

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

8x04 - "Cold Fusion."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novels

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Avatar, Book 2

Written by SD Perry

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Abyss

Written by David Weddle & Jeffrey Lang

and the short story

Star Trek: S.C.E: Cold Fusion

Written by Keith RA DeCandido

TEASER

FADE IN:

1. EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Much as we left it, with the lower core gone, lights dimmed, and work bees buzzing around effecting repairs.

2 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Moderately busy, lunchtime. NOG and SHAR sit side by side at the bar - Nog happily crunching on a plate of crab-like things, Shar munching an exotic-looking salad.

NOG

So when Kira showed me that message from Odo, there wasn't really much I could say. It's amazing - he's billions of light years away, on the other side of the galaxy, and that man can still intimidate me.

SHAR

I thought you worked together on the station for some time.

NOG

Yes, and when we first met, he was arresting me for shoplifting. But once he vouched for that Jem'Hadar monster, there wasn't much I could do. I guess he's here to stay. Don't have to like it though.

SHAR

Did you receive Colonel Kira's invitation to the gathering this evening? I believe it is intended to welcome Taran'atar and the new Executive Officer.

NOG

I did, and I'm thrilled to say I won't be able to make it.

SHAR

Why not?

NOG

Oh, I didn't tell you, did I? I came up with a great idea for how to fix the station. I've just got to run a few details past the Colonel, and then I'm off.

QUARK bustles up to the bar to interrupt them.

QUARK

Speaking of things being off, can you take a look at replicator three for me while you're here? It's malfunctioning again, and I wouldn't ask except I can't afford to hire anyone after the beating I took on your best friend's party.

Quark turns to Shar, really playing it up...

QUARK (cont)

But Jake Sisko means so much to my nephew, I knew it was the right thing to do. I couldn't turn away from family. Now that his father's gone, we only have each other.

NOG

Uncle, the station is in tatters. Entire sections are shut down to conserve power. I have to find a way to replace the fusion core, keep the station running on batteries in the meantime, and run a full repair on the *Defiant*.

QUARK

(mock offended)

After all I do for you, that you could deny me a scant moment of your time, just to offer an opinion on a simple replicator...

The guilt isn't working, so Quark just goes for begging.

QUARK

Nog, just look at it, would you?
I'm your uncle.

NOG

Fine, I'll look at it before I go.
Can we finish eating now?

QUARK

You're too kind.

Quark leaves in a huff, and PRYNN TENMEI, helm officer of the *Defiant*, wanders up from behind.

TENMEI

Afternoon, boys. Coming to the party later?

NOG

Hi Prynn. I'm going to be off saving the station, I'm afraid. You'll have to tell me all about it when I get back.

TENMEI

Well, I'm gonna be a little late myself, I have to finish some work on the *Defiant* bridge. But if it's to welcome the new First Officer, I thought I should probably make an effort to meet the new boss. You know anything about him?

NOG

Not a thing - just that he came in on the *Enterprise*, I think.

TENMEI

Can't be all that bad, then. See you later, Nog, Shar.

SHAR

Ensign.

Tenmei heads out towards the Promenade. Shar's combadge chirps, and he answers with a tap.

SELZNER (comm)
Ops to Ensign ch'Thane. This is
Selzner. You have a call waiting.

SHAR
Put it through.

SELZNER (comm)
It's straight from the offices of
the Federation Council, Ensign, on
an authorised private channel.

Quark stops even pretending not to be listening, and gapes at Shar. Nog is surprised too. Shar is distressed, but covering it. This is embarrassing for him, but inevitable.

SHAR
Would you send it to my quarters,
please? I'll be there in a moment.

SELZNER (comm)
Ah, right. Affirmative. Ops out.

QUARK
Why is someone at the Federation
Council calling you, Ensign?

SHAR
(flustered)
My mother works for the Council.

QUARK
Oh really? That's interesting.
What does she do? Secretarial
work? Chef? Consultant? ch'Thane,
ch'Thane...

Shar gets up, looking like he wants to get out of there quick as possible...

SHAR
I apologise for leaving, Nog, but
I've been expecting this call...

NOG
Hey, that's alright, I always take
my father's calls, and --

QUARK
Your mother is Charivretha zh'Thane?

People look around - that was louder than Quark intended.
Shar is mortified, instantly moves to go...

QUARK
Wow. The blue science kid is
zh'Thane's son. You have a talent
for picking powerful friends, Nog.

NOG
What do you mean?

QUARK
zh'Thane holds the Andorian seat
on the Federation Council. She
represents her entire world.

Quark wanders away impressed, already wondering how he can
make a profit from this. Nog just looks after Shar...

3 EXT. SPACE - ESTABLISHING

A small Starfleet vessel, the USS *Da Vinci*, travels at
warp. It is Sabre class, a small, snub-nosed and punchy
vessel only slightly larger than the *Defiant*.

4 INT. DA VINCI - CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

A human male Captain, DAVID GOLD, white-haired, Jewish,
70s, sits behind his desk watching his personal screen.

VOICE (comm)
Message from Deep Space Nine, sir.

GOLD
On screen.

The screen changes to show the Starfleet seal, then the
face of Colonel KIRA NERYS in her regular uniform...

GOLD

Colonel. This is Captain Gold. Is everything alright?

KIRA (screen)

Hello, Captain. Yes, everything's fine. Don't worry, this is just a simple diversion call.

GOLD

So the last dispatch was correct? The Jem'Hadar who attacked your station were renegades?

KIRA (screen)

They were. Unfortunately, in the process of stopping them we were forced to eject our fusion core.

GOLD

Oy.

KIRA (screen)

That about sums it up. We still need your help putting the station back together, just not here at the station. You're to rendezvous with one of our runabouts, the *Rio Grande*, in the Trivas system, and meet up with Lieutenant Nog, our chief operations officer.

GOLD

And this will help the station?

KIRA (screen)

Let's hope so. We need to get this place operational before we run out of power. The lieutenant will have all the details.

GOLD

Whatever you say. We're happy to be of service however you need us.

KIRA (screen)
Captain, the Starfleet Corps of
Engineers has already been a great
help to us. And to be honest, if
you could accompany the *Rio Grande*
back to DS9, we could probably use
some more of that service.

GOLD
That should be doable. I've heard
good things about your station. In
fact, one of my engineers used to
serve there. It'll be a privilege
to visit, and to help out.

KIRA (screen)
The privilege will be ours, Captain.
And I wouldn't worry about the
mission either. Nog's a pro. I'm
sure it will go completely smoothly.

Famous last words...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Just enough to get us in, then:

6 INT. DS9 - OPS

The station feels dimmer, the pulses of the power system slower and duller. DAX stands at the central operations desk, keeping an eye on things. BOWERS is at tactical.

VAUGHN browses the various stations, looking over people's shoulders, learning his way around. TARAN'ATAR stands far back against the wall behind Bowers, silently observing.

Kira exits the command office and walks to Vaughn.

VAUGHN

Everything go alright with the *Da Vinci*?

KIRA

I made sure to appear as confident and unruffled as possible.

VAUGHN

I'm sure Captain Gold appreciated it. Nog knows what he's doing. The kid is smart, and he has style to burn.

KIRA

Style? Nog?

VAUGHN

Sure. His little scheme... his solution for all this. We can't go on the way we are, running on barely a third of the power the station's used to. Starfleet even floated the idea of scuttling the station altogether if we couldn't come up with an idea soon.

KIRA

That's not going to happen. I admit I was a little sceptical, but I hate to discourage Nog's initiative, especially when he's so new at the job...

VAUGHN

And you had no better ideas.

KIRA

Something like that.

VAUGHN

How are preparations coming for the event later?

KIRA

Quark's got it all under control. He tried to sell me on another big party like the one for Jake, of course. But I made it clear - two hours, a dozen people, no more.

Vaughn subtly nods towards the statue-like Taran'atar...

VAUGHN

What about him? Will he be alright?

KIRA

I invited him. He wasn't sure what the point of the whole thing was, but he said he'd be there.

VAUGHN

Want a couple of extra security outside the door just in case?

Kira considers it. It might be prudent. But...

KIRA

No, we have to show him we trust him. He said he'd follow my orders, but I'll stick with him just to be sure.

7 **INT. DS9 - SHAR'S QUARTERS**

Shar stands at his personal comm unit, tight and formal. On the screen is an older Andorian female, VRETHA, wearing a complex hairstyle and with a regal and dignified bearing.

VRETHA (screen)

It is good that you are well, my
chei. When I heard of the attack on
the station, I feared the worst.

SHAR

No, zhavey. This crew is very adept
at handling... unexpected problems.

VRETHA (screen)

It only makes me wish even more
strongly that you would come home
now, where you are safe.

This is the subject Shar had not wanted to deal with. He tightens even further, but keeps his voice level and cool.

SHAR

I am needed here, zhavey.

VRETHA (screen)

Thirishar, you are our only child.
We didn't bear and raise you with
doubts about your obligations.

SHAR

No, zhavey.

VRETHA (screen)

You are part of the Whole. A covenant
broken by one is lost by all.

SHAR

Yes, zhavey.

VRETHA (screen)

There's nothing for you to resolve.

SHAR

I know, zhavey.

Vretha is frustrated that she's getting nowhere. Shar reins in his own emotions - guilt, and resentment for same...

VRETHA (screen)
You'll call very soon...

SHAR
As is my duty and privilege, *zhavey*.
Until then, I find you Whole in my
thoughts.

VRETHA (screen)
As you are in mine.

She breaks the connection. He seethes under the surface, staring at the screen until the emotions finally break free. With a hiss he launches a powerful PUNCH into the monitor, shattering the screen in a shower of sparks.

For a moment he thrills in the anger and violence, then slowly brings himself under control and hangs his head.

8 EXT. SPACE - ESTABLISHING

Rio Grande sits stationary in space. There's a horrific NOISE, something like music but made of teeth-shattering screeching sounds and crashing, grinding groans.

9 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Nog sits alone, facing the room and thoroughly enjoying the sound as it plays through the runabout's speakers at brain-melting volume. He's blissing out to it, directing it like an orchestra, even singing along in some spots.

Finally he notices the runabout's repeating ALARM over the noise. He looks out of the front window... and sees the *Da Vinci* emerge from warp in the distance. He opens a comm...

NOG
Rio Grande to *Da Vinci*. This is
Lieutenant Nog. Good to see you.

Captain Gold's face pops up on the screen...

GOLD (screen)
This is Captain Gold of the *Da Vinci* at your service, Lieutenant.
What on Earth is that noise?

Panicked, Nog suddenly realises the music is still playing.
He quickly works the controls to shut it off.

NOG
Sorry, sir. Please set course one-eight-seven-mark-nine and proceed at full impulse. We'll be there in twenty minutes.

GOLD (screen)
Good. Lieutenant Commander Duffy has a full away team ready to go.

NOG
I'm transmitting beam-over coordinates now. They'll put us right at the access to the core.

GOLD (screen)
Then let's get moving.

Nog cuts the connection and puts the runabout in motion.

10 EXT. SPACE

The *Da Vinci* and the *Rio Grande* fly in close formation. They approach the station EMPOK NOR - an identical twin to Deep Space Nine, but abandoned, and tilted at an eerie angle. It is mostly dark, except for the lower core area, which is still fully functional and seems to be powered up.

11 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Nog watches the approach to the station, checks readings. Reaches down and itches his prosthetic leg - a nervous tic.

NOG
If this place has been empty since Dukat's *pagh-wraith* cult left, why is life support still on, and why is the core running at full power?

12 INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA

Nog BEAMS into the same area where Vaughn and Kira fought Kitana'klan on DS9, but fully Cardassian in design, no sign of Starfleet technology. The lights are dimmed, and the main power core hums and glows a dull grey-white.

Nine Starfleet BEAM in as well, all in ops gold. Four humans and one Bolian carrying phaser rifles - security. The security chief, Lt Cmdr CORSI, a tall, severe blonde female, begins directing her staff to take up positions.

The engineers are two more humans, a single BYNAR named SOLOMAN (short, genderless, large cranium, translation unit on his hip, as seen TNG 1x15 "11001001") and a NASAT named P8 BLUE (a large blue insectoid, about a meter tall, like a pillbug with a hard carapace, as seen TAS 1x16 "Jihad").

One of the engineers, a sandy-haired male, steps forward...

DUFFY

I'm Lieutenant Commander Duffy.
I'm in charge here.

NOG

A pleasure, sir. If you don't
mind, I need to check something.

DUFFY

Check whatever you want. We'll get
started now.

NOG

Excuse me?

DUFFY

Don't worry. We'll get your core
before you can eat a tube grub.

NOG

But sir, with all due respect,
I've already --

DUFFY

Don't worry about it, kid.

NOG

Commander Duffy, I'm not a kid. I'm
the chief operations officer of --

STEVENS

Hey Duffy, you better take a look
at this. You too, Nog.

Nog and Duffy walk over to where STEVENS is at a console.
Still smarting, Nog recognises the non-com engineer from
the *Defiant* (4x07 "Starship Down").

NOG

Stevens, right?

STEVENS

Yup. Good to see you again, Nog.
And congrats on the promotion.
Take a look at this.

DUFFY

All reaction chambers are online.

NOG

What? That's insane! We don't even
keep all six active on DS-Nine.

CORSI

I thought this place was dead. The
report from your first trip said
it was just running on emergency
battery power.

NOG

One of the chambers was brought
online by the *pagh*-wraith cult
that squatted here. But all six -
it doesn't make sense.

CORSI

Someone's been here. We need to
bring more people over.

DUFFY

Corsi, that isn't necessary.

CORSI

Commander, there's a very good chance that we're not alone on this station.

DUFFY

Actually, there's no chance that we aren't. We checked - there's no life signs except us.

NOG

Excuse me.

CORSI

Right now, maybe. But someone had to bring those chambers online, and I doubt it was any cult.

NOG

Excuse me.

DUFFY

Keep your people on alert, and I'll let Captain Gold know. But we don't need any more security here. There's too many people as it is.

NOG

Excuse me.

DUFFY

(impatient)

What is it, Lieutenant?

NOG

Sir, I have already laid out a plan for the extraction of the core, and the transporting of it to DS9. If you'll just --

DUFFY

Look, Lieutenant, I appreciate you wanting to look good to your superiors. But don't worry about it. We're pros. We do this sort of thing every day.

DUFFY (cont)
We'll have your core out before
you know it. Just sit back and
watch, okay?

Duffy turns his back, walks over to Soloman. Nog is about
ready to blow. But before he can say anything...

...he REACTS as if hearing a sharp sound.

NOG
What's that noise?

DUFFY
I don't hear anything.

Nog closes his eyes to concentrate, turns to follow the
sound...

NOG
It's... over there!

He points to where the Bolian security officer is walking
along the catwalk. Suddenly the SOUNDS grows louder, and
energy CRACKLES around the officer.

A large ENERGY FIELD appears, covering the entire power
core, looking like a tightly woven, flowing brown mesh.
It's right where the Bolian is...

...and it sends the Bolian FLYING across the catwalk,
collapsing in a heap.

As the team reacts in shock...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA

Reacting to the brown energy MESH around the power core...

Nog hears another sound...

...and a BALL of the same energy appears on the catwalk.

CORSI

Androssi protocol one, now.

Corsi and her security officers tweak settings on their phasers -- and FIRE on the ball of brown mesh energy. It has no effect, and begins to FIRE back with wild ARCS of electricity. Everyone takes cover...

DUFFY

They've upgraded.

CORSI

Protocol two!

Nog, Soloman and P8 Blue rush to check on the two downed security. The Bynar checks them with a tricorder. Nog and P8 grab their dropped phasers and they begin FIRING...

DUFFY

Duffy to *Da Vinci*. We've got an Androssi security device here. Two guards are down, and the trick we used on Maeglin isn't working.

GOLD (comm)

Damn. So much for an empty station.

A guard's shot succeeds in disrupting the ball for a brief moment, but as soon as it reappears - it SHOOTs her down.

P8 BLUE curls her insect body up into a hard-shelled ball and ROLLS herself over to the fallen body. Electrical discharges from the device hit her, but she rolls on...

Once there, she uncurls, checks the settings on the fallen guard's phaser, and calls them out to the team...

P8 BLUE

Level four, low frequency!

Everyone resets their phasers and FIRES. The ball FIZZLES and dies. Nog stands with a sigh, scratches his leg again.

DUFFY

Good work, Pattie. Soloman?

The solitary Bynar answers with a high-pitched, almost electronic voice...

SOLOMAN

All three guards are alive. But they require medical attention.

DUFFY

Duffy to *Da Vinci*. Diego, please tell me you can punch through the Androssi's interference this time.

FELICIANO (comm)

Sort of. The interference is still there, but I can actually get a lock on Lieutenant Nog.

STEVENS

(off tricorder)

I think I know why. Captain, these security devices are broadcasting a huge number of very specific interference patterns, keyed to our own combadge frequencies.

CORSI

You mean to tell me that when we were on Maeglin, the Androssi scanned the combadge frequencies of the entire *Da Vinci* crew and then programmed them into their security devices, just on the off chance they'd bump into us again?

STEVEN

That's exactly what I'm telling
you, Corsi.

NOG

(exasperated)

Okay, so just beam me up, hand me
a pattern enhancer, and beam me
back down again.

GOLD (comm)

Get on it, all of you, so we can
get the wounded out of there. Once
that's done, we're going to yellow
alert. And I want reports every
fifteen minutes, Duffy, clear?

DUFFY

As a bell, sir.

CORSI

Captain, I recommend new combadges
for the entire crew, and I'll need
three more security guards too.

GOLD (comm)

Already on it, Corsi. Nog, get
ready to beam up.

NOG

Yes sir.

Corsi approaches Nog, nods to the phaser in his hands...

CORSI

Nice work with that, by the way.

NOG

Experience.

CORSI

Right, DS-Nine was pretty much the
front line for most of the war,
wasn't it? Well anyway, thanks.

The transporter effect SHIMMERS around an awkward Nog...

14 **INT. DA VINCI - TRANSPORTER ROOM**

...and delivers him onto a cramped transporter platform.
Transporter chief FELICIANO reacts with surprise...

FELICIANO
You're a Ferengi!

NOG
And you're a human. Can we get a
move on, please?

FELICIANO
Right, sorry, just didn't realise.
I'm Chief Feliciano. Here are the
pattern enhancers...

He brings the three, meter-tall tubular devices out, stands
them on the platform as Nog grinds his teeth, annoyed...

15 **EXT. DS9 - ESTABLISHING**

Favouring the *Defiant* sitting on the docking ring...

16 **INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR**

Kira walks down the corridor with Taran'atar at her side...

KIRA
Just try to relax, mingle, engage
people in conversation.

TARAN'ATAR
What shall I say?

KIRA
Well, talk about yourself, ask
them questions about themselves.
The idea is to let people get to
know the real you, rather than
just "a Jem'Hadar."

TARAN'ATAR
The real me does not relax, or
engage in pointless conversation.

KIRA

Right, well... just try your best.

They reach the door to the Wardroom and enter...

17 INT. DS9 - WARDROOM

Inside, QUARK is setting the last few dishes of food onto a table with one of his Ferengi waiters. BOWERS, VAUGHN and two other random Starfleet are there. No Bajorans.

Kira heads into the room, while Taran'atar hangs back, a total wallflower, observing only. He watches as Kira chats to Vaughn, just trying to learn the patterns of behaviour.

Next through the door are DAX and BSHIR, speaking *sotto*...

DAX

You sure you're up to this?

BASHIR

Genetically enhanced, remember?
Nothing can keep me down for long.

DAX

You're not invulnerable, Julian.

BASHIR

I know that. I also know that...
We may have made up last night,
but we still need to talk about
some things.

DAX

Absolutely. But later.

They head to the food table, where Quark greets them...

QUARK

Doctor, Lieutenant - welcome to
the party.

DAX

Hi Quark. Ummm, what's that smell?

QUARK

Do you like it? It's my very best cologne, I only wear it for special occasions. The ladies seem to love it - even Leeta said she'd never smelled anything like it.

DAX

(politely blank)

I can see why.

They move off, giving each other a secret "what the hell?" glance. Taran'atar watches them every step...

Bashir and Dax see him seeing them, and with a glance of agreement, they walk over to him. Taran'atar stiffens...

DAX

Taran'atar, I'm Ezri Dax. I want to welcome you to the station.

Taran'atar nods. A brief pause, then Bashir tries.

BASHIR

Taran'atar, I just wanted to say again that, ah, I'm very grateful to you for saving my life.

TARAN'ATAR

You owe me nothing.

DAX

We can help you interact with the others. If that's your choice.

TARAN'ATAR

...Thank you.

They lead into the room. Taran'atar is entirely befuddled but quite proud of himself for making it this far.

18 EST. EMPOK NOR - ESTABLISHING

The station listing on its eerie angle, *Da Vinci* and *Rio Grande* both holding station nearby...

19 INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA

In the background, P8 BLUE works on setting up phaser rifles at strategic points around the power core, one of Corsi's security force guarding each device...

In foreground Nog, Duffy, Stevens and Solomon work busily at various consoles, while Corsi herself stands guard...

NOG

So who are the Androssi anyway?

DUFFY

In a lot of ways, they're like the Corps of Engineers. They fix your technical problems - for a price.

NOG

What's wrong with that?

DUFFY

Well, they've been known to cause the problem in the first place, so they can charge to come in and fix it. And most of the people they "help" usually end up worse off than they started, because their price is usually new technology.

NOG

Do they ever alter old tech?

Duffy walks over to join Nog, reads his screen...

DUFFY

They've made modifications.

CORSI

What kind of modifications?

DUFFY

Not sure. The Androssi use these dimensional shifts in their tech. That's why their stuff doesn't show up until you interact with it.

CORSI

Okay, here's a question. Let's say they have modified the station. Do we have any reason to stop them?

NOG

We need the fusion core!

CORSI

So what? I remind you, Lieutenant, we're on an unclaimed station in unclaimed space. The Androssi have as much right to it as we do.

DUFFY

I'm with Nog here, Corsi. You're right, the Androssi have as much right to the station as we do. But we have just as much right to try to dismantle their modifications.

In background, P8 Blue instructs the four security to FIRE the modified phasers simultaneously at the MESH covering the energy core. The mesh flickers... and dies. Cheers!

Meanwhile, Stevens pores over his console. The screen shows a SCHEMATIC of the station, focusing first on the upper pylons, then the lower ones. He mutters to himself...

STEVENS

Okay, the parts up on the pylons are in the same spots we put the weapons upgrades on DS-Nine. That makes sense. But wait... the ones on the lower pylons are different. They kinda look like... hoo boy.

(aloud)

Uh, Duff?

DUFFY

Yeah, Fabe?

STEVENS

I think I know what they've done here. You should look.

Duffy goes over to Stevens' panel, and reads what's there.
His face drops...

DUFFY
I'd like to state for the record
that this really, really sucks.
(taps combadge)
Duffy to Gold.

GOLD (comm)
Go ahead, Commander.

DUFFY
We've broken through the field
round the fusion core, so now we
can get at it.

GOLD (comm)
Good work.

DUFFY
The bad news is that the Androssi
have made some modifications to
the station's equipment. Without
being a hundred percent sure how
it works exactly...

GOLD (comm)
Spit it out, Duffy.

DUFFY
Aye, sir. The Androssi are turning
Empok Nor into the mother of all
mobile weapons platforms.

Off their dismayed expressions...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

20 INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA

Picking up from the team's disturbing discovery...

GOLD (comm)

You sure about this, Duffy?

DUFFY

Completely? No. We'd need about a year and a full research team to figure it out. But they've put upgraded thrusters onto the lower pylons, and some nasty weapons systems into the upper pylons.

STEVENS

They've also made modifications to the core. Only one of the reactor chambers is actually running the station. The rest are powering a massive propulsion system that looks capable of up to warp six.

GOLD (comm)

Gevalt. I think we can all agree that a weapons platform of that size and power, moving at warp six, is a tremendously bad idea. I want a full analysis and options of what we can do about it.

Nog tries to come back to the whole reason they're here...

NOG

What about extracting the core?

VOICE (comm)

Sir, long-range scans are picking up a vessel on direct approach -

The signal is lost in static - everyone looks worried...

DUFFY
Da Vinci, you're breaking up.

VOICE (static)
- figuration and po-... Androssi.

DUFFY
Duffy to *Da Vinci*, come in!

CORSI
(taps badge)
Corsi to *Da Vinci*, come in.

21 **EXT. EMPOK NOR**

As the station hangs in the background...

...an ANDROSSI SHIP looms into view. It is much larger than the *Da Vinci*, a dull beige colour, and a remarkably boxy, uninteresting design. It FIRES on the *Da Vinci*...

22 **INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA (INTERCUT)**

The SOUNDS of weapons fire filter through, muffled by the metal of the station. Nog checks his tricorder...

NOG
There's some kind of jamming field
- the combadges are useless again.

CORSI
Places - the Androssi could board
the station at any minute.

On cue, a faster, quieter and less ostentatious effect than Starfleet transporters reveals...

...five armed ANDROSSI. Humanoid, various tones of brown-skinned, in beige jumpsuits, long brown hair in a ponytail and long beards. The general effect is of total blandness. Two wear two nose-rings each, two wear none, and one wears four (plus a shorter beard) - clearly the leader, HOWWI.

In response, Corsi and her security team instantly move to protect one each of the engineering team. Duffy shoots Corsi a look - *Don't fire first*. She nods acknowledgement.

DUFFY
Sub-Overseer Howwi.

HOWWI
Commander Duffy. This is now the second time you've interfered in a lawful Androssi operation.

DUFFY
That's your interpretation. But we have as much claim here as you do.

HOWWI
Perhaps. But we have a mission for the Elite to fulfil.

DUFFY
So do we. Thousands of lives are counting on us to get this fusion core back to one of our stations.

NOG
In fact, that's all we need. Can't we negotiate? Most of your systems are in other parts of the station. Let us extract the fusion core, and you're welcome to the rest of it.

Duffy shoots Nog a look - that is *not* how we do things.

HOWWI
Why do these lives you wish to save concern us?

DUFFY
I beg your pardon?

HOWWI
We are performing a mission. You wish us to hamper that mission to preserve the lives of irrelevant aliens. We have nothing to gain by allowing you to take the core.
(to his subordinates)
Kill them.

An Androssi touches a control - a brown ENERGY MESH appears around the aliens, begins shooting out electrical bursts. But Corsi and her team are quite calm and prepared...

CORSI

Fire!

The security team all FIRE at once, and the energy shield flickers and dies, leaving five rather surprised Androssi.

CORSI

On stun, and fire!

The team adjust setting, FIRE again, and all five Androssi fall to the deck unconscious. Everyone sighs with relief...

DUFFY

You know, it's really nice when things go easy once in a while.

CORSI

We're not out of this yet. Listen to all that going on outside.

DUFFY

I know. But I've got an idea...

Duffy is smirking right at Nog - to his concern...

23 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Just for a moment...

24 INT. DS9 - WARDROOM

At the party, Dax is chatting with Vaughn and Taran'atar...

VAUGHN

Starfleet approved a substantial refit for the *Defiant*, if we're going to be taking it back into the Gamma Quadrant. Two science labs, biochem, upgraded sensors, stellar cartography...

DAX

That'll take weeks to be finished.

VAUGHN

No rush - not if what Taran'atar said about the Dominion is true.

TARAN'ATAR

The Founders welcome Starfleet into the Gamma Quadrant. We will not interfere.

DAX

Well, good. Any ideas who you'll choose for your command staff yet?

VAUGHN

Is that a hint, Dax?

DAX

Well, I have been thinking about some things since the attack on the station.

VAUGHN

Since you saved the station.

DAX

Well, yeah. Since I took command of the *Defiant*. It wasn't like it was a decision I made - more like a reflex. And I'm wondering where that might lead.

The doors open and SHAR enters. He really doesn't want to face people right now, after the call with his mother. But before he's taken two steps inside, Quark is at his side.

QUARK

Shar! I'm so glad you could make it. Try these - fresh Bajoran vegetables, marinated in *p'losie* wine. Exquisite!

Shar nervously takes a piece, sniffs it, tastes it...

SHAR

They're very good. Do you know if
Lieutenant Ro is coming?

QUARK

Of course! Why do you think I'm
wearing this cologne? I don't just
put it on for no good reason. What
do you think?

SHAR

I never smelled anything like it.

QUARK

Exactly. As long as we're talking,
I've been meaning to ask you, I
had this incredible idea about
establishing new shipping lanes
into the Beta Quadrant, and -

RO

Hey Shar!

Shar is relieved and turns to see RO entering. Quark is
torn between admiring her and being annoyed at her...

RO

Quark, look - Lieutenant Bowers is
holding an empty glass. You're not
catering for a flat fee, are you?

QUARK

If you'll excuse me... perhaps we
can pick this up again later.

Resigned, Quark heads over to Bowers. Ro turns to Shar...

RO

Sorry about Quark. Now that the
news about your mother is out, he
thinks he's got a direct line to
the Federation Council.

SHAR

Of course. It's always the same,
whenever I take a new assignment.

RO

Like anyone cares who your mom is.

SHAR

You... don't care?

RO

About your mother? Why would I?
I don't know her.

Shar brightens a little.

Elsewhere, Dax comes back to Bashir with a dazzling grin...

BASHIR

I take it your conversation went
poorly.

DAX

I'll have you know you're looking
at the new unofficial assistant
commander for the *Defiant's* first
trip into the Gamma Quadrant.

BASHIR

Ezri, that's wonderful. And you're
sure this is what you want?

DAX

Positive. I just finally realised
with as much potential as I have,
I could stand around for years
contemplating my choices, or I
could just get on with it.

BASHIR

Well, I'm happy for you.

DAX

And it might do you some good to
remember that as much as I love
you, you'll probably have to call
me 'sir' before long.

Bashir sidles up, purrs low and sexy in her ear...

BASHIR
I can call you 'sir' right now, if
you like...

DAX
Ask me again later.

As they smile flirtily at each other...

25 EXT. SPACE - EMPOK NOR

The blocky Androssi ship continues to bludgeon the *Da Vinci*
with its beige but formidable weapons...

The smaller Starfleet ship darts around trying to evade...

Meanwhile, unnoticed near an upper pylon, the *Rio Grande*
comes to life - engines powering, lights shining.

It turns... and surges away from the station, heading
towards the Androssi ship from behind...

26 INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA

As Nog runs the ship by remote from his console...

DUFFY
Sensor readings are still spotty,
but it looks like the *Da Vinci* has
taken a lot of damage. Their
shields are almost gone!

NOG
Yes, but the Androssi's starboard
shields are completely down.

DUFFY
So fire phasers there.

NOG
No, I have a better idea.

DUFFY
Lieutenant, I gave you an order!

NOG

I know the *Rio Grande* better than you do, Commander, and I know what it's capable of. Its phasers won't make much difference on that hull.

Duffy reluctantly lets Nog take this one...

27 **EXT. EMPOK NOR - THE BATTLE**

The *Rio Grande* FIRES phasers on the Androssi's port side instead - they FLARE against the still intact shields...

The Androssi ship lumbers around to face the runabout...

...leaving its vulnerable starboard side facing *Da Vinci*.

28 **INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA**

Duffy grudgingly admires Nog's strategy...

DUFFY

Alright, fine, so you've got them distracted. Now come on, Captain, see the opening...

They watch the screen on tenterhooks, hoping this works...

29 **EXT. EMPOK NOR - THE BATTLE**

Da Vinci launches photon torpedoes towards the Androssi's unshielded starboard side...

...and they all score. EXPLOSIONS rack the blocky ship...

30 **INT. EMPOK NOR - LOWER CORE AREA**

Nog and Duffy celebrate together at this sight...

DUFFY

Yes! Multiple hull breaches on the Androssi ship. Power levels are failing... and they're retreating. Well done, Lieutenant.

Behind them, with two security guards watching over them, the unconscious Androssi beam out in their bland effect. Or three of them do anyway - Howwi and the other two officers. The workers (the ones without nose-rings) are left behind.

CORSI

I guess these two are prisoners?

DUFFY

I guess? We'll turn them over to a starbase. Fabe, how's the station?

STEVENS

Remember last time, when all their tech just disappeared?

CORSI

Let me guess.

STEVENS

Yep, did it again. It all fell into whatever dimension they hide it in when they're not using it. Far as I can tell, they left Empok Nor exactly as they found it.

NOG

(off screens)

Not quite. The battle compromised the integrity of the fusion core. If we try to extract it now and tow it back to DS-Nine - well, let's just say we'd all be on our way to meet the Blessed Exchequer.

On Nog's disappointment in that, we...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

31 EXT. EMPOK NOR - ESTABLISHING

Quiet now as the *Da Vinci* rests, the *Rio Grande* nearby.

32 INT. EMPOK NOR - OPS

Like DS9 Ops, but dark and dingy, and most of the consoles don't work. Nog and the SCE team stand around the central Ops table, all throwing out ideas for discussion...

SOLOMAN

Is it not possible to repair the structural integrity field?

P8 BLUE

Not without Cardassian emitters. We don't have replicator patterns for those, and I doubt we could get Cardassia to ship us any.

STEVENS

Even if they could, it would take them over a week to get here.

NOG

We don't have that kind of time. If we don't get this replacement core to DS-Nine within ten days, the station won't be viable.

CORSI

Can't you put it in a forcefield?

DUFFY

Not and tow it at warp. And if we stick with sublight, it'll take a hell of a lot more than ten days.

STEVENS

Maybe if we use the runabout's warp engines - create a static warp bubble around the core.

P8 BLUE

The stresses of the warp bubble
would tear it to pieces. Besides,
those things only work about half
the time anyway.

DUFFY

Okay, so that's out.

Finally, when there is a lull in the increasingly wild
theories, Nog states what he thinks is obvious...

NOG

Why don't we just move the whole
station?

Silence for a few seconds as they all look at him...

DUFFY

Excuse me?

NOG

Get a bunch of ships to tractor
the whole station at warp to the
Bajoran system.

STEVENS

Uh, Nog... if I'm remembering
right, DS-Nine is about fifteen-
hundred meters by three-hundred-
seventy meters, right? And this
place has the same dimensions.

NOG

Yes.

DUFFY

And you want to tow it at warp?

NOG

(shrug)

Low warp, but it can be done. We'd
need twelve ships, one on each
pylon and six on the docking ring.

P8 BLUE

They'd all need to be the same general size and class, or the tractors would be incompatible.

NOG

No they won't. The *Rio Grande* can take point and make sure the warp fields and tractor beams stay coordinated.

DUFFY

Yeah, but you'd only be able to do that at warp two, and then you'd never make it in time.

STEVENS

(inspiration hitting)

We can do it at warp four.

DUFFY

Fabe...

STEVENS

I'm serious, Duff. The *Da Vinci* just took a major pounding from the Androssi, and it can still do warp four. It's baby steps. Think out of the box for a change.

DUFFY

Don't get cute, Fabe. Besides, think about what kind of subspace disruption you're going to cause. Communications will be spotty at best - how will you coordinate everything when you can't even stay in constant contact?

NOG

I'm not sure, but there has to --

P8 BLUE

Oh that's easy. There's a new method of close-range ship-to-ship using tight-beam tachyon pulses.

P8 BLUE (cont)
The Romulans developed it, and
finally decided to share it about
a week before the end of the war.

NOG
I didn't know about that.

CORSI
Neither did I.

P8 BLUE
You people really need to keep up
on the trades. It's all they've
been talking about in the "Journal
of Engineers and Technicians."

DUFFY
(cut to the chase)
Can you make one?

P8 BLUE
Of course, I have the replicator
pattern on the *Da Vinci*.

DUFFY
Well alright then. Duffy to Gold.

GOLD (comm)
Go ahead, Duffy.

DUFFY
We have a new plan, sir, that
everyone seems to think can work.
There's only one problem - we'll
need twelve ships.

GOLD (comm)
(chuckling)
Oh, let me just make a call.

As they all look between themselves with satisfaction...

33 EST. DA VINCI - ESTABLISHING

Just to indicate time passing. Empok Nor in the background.

34 INT. DA VINCI - CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Nog enters, a little nervous. Gold sits behind his desk...

GOLD

Lieutenant Nog. Good to meet you
in person at last. Take a seat.

(he does)

I've spoken to the SCE liaison to
the Admiralty, and informed him of
your plan. His specific words
were, "Have ye gone daft, lad?"

NOG

I understand it's a little outside
the established norms, sir...

GOLD

Oh, never mind that. Those norms
are just guidelines. Admiral Scott
actually complimented you on your
chutzpah, but I'm afraid he could
only arrange for nine ships. And
once they get here, you'll have to
persuade them to do what you want.

NOG

Leave that to me, sir. And don't
worry about it - with *Da Vinci*,
we'll have ten ships, which is
actually one more than we need --

GOLD

Then why did you ask for twelve?

NOG

Fifth Rule of Acquisition, sir.
Always exaggerate your estimates.

GOLD

(chuckling)

That was an engineer's axiom long
before you people took it on. But
what I want to know is... what's
in it for me?

NOG

(on familiar ground)

You'll have shore leave for all
your crew on Bajor, and whatever
maintenance your ship requires...

GOLD

Both of which I can get at any old
starbase, and they would at least
have a working power source. No, I
need more than that, Lieutenant.

NOG

I'm not sure what else to offer...

Gold sits back, pondering the question...

GOLD

When the *Da Vinci* first arrived in
the Trivas system, and established
the comm with your runabout, you
had some kind of music playing. It
sounded like Sinnravian *drad*.

NOG

Yes! Yes it was. I can make a
recording for you.

GOLD

Oh not for me, I can't stand that
stuff. But... my son is dating a
Sinnravian, and he hasn't been
able to get hold of Blee Luu's
newest recording.

NOG

It's yours.

GOLD

Original, not a copy. Sinnravians
are fussy about that. Something
about their inner ears.

NOG

You'll have an original recording
by the time we reach DS-Nine.

GOLD
In that case, Mister Nog, the *Da Vinci* is at your disposal.

NOG
Excellent! Thank you, Captain.

GOLD
Alright, Lieutenant. You've done well. Dismissed.

Nog bounces happily out of the room, while Gold watches fondly with a chuckle...

35 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

...to Nog drumming along to the horrendous excuse for MUSIC again, mind ticking over the problem. Outside the window, it shows that the ship is now docked to an upper pylon...

NOG
Now, how am I supposed to get hold of Blee Luu's latest recording?

After a moment, the door opens and P8 BLUE enters. She immediately SCREECHES, waving her pincers about violently.

P8 BLUE
Lieutenant, if you don't shut that horrible noise off right now, Deep Space Nine will need a new chief engineer, because the present one will be larva food!

NOG
Computer, terminate music.

It does. P8 Blue sighs, relieved...

P8 BLUE
First Abramowitz, now you.

NOG
Who's Abramowitz?

P8 BLUE

Da Vinci's cultural specialist,
and also my roommate. She just got
the latest recording of that fecal
matter you call music by Blee Luu,
and it's driving me insane.

NOG

(smiling)

Really? Perhaps we can help each
other out.

Nog smiles, hearing opportunity in the wind...

36 INT. DS9 - WARDROOM

Vaughn is relaxed and happy, enjoying the party. He looks
over to where Quark is chatting to Ro with an adoring look,
and decides to go rescue her. As he approaches, he sniffs
the air a little, pulls a face, but doesn't say anything.

VAUGHN

Nice party, Quark. Though I should
warn you, that fruit wine of yours
is right on the edge of going bad.

QUARK

I'll have to look into that.

(back to Ro)

So, next week then.

After a sour glare at Vaughn, Quark bounces away happily...

VAUGHN

Lieutenant Ro, I'm Elias Vaughn.

RO

Commander.

VAUGHN

I hear you were top of your class
at Advanced Tactical. I actually
helped design their curriculum.
I'd be interested in hearing what
you thought of the training.

RO
(nonplussed)
That would be fine. I'm sorry, if
you'll excuse me, Commander...

She escapes; Vaughn watches her go, as Kira approaches him.

VAUGHN
A intriguing woman. I wonder if
she has any idea what Picard did
for her after she returned to
Bajor. Starfleet wanted her
extradited, you know, because of
that business with the Maquis. But
he got them to drop the charges.

KIRA
I had no idea.

The door opens again -- and KASIDY hesitantly enters. Kira
excuses herself, approaches Kasidy with a nervous smile...

KIRA
Kas, I'm so glad you decided to
come.

KASIDY
Actually, I'm not staying. I'm
feeling a little tired. I just
wanted you to know that I've
decided to go ahead with my plans
to move to Bajor.

KIRA
That's wonderful. I just know it's
the right thing for you, Kas,
after all you've done with the
house, and...
(and Ben)
...and how much you've wanted it.

Kasidy pats her belly thoughtfully...

KASIDY
You're right. It's what I want.

37 **INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR**

Ensign Tenmei walks down the corridor, straightening her uniform nervously, wanting to look her best for the new first officer. The door opens...

...and she spots Vaughn standing across the room, chatting to Dax and Bashir (he doesn't spot her). Her eyes go wide with surprise, quickly turning to anger...

TENMEI
Vaughn?! Oh God, he's the new
first officer?

Shaking with rage, she turns before she can be spotted and stalks back down the corridor. After a few steps, she breaks into a run, tears in her eyes...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

44 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Standard establisher, just with the lower core still dark.

45 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Dax stands at a mirror, checking herself before leaving for the morning shift. She is now wearing a red command collar, with full lieutenant's pips. Bashir comes up from behind, hugs her round the waist, picks fluff off her shoulder.

BASHIR

You sure you're ready for this?

DAX

Absolutely.

BASHIR

You're not invulnerable, Ezri.

DAX

Stop worrying, Julian. I've made my decision and I'm comfortable with it. I am who I am, and it's time I started acting like it.

They kiss, and head out together.

46 INT. DS9 - OPS

Basically the same as at the top of the episode. Everyone is in the same place, except that Shar is sat at the science station, and Ezri Dax is wearing her red command collar. Vaughn approaches Shar just as his panel goes wild.

VAUGHN

Cardassian control interfaces take some getting used to, Ensign.

SHAR

(flustered)

Yes, sir.

VAUGHN

Relax, mister ch'Thane. Given the circumstances, it's no wonder the arrays are going haywire. Stay with it. I've found when dealing with alien computer systems, that it helps to keep the psychology of the people who created them in mind. In this case, meticulous and detail-oriented. Redundancies are to be expected.

SHAR

Thank you, sir.

The hissing of the office door indicates Kira's arrival. Vaughn heads to the central table as she descends.

KIRA

Something coming in?

VAUGHN

Certainly looks that way. A quite large something, at low warp.

KIRA

Nog?

VAUGHN

It had better be, or we're going to be a multi-gigaton smear of debris across the Denorios Belt.

KIRA

(to Shar)

But no hail?

SHAR

No sir, but we anticipated this. Something this big, when you consider subspace disruptions...

KIRA

(back to Vaughn)

Does it look like he's leaving himself enough room to brake?

VAUGHN

It depends on how much momentum it
had when Nog took it to warp. Let
him do his job, Colonel.

She's not entirely thrilled with his tone, but lets it go.

KIRA

(to Shar)

Anything on short-range, Ensign?

SHAR

(worried)

I was told that the short-range
array was to be taken offline
until further notice. Sir.

KIRA

(to Vaughn)

I don't remember authorising that.

VAUGHN

You didn't, I gave the order
yesterday. You were busy dealing
with the Cardassian liaison at the
time. I didn't want to bother you
with it. It was an easy choice -
short-range sensors or lights.

KIRA

Right. Lights. Good call.

(to Shar)

Bring them back online, Ensign.

Shar hits a few keys, and the main viewscreen comes to
life. Everyone turns to watch. On the screen, space begins
to slowly split open with the hint of something emerging.

47 EXT. SPACE - DS9

With the station off to one side, the tear in space expands
to reveal the remarkable sight of a tiny runabout leading a
fleet of nine varied starships (including the *Da Vinci*).

The ships are arranged equally around Empok Nor (now at the proper angle), pulling it with tractor beams, one on each pylon and three around the docking ring.

As the whole arrangement drops out of warp, far enough away from DS9 to not cause a problem, the ships cut tractor beams in turn. It almost looks like two DS9s side by side.

48 INT. DS9 OPS

Everyone watches the screen with awe. After a moment, Kira breaks out with a whoop of success, followed by others.

BOWERS

Colonel, we're receiving a hail
from the *Rio Grande*.

KIRA

About time. On screen, Lieutenant.

The screen changes to an image of Nog in the runabout cockpit, looking like he hasn't slept in days.

NOG (screen)

Lieutenant Nog reporting, Colonel.

KIRA

Nog, I...
 (lost for words,
 tries again)
You realise this is going to spoil
my view of the wormhole, don't
you?

NOG (screen)

Not for long, Colonel. Once we
transfer Empok Nor's lower core to
Deep Space Nine, we can tow what's
left of the station some place
nearby and park it there for the
next time we need spare parts.

VAUGHN

How did the station hold up?

NOG (screen)
Even better than my simulations
predicted, Commander. I'll be able
to start work on the fusion core
transfer as soon as we've
stabilised orbit.

VAUGHN
No, I don't think so. See that
Empok Nor is stable, but I want
you asleep in your quarters as
soon as you're finished.

Nog is instinctively about to protest. Vaughn interrupts
before he can get started.

VAUGHN (cont)
Don't force me to make it an
order, Lieutenant.

NOG (screen)
Yes, Commander. Thank you. And
Colonel, you should know the SCE
really came through. I couldn't
have done it without them, or the
other ships in the convoy.

KIRA
I'll make sure to note that in my
report. And Nog?

NOG (screen)
Yes, Colonel?

KIRA
Excellent work.

NOG (screen)
Thank you, Colonel.

Nog signs off, and Kira turns to Vaughn with a grin.

VAUGHN
I told you the kid had style.

Kira smiles back at him, admitting he has a point.

49 INT. RIO GRANDE COCKPIT

Nog sits back with a sigh of exhaustion as the connection drops. Another comm signal comes in, and he accepts.

GOLD (screen)
I'm afraid we can't stay,
Lieutenant. We've just received
another, rather urgent mission.
Please tell Colonel Kira I'm sorry
I won't get to see the station.

NOG
I will, sir.

GOLD (screen)
You did good work here today, Nog.
Any chance I can convince you to
transfer here? I have a feeling
you'd fit right in.

The image moves sideways - Duffy's face appears as well...

DUFFY (screen)
He's right, Nog. I know we may not
have seemed very hospitable at
first, but - well, I was wrong to
slap you down. I'm sorry for that.
I'd be honoured if you'd join us.

NOG
I'm flattered by your offer,
Captain - and I accept your
apology, Commander - but I have to
say no. I'm very happy where I am.

GOLD (screen)
It's our loss. Good luck, son.

NOG
To you too, sir. Really, thanks.
But on Deep Space Nine... I'm the
chief.

Gold nods his understanding and signs off. Nog smiles,
turns his music back on, and begins to work again.

49 EXT. SPACE - RIO GRANDE

Pulling away from the runabout as the music continues to play, and both stations and the other starships hang placidly in the background.

FADE OUT:

THE END