

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x05 - "Deep Down."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

On BASHIR... as he strolls down the corridor at a leisurely pace, smiling pleasantly, satisfied with the world...

FRONT - looking down the length of the corridor as Bashir walks towards us, alone. Still happy...

LOW - on Bashir's feet, boots walking smooth and regular on the carpeted deck...

SIDE - the walls move past as Bashir continues to stroll...

O'BRIEN (o.s.)

Hey, Julian! Wait a minute!

O'BRIEN catches up, in uniform. Bashir is happy to see his friend. O'Brien walks with him, behind and to his left...

BASHIR

Hello, Miles. I've been waiting for you.

O'BRIEN

That's cuz I'm always behind.

BASHIR

Yes... that's true.

REAR - walking with them now, looking down the corridor ahead of them. It seems to stretch out forever...

GARAK waits in one of the doorways that dot the length of the corridor. He smiles his typical enigmatic smile...

GARAK

Come now, Doctor. Didn't I teach you to keep your secrets better than that?

Bashir and O'Brien keep walking, and Garak joins alongside, taking up position just behind and to Bashir's right...

FRONT - the trio walks towards us, Bashir in the middle...

BASHIR
Secrets? I don't know what you're
talking about, Garak.

O'BRIEN
(mutter)
As usual.

GARAK
(teasing)
Now who's plain and simple?

SIDE - another figure steps in to walk with the group - ODO
wearing his Bajoran Militia uniform and a warning glare...

ODO
Garak... I've got my eye on you.

GARAK
That's very flattering, but quite
unnecessary, Constable.

FRONT - now KIRA (in Bajoran uniform) walks with Bashir,
Odo on the other side. O'Brien and Garak are gone...

KIRA
Julian can handle him, Odo.

Odo harrumphs his disbelief...

REAR - Bashir in the middle, SISKI on the right in uniform,
a tall, elegant woman on the left, long dark ponytail...

SISKI
Julian can handle anything that
comes his way, right, Dax?

SIDE - EZRI DAX emerges from behind Bashir, wearing a blue
uniform, taking position level with Bashir, on his left...

DAX
I know he likes to think so.

Bashir frowns, a little confused...

LOW - Bashir's boots, treading steadily... and another pair of boots comes on his right, over-taking and passing him...

O'BRIEN (o.s.)
Out of the way, Julian.

FRONT - O'Brien is now on his right, Garak on his left (opposite of earlier). Both move on ahead of Bashir...

BASHIR'S POV - as O'Brien and Garak walk on ahead...

O'BRIEN (cont)
I don't want to play anymore.

BASHIR
No, that's fine, I understand.

GARAK
I'm afraid I have much more
important things to do than wait
for you, Doctor.

O'Brien and Garak stretch further ahead. They reach out...
...and hold each other's hands as they walk off...

ON BASHIR - who blinks in surprise. Looks to his right...

WIDER - where Sisko walks, in Bajoran civilian clothes...

SISKO
Open your mind, Doctor. You're too
small minded.

Sisko's entire body begins to GLOW an unearthly white...

Bashir's only reaction is a small flicker of puzzlement...

ON KIRA - now in a Starfleet uniform, walking at Bashir's left. Eyes closed, whispering prayers under her breath...

ON SISKO - as the glow filling him grows quickly, his image fading simultaneously, until he disappears from sight...

SIDE - as Odo, now dressed in the shapeless smock of the Founders, also overtakes Bashir...

ODO

Excuse me, Doctor... I have a
major galactic civilisation to
save single-handedly.

REAR - watching Odo walk on ahead of Bashir, into the empty
and endless corridor. Dax steps up to Bashir's side...

BASHIR'S POV - Dax looks up at Bashir, now in a red-collar
command uniform. The walls continue to move past...

DAX

You used to do things like that,
Julian. Back in the day.

ON BASHIR - who recoils, defensive...

BASHIR

But I like it here....

FRONT - Dax steps ahead of Bashir, walks confidently on...

DAX

Well... that's nice.

She walks ahead, leaving Bashir behind. He watches her go,
plaintive, hopeful...

Dax overtakes the camera, leaving Bashir alone in the
corridor...

LOW - Bashir's boots walk on, floor passing beneath him...

SIDE - though Bashir's body walks at the same pace, the
walls moving past him slow down... slower... slower...

BASHIR

Dax...?

No response. The walls slow, and slow, and stop altogether.

Bashir's body still walks - it's just not getting anywhere.

FRONT - Bashir walks, but he is not progressing any further
down the corridor. The walls aren't moving.

The camera slowly pulls back, retreating down the long, empty corridor away from him.

Bashir continues to walk towards us, but getting further and further away...

BASHIR
(small, plaintive)
Hello? Is anyone there?

Silence.

CUT TO:

2 INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS

Bashir jerks awake with a surprised "Buh!"

He is lying in tangled bed sheets in his darkened quarters. He looks around himself, his senses returning to him.

As Bashir realises he just had a nightmare...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

BASHIR stands near his desk. All the familiar medical staff - TARSES, RICHTER, ETANA and AYLAM - stand around, holding padds or notebooks. Bashir is leading a staff meeting.

Bashir has dark circles under his eyes, muscles a little slack. Nothing too overt, but just enough to mark him as tired and lethargic. We are already mid-meeting...

BASHIR

Doctor Tarses, any news on Ensign Cardok?

TARSES

He'll be fine. He just needed his carbon trichloride adjusting - apparently his body needs a little more than the average Benzite. Easily manageable with a tweak in the atmosphere in his quarters.

BASHIR

Good, good. Umm... Kristen, did we talk about quarantine issues for the Kressari freighter tomorrow?

RICHTER

(a little confused)

Yes, Doctor... last night, before I clocked out.

BASHIR

(annoyed at himself)

Right, of course. Right. Sorry.

Bashir frowns, shakes himself, clearing his foggy head...

ETANA

Doctor... are you feeling okay?

BASHIR
I'm fine. Just... haven't been
sleeping well lately. Bad dreams.
(waves it away)
It's nothing. I'm fine.

Etana and Richter exchange a worried glance. Bashir sees...

BASHIR (cont)
I said I'm fine. Now... we've
covered everything, yes?

TARSES
I think so. It's evening shift,
there's no urgent business. We can
run the shop for a while, if you
want to take a moment, grab
something from the Replimat...

BASHIR
Yes... yes, I think I'll do that.
Thank you, Simon. Alright, er...
dismissed, then. Thank you, all.

They all go their separate ways...

4 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

KIRA enters, TARAN'ATAR trailing behind her...

KIRA
Like I said, we've put everything
back the way it was.

Taran'atar looks around, unimpressed...

TARAN'ATAR
Not everything.

He looks pointedly at a bare wall. Kira gets his meaning...

KIRA
We decided that it would be in
everyone's best interest if you
didn't keep any weapons in here.

Taran'atar watches Kira for signs of fear, anger, hatred...
but she is holding tight. He turns away, keeps exploring...

TARAN'ATAR

I am here on a mission of peace.
I have no need of weapons.

KIRA

I hope that's true. But I know
you also used them in the course
of your training and exercise.

TARAN'ATAR

I can generate holographic weapons
for that purpose. They would
present no danger to the station's
physical populace.

KIRA

The holosuites aren't an option.
Quark is staying firm on banning
you from the bar. You'll have to
exercise either in here... or in
the station's public gymnasium.

TARAN'ATAR

The public will not want to share
facilities with me.

KIRA

Maybe not. But you went through
the same thing last time. They got
used to you then. They'll get used
to you now.

TARAN'ATAR

It is not the same. When I first
came to Deep Space Nine, people
hated me simply because I was
Jem'Hadar. Now they will hate me
because of what I did...

(looks at Kira)

...to you. And to Lieutenants Ro
and Tenmei.

An uncomfortable pause. Kira pushes through it...

KIRA
Look in the other room.

Intrigued, Taran'atar moves to do as she says, and sees...

ANGLE - THE BEDROOM

...with an actual bed in it. He looks back at Kira...

KIRA
I'm assuming you still need sleep.

TARAN'ATAR
(grumble)
I do. The Founder maintained his prohibition on using the white.

KIRA
Then this should help you. Don't be embarrassed. Odo himself used to sleep in a bucket he kept in the back of his office.

Taran'atar stares at the bed, not moving...

KIRA
How long since you last slept?

TARAN'ATAR
Not since I left the Dominion.

KIRA
I can't order you to do anything, but if you want my advice, I'd take the chance for a nap right now. Once you've rested, we can start talking about what you're actually going to achieve here.

She turns and walks away, slightly relieved to be away from him. She approaches the door...

5 ANGLE ON THE DOOR

...which opens, and Bashir walks in, still looking tired and haggard.

6 **BASHIR'S POV**

...a completely empty set of quarters. Basic furniture shorn of any personal belongings or effects.

Bashir steps in, lets the door close behind him. He looks over towards the bedroom... a wistful half-smile.

The dining table. The sofa. The window full of stars. Back to the bedroom. Memories attached to all of them.

Then he shakes himself. Enough of this. He pulls himself together, turns and walks back out of the room again.

7 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE**

Kira enters her office, VAUGHN following behind. Kira takes her chair, Vaughn sits opposite. Kira picks up a padd...

 VAUGHN
How did it go?

 KIRA
He's not happy, but he'll do it.
So! I guess we need to discuss
who's taking over from Dax...

 VAUGHN
Alright. For second officer of the
station, I think it's Ro.

 KIRA
Really?

 VAUGHN
She's got the experience, the
instincts, the tactical training.
Picard said she would have been a
Commander a decade ago if not for
that whole Garon Two thing.

 KIRA
Don't get me wrong, I have no
problem leaving her in charge
short term. But do you really
think she can handle long term?

VAUGHN

Can't get to one without going through the other. She can do the job, Captain. She may not believe it herself... but that's why she needs us to believe in her.

Kira is not convinced, but at length she taps her padd...

KIRA

I am promoting Lieutenant Ro Laren to the position of Second Officer. If you and I are out of commission or unavailable, she's in command.

(new thought)

Oh, but what about alpha shift ops controller? Ro can't spend all day parking freighters.

VAUGHN

So we split the role. Leave Ro as Security Chief and Second Officer, and assign Major Cenn to run the boards. Keeps him nearby in case we need him as Bajoran liaison.

KIRA

Always used to work for me. So! That just leaves First Officer of the *Defiant*.

VAUGHN

Well, there I'd go with Bowers. Twenty-year veteran of the service, stickler for protocol --

KIRA

Yeah, I noticed.

VAUGHN

He's already stood in for Dax in the past. We may have had our disagreements, but I never doubted for a second he has the interests of his ship and crew at heart.

KIRA
Okay, I guess that's decided.
(taps padd again)
You know, I kinda like having you
make all these decisions for me.

VAUGHN
Advising you, Captain. The final
decision is always yours.

Kira looks down at her padd... and smiles mischievously.

KIRA
Ro in command. Should be fun.

CUT TO:

8 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

RO sits at her desk, leaning across it threateningly...

RO
Do you want me to punch you in the
face? Is that what this is about?

Major CENN looks like a man facing down a wild animal on a
lonely street. He tries not to poke the bear, keep it fully
professional, while still standing up for himself...

CENN
Lieutenant... providing short-term
visiting dignitaries with a few
guards is one thing. Placing a
constant, round-the-clock security
presence on one is quite another.

RO
(gritted teeth)
Well, Major, it's going to happen.
Captain Kira made this deal, and
she's in command of this station,
so what she says goes. Ours is not
to question why, but to shut the
hell up and do as we're told.

CENN

(patient, cautious)

I understand that. I'm only saying that it might be easier said than done. I'm not sure we have the bodies to spare, not to mention the fact that it could well be seen as a diplomatic insult.

RO

(sneer)

Aww, you're afraid we'll hurt his feelings?

CENN

Relations with the Dominion are in a delicate place right now. With all due respect, Lieutenant, you won't make them any better by watching Taran'atar's every step. I do understand how you feel, but you might just have to --

RO

(interrupting)

Say one more word and I will snap your neck. Seriously.

Ro is as coldly angry as we have ever seen her. Cenn stops and gapes, astonished. Though he doesn't like being spoken to like this, he is wise enough not to make it any worse...

RO

You have your orders. Make it happen. Now get out, while you can still walk.

Without saying a word, Cenn nods nervously, stands, heads out onto the Promenade...

9 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

A turbolift door opens and Ro emerges, walking gingerly with the help of her walking stick. Still furious with Cenn, muttering under her breath...

RO
Trying to tell me about trust.
After all that crap he gave me
about this entire station being an
affront to Bajorans, he wants to
make nice --

An unseen force BARRELS into her with the strength of a
raging bull, knocking the breath is out of her...

RO lands with a CRUNCH against the bulkhead. Bones BREAK.
She gasp-SCREAMS. She crumples to the floor, eyes wide with
terror, neck at an unnatural angle. She looks up to see...

TARAN' ATAR, his face filling her vision, he's coming for
her, his face contorted with fury...

On **RO** as she SCREAMS...

CUT TO:

10 INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS

A strangled scream forces its way out of Ro's throat as she
jerks awake from her dream.

She is lying in her bed, sheets soaked with sweat. Looks
around in a panic, catching her breath.

She's alone. She's safe. It was just a dream. She pants
from the terror...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS

BATHROOM. Ro splashes cold water onto her face, trying to shock the dream out of her system. Stares at herself in the mirror. Deep breath. Gets herself under control.

Opens the cabinet, finds the hypo, closes the cabinet --

-- and TARAN'ATAR is standing behind her in the mirror. Ro SHRIEKS, spins on the spot...

...but there's nobody there. Ro forces her beating heart to slow, her rasping breaths to calm, back to the mirror...

She lifts the hypospray in her hand, purposely injects the painkillers. She breathes deeply as they take effect.

She reaches to the side, grabs her walking stick. Heads back to the main room, hobbling more than usual.

MAIN ROOM - still darkened for night. Looks at the bed, its rumpled, sweat-drenched sheets. Stares for a moment...

RO
Computer. Time.

COMPUTER
Five-hundred forty-seven hours.

Too early to go to work. Too late to go back to bed.

RO
Fine. Start the shower.

12 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

The Jem'Hadar lies on his bed, straight as a rod, dressed and fast asleep. Nothing has moved or ruffled at all...

L'HAAN (v.o.)
Why are you here? What good does
it serve?

13 **EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD - DAY**

A sweeping, panoramic view of the Great Link, the enormous sea of golden Founders swelling and rolling gently...

TARAN'ATAR (o.s.)

This is the world of the Founders.
The home of the Dominion. This is
where I belong.

...until we find Taran'atar on the islet, staring out...

...and behind him, a Vulcan woman - L'HAAN, the Intendant's
handmaiden (9x23 "The Soul Key") - gazing out with him...

L'HAAN

Is it? Then why have they twice
sent you away?

TARAN'ATAR

To do work for the Founders that
only I was capable of doing.

L'HAAN

You parrot the words of your
former masters. Have you no
thoughts of your own?

TARAN'ATAR

I never needed thoughts of my own.

L'HAAN

That is not a denial. Tell me your
thoughts.

TARAN'ATAR

Why do you care?

L'HAAN

You are the one who has brought me
here, in order to ask precisely
these questions of yourself.

TARAN'ATAR

Federation double-speak. None of
you ever say what you mean.

L'HAAN

I am not Federation. I am not even
real. But you are correct that I
lived a life of deception. Very
well - leave me. Return to your
Founders, if they will have you.

Taran'atar steps towards the edge of the Link. But as he
steps closer, the tide of the sea recedes away from him.

Another step closer - the Link moves away again.

Frustrated, Taran'atar turns and looks at L'Haan. She gazes
back at him, completely expressionless and impassive...

TARAN'ATAR

This is pointless. None of this
is real. I am already with the
Founders - I do their bidding.
That is all a Jem'Hadar needs.

L'HAAN

(eyebrow)

You have learned the ways of the
humans too well. Now you lie to
yourself.

Getting angry, Taran'atar turns towards L'Haan and advances
on her. But as he does, her image FADES AWAY into nothing.

Taran'atar stands alone on the islet, surrounded by the
Link. It seems very far away. He SCREWS UP his eyes...

14 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

...and opens his eyes from sleep. Calm and controlled. He
sits up slowly, turns to sit on the bed's edge.

He frowns, sneers, growls... and then puts it behind him.
He stands and moves to the door...

15 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

...and is about to walk straight past crewman SEVAK without
acknowledging him. But the Vulcan, previously as relaxed
and at ease as a Vulcan ever is, snaps to attention...

SEVAK

Pardon, Ambassador, but Lieutenant
Ro has requested that a member of
station security accompany you at
all times outside your quarters.

Taran'atar stares him down, a little irritated. He makes
silent note of the phaser holstered at Sevak's hip...

TARAN'ATAR

She does not trust me.

SEVAK

I have no information about the
Lieutenant's motivations, sir.
But I will follow my orders.

That strikes a chord. Taran'atar relents...

TARAN'ATAR

Very well. I wish to visit the
station's exercise room. You
may... accompany me.

Taran'atar turns and walks, Sevak follows...

16 INT. DS9 - GYMNASIUM

A large room like a cargo bay, with weights, treadmills, a
stretching area. Taran'atar marches in, Sevak close behind.
But they are brought up short when they realise...

...that RO is there, carefully using a weight machine. She
STARTS at the sight of Taran'atar. Awkward stares...

TARAN'ATAR

Lieutenant. I had not expected
anyone else to be here this early
in the station's day. I thought it
prudent to avoid the civilian
population for now.

RO

(blank)

That's probably a good idea. I'll
let you have the room to yourself.

TARAN'ATAR
That will not be necessary.

RO
No, it's no trouble.

She slowly disentangles herself from the exercise machines, grabs for her walking stick, anti-grav anklets visible.

She hobbles slowly towards the exit. It's a big room, and the long, silent stretch of time is agonisingly awkward.

Neither the Vulcan nor the Jem'Hadar can show any emotional reaction, but the struggle is accusation enough on its own.

Finally she hobbles past them and out the door. Taran'atar stands there, considering everything...

17 INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS

Bashir sits on his bed. In uniform, but slumped and tired, no energy. A moment - he pulls himself together...

BASHIR
This is ridiculous. Computer -
Arabica coffee, full strength.

COMPUTER
Standard user preferences for this
replicator indicate no caffeinated
beverages. Please confirm request.

BASHIR
Oh, for God's sake. Confirm.

The replicator produces a steaming cup of coffee. Bashir reaches in to grab it. He takes a sip. It doesn't help.

BASHIR
Might as well get the morning
started.

COMPUTER
Please restate request.

Bashir just rolls his eyes, heads to the door. It OPENS...

18 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

...but as he passes the threshold out into the corridor, the standard lights die out and the usual background sounds of the station fade away. The door closes behind him.

Bashir stands in the corridor, looking up and down, puzzled by the complete lack of power or life. What's wrong here?

BASHIR
Hello? Is anyone there?

No answer. Just dim background lighting, no sounds.

BASHIR
Computer? Has there been a power failure in this section?

No response.

BASHIR
I suppose that answers my question.

Carrying his coffee, Bashir begins to walk down the corridor, a bit trepidatious...

19 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Dark and silent, only dim emergency lighting to see by. And it is a ghost town, with not a single soul to be seen...

...except for Bashir, who emerges from around the curve of the Promenade, walking along. He is not a little worried...

20 POV ANGLE

Something is watching Bashir. We see him from behind. He jerks his head around, looking urgently back the way he came - towards us. Did he hear something?

There's nothing there - even though our POV is right in the middle of the Promenade, watching him, he doesn't see us.

He turns back around and walks on...

21 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Security office - dead. Replimat - dead. Quark's bar -
dead. Station shrine - dead.

Finally he reaches the Infirmary. Doors closed. He steps
warily towards them. They open onto...

22 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY (CONTINUOUS)**

...a similarly dark and deserted room. Bashir creeps in,
still expecting something to jump out at him...

BASHIR

Anybody there?

(beat)

I'm not about to get jumped by a
Lethean again, am I? I've had
quite enough of that.

But no, there's nothing.

BASHIR

Computer... please respond.

COMPUTER

Ready.

BASHIR

Then can you please tell me where
everyone is.

COMPUTER

Please restate request.

BASHIR

(frustrated)

This god-forsaken station has a
crew of hundreds and a population
of thousands. From the bats in the
belfry right down to the bears in
the bedroom. So why can't I find
any of them?

COMPUTER

Unknown.

BASHIR
Are they still on board?

COMPUTER
Negative.

BASHIR
When did they leave?

COMPUTER
A long time ago.

That's disquieting. Bashir walks through from the office area to the surgery suite. Still empty.

BASHIR
Is there anyone left?

COMPUTER
Negative. You are alone.

BASHIR
(small, scared)
Then what's following me?

COMPUTER
Nothing. You are alone.

BASHIR
Stop saying that.

COMPUTER
All your friends have left you.
You are alone.

BASHIR
Stop it!

Bashir hears the door of the Infirmary open - he turns and moves quickly to see who it is, hopeful to prove the computer wrong.

It's OLD BASHIR. Like he looked in 3x18 "Distant Voices" - a wrinkled and decrepit old man, white-haired and stooped over, barely able to place one foot in front of the other.

BASHIR gazes sadly at this passing vision, understanding...

OLD BASHIR shuffles slowly to his usual desk, creakingly lowers himself into the seat, looks forlornly at the room.

OLD BASHIR'S POV - from his position at the chief medical officer's desk, he looks around at the Infirmary. It's empty now, no sign of the younger Bashir.

OLD BASHIR turns back to his desk. Taps the computer, talks to it in a creaky old man's voice...

OLD BASHIR
Begin medical officer's log. I've
been alone here now for... fifty
years. Everybody else has moved
on. But it's okay. I like it here.
(sadly)
I'll never leave.

An ARM in a Starfleet medical uniform reaches into frame, unseen by Old Bashir, grabs his shoulder.

Old Bashir jumps in fright --

MATCH CUT to:

23 INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS

-- and Bashir JERKS awake in his bed, back in his darkened quarters. He readjusts to his surroundings...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

24 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

QUARK works the bar as usual. RICHTER and ETANA share breakfast at a table nearby. CENN is sat with them...

CENN

It's about Lieutenant Ro. She's been kinda tough on me lately... and you worked with her a long time... how do you handle her?

ETANA

I'm not sure I ever handled her, Major. She is tough. But I like that. Piss her off, and she will bring you down. But if you can get her on your side, she'll be the fiercest friend you ever had.

CENN

But this is more than her usual bad mood. She's tired, irritable - I'm actually worried for her.

RICHTER

Doctor Bashir's been kind of rough lately too. Not angry... just woolly, absent minded.

(looks up; sotto)

Speak of the devil...

Cenn looks at her, confused by the human idiom. She nudges his attention to the door, where Bashir just entered...

CENN

He looks awful...

RICHTER

Yeah... he said he's not been sleeping well. Bad dreams.

The three watch Bashir sluggishly approach the bar...

25 **BASHIR & QUARK**

Bashir settles in at the bar...

BASHIR

Small coffee please, Quark. Full
strength, Arabica blend.

QUARK

I thought you were a decaf man.
But I guess you do look kind of...
 (how to say it?)
...like Morn with a hangover.

Bashir forces a tense smile of grim amusement...

BASHIR

Just get me the coffee, Quark.

Quark turns away to the replicator, works the buttons...

26 **CENN, ETANA & RICHTER (FOREGROUND of SC 61)**

Scene 61 (Bashir & Quark) takes place simultaneously in the
background. Cenn, Etana and Richter overhear... Observing
them, something worrying occurs to Cenn...

CENN

Sevak walked Taran'atar to the gym
first thing this morning. He said
Ro was already there, looked like
she'd been there a while. I guess
she's not sleeping either...?

RICHTER

You think she's been having bad
dreams too?

CENN

She'd certainly have reason to.

ETANA

But what are the odds two of the
station's senior officers would
have an attack of the *pagh-wraith*
at the same time?

27 **BASHIR & QUARK (BACKGROUND of SC 60)**

Quark places a steaming cup of dark coffee on the counter in front of Bashir. Bashir looks up at him, unimpressed...

BASHIR

What's that?

QUARK

It's coffee. Full strength,
Arabica blend.

BASHIR

It's a large. I asked for a small.

QUARK

Oh, that. It's at no extra cost.
Their's idea to build good will
with the customers.

28 **BASHIR & QUARK**

Bashir is getting louder, angrier. Customers start to stare - Quark is baffled, trying to rescue this transaction...

BASHIR

But I didn't ask for a large.

QUARK

But... it's the same price.

BASHIR

That's not the point! I only
wanted a small. If I'd wanted a
large I would have asked for a
large. But I didn't, did I?

QUARK

(hands up)

I'm sorry, I just thought you'd
like it.

BASHIR

You should give the customer what
they ask for, Quark, not what you
think they'd like.

Bashir SHOVES the cup of coffee away. It tumbles off the counter and SMASHES to the ground...

QUARK

Hey!

Etana is instantly on her feet, security training kicking in. The rest of the bar is silent, watching the scene...

ETANA

Doctor! Is there a problem here?

Under staring eyes, Bashir realises he has gone too far...

BASHIR

Quark... I'll pay for the damage.
I haven't been sleeping well...

ETANA

(delicately)

Still having the nightmares?

BASHIR

It's stupid. I don't have nightmares. There must be something wrong with me.

QUARK

Then you stay the hell out of my bar until you get it fixed.

ETANA

Quark, this is serious. Bashir's not the only one acting strange lately... and I'm starting to think it's not a coincidence.

Etana leads Bashir gently away. Quark stands behind his bar, jaw set and angry, watching them go...

CENN

(sotto, to Richter)

So much for not being angry.

Off Cenn, worried that something is going on here...

29 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

Bashir sits sideways on a bio-bed, insular and embarrassed.
Richter and Tarses work scanners, physically examine him.

In the office is an impromptu staff meeting of Kira, Ro and
Cenn. SHAR and NOG both enter from the Promenade...

KIRA

Shar - anything?

SHAR

All the usual scans are negative,
but there are some more... exotic
traces that are not detected as a
matter of course. I will continue.

NOG

Maybe it's nothing. People have
dreams all the time. I had a dream
that I went to bed still wearing
my uniform.

Everyone turns to look at him. Deer in the headlights.

NOG (cont)

...I hadn't, though.

Tarses and Richter enter from the surgical suite...

TARSES

I haven't found any obvious
medical cause, either, Captain.
But I'm not yet prepared to say
there isn't one.

Bashir follows, not wanting to be left out, although that
wasn't really Tarses' plan...

BASHIR

Of course there is. There's always
a reason for this kind of thing.
Keep looking.

KIRA

We will, Doctor.

BASHIR

Kristen, work with him, will you?
Airborne pathogens, degenerative
disorders. And Shar... various
kinds of non-corporeal aliens are
known to attack using telepathic
signals... check everything.

SHAR

Certainly, Doctor.

BASHIR

I don't have nightmares, Captain.
I haven't since I was a little
boy. And me and Ro at the same
time? That's no coincidence.

KIRA

(calm down!)

We'll handle it, Doctor. You just
get some rest.

RO

(impatient)

Are we done with this now? That
damned Kressari freighter is on
final approach for its delivery of
poison flowers, and security is
short enough as it is.

CENN

What about Taran'atar?

Ro visibly tenses. Nog sees it, and is concerned...

KIRA

What about him, Major?

CENN

Crewman Sevak has been assigned
to escort him. If he could be
relieved, we'd have more bodies
spare to help with the Kressari...

Cenn gives a nervous glance at Ro - practically vibrating
with annoyance. Kira is aware of the tension...

KIRA
Assignment of security personnel
is Lieutenant Ro's responsibility.
Any changes are hers to make. Get
to work, everyone.

They do so, all but Tarses and Richter heading out onto the
Promenade. Ro stomping angrily, Bashir slouching tiredly...

KIRA (cont)
Major Cenn, stay a moment, please.

Cenn stops, closes his eyes in a wince. He knows he did
wrong, and now he is in trouble. Once they are alone...

KIRA
Do you know what you did wrong,
Major?

CENN
I do. And I'm sorry --

KIRA
I'm not the one you owe an apology.
I know you meant well, but there's a
time and a place. Once your direct
supervisor has made their decision,
it's inappropriate to go over their
heads to their supervisor.

CENN
Begging your pardon, Captain...
but isn't that exactly what you
did with Akaar and Asarem only a
few days ago?

Kira can't help but smile. He's got her there...

KIRA
Yes... and if things hold to
pattern, that should blow up in my
face any day now. If you really
want to help Ro, then find
whatever's behind this.

Cenn nods with resolve. He'll catch them...

TREIR is nearby, cleaning up the smashed coffee cup...

Others sit at the bar, including a KLINGON male, who overhears everything QUARK is about to say to KIRA...

QUARK

Don't even try to paint this as my fault, Captain. I try to do a good deed - at my own expense - and I get attacked and slandered.

KIRA

I'm not blaming you, Quark. I just asked what happened. If there's something wrong with my medical officer, I need to know about it.

QUARK

Well I'm sure the Federation will figure it out with their sensor readings and science explanations.

KIRA

(sigh)

Fine. But I also wanted to talk to you again about Taran'atar.

QUARK

No is no, Captain.

KIRA

Quark, you know this isn't right.

QUARK

What I know is that I've had six customers come to me just this morning and say how grateful they are that I banned that overgrown rock from my bar. I don't need murdering Jem'Hadars, and I don't need crazy hew-mons either. So with all due respect, Captain, get your own ledgers in order before you come for mine. Are we done?

KIRA
(bites tongue)
Thank you for your time, Mister
Ambassador.

Quark turns his back and returns to work. Kira can only
walk away empty-handed. Treir is right there...

TREIR
What was that all about?

QUARK
What else? Taran'atar. It's all
his fault.

TREIR
What is?

QUARK
Ro. Bashir. The whole station's
having bad dreams because of that
murdering monster.

Quark stomps off, leaving Treir a little bemused.

But the Klingon man heard everything - he sneers, gets up
from the bar, stomps across the bar, joins a table of two
other Klingons. He talks to them MOS, and they all growl...

31 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A standard freighter ship settles onto the docking ring...

32 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

Starfleet security, led by Major Cenn, stands waiting at
the bottom of the gangplank.

The freighter's captain, a KRESSARI male named INGTUPLETH,
walks down the gangplank, surprised and wary to see them...

CENN
You are Captain Ingtupleth?

INGTUPLETH
I am.

CENN
I'm Major Cenn, station security.
Please come with me, Captain -
there are some questions I'd like
to ask you.

Confused and wary, Ingtupleth has no choice but to agree.
He follows Cenn out of the room, nervously watching the
security as they move up the gangplank onto his ship...

33 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Cenn leads the worried Ingtupleth on. They turn a corner...
...and see Taran'atar approaching, Sevak escorting him...

INGTUPLETH
A Jem'Hadar...? I thought --

CENN
He's none of your concern.

The two groups pass each other in the corridor. Taran'atar
is uncomfortable, knowing everyone hates him.

Ingtupleth is worried - does the Jem'Hadar have something
to do with why he is being questioned?

Cenn and Ingtupleth move on, but the Kressari glances back
over his shoulder, still worried about the Jem'Hadar.

At the other end, Taran'atar and Sevak turn the corner...

...and as they pass, we see the KLINGON from Quark's,
lurking in the shadows, watching Taran'atar's every move.
Off the Klingon's threatening sneer...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

34 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS

Cenn and Ingtupleth sit across a table in the middle of the room. The Kressari still has no idea what this is about...

CENN

What is the nature of the cargo
you're delivering today, Captain?

INGTUPLETH

Several species of flora native to
Kressar... as I told members of
your station's staff when the
arrangements were first made.

CENN

And those are poisonous species?

INGTUPLETH

Potentially poisonous under very
rare conditions, yes.

CENN

And one of the effects of that
poison is hallucinations, correct?

INGTUPLETH

Major, I answered all of these
questions weeks ago. And your crew
agreed to provide the quarantine
to prevent exactly the effects
you're worried about.

CENN

Yes, it's stretched our resources
nearly to the limit. So I have to
wonder... what else might be going
on while they're all so occupied?

INGTUPLETH

What else...? Major, I have no
idea what you're talking about.

CENN

I'll tell you, Captain. Members of our senior staff - the two most closely involved in running your quarantine in fact - have recently been afflicted with a series of dreams designed to make them less able to do their jobs. On the exact same day that this shipment of hallucinogenic plants arrives on the station. Surely you can see why that would jump out at me as being more than a coincidence?

INGTUPLETH

(stunned)

Major... I have no intentions against you or anyone on this station. Why would you even --

CENN

You seemed surprised to see a Jem'Hadar in the corridor earlier. Why was that?

INGTUPLETH

(thrown off)

I was just shocked, that's all. I'd heard that one used to live here, but I thought he'd left. What does that have to do with --

CENN

Last time I talked with a Kressari in this room, she was part of a plan to kill the commander of this station, using that very Jem'Hadar as her agent. In fact, she was the one who perfected the method they used to override his loyalty to the Founders... a method that included sending him subconscious instructions while he slept. And now he's back only a matter of days before you arrive... with your hallucinogenic plants.

Ingtupleth sits back in his chair, absolutely amazed...

INGTUPLETH

I think I've heard enough of your
baseless accusations, Major. I'm
not saying another word to you
until I have legal counsel.

Cenn smiles, smug - that's basically a confession...

35 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Ro sits alone at her desk. On the screens, unnoticed for
now, Cenn leads the Kressari captain into a holding cell.

Close on Ro's blank staring eyes as she remembers...

36 INT. RO'S QUARTERS

Last night. Ro is asleep in bed, caught in a dream...

...then she JERKS awake. Flat on her back, raises her head,
looks around at the darkened bedroom...

RO'S POV - a hint of movement, a SHADOW seems to shift...

RO - a GASP of fear... she moves to get up... but she can't
move. Looks down at her arm, wills it to move... nothing.
Legs... nothing. Looks back up at the room...

RO'S POV - a NOISE in the darkness... like a chuckle and
growl combined... then a humanoid SHAPE dashes across the
window, briefly silhouetted against the starlight...

RO - grits her teeth, tries to force her body to move. It
won't. The GROWL comes again, louder... closer...

POV - looking vertically down on her, getting closer... she
can't escape... she SCREAMS...

37 INT. RO'S QUARTERS

Ro wakes for real, a strangled scream in her throat again,
pulse pounding in her ears. She instantly sits up, looks
around... nothing. Tests her hands, clenches and stretches
them in front of her face... fine. Fights back the tears...

...and fights them back again, coming out of the memory.

She opens a desk drawer, pulls out a hypospray. Pushes it to her neck, injects the painkillers...

...and that's where NOG finds her, caught in the act, as he enters from the Promenade. He sees the hypospray. Doesn't react or comment, though he knows exactly what is going on.

Ro puts the hypospray away. Returns her attention to her desk, tries to look like she's busy. Doesn't want company.

Nog steps further in, the door closing behind him...

NOG

Lieutenant, I came to tell you
that Shar still hasn't found
anything... and that I understand
how you feel.

RO

(sharp)

Lieutenant, have I given you any
indication at all that I want your
sympathy?

NOG

(a bit annoyed)

This isn't sympathy. You can get
sympathy from my uncle. This is
empathy. Believe it or not, Ro,
you're not the only one who's ever
been hurt by a Jem'Hadar. The
Federation is filled with people
in the same situation...

He pulls up his uniform leg, revealing the prosthetic...

NOG (cont)

...including me. In case you
forgot, when Taran'atar was first
assigned here, I had a hard time
believing he wasn't about to kill
me every time I saw him.

Nog drops his trouser leg, point made. Ro is the tiniest bit ashamed. Won't go as far as saying so, of course...

RO
(quietly)
How did you get past it?

NOG
In my case it took a supernatural encounter with a mysterious space-borne artefact in the Gamma Quadrant. You may have to go the long way around. But I did get past it, and you will too.

Ro just gives a small nod. Nog accepts graciously.

Then he looks up at the monitors, sees the Kressari captain in one of the holding cells...

NOG
What did the Kressari do?

RO
What?

She turns around, look at the screens, confused. Seeing the Kressari, and Cenn standing nearby, she frowns...

39 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Taran'atar and Sevak emerge from a turbolift, walk along. All around, extras give Taran'atar dirty looks...

They are about to head past Quark's bar, but Taran'atar notices Quark, noticing him from just inside the bar.

Quark stops what he is doing, stands firm. None shall pass. Taran'atar stops walking, glowers... Sevak eyebrows him...

TARAN'ATAR
I am not permitted to use the Ferengi's holosuites. The exercise room was unfulfilling. Every face on the station looks at me with hatred. I tire of it.

SEVAK

With respect, Ambassador, did you truly expect it to be otherwise?

TARAN'ATAR

I did nothing to these people. To those whom I did hurt, I have apologised. Is that not enough?

Sevak ponders that... and suddenly, Taran'atar reaches out and GRABS the Vulcan, SHOVES him out of the way...

...revealing the KLINGON from earlier, storming towards them, his *dk'tahg* dagger raised ready to strike...

KLINGON

Die, *fekh'lari* monster!

Unconcerned, Taran'atar PUNCHES hard with one fist, right in the chest, sending the Klingon FLYING back...

40 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS

Ro marches in, walking stick CLANGING hard. Cenn is tapping into a padd while Ingtupleth stands inside a cell...

RO

What the hell is he doing in here?

CENN

Lieutenant... I was interviewing Captain Ingtupleth with respect to your... condition. I believe he may be involved in what's happening to you and Doctor Bashir.

Ro clenches her fists, closes her eyes, takes a deep breath. She may lose it at any second...

RO

Major Cenn, explain something to me. How is it that you can manage to dress yourself in the morning, being so mind-numbingly stupid?

Cenn's jaw drops...

41 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Taran'atar sneers down at the Klingon on the floor...

TARAN'ATAR

I had wondered when you would
finally attack. I smelled you
following me an hour ago.

KLINGON

I am a Klingon! I attack my enemy
to his face, not in the dark, with
honourless mind games.

TARAN'ATAR

And I am your enemy?

KLINGON

Not for much longer.

The Klingon LAUNCHES back up off the floor for another go.
But before he can make contact --

-- Sevak steps calmly between them, pushes Taran'atar back.
A sharp KICK knocks the dagger out of the Klingon's hand.
Enraged, the Klingon aims a FISTS at Sevak's head --

-- but the Vulcan catches the fist, smoothly TWISTS the arm
behind his back. The Klingon ROARS in frustration --

-- but Sevak's spare hand reaches for a NERVE PINCH. The
Klingon slumps, unconscious.

SEVAK

Do you know him?

TARAN'ATAR

Not before now.

A ROAR of anger, and they turn to see KLINGON 2, the first
Klingon's friend from the bar. He stands in the doorway, a
little drunk and glaring down at his fallen friend...

KLINGON 2

What did you do to him? I will
kill you!

Klingon 2 runs to attack. Taran'atar runs to meet him, before Sevak can do anything to stop him.

Meanwhile Nog stands in the open Security Office doors. He sees the fight, stays back...

42 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS

Ingtopleth is inside his cell. But he might as well be invisible right now, as Cenn and Ro argue across him...

CENN

Lieutenant, you may be my superior officer, and I'm sorry for what you're going through, but it is not okay for you to speak to me like that. I'm trying to solve --

RO

He's got nothing to do with it, you idiot!

NOG (comm)

Nog to Ro. There's a situation on the Promenade. We need you here right now.

A moment of surprise - then...

RO

Get him out of there. Now.

And she turns and stomps back towards the exit.

43 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Quark SHOVES Klingon 3 across the threshold of his bar from behind - keeping himself clear of any swinging daggers - and SLAMS the door control - they KERTHUNK closed before the Klingon can turn and retaliate. Through the glass...

QUARK

And stay out!

Ro steps out of security, Nog directs her attention towards the fight... not that she could miss it...

SEVAK gets a solid martial arts hit in against Klingon 3...

TARAN'ATAR grabs Klingon 2 in a headlock. The Klingon roars and struggles. Taran'atar tries for a NERVE PINCH ---

-- but it doesn't work. Taran'atar looks at his own hand, confused, then up at...

SEVAK, who gives him a calm eyebrow mid-fight - *why did you do that?*

KLINGON 2 laughs, spins in Taran'atar's grip, PUNCHES him hard. Growling with anger, Taran'atar PUNCHES him back...

RO stands in the doorway. Does she interfere, or just enjoy the show? Nog is confused by her lack of action...

NOG
Lieutenant...?

A burly BAJORAN man steps up out of the crowd...

BAJORAN
Hey! Leave him alone!

The Bajoran tries to GRAB Taran'atar's arm and pull him away from Klingon 2. Taran'atar turns --

-- and SHOVES the Bajoran man away, making sure it is a non-lethal blow.

KLINGON 2 takes his opening and gets a good slog in...

BAJORAN man comes back too, begins to hit Taran'atar...

Getting more aggressive and angry, Taran'atar SPINS on the spot with hands out, pushing everyone away from him...

Momentarily free of attackers, Taran'atar looks up --

-- and sees INGTUPLETH, the Kressari captain, striding to him. CENN follows, trying to hold the Kressari back...

Behind them all, Nog is still staying out of it...

But Ro turns and heads back into the Security Office...

INGTUPLETH

You! They put me in jail because
of you, you murdering freak!

And Ingtupleth joins the fight too, attacking Taran'atar...

Cenn and Sevak wade in, trying to pull Ingtupleth and the
Bajoran man back out...

A phaser blast SHRIEKS across the Promenade, hitting the
bulkhead. Cenn turns -- and sees Ro holding the phaser...

RO

That's enough! Stand down now or
I will fire, and I will not miss.

Klingon 3 ignores her, ROARS towards Taran'atar...

...the Jem'Hadar PUNCHES him away again...

Ro starts forward, walking stick dropped and forgotten...

RO

I said stop it, all of you!

Ro reaches for Taran'atar's arm --

-- and the Jem'Hadar reacts angrily, SPINS and SHOVES hard
with all his might...

...and Ro FLIES across the Promenade, landing hard with a
CRUNCH against the bulkhead.

She crumples to the deck, SCREAMS in shock and pain...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

44 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

RO jerks awake with a small GASP, finds herself on a bio-bed with Doctor TARSES working over her. She sighs...

RO
Am I paralysed again?

TARSES
Far from it. In fact, you're better than ever. In all the adrenaline, I bet you didn't even notice you dropped the walking stick, did you?

Ro thinks back a second... then gives a small smile. Tarses gently helps her to move up to a sitting position...

TARSES
You're fine. A couple of bruises, a bit of shock... but that's all. I'd like to think it goes without saying that you still need to take it easy. But knowing you...

RO
I get it, Doctor. Thank you.

The main doors open and BASHIR rushes in, looking a little wild and desperate. He rushes over to Ro and Tarses...

BASHIR
I heard what happened. Are you okay?
Did you find out what's going on?

TARSES
Lieutenant Ro will be fine, Doctor. And no, I haven't yet found a cause for your dreams.

RO
Cenn had the crazy idea it was the Kressari --

BASHIR

Yes! Exactly! That must be it.
The flowers have hallucinogenic
effects, don't they?

TARSES

(trying to be patient)
Yes, they do. But I've checked
that. The quarantine is secure.
There's no sign of any spores
getting loose. That's not it.

RO

Julian, I agree with Simon --

Bashir boils over with frustration, pushes past Tarses...

BASHIR

You're both useless. I'll find it
myself. I'll prove it!

Bashir goes to his panels and begins working. Tarses and Ro
exchange worried looks...

45 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira sits behind her desk, Taran'atar at attention...

KIRA

No, you're not in trouble. Nog and
Sevak both corroborate that it was
self-defence. And that you went
out of your way to use non-lethal
methods. Thank you for that.

TARAN'ATAR

I had anticipated emotional
reactions. I did not expect they
would extend to violence.

KIRA

The Klingon who attacked you...
apparently his brother served on
the *noH'pach*.

Taran'atar nods, understanding the reference...

KIRA (cont)
The others were just defending
their friend. They're all sleeping
it off in security. Do you want to
press charges?

TARAN'ATAR
What good would that serve?

Kira understands what he means...

46 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Ro walks along the Promenade, away from the Infirmary and
towards the Security Office. She is not using the walking
stick, but still taking it easy. She reaches security...

47 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

...and Quark is there waiting for her, arms folded. She
stops, hangs her head, sighs. Now what?

QUARK
What's Rule of Acquisition number
one hundred ninety?

What the hell does that have to do with anything? Ro moves
around to her seat, wanting to get back to work...

RO
(dismissive)
"Hear all, trust nothing."

QUARK
Which is why I'm here, to ask you
for myself if the stories I'm
hearing are true.

RO
(growl)
Get out of my office, Quark.

QUARK
You don't scare me, Laren.
(gently)
Why didn't you tell me?

RO

Because it's none of your damn business. Still isn't.

QUARK

Why do you act like you don't have anyone to turn to? You know what Major Cenn did this morning, after you ripped him a new wormhole? He came to Etana and Richter, looking for ways to help you.

RO

Got a funny way of showing it. Throwing the Kressari in jail. We had to waive the docking fees to make it up to him.

QUARK

Because you wouldn't tell him what the problem was. He was flailing around in the dark. Gint knows I probably didn't help either...

RO

You?

QUARK

That Klingon overheard me saying it was all Taran'atar's fault.

Ro tenses again. Quark sees it. He goes to her...

RO

(small whisper)

He scares me, Quark. I'm afraid to even go to sleep.

QUARK

I know. I'm sorry. But you're safe with me.

(clarification)

In my bar.

Ro peers at Quark, and realises something...

RO
Quark... did you ban him from your
bar... for me?

QUARK
Of course I did. You can't expect
me to welcome him like an old
friend after what he did to you.

Ro smiles, touched by his support. She reaches out to touch
his ear affectionately. She comes to a decision...

RO
Undo it.

QUARK
What?

RO
Let him back in the bar. None of
it was his fault. He's said he's
sorry. Undo it.

QUARK
Laren...

RO
Please, Quark. For me.

Quark takes a deep breath. How can he refuse?

QUARK
You know this'll hurt business...

That's a yes. Ro smiles in thanks.

48 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Major CENN sits at the bar, while life around him returns
to normal. TREIR is working the bar, and Cenn is gazing
lovingly at her while she goes about her business.

There is a COUGH, and Cenn turns to see Ro standing nearby.
He jumps a bit, worried he is about to be yelled at again.
Instead, Ro moves to take the seat next to him...

RO
Mind if I join you, Major?

CENN
(confused, wary)
Not at all, Lieutenant.

RO
I wondered... if could buy you a
drink.

Cenn is quietly taken aback. It's an apology...

CENN
That would be nice. Thank you.

RO
Alright, then.
(calls over)
Treir?

Treir heads over to them. Cenn smiles - he accepts Ro's
apology - but then he looks past Ro, and his smile fades.

Ro sees the change, turns to look - Taran'atar has entered.
Tension all around the bar as people stop talking...

Ro manoeuvres off her bar stool, stands to confront him.
She wants to run, fight, scream... but she controls it...

TARAN'ATAR
Lieutenant... thank you.

RO
You're welcome.

With a nod, Taran'atar walks past and heads up the stairs
towards the holosuites. Around the bar, two customers get
up from their seats and walk out in protest.

Ro sees it. She turns to the bar, gets back on her stool...

RO
Synthale?

Cenn has watched the exchange. He's impressed...

49 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

BASHIR is alone at his desk, working hard, frazzled and unrested. Screens scrolling, padds strewn all around. He hears the doors open behind him, doesn't look up...

BASHIR

I said get out, all of you. If
you're not going to help me -

KIRA (o.s.)

(firm)

Doctor.

Bashir jerks round, recognises a command tone when he hears it. KIRA is there, with SHAR, TARSES, RICHTER and ETANA hovering awkwardly. Bashir stands, smartens himself up...

BASHIR

Captain. I'm sorry. What can I do
for you?

KIRA

I have Lieutenant ch'Thane's final
report.

BASHIR

About time. What have you found,
Shar?

SHAR

Nothing, sir. I have checked every
subspace band for signals, and
there is only the usual background
radiation. No traces of telepathic
activity on the station.

BASHIR

(frustrated)

Then it must be something else!
Simon, the Kressari...

TARSES

No, Doctor. Besides, you said this
started a couple of days ago. The
Kressari only arrived today.

BASHIR
Something else then! Kristen, you
remember the Cathedral...

KIRA
Doctor... no.

Kira is gentle but firm. Bashir kind of knows what she's
telling him... but doesn't want to accept it.

BASHIR
I don't have nightmares, Captain.
I'm not some stupid little boy
who's afraid of the dark!
(getting tearful)
I'm a grown man. I know everything
that happens in my own head, and I
don't have nightmares! I can't!

It's getting uncomfortable. Kira glances at Tarses, and he
gets her message. He gently leads the others away and out
of the room, until Kira is left alone with Bashir...

KIRA
Doctor...

Bashir slumps into his seat, exhausted but still fighting.
Kira goes to him, worried for him, gently trying to help...

BASHIR
There has to be something...

KIRA
There isn't. I'm sorry, Julian.
But there's nothing you can blame
this on. No aliens, no diseases...
(beat)
There's just you.

Tearfully, he finally accepts it.

BASHIR
Just me. I am alone.

Bashir stares, teary-eyed. Kira is there for him...

50 **INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS**

Bashir sits alone in his quarters, Some time later. He is past the worst of it now. Doctor LENSE (from 9x15 "Wounds") appears on his screen, head and shoulders, in uniform...

 LENSE (screen)
Julian! This is a nice surprise.
What's the occasion?

 BASHIR
Hi, Elizabeth. I hope you don't mind... I just felt the need to talk to somebody.

 LENSE (screen)
Any time, Julian, you know that.
What's wrong?

A deep breath, as Bashir finally admits it to himself...

 BASHIR
Ezri's gone.

 LENSE (screen)
Oh Julian... I'm sorry.

 BASHIR
My own stupid fault. I knew it was coming. It just... brought up some issues for me... that I didn't want to face.

 LENSE (screen)
Like what?

 BASHIR
Like feeling like everyone is moving on with their lives without me, and I'm stuck here doing the same old job...

 LENSE (screen)
It's an important job, Julian.
They couldn't manage without you.

BASHIR
Thanks, I guess. What about you?
Anything new with the great Doctor
Elizabeth Lense?

LENSE (screen)
One thing, yeah.

Lense pulls back from the camera, and we see that she has a
definite bump - she is about six months pregnant...

BASHIR
My God, Elizabeth... is it...
(sadly)
...is it Saad's?

LENSE
(sad nod)
Yep. My baby's father is dead, on
another planet, stuck in another
dimension that no-one can get to
anymore. At least I hope for his
sake he's dead.
(beat)
So I know what you mean... about
feeling left behind.

On Bashir's sad face...

51 **INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS**

Taran'atar lies on his bed, asleep. Like it was before,
with him lying straight as an arrow...

L'HAAN (v.o.)
You have returned...

52 **EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD - DAY**

Taran'atar stands gazing out at the Great Link from his
place on the islet, as it gently swells and rolls. L'HAAN
the Vulcan woman stands nearby, watching with him.

L'HAAN
I did not expect to see you here.
You called it pointless.

TARAN'ATAR

You did not expect it because you
do not exist. You are a
fabrication of my mind.

L'HAAN

Indeed. And yet here you are again
to speak with me. May I ask why?

TARAN'ATAR

I am hated and attacked everywhere I
go. Even the Founders cast me out.

L'HAAN

Does it bother you?

TARAN'ATAR

It should not. A Jem'Hadar should
be above such things.

L'HAAN

That is not a denial. How
fascinating... a Jem'Hadar who
wants a friend.

TARAN'ATAR

A Jem'Hadar has no need of friends.

L'HAAN

Do not worry, Taran'atar. I will
be your friend.

On that ominous note...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW