

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x04 - "The Officers' Club."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the short story

"The Officers' Club"  
by Heather Jarman

appearing in

*Star Trek: Tales From the Captain's Table*

and incorporating elements from

*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:  
Gateways Book 4  
Demons of Air and Darkness*  
by Keith RA DeCandido

**TEASER**

FADE IN:

**1 EXT. SPACE - THE WORMHOLE**

The wormhole bursts open in its customary display. A small DOMINION ship flies out, and calmly heads towards camera.

**2 INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

SHAR, DAX and BOWERS are at their stations. KIRA and VAUGHN exit her office and walk to the top of the stairs. Extras elsewhere. All of them watch the screen nervously - the ship is expected, but it's a tense moment.

BOWERS

Captain?

KIRA

Yellow alert only, Lieutenant. And keep the shields down. We don't want to spook them.

BOWERS

(unconvinced)

Aye, sir.

The turbolift disgorges ODO, in his Bajoran Militia uniform. Kira looks to him warmly but nervously - he comes to stand with her, takes her hand in encouragement.

ODO

Everything alright?

KIRA

So far.

A signal bleeps on Bowers' panel, making him jump.

BOWERS

They're hailing, sir.

KIRA

Put them through.

The screen changes to show the face of WEYOUN. The Vorta bows to Odo before acknowledging anyone else. He is polite and friendly - Kira responds likewise for diplomacy's sake.

WEYOUN (screen)  
Founder. It is gratifying to see you safe. Captain Kira, Commander Vaughn. I thank you for allowing us to approach Deep Space Nine without incident.

KIRA  
You're welcome, Weyoun. If you'll relinquish control to Lieutenant Dax, we'll bring you in.

WEYOUN (screen)  
A pleasure, Captain. I'm looking forward to visiting the station again. It's been a while.

The signal ends. Kira shares a nervous look with Vaughn, then nods to Dax to begin docking procedures. Kira walks with Odo back to the turbolift.

**3 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

NOG exits a turbolift and walks along, engrossed in a padd. As he passes the door to Quark's bar, he spots TENMEI sat a table. Alone, and fidgeting as if she has been stood up.

A Ferengi waiter asks her MOS if she wants anything - she politely declines. Nog understands that Prynn wouldn't want pity, and so he carries on unnoticed.

**4 INT. DS9 - UPPER PYLON CORRIDOR**

Kira and Odo walk companionably along, arm in arm.

KIRA  
Are you sure you have to go back so soon? You only just got here.

ODO  
I wish I didn't, Nerys. But things are changing all the time in the

Link. I need to be there to guide them, help them understand. There's still so much disagreement over my experiences with "solids." And then there's Laas...

KIRA  
(surprised)  
Laas?

ODO  
Yes... he's still determined to find the rest of the Hundred. The ones he finds, he brings back to the Link, and then the Link has to absorb their experiences as well. It's... a confusing time.

KIRA  
I've been meaning to ask you - why Weyoun? Didn't you get enough of him during the war?

ODO  
I suppose I just wanted a familiar face. I know Weyoun, he knows me. It saves me from having to explain my point of view every time I want to get something done. Plus... we know that at least one Weyoun was capable of questioning the hardcore Dominion doctrine...

KIRA  
And you're hoping that this one can see the light as well.

ODO  
Something like that. It's a small step, I know. But if I can do with the Vorta what I've been trying to do with Taran'atar - teach them to think for themselves instead of just blindly following orders... I don't know. As it is, he was

extremely unhappy about letting me wander around without an escort.

KIRA

You mean that's why there was a Dominion ship in the Idran system? Weyoun was following you?

ODO

I'm afraid so. I'm sorry to burst young Mister Sisko's bubble, but Weyoun was only as helpful as he was because of me, not Jake.

KIRA

Why were you disguised as Wex?

ODO

I wanted to follow the rumours I'd heard about the wise woman with the healing hands. I knew people wouldn't respond well to a Changeling walking openly among them. I'm afraid the Founders' paranoia can seem distressingly justified sometimes.

KIRA

She said she knew you were coming - that something was coming, anyway. She never doubted that everything happens for a reason.

ODO

And what about you, Nerys? Do you feel the same way?

KIRA

I do. I know that great things are coming for Bajor, and that I have a part to play in the Prophets' plan. And I don't doubt anymore... that we'll be together some day.

They stop at a T-junction. Odo leans in for a tender kiss.

ODO  
I know we will. But for now...

KIRA  
(finishing  
the thought)  
...You still have work to do.

They turn and walk down the corridor towards the airlock.

Weyoun waits there with two armed Jem'Hadar guards and four Starfleet security. TARAN'ATAR is also there, in his black coverall, standing slightly apart from the others. Weyoun bows again and the Jem'Hadar stiffen as Odo approaches.

WEYOUN  
Founder, welcome. We are ready to  
return you to the Dominion at your  
convenience.

ODO  
Thank you, Weyoun. Nerys...

With a last grip of her hand and warm glance, he leaves Kira and steps into the airlock. Kira steps back to let the group pass, but Taran'atar pipes up unexpectedly.

TARAN'ATAR  
Founder...  
(Odo turns)  
... I wondered if I might speak  
with you... before you leave.

WEYOUN  
(shocked)  
Remember your place, First.

ODO  
No no, Weyoun, that's alright. You  
go on ahead, I'll be perfectly  
safe with Taran'atar.

Weyoun is not pleased, but he is incapable of refusing. He bows and leads the soldiers back through the airlock. They give mildly disapproving glances at Taran'atar as they go. Kira subtly leads the Starfleet security a few steps away.

ODO  
What is it, Taran'atar?

TARAN'ATAR  
Founder... I want to go with you.

ODO  
(sympathetic)  
Taran'atar...

TARAN'ATAR  
I do not understand my mission here. I have never understood it. I am useless here. I do nothing but train for a battle that these people hope will never come. You asked me once what I would do if I had the choice. This is my answer. I would return to the Dominion. I would come with you.

Odo feels sorry for Taran'atar who is obviously struggling. He tries to give the Jem'Hadar some encouragement.

ODO  
You do much more than that. Your role here is vital to the future of the Dominion. You are here to learn about life in the Alpha Quadrant. And if you learn, hopefully you will understand.

TARAN'ATAR  
I have learned, Founder. I have observed them at work, and have learned to predict their actions with accuracy. I have observed them at rest, and learned that they are infinitely less efficient than Jem'Hadar. I have memorised the cultural idiosyncrasies of more than thirty species and I still do not see how any of it can be of benefit to the Dominion.

ODO

Then trust me to see what you cannot. I want you and the other Jem'Hadar to understand why these people's ways of life deserve to exist as they are, without being controlled. And you are already learning that. Here you are, asking me for what you want - you would never have done that before. I'm only sorry that I can't give it to you. As I just said to Captain Kira, I still have work to do in the Dominion. And you still have work to do here.

Realising that Odo will not budge, Taran'atar bows his head and takes a step backwards. Odo is sympathetic.

ODO

I hope one day you will come to understand, Taran'atar. Just... keep trying.

TARAN'ATAR

Yes, Founder. I will obey.

Sadly, Odo turns, and with a last glance back to Kira, he steps into the airlock and towards the ship. Kira watches him go, and watches Taran'atar also glance at her before turning and walking the other way.

**5    INT. DS9 - UPPER PYLON CORRIDOR**

Kira walks along alone, saddened. As she turns a corner, she realises that BENJAMIN SISKO is walking towards her, in civilian clothes, a big playful grin filling his face.

SISKO

You're a difficult woman to find, Captain.

KIRA

Benjamin!

Cheering slightly, she hugs him in welcome.

KIRA

What are you doing here? Is Kasidy okay?

SISKO

She's fine, Nerys. I came because I needed to see you.

KIRA

Why, what did I do?

SISKO

You made Captain, that's what. And that means it's time to introduce you to a tradition all Starfleet captains have gone through for centuries. I did it, Bill Ross did it, and now it's your turn.

KIRA

A "tradition?" Benjamin, I don't know...

He puts his arm around her, begins to lead her back down the corridor.

SISKO

Don't worry, Nerys. You're gonna love it. It involves drinking.

Off Sisko's mischievous grin...

FADE OUT:

**END OF TEASER**

**ACT ONE**

FADE IN:

**6     INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Kira and Sisko exit a turbolift and make their way towards Quark's bar. Bajorans everywhere gaze adoringly and defer to Sisko - he takes it politely and modestly. They enter...

**7     INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)**

...Just as Tenmei has given up waiting and is on her way out. She nods politely to Kira and Sisko as they pass.

TENMEI

(to Kira)

Captain.

(to Sisko)

Captain.

KIRA

Ensign.

(to Sisko, *sotto*)

Still weird.

He smiles just as QUARK bustles up in full host mode.

QUARK

Captains! Welcome to Quark's Bar, Grill, Embassy, Gaming Hall and Holosuite Arcade.

KIRA

That's quite a mouthful.

QUARK

I'm a full-service establishment. I'm just trying to reinforce that image among the station populace. Now what I can get for you?

SISKO

Actually we're heading up to Vic's lounge, if that's okay with you, Mister Ambassador.

QUARK

Eh, no skin off my ears. Whatever you spend in there goes into my pockets anyway. But wouldn't you rather spend your time here in the bar, among your friends and crew?

KIRA

You mean where everyone can see the station's captain and the Emissary of the Prophets enjoying your facilities, and might be motivated to do the same?

QUARK

Is that so hard?

While Kira rolls her eyes, Sisko smiles warmly.

SISKO

We appreciate the offer, Quark. But Vic's is more appropriate for this particular celebration.

QUARK

Celebration?! Oh, you should have said! I can get Treir to...

But Sisko and Kira have already walked on, letting Quark talk to himself.

**8    INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Dax stands where she was with Vaughn at the central Ops table as the extras, who feature more Bajorans in Starfleet uniforms than usual, continue to move around.

DAX

D-S-nine to Dominion vessel Nine-Seven-One. You are clear to depart. Safe journey.

She waits to receive the confirmation signal - the console beeps affirmatively. She turns to Vaughn.

DAX

Sir... permission to leave Ops. I  
need to meet with Doctor Bashir  
regarding his... request.

Vaughn knows what she really means, and sympathises, but  
also understands her desire to keep it professional.

VAUGHN

Permission granted, Lieutenant.  
Take all the time you need.

Grateful, Dax nods and trots up the stairs to the lift.

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

Nog and SHAR sit on the deck, working on panels and cables,  
their usual friendly mood. Right by them is a large window  
looking out onto open space. Nog plugs a large cable into a  
socket and throws a SWITCH. A computer screen nearby comes  
to life, and works through a boot-up sequence.

NOG

Checking...

The screen comes back with a positive bleep. Nog smiles and  
claps Shar on the back in congratulations.

NOG

I told you we could do it.

SHAR

I never doubted it.

NOG

Oh, really? Who was the one who  
thought the antenna alignment was  
wrong?

SHAR

That was me.

NOG

Who was the one who said we'd need  
twice as many flux capacitors as  
we actually did need?

SHAR

That was me too.

NOG

Who was the one -

SHAR

Nog, just because I was critical of some details doesn't mean I doubted we'd get the array online.

NOG

Hah - you say that now.

SHAR

Yes, and I would have said it then if anyone had asked.

Out of the window, they see Odo's Dominion ship streak away from the station, out into space. The wormhole bursts into life, the ship dives in, and the wormhole closes up again. Nog gazes out into space with a look of awe and pleasure.

NOG

Isn't it the most beautiful thing you've ever seen? I think the first time Jake took me to the Promenade to watch the wormhole opening was the first step on my road to joining Starfleet.

SHAR

For me, it was the sheer thrill of scientific discovery. I was determined to find a solution to my people's problems. We searched our own world for centuries with no answer, so I decided it must lie out there, among the stars.

NOG

Not to mention it was a chance to get away from your mother.

SHAR

(changing subject)

You speak of Jake often, Nog. It must have been difficult for you, not knowing if he was safe in the Gamma Quadrant.

NOG

Well, yeah, I guess. We grew up together here on the station, so it's always odd not having him around. Now he's gone again, off doing this big walkabout thing on Bajor. But at least I know it was his own choice to go. It was the same when I went to Earth to attend the Academy -

(catches himself)

- and I'm catching on to your tricks now, Shar. Whenever anyone gets into personal territory, you change the subject. I wish you'd just quit it. You don't have to do that with me anymore.

SHAR

(hangs head)

You're right, Nog, I'm sorry. I suppose it has become habit. And you are right... it was a chance to escape zhavey and her constant talk of obligations and things I should be doing. Being here on the station... I missed my bondmates terribly. But my friendships with you, and Laren, and Prynn... they were a great refuge for me.

NOG

And now?

SHAR

Now, they are a refuge from an altogether new pain. Delegate Keren said something that means more to me now than it did then.

NOG

Keren - your Yrythny friend?

SHAR

Yes... She said that to choose to leave your home was one thing. But to know you will never be allowed to go back... is quite another.

NOG

But you can still go home, surely? They're family. They haven't banished you altogether.

SHAR

I would not be welcome.

NOG

Well, then. If your friends here are so important... why did you stand up Prynn for lunch again?

Shar starts - he did not realise Nog knew about that. Instinctively, he tries to cover.

SHAR

The Dominion ship was due to arrive. Granted, it was T'rb's shift, but I felt the senior officer should...

NOG

(gently)

Shar. Stop it.

Still battling against his natural tendency to secrecy, Shar is hesitant to talk about it, but forces himself.

SHAR

Nog, you must understand... I have expected to bond with Anichent and Dizhei and Thriss all my life, since I was old enough to know what the word means. To go against the bond... to even think of another... is very difficult.

Although his shame suggests that he definitely is thinking about it anyway. Nog almost regrets bringing it up.

NOG

Shar, I know you loved Thriss. And I know you still love Anichent and Dizhei. But if you really have left that life behind, you can't cling on to it. You have to move on. You like Prynn, don't you?

SHAR

Yes, but -

NOG

Then take the chance. In Ferengi terms, she's offering you a prime opportunity, and she's waiting for you to seal the deal. Just because one contract fell through doesn't mean you shouldn't take a chance on another. I'm not saying you have to do anything drastic. Just let yourself be open to the idea. And see where it leads you.

Shar goes back to his work, thinking hard about that.

10 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

A normal afternoon-type crowd in the 1962 Las Vegas lounge. Kira and Sisko are perched at the bar, the only "real" people there. Kira still a little melancholy, Sisko excited about passing on his tradition. Sisko gestures to a waitress, who brings them two glasses of something.

KIRA

So what's this tradition? And how humiliating is it?

SISKO

Don't be so paranoid. We call it the Captain's Table, and it's really very simple. Once an officer makes captain, his or

her... "mentor" takes them to the nearest bar, and they drink.

Sisko hands a drink to Kira, clinks his to hers.

SISKO

The drinks are on the house -

KIRA

Don't let Quark hear that.

SISKO

- and the only payment is a story.

KIRA

(bemused)

A story?

SISKO

Yep. You tell me a story.

KIRA

Benjamin... you know I don't have much of an imagination when it comes to stories. You grow up just fighting to survive every day, and you don't have much time to be creative.

SISKO

Nerys, you have hundreds of stories. You've told me about working with Shakaar, about liberating Gallitep, discovering the truth about your mother... I know there's more. It doesn't have to be a new story, doesn't even have to be true. Just has to be worth the price of a drink.

KIRA

Well... let me think about it.

(changing subject)

Did you hear they're going to let me name our next new runabout?

SISKO

(laughing)

They're still giving you those things? This station must keep the whole runabout industry afloat.

KIRA

Hey, don't blame me for that. You started that tradition yourself. We're finally going to have a full complement of six runabouts. We've got the *Euphrates*, the *Nile*, the *Rio Grande*, the *Brahmaputra* and the *Missouri*. The last one is coming in a few months, and as Starfleet's chief representative in the Bajoran sector, I get to name it after a Bajoran river.

SISKO

About time too. Any ideas?

KIRA

(smile)

The *Yolja*, of course.

(Sisko smiles)

Speaking of, any news from Jake?

SISKO

He sent me a message to say he was fine. With him away, and my dad and Judith gone back to Earth, it almost feels quiet. Even with a new baby in the house.

KIRA

(wistful)

I envy you. You have more family than you know what to do with. My mom's dead, my dad's dead... Keiko and the chief took Kirayoshi back to Earth, and now to Cardassia...

SISKO

Didn't you tell me you had two younger brothers?

KIRA

Yep, Reon and Pohl. Both gone.  
It's just me now.

SISKO

Nerys... I'm sorry.

KIRA

(faux blasé)

It's just my life. Pohl died of  
malnutrition in the camps. And  
Reon... Reon was...

She drifts off, remembering. She gazes out into the crowd  
of milling '60s lounge-goers, and gradually, as if in slow  
motion, the crowd changes.

Cardassian soldiers in uniform begin to wind their way  
through the crowd, drinking and relaxing, playing tongo,  
being served by scantily clad Bajoran comfort girls.

Kira watches them go about their business, regretful. Sisko  
doesn't see them, of course, since they're Kira's memories.

SISKO

You've found your story, haven't  
you?

KIRA

I think so. It was towards the end  
of the Occupation.

(realising)

Wow. Only ten years ago. Feels  
like a whole other lifetime.  
Shakaar assigned me to infiltrate  
one of the most powerful organised  
crime syndicates on Bajor. Doblana  
Base managed critical pieces of  
the Cardassians' infrastructure,  
like communications. The Plin  
Syndicate ran their operation  
right alongside it, what they  
called The Officers' Club. The  
usual Cardassian vices. But  
Shakaar told me that all the

gambling, drinking and...  
companionship... didn't account  
for a tenth of their revenues.  
That was just the foam on the  
*raktajino*. A cover for their real  
business - major Alpha Quadrant  
black market hub. Bajorans, using  
the suffering of their own people  
as an opportunity to make profit  
for themselves. I despised them  
all. And my brother Reon stood at  
the top of their festering ranks.

Kira grits her teeth, watching the Bajorans flirting and  
debasing themselves before the Cardassians.

Then out of nowhere, a FIST swings towards her and PUNCHes  
her hard in the face.

MATCH CUT to:

**11**    **INT. HOLOSUITE**

Occupation-era Kira falls to the floor from the punch. She  
is in dirty, ripped clothes, her long hair is wild and  
loose, and she is furious.

With barely a second to catch her breath, she looks back up  
at the Cardassian SOLDIER who is standing over her with a  
sneer, and she bares her teeth.

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT ONE**

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

### **12**    INT. HOLOSUITE

Where we were, an empty holosuite set, as Occupation-era Kira gets to her feet to swing a wild, desperate blow back at the Cardassian soldier. Her face is bruised, her teeth are brown and rotten, and her body is thin and unfed.

As Kira and the dispassionate Cardassian trade blows...

KIRA (v.o.)

My mission was to worm my way into this nest of traitors and kidnap Glinn Gundar. He'd designed some upgrade to the Cardassians' comm network and we needed his "help" to stop it going online. I just had to get him out of there - what happened to him after that wasn't my problem. Nothing to do with Reon. Didn't even have to see him. Not that I hadn't seen his face on every Bajoran collaborator I'd ever killed.

The Cardassian gets a good shot in. Kira turns back to him, adrenaline and sheer hatred fuelling her. She rushes him with a furious flurry of punches.

KIRA (v.o.)

Straightforward enough. I just had to get through the job interview.

One last vicious PUNCH from Kira, and the Cardassian crumples to the floor. She catches her breath, watching the Cardassian fizzle out of sight - he is a hologram.

A door behind her opens, and she turns to see LIAWN, a male Bajoran functionary at the Officers' Club. He seems unimpressed, while Kira still seethes, holding her wounds.

LIAWN

Peri will fix your teeth and attend to your wounds. I've provided you with enough credits to get you anywhere on Bajor. Go with the Prophets.

KIRA

(incensed)

I mopped the floor with that guy. What do you want from me? How dare you turn me away! I need this job!

LIAWN

I'm almost persuaded. Why do you really seek employment with Plin Patra? Who are you working for?

Kira sags, realising she will have to play this different. She lies as convincingly as she is able.

KIRA

I admit, I served in the resistance before. But I'm done with it. I can't take it anymore. Any belief, any dream I had that we could end this occupation... I'm exhausted. I want to get out of the cold and the mud and the starvation. While I still can.

Another Bajoran woman steps into view, making a show of clapping politely. She is PLIN, the middle-aged but elegant and whip-smart leader of this operation.

PLIN

Well done. I don't believe a word of it, of course, but our members might. Change your clothes, let Peri fix your wounds, then come to my office and we'll talk.

Then Plin turns and walks away. Liawn waits disapprovingly for Kira to follow them.

KIRA (v.o.)

Plin Patra. We'd never met face to face, but I knew her from the Cardassian news feeds. They offered Plin's warm relations with them as proof that they could work and play well with Bajorans.

As Kira follows them out of the holosuite...

**13    INT. PLIN'S OFFICE**

Plin sits confident and relaxed at her desk. It is simple and unostentatious - she doesn't want to push any buttons.

The door opens and Kira enters - better clothes, a bit cleaned up from earlier, but she remains suspicious and tense. Plin motions for her to take the seat opposite.

KIRA

You're not worried that my scrubbing brush skin will snag your fabric?

PLIN

Reon said you had a sense of humour.

KIRA

I'm sure Reon's had a lot more fun than me over the last ten years.

PLIN

On that we agree.

Plin looks Kira up and down, notes her tense posture.

PLIN

You don't trust anyone. Good. That will make this easier.

(beat)

You don't want a job. You're not leaving anything. You're here on assignment from the resistance.

(Kira swallows hard)

You're wondering how I know.

KIRA

Do you read minds as well?

PLIN

I read people. That's my business, and I'm very good at business. In twelve years in the resistance, you have never once faltered in your loyalty. All of those in my circles keep a close eye on you, looking for vulnerabilities in that impenetrable moral armour, wondering when we'll wake with your knife at our throats.

KIRA

So why am I sitting here and not in a transport back to Dakhur?

PLIN

Because I share your loyalties. We fight for the same side.

KIRA

(derisive snort)

Please. You can do better than that.

Plin gets quietly up from her chair and leans in close to Kira. She whispers something directly into Kira's ear. Kira's face drops in total surprise. Plin returns to her seat, a smug and satisfied smile on her face.

KIRA

How do you -

PLIN

Can you imagine a better cover for a resistance cell? Look beneath the dabo, and the Cardassians with their comfort girls on their arms, and you'll see how perfect our set-up is. You can work here, but there are no solo operations in the Officers' Club. I won't allow you to blow our cover, even

inadvertently. I need to know the details of your op.

KIRA

You honestly expect me to tell you that? You may have lobbed an authentic-looking grenade in my lap, but I still don't trust you.

PLIN

(chuckling)

Excellent. You shouldn't. But we work together, or you're on that transport back to Dakhur, and no apology to Shakaar. Fair?

Kira nods, but still uncertain. Plin brings it to a close.

PLIN

Good. I'll give you back to Liawn and Peri, get you started on your improvement regimen. I have much higher expectations of those who work for me than Shakaar does.

As she dismisses Kira back out of the room...

KIRA (v.o.)

So I'd passed the first test.

**14**    **MONTAGE**

-- Kira soaks in a restorative cream bath.

-- She sits on a primitive biobed as Liawn removes her scars with a dermal regenerator.

-- She sits in a staff dining room, eating meat and vegetables and drinking protein shakes.

-- Kira stands in front of a mirror, looking much healthier and cleaner. She inspects her clear skin, her shorter hair (now in "1x01 Emissary" bob style), and runs a tongue over her brand new sparkling white teeth.

**15**    **INT. OFFICERS' CLUB**

Liawn leads the newly cleaned-up Kira into the main club area (redress of Vic's lounge). She is wearing simple but attractive clothes, and they keep to corners and shadows.

The room features plush sofas, velvet curtains, tables filled with buffets and drinks and desserts. Servers flit about with trays of drinks and trolleys for cleaning, trying not to be noticed as the Cardassian officers gamble and party with their Bajoran dabo girls and comfort women.

LIAWN

Let me be clear. The Officers' Club does not have customers, it has members. Members receive benefits, they do not transact for services. Understood?

Kira nods. She watches a young, beautiful and barely clothed comfort girl slink past, pouring herself around a dumpy Cardassian male, fawning over him. Kira tries to control her habitual sneer.

KIRA

I suppose there's a pecking order. Senior guls and legates receive the companionship of someone like her. And lower officers have to make do with the likes of me.

Liawn looks askance at her, and his formerly stiff face bursts into raucous LAUGHTER. Kira is insulted.

LIAWN

Oh forgive me, forgive me. It's entirely my own fault. My dear, you are not fit to provide benefits to our members.

KIRA

(angry)

I'm not fit to *frinx* a Cardassian?!

LIAWN

You would be repugnant to them!

KIRA

You think it would be the highlight of my life to be pawed by those cold-blooded, lizard-skinned murderers?

LIAWN

(suddenly dark)

I advise you to stop there if you ever want any hope of serving them.

Kira is about to explode with indignation, but pulls herself under control for the sake of her mission.

KIRA

So what exactly will I be doing?

LIAWN

Housemaid.

Liawn leads Kira on along one side of the room, staying out of the way. Kira observes the crowd closely as she goes, watching how the servers are ignored as the Cardassians pay all their attention to the fawning comfort girls.

KIRA (v.o.)

Not good enough to sleep with them, only good enough for their garbage. Lucky me. But as I watched them, I thought about what Plin told me. I saw the comfort girls pouring *kanar*, sitting in their laps and giggling, filling them full of *kalava* seeds. The Cardassians did all the indulging, but the Bajorans enabled it. Plin's people held all the power here, and the Cardassians just gave it to them.

Kira's pique gives way to intrigue and admiration as she begins to understand how the system works.

Kira has been assigned a small, bare cabin and shares it with one other. She is sitting on her bunk, resting and thinking, when TEARA enters - the gorgeous comfort girl from earlier.

She is friendly enough in the circumstances, and chats to Kira while going to her own bunk, shaking the gold coins from her bosom and other strategic locations.

TEARA

Hey. Nice to meet you.

KIRA

Nerys. Kira Nerys.

TEARA

Plin Teara. Call me Teara though - everyone does. Let me be the first to give you a tip as your official welcome to the club. You won't make credits like this -

(re the coins  
from her bosom)

- until you become a companion. But play nice and you should get to the gambling tables quick enough. Only took me a season to advance out of house-keeping when I started. I can show you around the place later, if you want.

KIRA

Yeah, thanks. That would be great.

**17    INT. OFFICERS' CLUB**

Kira is now in her housemaid's uniform. She is working on cleaning away used plates and glasses from the Cardassian guests, putting them in her trolley. She keeps her head down, gets on with her work, watching every move they make.

KIRA (v.o.)

Plin Teara. I wasn't naive enough to assume she was resistance too - not everyone at the Officers' Club

was. But I knew she'd be reporting back to her mother often enough. Still, she was good as her word, and within days I knew my way around the club like a natural, including all the secret passages that let the staff work undetected by the club's members.

She continues to weave her way around the gaming tables and the drunken Cardassians, who all ignore her completely.

KIRA (v.o.)

I also realised again that Plin knew what she was doing after all. Housekeeping was the perfect place for me to work, because as far as the Cardassians were concerned, I was invisible. When nobody sees you, you see everything.

As Kira works, a tall and handsome Bajoran man steps out of the background to attend to a Cardassian guest. The Bajoran wears a good suit and a confident air - management. He deals MOS with the officer, smoothing over a minor concern.

Kira notices him, almost recognises him. After a few moments of observing, she realises it is her brother REON.

KIRA (v.o.)

I caught my breath. I hadn't seen him once since I got there. I wasn't sure I was seeing him now. Maybe I was imagining it. But his eyes, his smile, seemingly so sincere... and so much like my mother's. Reon, my brother, the collaborator. But was he, really? Or was he pretending, like Plin?

Reon's business with the Cardassian is over, with the help of a large handful of gold coins and a near-naked dabo girl. Then he puts a finger to his ear, receiving a communication. He doesn't look happy. He turns to leave; Kira has to stop herself from calling out loud after him.

Making a snap decision, Kira quickly but quietly puts her cleaning tools back in her trolley and hurries after him.

**18**    **INT. CORRIDOR**

Kira emerges into a corridor, pushing her trolley before her, just in time to see Reon disappear around a corner. She quickly stores her trolley in an alcove and follows him, taking care to stay a discreet distance.

**19**    **ANOTHER CORRIDOR**

Kira turns another corner to see a door closing, one of a series along the corridor wall. These are the suites where Cardassians go for "companionship". Each door has a light over it; some are green, some are yellow. The one above the door Reon just disappeared through is RED - do not enter.

This corridor is busier with workers. As Kira watches, the giggling dabo girl from the lounge room leads her drunken Cardassian soldier down the corridor and through another door at the far end. The light above the door turns from green to red.

Not sure what to do now, Kira hunkers down outside the door, pulls out a cloth from her uniform and pretends to clean. When a couple of other Bajoran workers have passed her and paid no attention, she pulls open a control panel and begins disconnecting wires and moving isolinear rods.

In another moment, the light over her door changes from red to yellow. Kira replaces the panel, stands up, straightens her uniform. She subtly checks around to make sure she is not being watched, then pulls out her housekeeper's ID, slips it through a sensor by the door. It opens, and she quickly steps inside, the door closing behind her.

**20**    **INT. GUEST SUITE**

The room is darkened. Kira creeps in, not sure what she will find. Faint voices ahead of her in the darkness seem agitated, worried. She takes a few steps further in...

...and a hand clamps over her mouth, YANKing her head back. Another arm around her waist, pinning her arms. A darkness-shrouded mouth whispers into her ear...

TEARA  
(angry whisper)  
Don't make a sound.

Kira's attacker pushes her away, into the main body of the suite, where she stumbles and collapses onto a couch. Kira looks up to see that it is Teara, worried and tense.

TEARA  
Stay out of this, Nerys.

On Kira's surprise and fear...

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

FADE IN:

**21 INT. GUEST SUITE**

Kira looks to the side, where she sees Reon crouching over a collapsed and unconscious Cardassian, scanning him with a basic tricorder. He glances up, not surprised to see Kira. Near them is a smashed bottle, wine spilling out onto the carpet. Teara, in a slinky silk robe, stalks over to Reon.

TEARA

Well? Will the overdose kill him?

REON

Definitely not. In fact he could regain consciousness any minute. We have to move him.

TEARA

(to Kira)

Muss the bed so it looks like it's been used.

Kira does, still confused by whatever is going on here.

REON

Nerys, help us get him onto the bed. He can't wake until he's had a memorable encounter with Teara.

Kira does that too, still without a word.

TEARA

At least I'm already undressed, thank the Prophets for small blessings.

Teara throws off her robe, revealing barely legal lingerie. The Cardassian begins to groan his way to consciousness.

TEARA

He's waking up! We have to get him undressed. Now, Nerys!

With a grimace, Kira helps to pull off his boots. Once he is down to his underwear, Teara climbs onto the bed, draping herself over him.

Reon opens a secret panel and pulls out a small device. He attaches it to the Cardassian's forehead and presses a few buttons. The Cardassian settles back into blissful sleep.

REON

There. That should keep him out long enough to get this mess cleaned up.

Then he turns to Kira, his face breaking into a big grin.

KIRA

What could you possibly find amusing about this?!

REON

You. Always off on some stupid nosy quest to save the world. You haven't changed in ten years.

KIRA

Well, you're pretty much a stranger to me at this point.

TEARA

Could you possibly have this family reunion another time? You nearly ruined this op, Nerys.

Reon is chastened, and becomes a bit more stern with Kira.

REON

She's right. But since you insisted on being nosy, I might as well tell you what was going on here. That brandy that's currently staining the carpet was laced with a little something that loosens up our beloved members' tongues. Teara was trying to find out when Gundar is supposed to arrive. Unfortunately somebody added three

times the normal dose, and he had a seizure.

KIRA

(fake innocent)

Who's Gundar?

TEARA

Oh please. You've been waiting for that information since the day you got here, and don't bother with the innocent act because it's the only thing worth risking an operative of your calibre for. I know exactly who you are, Nerys.

KIRA

Why not use Gundar yourselves?

TEARA

I asked Mother the same thing. She said you were doing her a favour and she was letting you have Gundar in return. Although I can't imagine what you can do that we can't.

REON

(off tricorder)

He's starting to come round. Teara, get ready to welcome him back from happy land. We'll just throw a rug over the stain.

TEARA

I'm sure we had a wonderful time. Find out who doctored that brandy, Reon. It nearly killed him.

(tenderly)

I'll see you later?

Nodding, and with a tender smile, Reon takes Teara's hand for a moment. Kira sees the look that passes between them - she realises with a start that they are a couple. Then Reon grabs Kira's arm and drags her out of the room.

**22**    **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

Where current-day Kira and Sisko sit at the bar, as she relates her story.

KIRA

That was the first time I'd seen my brother in ten years. Quite the get-together.

SISKO

So he was with the resistance after all? Just like Plin?

KIRA

(sad smile)

So it seemed.

Sisko notices the non-answer...

**23**    **INT. PLIN'S OFFICE**

Occupation-era Kira sits opposite Plin. A small device on the desk emits a LIGHT and a HUM - a jamming device. Kira is tense; they talk in hushed, conspiring tones.

PLIN

You're the only one outside my own operation that's in a position to identify the double.

KIRA

And what makes you think your operation's been compromised?

PLIN

About six months ago, we got a visit from a military medical official, one who'd never been here before. We were nervous why he'd suddenly come now, so one of my girls... loosened him up. He let it spill that he was here to follow up on a special patient - a Cardassian who had been surgically altered to look Bajoran.

Kira tenses - this is a very bad thing. Plin sighs sadly.

PLIN

We don't know any details. If it was a male or a female. We combed through every security recording. Talked with every witness. The only people we could specifically confirm him having contact with were my own senior operatives.

Kira puts it all together, and doesn't like the answer.

KIRA

So there are two possibilities. Either the meeting happened and you didn't know about it... or one of your people is a plant.

(Plin nods)

And since I've never been here, I might be able to see something you can't because you're too close.

PLIN

Precisely.

KIRA

Teara's on the list, isn't she?

PLIN

(nods sadly)

As are Reon and about ten more of my most trusted agents. I don't know who I can trust anymore. I need you to tell me.

Kira sympathises, and thinks about it for a moment.

KIRA

I'll do what I can. But my own operation comes first.

Plin has no choice but to graciously accept Kira's terms. As Kira gets up to leave the room...

**24**    **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

Sisko shakes his head at the convolutions.

SISKO

A Cardassian infiltrator disguised  
as a Bajoran resistance member,  
disguised as a Cardassian  
collaborator...

KIRA

They do love their intricate  
plans.

Sisko smiles, unable to deny that...

**25**    **INT. CORRIDOR**

... as Kira exits Plin's office and finds Reon waiting for  
her outside. He sighs, looking into her eyes.

REON

So we meet again, Nerys.

KIRA

We wouldn't be meeting at all if I  
hadn't followed you.

REON

I wanted to figure you out first.  
See if you were still the bossy  
big sister I remembered. Now that  
you know what we're up against,  
can you blame me?

Kira keeps quiet, not sure what she is allowed to say.

REON

I can't undo the past, Nerys. And  
I won't apologise for my choices.  
But we can start from now.

KIRA

Pohl died. This place, this life  
you've led. You had the resources  
to save him, and you didn't.

REON

I know that. I did what I had to.

Kira can still only glare at him, not ready to forgive him. Not pushing it, Reon takes her arm and leads her away.

REON

Come on, Nerys. We'll talk more over brunch. If you still hate me when we're done, at least you'll have heard my side of the story. But we're on the same side now.

But are they? Kira can't be sure.

**26    INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

JULIAN BASHIR is moving busily around the infirmary, making final checks and collecting personal items, throwing them into a bag. Ezri Dax stands to one side, watching him.

BASHIR

Doctor Girani has everything under control, but now this is a fully Starfleet facility, Medical wants one of their own here as well. So I've arranged for a Doctor Simon Tarses to help out while I'm away. He's supposed to be brilliant - served on the *Enterprise* a few years back as a med tech. And Kristen knows what she's doing - between the three of them they should handle any problems.

DAX

Julian, are you sure this is the right time to take a vacation?

BASHIR

It's the perfect time. I've got tons leave saved up, and it looks like all the drama may finally be over for a while. I haven't been back to Earth in years, and after

our experience with the Cathedral  
- and other recent events - I  
think it's time I see my parents  
and... talk about some things.

DAX

(quiet, sad)

We were supposed to take that trip  
together, remember?

BASHIR

I remember.

DAX

If there's things you need to talk  
about, maybe we should both go and  
see Counsellor Matthias, or -

Bashir steps closer to her, taking her hands gently.

BASHIR

Ezri, it's okay. Really. I'm fine.

DAX

I'm just afraid that you're  
leaving because of me.

BASHIR

Well... frankly, yes, I am. At  
least partly. But not in a bad  
way. If I have to get used to not  
having you by my side twenty-six  
hours a day, I may as well get  
started sooner rather than later.  
I won't say I'm thrilled about us  
breaking up, but I'm okay. Okay?

DAX

Yeah... I guess. Just... stay in  
touch, alright?

BASHIR

I promise.

Zippering up his bag, he pecks her chastely on the cheek and  
walks out to the Promenade, leaving her a bit deflated.

27 **INT. STAFF DINING HALL**

Occupation-era Kira sits eating alone, minding her own business. Another cleaning girl, MENA, comes and sits opposite her with her own tray of bland and boring food.

MENA

Hey, Nerys. Sorry to hear about your transfer.

KIRA

What?

MENA

Oh... you didn't know? Yeah, I just checked the rosters, and you're not working the senior suites anymore. You're back down on junior suites. Guess you must have pissed somebody off, huh?

Kira sits there, suddenly very worried.

MENA

I don't know what Teara's problem is...

KIRA

Mena, what do you mean? Teara is responsible for this?

MENA

(shrug)

I wouldn't take it personally. She gets in these moods sometimes.

Mena carries on tucking into her food as Kira begins to worry even more.

28 **INT. KIRA'S QUARTERS**

Occupation-era Kira sits on her bunk, folding clothes.

KIRA (v.o.)

The change made no sense. I'd worked my way up the ranks, and more than that, I was expecting Gundar any day. I needed to be working the senior suites to get access to him. So I sent a note to Plin, just telling her I'd been reassigned. I guess she followed up on it.

Teara bursts into their shared quarters, raging at Kira.

TEARA

Keep my mother out of this!

KIRA

(calmly)

You stay out of my work, I'll stay out of yours.

TEARA

I don't know why she has such faith in you. Her and Reon both. She's so desperate to protect our work, she's grasping at whatever thin hope she can. Never mind that your presence here puts us all at risk. But believe me, Nerys. I'll be watching your every step.

KIRA

No, you won't. Because I'll be behind you... watching yours.

As the two women stare each other down...

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT THREE**

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

### **29**    INT. GUEST SUITE

Occupation-era Kira is in her cleaning uniform, fluffing pillows, straightening sheets, replacing empty bottles.

KIRA (v.o.)

So I was back on senior suites, except that I added surveillance of Teara and her clients to my schedule. She kept a low profile for a few days, until I noticed an anomaly in the records.

### **30**    INT. KIRA'S QUARTERS

Off-hours, Kira sits on her bunk in low lights, watching the screen of a portable data padd, displaying a guest suite as seen from a hidden camera in a high corner.

Teara is there, coquettishly curled on the lap of a large and ugly Cardassian soldier, GUNDAR. Kira is paying close attention, but also keeping an eye on her door.

KIRA (v.o.)

I knew that one of the girls had abruptly taken ill mid-shift. I checked around, and discovered that Teara had taken over for her. But there was no mention of it in the reports. And I couldn't go to Plin without absolute proof that Teara was hiding something - this was her daughter. Then I found it.

Kira's face drops as she sees something bad.

### **31**    INT. REON'S OFFICE

Even simpler and sparser than Plin's. Reon is sat behind his desk, doing paperwork. The door opens and Kira enters, extremely agitated and worried.

REON

Nerys?

KIRA

Can I talk?

Understanding the subtext, Reon presses a few buttons and a device on his desk, like Plin's, begins to glow and hum.

KIRA

She called him 'Father.'

REON

Who?

KIRA

Teara. I saw it on the visual feed from this afternoon. She called Gundar 'Father.'

REON

Gundar's here?

KIRA

Yes! Teara had him in the suites this afternoon.

REON

Are you sure you heard her right?

KIRA

No question.

REON

Nerys... our members have all sorts of weird sexual fetishes. Who's to say it's not just part of some perverted fantasy of his -

KIRA

(insistent)

She called him Father in Cardassian.

That's definitely not good.

**32**     **INT. OFFICERS' CLUB**

Another day in the main lounge area. Kira cleans and tidies, ignored by everyone, but keeping a close eye on Teara as she flirts her way between the various officers.

KIRA (v.o.)

Without telling Plin, Reon gave me access to any surveillance feeds and data I wanted. Nothing I found bode well. I found out that Gundar did have a daughter, and that when she dropped out of sight two years earlier, some people thought she'd joined the Obsidian Order.

Gundar enters. Teara goes straight to him, beaming wide, arms outstretched. He swings her round in delight. Then she takes his hand and leads him off towards the suites.

Kira quickly finishes her work and pushes her trolley out towards the back corridors, determined to follow them.

**33**     **INT. KIRA'S QUARTERS**

Kira rushes into her quarters, pulls the padd assembly out of a hidden cabinet, and switches it on - just in time to see Teara lead Gundar by the hand into the suite. On the screen, Teara throws her arms around Gundar flirtatiously.

TEARA (screen)

I'm so pleased to see you again.

GUNDAR (screen)

And I you. I feel as though it's been a lifetime. Come, my child. Sit on my lap and we will talk as we have before.

Gundar drops onto a couch and pats his lap, inviting Teara to sit. Kira cringes as Teara childishly does so. She pulls a small medallion from her bosom and secretly shows it him.

TEARA (screen)

I kept this since last time.

GUNDAR (screen)  
What a thoughtful girl you are.  
I hope I can repay your -

Then his face freezes as he recognises the object. It's a signal of some kind, and it worries him. Kira sees this.

KIRA  
Computer, freeze image. Zoom in.

The image freezes and zooms in on Teara's hand, holding the medallion. Kira tenses. Then she moves the frozen image up to Gundar's face - barely concealed panic.

**34**    **INT. CORRIDOR**

Kira rushes down the corridor towards the suites, trying not to appear too suspicious to the other Bajoran workers but definitely angry and terrified.

She reaches the suites, swipes her pass card through the sensor and the door opens. She pulls a weapon from a concealed holster, raises it, and steps inside.

**35**    **INT. GUEST SUITE**

Kira enters, weapon raised, only to find Teara waiting for her, her own weapon raised and pointed straight at Kira. Gundar sits to one side, completely caught off guard.

TEARA  
Took you long enough. I thought  
I'd have to start without you.

KIRA  
I prefer a dramatic entrance.

TEARA  
Put down your weapon or I'll kill  
Gundar. What use will he be to  
your cause then?

KIRA  
You people never cease to amaze  
me. You're right up there with the  
Romulans when it comes to loyalty.

TEARA

I don't know what you're babbling about, but I'll be damned if I let you destroy my life's work.

Kira DIVES for Teara's legs, tackling her to the ground, just in time to avoid the FIRE from Teara's weapon. The gun skitters from Teara's hand. The still-surprised Gundar reaches for it, but Kira aims a KICK at his bulbous belly.

Kira and Teara both get up, reaching for the phaser. Kira reaches it first, just enough to knock it away into a corner. While Gundar coughs and splutters, Teara charges.

Kira catches her and squeezes her throat. Teara struggles and scratches, but Kira is stronger. She throws Teara against the wall. Her skull connects with a sickening CRUNCH, and Teara slumps to the floor, dead.

A short and brutal fight, and it is over just as quickly. Kira stands, looking over to Gundar, who is still wheezing.

KIRA

I didn't kick you that hard, you big baby.

Kira grabs a sheet off the bed, rolls it into a rope and begins to tie Gundar's arms behind his back. Then she grabs a thin scarf off Teara's body and gags him with it.

KIRA (v.o.)

This whole thing had gone down so fast, I didn't have time to think about how I'd get Gundar out of there, or to signal Shakaar that he was on his way. One last time, I had to trust Reon to help me.

**36    INT. GUEST SUITE**

Some time later. Gundar sits shaking and terrified of Kira, while she paces the room impatiently in front of him.

Reon enters, agitated, pushing one of the cleaning trolleys in front of him. Kira smiles, impressed at his ingenuity.

Reon pulls out a hypospray and injects Gundar in the neck. The Cardassian slumps unconscious, and between them, Kira and Reon manhandle him into the empty space inside the cleaning trolley.

That done, Reon's eyes drift sadly over to Teara's body.

KIRA

I'm sorry, Reon.

REON

So am I. Though I suppose I'm not entirely surprised. She's been acting strange for a while now.

KIRA

The real Teara might still be alive.

REON

You don't believe that.

KIRA

No, I don't.

REON

We should probably get going.

Nodding sadly, Kira begins to push the trolley.

REON

We probably shouldn't walk to the shuttle bay together. Management don't typically accompany housemaids on their rounds. You take Gundar - I'll meet you there.

KIRA

(re Teara's body)

What about -

REON

(quietly)

I'll take care of it.

37 INT. CORRIDOR

Kira walks alone through the corridors, pushing the trolley. None of the other workers pay her much attention.

KIRA (v.o.)

I'd killed for the resistance before. And more than a few of my kills had been premeditated. I wasn't squeamish about dealing death when necessary. Why this one felt different, I couldn't say.

38 INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR

A small boxy elevator, taking Kira down to the shuttle bay.

KIRA (v.o.)

I thought back on my confrontation with Teara... and it hit me. She never actually admitted to being the double.

Suddenly confused and worried, Kira pulls out a small comm device and presses a few buttons. After a moment...

PLIN (comm)

This is Plin.

KIRA

Teara's dead. I killed her because I had reason to believe she was the double.

PLIN (comm)

You should have come to me first. It didn't have to end like -

KIRA

Listen to me. I might have been wrong. There's a chance Teara was framed. Reon gave -

PLIN (comm)

We shouldn't be talking like this. Why don't I meet you and we can -

KIRA  
I'm gone, Plin. We're only having  
this conversation because I want  
justice.

She taps off the comm, puts it away, and waits.

**39**    **INT. SHUTTLE BAY**

An impressively large room, big enough to service this entire base. Half a dozen Cardassian-design shuttles wait behind a row of passcard checkpoints.

Elevator doors open and Kira tentatively steps out, pushing her trolley. The area is deserted and ominous. Then Reon steps out of the shadows, beckoning for Kira to follow him.

REON  
Come on. Follow me. I'll help you  
secure Gundar. You've contacted  
Shakaar for the rendezvous?

KIRA  
I'll do that once we're away.

REON  
Can you afford to wait that long?  
We need to get out of here, fast.

KIRA  
Why? What's wrong?

REON  
I'll tell you once we're clear.

**40**    **INT. SHUTTLE BAY**

They have reached a shuttle, and Kira and Reon are just hauling Gundar's body up the short staircase into its cockpit. Just as they heave him across the threshold...

PLIN (o.s.)  
You decided to throw a going away  
party without me. How unlike you.

Kira and Reon turn to see Plin standing behind them, angry and tearful, holding a weapon on Reon. Coming back down the steps, Kira looks between them, confused.

REON

Plin... what are you doing?

PLIN

I checked the logs, Reon. You set Teara up. You made it look like she was the double, when she was just following your instructions.

Kira's face drops, and she turns to Reon, disappointed and angry. Reon sees this, shakes his head, chuckles sadly.

REON

So, you're back to believing I've lived down to all your worst expectations. Feeling morally superior to your collaborator brother about now, eh, Nerys?

She spits at him, and he flinches back, genuinely hurt.

PLIN

We've only got a short time before shift change, and then this place will be streaming with people. Nerys, take my weapon. I'll secure Gundar.

Kira takes Plin's weapon, keeping it trained on Reon. Then Plin trots up the steps and drags Gundar's unconscious body deeper into the shuttle. Reon steps closer to Kira.

REON

This time your inability to let go of the past will get you killed.

KIRA

Don't come any closer -

But he lunges forward, pulling her in tight and whispering desperately into her ear.

REON

Listen to me. There is no double.  
I scanned Teara's body. She's as  
Bajoran as you and me. She was set  
up and there's only one person who  
could have done it.

Kira's eyes flare, more confused than ever. She struggles,  
but Reon holds her tight and continues.

REON

There is no systems upgrade. Plin  
is in trouble with the Cardassians  
and she's using you to sell out  
Shakaar as some kind of loyalty  
test. Here's the proof. Check for  
yourself. But whatever you do,  
don't go straight to Shakaar. Go  
anywhere else.

He discreetly pops a comm chip into her uniform pocket.  
Then he pushes himself away from her, takes a step back.

REON

Aim your weapon.

Tears in her eyes, trembling, Kira does as he says. She  
speaks loud enough for Plin to hear, crying as she does.

KIRA

You won't get away with this, Reon  
or whatever your name is. You can  
tell your Cardassian masters that  
they'll have to do better than  
this if they want to break Bajor.

Plin appears, comes back down the steps to Kira.

PLIN

The shuttle's ready to go. I can  
help you through Cardassian  
security much faster than if you  
go on your own.

Kira looks nervously back and forth between the two. Which one is lying and which one is telling the truth? Reon holds her eyes, pleading, subtly shakes his head.

KIRA

You have to stay here, Plin. You have to figure out what damage Reon's done to your operation - for Bajor's sake.

Plin reaches across, gently takes the weapon from Kira's hand, keeping it trained on Reon. Kira backs up the steps into the shuttle, never taking her eyes off Reon's. They reflect determination, peace with his decision, and urging for her to get away while she can.

PLIN

Go with the Prophets, Nerys.

KIRA (v.o.)

I knew then that leaving Reon there would mean his death. If he was a Cardassian double, Plin would kill him in revenge for Tera. If he wasn't, and Plin had betrayed the resistance to the Cardassians, like he said, then she would kill him to protect herself. Either way, my brother was dead.

Kira clammers backwards through the shuttle's hatch. At the last second before the hatch closes, she sees Reon lunge at Plin, fighting for the weapon. The hatch seals shut, and Kira hears the weapon fire. She gasps in fear and tears.

FADE OUT:

**END OF ACT FOUR**

## ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

### **41**    EXT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - NIGHT

A small, weak-looking sublight Bajoran shuttle flies through the snowy skies over Bajor's planetary surface.

### **42**    INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Occupation-era Kira pilots, keeping a tight hold on the ship's controls. Refusing to let the tears out again, clinging to the certainty that she did what was necessary. Somewhere behind her we can see Gundar still tied up and slumped unconscious in a corner.

SISKO (v.o.)  
Nerys... I'm so sorry.

### **43**    INT. VIC'S LOUNGE

Sisko and Kira sit where they were at the bar. Kira gazes out at the milling crowd - no Cardassians or Bajorans now, just 1962 Las Vegas partiers. She is not crying now. She made her peace with this a while ago. It's just still sad.

SISKO  
Did you ever find out for sure -

KIRA  
No. The chip he gave me, it was a map of all the Cardassian patrols in the area, and how to avoid them. It got me out of there alive. But nothing about doubles or secret agents or anything like that. So... whether my brother died as a hero, giving his life to get me to safety with the information Shakaar needed... or as a collaborator, rotting in a Cardassian prison while someone else walked around wearing his face... I never knew.

SISKO

Nerys, please forgive me. This was supposed to be a celebration, a happy time. I never meant to dredge up bad memories.

KIRA

No, Benjamin, that's okay. I guess I'm just a little maudlin today. I... get sad when people go away.

SISKO

Like to the other side of the galaxy.

KIRA

(sad smile)

You'd think I'd be used to it by now. The people around me have a tendency to go away. Lucky I don't have a fragile ego or I might take start taking it personally.

SISKO

I know what it's like to have to make the tough call. During the war, I made decisions I never dreamed I'd have to make. But the thing is... once you take that seat at the Captain's Table...

KIRA

(in other words)

Once you join the Officers' Club...

SISKO

(accepting that)

...Then the buck stops with you. You can surround yourself with good friends, people you trust. But you're the one who's out there, making those decisions. Not your staff, not the admirals. You.

Kira nods, understanding what he is getting at.

SISKO

Nerys, don't misunderstand me. I will be here for you as much as I can. You can always come to me for advice. But in the end, it comes down to the decision you make. To run, to fight, to leave someone behind. And there's nobody else can bear that burden but you.

KIRA

No pressure.

SISKO

But that's why you need friends. You promise me, Nerys - call me, any time, if you need to talk.

She smiles, warmly this time, comforted by her friend.

KIRA

I promise. Now come on. We've been in here all afternoon. You've had your tradition. You've got a baby to look after, and I've got a station to run. So get.

He grins, and they jump lightly off their bar stools.

**44 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE (UPPER LEVEL)**

Taran'atar stands at the railing, watching the people go about their day below. People walking by almost absently give him a wide berth, isolating him. Only RO LAREN heads specifically for him, keeping it light and conversational.

TARAN'ATAR

(acknowledging)

Lieutenant.

RO

Taran'atar. I heard about what happened this morning. I'm sorry you're not happy here. I've had trouble fitting in places myself.

TARAN'ATAR

I was foolish. The Founder has given me an order. I must obey.

RO

It's not always that easy, I know. It's time for dinner. I wondered if you wanted to join me. You have to eat occasionally, don't you?

TARAN'ATAR

Yes. In the absence of the white, the Vorta gave me a replicator pattern for a nutrient broth that I must ingest once a month.

RO

Sounds tasty. I thought we could talk about some of your old missions for the Dominion. I'd be interested in hearing your tactical insights. I've had some interesting adventures myself.

TARAN'ATAR

(askance)

Ones in which you fought the Dominion?

RO

(delicately)

Some of them. But I do have other stories. So what do you say?

TARAN'ATAR

Lieutenant, I am a Jem'Hadar. I will not make small talk with you over cocktails.

RO

(amused)

And I'm not asking you to. We'd be exchanging tactical and cultural information at the same time as ingesting vital nutrients for

maintaining physical strength.  
That sounds efficient, doesn't it?

TARAN'ATAR  
(considers it)  
It does. I accept.

Turning, he walks towards the stairs, Ro following.

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

A usual evening meal-time crowd - pretty busy with eaters and drinkers, not so much gamblers right now.

Ro and Taran'atar approach a table. Ro pulls out a seat for the Jem'Hadar, who looks at it curiously. Eventually getting the gist, he takes the seat awkwardly. Ro joins him. Quark steps up to them, surprised, still wary of Taran'atar, and confused why Ro is socialising with him.

QUARK  
Lieutenant. Good to see you.

RO  
Hello, Quark. Can we see the dinner menu, please?

QUARK  
Right away. And for your "friend"?

Taran'atar pulls out an isolinear rod from a pocket in his overalls and hands it to Quark without a word. Quark nods and scuttles off, still quite mystified.

Above them, Kira and Sisko make their way together down the spiral staircase from the holosuites. Reaching the bottom, they spot Ro and Taran'atar together, and they all nod their acknowledgements. Kira is glad to see Taran'atar making an effort to make friends.

KIRA  
(to Sisko)  
Good friends. People you trust.

SISKO  
Exactly.

They continue on their way out, and pass Prynn Tenmei, sat again at a table, alone.

As Kira and Sisko leave to the Promenade, they pass Shar on his way in. He is tentative, nervous, but determined. As he approaches Prynn's table, she looks up, relieved and glad to see him. They sit together, and look at each other nervously but hopefully.

Panning up to the balconies, we see Elias Vaughn, sat alone at a table, drinking and watching Prynn with sadness. She doesn't see him. He is happy she is making friends too, but regretting that it is not yet with him.

**46    INT. DS9 - OPS CENTRE**

Evening shift in Ops. Ezri Dax is in command, standing at the central Ops table. No crises, no problems, just a normal evening shift. She looks around herself, at all the staff working their various stations.

She doesn't know most of these people. They are crew - good people but not friends. She is sad about Bashir going away, sad about a lot of things. Feeling lonely in a crowd.

Nog is at his engineering station. He gives a polite toothy smile. She forces a polite but unfelt smile in return, and turns back to her work.

**47    EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Final closing shot.

FADE OUT:

**THE END**