
had made me obvious and stupid.

Mila slices a straight line through the crowd no problem.
But trying to follow her, Garak is buffeted from all sides.

A Parisian man bumps into him one way, swearing MOS to get
out of the way. As Garak gapes in astonishment at such rude
behaviour, he's knocked again the other way by a woman with
a baby carriage who doesn't bother to even acknowledge him.

Realising he needs to keep moving or be trampled, he chases
after Mila as best he can...

32 EXT. CHARLES DE GAULLE SHUTTLE PORT - DAY

Mila and Human-Garak are now outside, standing by the taxi
rank outside the shuttle port. The crowd is just as heavy
and chaotic out here as inside.

Garak is sweating, breathing in short gasps - even outside,
the claustrophobia is kicking in. With one hand out to hail
a taxi, Mila notices Garak's distressed state...

MILA

Do not worry, Monsieur. It's the beginning of the holiday, and everyone wants to get away.

A taxi finally stops for them - one of a line of individual pods that swing below a monorail track. The door opens and Mila clambers in. A little bemused, Garak follows her...

33 INT. PARIS TAXI

Garak collapses into one of the seats, Mila perched primly in another. The DRIVER looks through the partition..

DRIVER

Votre destination?

MILA

*Ménilmontant, s'il vous plaît.
Près de la Gard du Nord.*

The driver pulls away, jerking Garak back into his seat.
NOTE: the driver is played by the same actor as Cronal earlier, although again Garak doesn't recognise him.

Garak resettles into the seat, the air conditioning calming his nerves. Looks out the window at the city passing by...

...a motley collection of old stone buildings and modern glass and metal constructions, seemingly totally at random. Yet the people filling every square inch seem to be able to move through it all smoothly and easily.

The golden sunlight makes the chaos seem warm, happy even. Garak watches all of this, intrigued and spellbound...

Mila stays quiet, trying not to look like she's watching...

MILA

It's not how you remember it?

GARAK

Yes... for the most part. But I'm always surprised at how different it is from... some other places I've been.

MILA

The Americans and Germans call us obstinate. They call Paris the 'museum city,' because we wouldn't make the changes they have made to their cities.

The driver turns in his seat, looks directly at Garak with piercing eyes. The taxi continues to drive itself...

DRIVER

But they keep coming here, don't they? And do you know why?

GARAK

Uh... because they like museums?

DRIVER

Au contraire, m'sieur! They live in sterile boxes. But they don't want to forget what real life is like. So they come and eat our real food, and walk our real streets, and begin to feel real feelings again. They remember what it is to be a human being! Why do you think the Federation chose us to build their centre?

GARAK

Uh... because they want to be in a real city?

DRIVER

Voilà!

Satisfied, the driver turns back to his job. A little baffled, Garak goes back to looking out of the window...

GARAK (v.o.)

I remember you once describing the French to me, Doctor, as different. I saw that I was being introduced to a diehard culture that wasn't featured in Federation propaganda.

34 EXT. PARIS APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

The taxi glides to a halt on its monorail, outside a block of apartments, a fairly old building of classical Parisian design. Not crumbling, but far from 24th Century Federation modern. You could believe it hasn't changed in centuries.

Garak clambers out of the taxi and gazes up at the building while Mila handles the fare. Then she joins him on the pavement and the taxi zooms off. Garak just stands there, absorbing what to him is an astonishing experience...

...people just going about their lives. The sounds of children happily playing. Washing hanging out on lines. Neighbours greet neighbours with a warm kiss-kiss, chat openly about their day. Garak almost can't handle it.

35 INT. PARIS APARTMENT

Garak enters, finds a room to suits the building's exterior perfectly. Wooden floors, white painted walls, wrought iron fittings, stucco in the corners. As Mila carries in his bags behind him, Garak goes to the already open window...

OUT THE WINDOW

A COURTYARD onto which all the apartments open. Most of their windows are open too, so that all their neighbours can see freely into their homes, into their lives. People go about their business, enjoying each other's company.

Looking down to the ground several floors below, CHILDREN toss a ball about among plants and flowers. The delicious smells and happy sounds echo up to him...

BACK TO THE ROOM

Garak is astonished at all of this. It's almost enough to make him cry.

He turns back to Mila, only see to see that she has been watching him closely. He clams up a little...

GARAK
Who arranged for these living
quarters?

MILA
(confused)
Monsieur Sharib. I thought --

GARAK
I know who my contact is. I just
want to know who he used as an
intermediary.

MILA
Ah - an estate agent, you mean.

GARAK
Yes, whatever you call it.

MILA
I only know of Monsieur Sharib. His
information is on the data padd,
just there. He told me to tell you
welcome, and he'll be in touch.

She points across the room to a sideboard, where a standard
Starfleet data PADD sits. Garak nods, trying to bring his
jittery behaviour under control. Mila waits politely...

GARAK (v.o.)
I tried to repress my anger at my
own ineptitude. I was losing my
control. I had to be more careful.
I knew that Mila was picking up
everything. She was too good to be
just a tourist guide. Too careful
to reveal any kind of reaction to
my ridiculous behaviour.

MILA
Well... is there anything else,
Monsieur?

GARAK
No. Thank you, Mila. You've been
very kind. How do I find you...
if I need you for some reason?

MILA
That information too is on the padd.

She gives him a sly smile, and leaves...

Garak stands in the middle of the room, pondering, alone now except for the sounds of life going on outside. Looks around at all the old architecture, the old fittings. Opens his suitcase, begins to move things, organise his space...

GARAK (v.o.)

Mila said that the building was nearly five-hundred years old. A conservative estimate, I thought. Never in my life did I imagine I'd be living in an alien culture's ancient history. I wondered if I hadn't died and been transported to some bizarre afterlife.

Garak pauses his tidying, lost in his thoughts...

GARAK (v.o.)

Then a more frightening question took shape. What if I had come to this place to die? What if this was me... seeking my death? A few days before I would have welcomed the thought, but now, with new hope on the horizon...

Garak shakes off the thought, moves to the sideboard, picks up the padd. Looks at its screen, which features...

...a picture of BASHIR. Garak frowns, somewhat confused.

Around him, the SOUNDS of life, of conversations and food cooking and children playing, begin to grow louder. They echo, swirl, blend and separate. Garak looks around...

The apartment walls begin to move. Patterns play across the surfaces, like in Nel's basement. Shapes form and dissolve. The entire apartment seems to be moving, flowing, circling.

He looks back down to the padd in his hand - and it MELTS.

The padd and hand both FLOW like liquid, a Dali painting. Caught up in whatever is happening to the rest of the room.

As the noises and sights and colours all swirl around him, Garak is terrified. Eyes flared, confused, panicking...

...the padd has become a tiny black hole, the whole world orbiting it before being inevitably sucked in...

...Garak finds himself bent into impossible shapes, belly sucked towards it even as his head tries to pull away...

...as all the room swirls tighter and tighter, disappearing into the ever growing black hole at its centre...

...Garak is the last to be pulled in. Nothing to grab on to. He's falling down the hole, like it or not...

And then, he's gone. The blackness is all there is.

36 **BLACK OUT**

Gradually, and slightly **FADE UP**...

Until we recognise the face of Garak, gazing out at us. Not the human version, but the original Cardassian.

The face is ghostly in the darkness, watching, confused but curious... What is going on here?

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

37 ON GARAK

...in the darkness, watching, more confused and curious than afraid. Voices drift to him across the darkness...

PYTHAS (o.s.)
How would you present yourself?

38 GARAK'S POV

...as the shadows form into the shapes of people. It's the meeting after Garak's breakdown at the rally, but *just* the people, replaying the last few moments, unaware of anyone watching them. Garak, Parmak, Pythas, Dejar and Limor...

GARAK
How else, Pythas? As a plain and simple tailor.

Pythas accepts with a sigh. Garak smiles, satisfied with the deal made. Parmak guides Garak to the door...

PARMAK
Come along then, Elim. If you insist on going to Earth, I'll find you some kind of... guide book or something.

Garak lets himself be guided out. But the scene continues. Pythas, Limor and Dejar look among each other...

DEJAR
What do we do with him?

PYTHAS
He can never come back.

DEJAR
From Earth?

PYTHAS
At all. He's no asset to us now.

39 **ON GARAK**

...watching, listening, absorbing...

40 **GARAK'S POV**

...watching the three Cardassians talk in the darkness...

LIMOR
I'll arrange it.

PYTHAS
I want him to live, Limor... Just
as long as he never comes back.

LIMOR
How can this be done?

PYTHAS
...the Vinculum.

LIMOR
Listen to me, Pythas. Garak has
many enemies. It would be a simple
matter to kill him. To spare him
is no solution. Nor is it mercy.
His life has run its course!

Pythas thinks about what Limor has said...

41 **ON GARAK**

...watching, sad...

42 **GARAK'S POV**

...focusing on Pythas, as he ponders. He doesn't speak out
loud, but we HEAR his thoughts, ghostly and indistinct...

PYTHAS (v.o.)
He's right. Elim is exhausted. His
inability to give the speech today
shows how depleted his morale is.
Perhaps it would be a kindness...

Garak's focus shifts to Limor, tall and thin and cold...

LIMOR (v.o.)
This is the sentimentality that
Enabran allowed into the Order,
that nearly destroyed us. I taught
Pythas to be harder. But the chain
of command must be preserved...

Finally, Pythas makes his decision...

PYTHAS
Arrange it with Timot... so that
Elim goes to the Vinculum and
never returns. Parmak assures me
the controls are easy enough.

DEJAR
Should we worry about Parmak?

PYTHAS
He'll never find out, Dejar. Elim
will disappear, and it will be
revealed that he was assassinated
while trying to make a deal with
the Federation. I don't think I
have to explain to you how this
will work to our advantage.

The scene over, the players fade back into the darkness...

43 ON GARAK

...sad, head hanging, disappointed that his compatriots and
friends could dispose of him so easily.

Gentle LIGHT intrudes on the darkness... Garak looks up...

44 GARAK'S POV

...to see HIMSELF in full-length mirror, standing in old,
Hebitian-style dress. He gazes at himself, intrigued...

Behind him, in the mirror, a DOOR opens in the darkness,
and bright light and cheerful sounds creep through it...

He turns and walks towards the door. But at the threshold,
he pauses and looks back over his shoulder...

45 INT. GARAK'S SHACK

...and sees his small shack, the only home he has now. The small COT he sleeps on, the primitive STOVE he cooks with. No mirror, but an ORALIAN MASK hanging on the wall...

GARAK
(to self)
Is this a dream?

PALANDINE
Does it matter?

Garak realises with a start that PALANDINE sits calmly on his bed, having blended in to the point of invisibility. Now she stands and approaches him in the doorway...

PALANDINE
Really, Elim. Does it matter if
this is a dream or reality?
(re the shack)
Because if you want to get out of
here, you're going to have to
learn to live in both worlds.

She walks past him into the bright light beyond the door, holds out her hand for him to follow...

Lost in wonder and confusion, Garak takes her hand, follows her into the light. But as they walk on, Palandine turns to smile at him, and it's not Palandine anymore. It's NEL...

SHAPES form out of the light, as if Garak's eyes are simply growing used to the brightness Cardassians instinctively dislike. Those shapes gradually resolve into...

46 INT. BANQUET HALL

...a party, a pleasant gathering of seemingly hundreds of happy, civilised and friendly people. All Cardassian, but no sign of the militarism or arrogance one would expect from Cardassians... because these are Hebitians.

NEL
Go ahead, Elim. Feel free.

Garak steps into the crowd, tentative at first, not sure he should be here. But he wants to be one of these people. In the distance is a familiar face, laughing with friends...

...BASHIR turns, smiles in recognition, beckons Garak to join him. Elated, Garak wades into the crowd. But the closer he gets, the further away Bashir seems to be...

TOLAN (o.s.)

Elim. I'm so glad you came.

Surprised, Garak turns and sees TOLAN ("A Stitch in Time"), dressed in the robes of an Oralian Guide. Nel stands behind him, observing happily. Garak gapes in amazement...

GARAK

Father... I've missed you.

The room around them changes again, almost imperceptibly. It DARKENS, the others disappearing, until the three of them are alone, standing in...

47 INT. STONE ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

...Nel's basement hideout. The black stone walls shift and blend, shapes shimmering and not quite forming. Garak steps closer, watching the shapes as they begin to coalesce...

...into a procession of figures. It's the HEBITIAN FRIEZE that was painted onto the walls of the Oralian temple in "A Stitch in Time," but these figures are *moving*.

We slowly ZOOM IN on the animated people, cave drawings of Cardassians, walking one behind another along a path. They all seem comfortable, content, in harmony...

TOLAN

If they are able to understand how connected they are... if they can accept the connection... then the tribes can come together... they can celebrate...

The image shifts, a RIBBON appearing, a pinkish thread connected to each figure, leading from their heart...

...we FOLLOW the pink thread from one Hebitian as it rises up into the sky... slowly, slowly...

...until the thread reaches its source - a hand-drawn representation of ORALIUS. A winged figure, almost angelic, as seen on the statue in the ruins at Gardat.

The figure has countless similar pinkish threads leading out of its body, connecting to the people below...

TOLAN

We are all connected, Elim. All of us. Oralius came to teach us this, help us understand and celebrate that connection.

We focus upon Oralius itself, wings wide... CLOSE IN on its semi-Cardassian face, smiling with grace and love. CLOSER, to the indentation in its forehead, like all Cardassians...

...and then the "spoon" shape... BLINKS. Like an eye.

PULL OUT gradually - we see the indent has indeed become an eye. A large single eye, set into the face of an EAV'OQ.

PULL OUT further - we see the Eav'oq's body, white and warm, gently soothing, the single eye smiling.

Garak watches all of this, on the verge of understanding. He has never seen an Eav'oq, doesn't know what one is. He just sees this strange alien figure, hovering peacefully over the Hebitians below. He smiles, comforted.

The Hebitians are now closer to the Eav'oq, gathered around it. The pink ribbons have become the Eav'oq's multiple LIMBS, curled around the Hebitians, embracing them...

TOLAN

And he was right to. Because... watch, Elim. Watch what happens when the connection breaks.

The procession of FIGURES continues. But one or two of them stumble, fall to their knees. The happy, peaceful feeling gives way to grey dullness. More Hebitian figures collapse in hunger or fatigue or choking. Garak watches in horror...

New figures arrive, dressed in black, carrying knives and guns. They attack the weakened Hebitians, laugh over their dead bodies. These are CARDASSIANS, dark and ominous.

Above, the Eav'oq still hovers. Its pink ribbons are now snapped, the connections broken, its eye no longer smiling. It draws away, the image diminishing and growing smaller, pulling back until it is a mere dot... and then gone.

GARAK

No... come back... please...

TOLAN

He will, Elim. Oralius... is of Cardassia. You are of Cardassia. You are the Hand of the Fates. Bring Oralius back to them.

Garak turns away, tears in his eyes...

48 INT. GARAK'S SHACK

...and finds himself back in the shack. Tolan is with him, showing him his gardening tools. Outside it's a normal day, before the Dominion. Inside, it's a boy and his father...

TOLAN

Are you still working with the orchids, Elim?

GARAK

Not for a long time.

TOLAN

Cultivate what's left. And teach someone else the method.

GARAK

I will.

Tolan smiles up at the wall, where the Oralian mask hangs.

TOLAN

You still have the mask! Wear it next time you speak, Elim. It will help to remind them.

Tolan stands directly in front of Garak, reaches out gently and touches his son's forehead, right on the spoon shape. Then the older man FADES from view, until he's gone.

Garak looks at the Oralian mask. It begins to GLOW with a warm, gentle white light. The mask seems to move, smile.

Pink ribbons stretch out from all sides of it, reaching to make a connection. The light grows and grows until...

WHITE OUT

Then **FADE IN** to...

49 PARMAK

...looking into camera, concerned and nervous.

PARMAK

Elim? Can you hear me?

50 INT. PARMAK'S HOME

Garak lies on a thin, rattling pallet in a small ordinary room - nicer than Garak's shack, but not by much. He opens his eyes hesitantly, as if recovering from a hangover, or maybe a psychedelic experience...

GARAK

Yes, Doctor. No need to shout.
Where am I?

PARMAK

(relieved)

An old family home. But... what
happened to you, Elim? And how did
they know to bring you here?

Garak sits up, wincing at the pain behind his eyes.

GARAK

They? Who are they?

PARMAK

I have no idea. A young woman and an old man. I'd never seen either of them before. But they made it very clear that I wasn't to tell anyone you were back. What happened on Earth?

GARAK

Yes... Earth...

Garak climbs slowly off the pallet and stands, testing his limbs, stretching out his fingers. He feels the ridges on his face and neck, as if confirming that he is Cardassian.

He looks up at Parmak, smiles. He seems happier and more energised than he has in months...

GARAK

Never mind about that. What matters is that I'm here now. At long last. And we have much work to do.

PARMAK

We have?

Garak smiles affectionately at Parmak's confusion...

GARAK (v.o.)

I looked at him, wondering how I could ever explain. Parmak is a man of science, Doctor, like yourself. He believes we can reconstruct a society based on a purely rational model. I had believed that myself, before. I had thought that was the very message you had been trying to give me in the Vinculum - that you represented the Federation, giving me their blessing to lead Cardassia into a new era of rationality. But I understood now that I was wrong.

GARAK

Oh yes. It's about the connection, you see. That's what's important.

PARMAK

All very mysterious, I must say.
Perhaps I should contact Pythas --

GARAK

(urgent)

No. Don't tell anyone I'm here. No
Cardassian, anyway. However, I
would like you to send a message
to your Federation contact.

Parmak's eyes go wide, his mouth drops in shock...

PARMAK

How... did you know...

GARAK

(warmly)

That you're still in contact with
Yevir? I know, Doctor. I know you
were the one who helped to smuggle
the Vedek off Cardassia and back
to Bajor, despite the quarantine.
And I'm glad.

PARMAK

You were the one who convinced me
we could work together with the
Bajorans, Elim. I only didn't tell
you because --

GARAK

Because you were afraid to tell
anyone, I understand. Now I need
you to get a message to him. And
from him, on to someone else. But
them only. No-one else must know
I'm here. Can you do that?

PARMAK

But surely Pythas --

GARAK

No-one. It's also vital that I
find a way to Lakarian City as
quickly and quietly as possible.

PARMAK
...Lakarian...?

GARAK
There's much work to do, yes. But
more importantly, it's work that
we've never done before. Or not
for a long time, anyway.

Parmak nods, not having the tiniest idea what Garak is
going on about, but trusting his friend...

51 **EXT. CITADEL - NIGHT**

Garak stands again in the darkness, feeling the ancient and
pliable black stone of the Citadel. The Blind Moon peeks
from behind the clouds, casting a ray of silver light...

GARAK (v.o.)
So that's how I began my new mission,
Doctor. Not as some political leader
standing on the galactic stage as the
respectable face of Cardassia. As the
Hand of the Fates, trying to rebuild
the links between us, helping us to
understand that we are connected,
however much we try to deny it.

52 **EXT. LAKARIAN CITY - NIGHT**

The deserted streets of the old city. We travel slowly down
them, past the numerous dead apartments crammed in tight...

GARAK (v.o.)
It's strange - I feel the need to
apologise for breaking our initial
agreement, even though I misunder-
stood it at first, and it was not
even really you with whom I made
it. But I do hope you won't be
offended that that agreement has
now been superseded by another.

As we get to one apartment, a CANDLE shines in its window.
One single spark of light in the dark, deserted streets...

CROSS-FADE to...

53 **EXT. BAJOR - DAY**

The surface of Bajor, bright and sunny and peaceful...

GARAK (v.o.)
I've tried my best to explain
everything I experienced, and the
effect it has had on me. It's
entirely possible I failed on that
score. I'm not at all sure I
understand it myself yet.

54 **INT. YEVIR'S OFFICE**

YEVIR sits at his desk, dressed more simply than the usual elaborate Vedek's robes. The jevonite FIGURINE has pride of place on his desk. He's reading from a Bajoran PADD...

GARAK (v.o.)
But if you find anything of use in
it, I'm glad. I just wanted you to
know. After all, we are connected,
you and I. And as much as I can't
help worry that you're safe, I think
I'd know, deep down, if you weren't.
If you have any need to contact me,
you know how. In the meantime I send
my warmest regards. Be well, Doctor.

Yevir places the padd back onto his desk, sits back. It's all running through his mind, and he's trying to process it. He's absolutely amazed.

He reaches out, picks up the jevonite figurine, traces the Cardassian neck ridges, the Bajoran nose lines...

YEVIR
We're all connected...

He places the figurine back down, calls out excitedly...

YEVIR
Mika? Mika!

The door opens - revealing MIKA, former *pagh*-Wraith cultist and current Ohalavar, now working as Yevir's assistant...

MIKA

Vedek - is there a problem?

YEVIR

Arrange a secure delivery to Deep Space Nine - I have an important message I need to pass along.

MIKA

Yes, Vedek. Is that everything?

YEVIR

No. Contact the monastery at Ashalla. I need to speak with your uncle as soon as possible.

MIKA

My uncle? The Kai?

YEVIR

Yes, Mika. While you're at it, send a message via the station into the Gamma Quadrant. Ranjen Opaka should hear this too.

MIKA

Hear what, Vedek?

YEVIR

Oh, Mika... we are connected.
Connected, Mika! ...Go.

Mika nods and leaves the room. Yevir sits back, full of wonder and revelation at what he's figured out...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW