

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x15 - "Inside Out."

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 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

A quiet, calm public park area on Bajor. Trees, flowerbeds, a central memorial created from one broken building girder set into a stone base. A public bench rests on one of the gentle flower-lined stone paths that wind through.

It's dark, a warm spring night that's perfect for a clandestine meeting.

VAUGHN stands off the path on a grassy verge, adjusting the settings on a transporter enhancer module, like the ones we saw in 10x01 "Emancipation." Once the settings are right, he switches it on, and the light on top bursts to life.

Looking around the area, he observes three other identical modules, set up in a rough square around the single bench. They bathe the area in a gentle bluish glow - the only light source besides the multiple moons.

The modules set up, he straightens his uniform, readies himself, and takes a calm, confident seat on the bench.

A few moments pass. Vaughn waits calmly, enjoying the peace of the area, the warm spring breeze. He's in no rush.

Finally there's a tiny rustle, barely audible. This is what he was waiting for. Not worried - it's entirely expected.

A hand reaches out to pull a bush aside, leaving space for a body to step out onto the path. It's RO LAREN.

She looks around the area, takes in the memorial, smiles slightly at it. Looking around further, she spots Vaughn sat on the bench, across the park from where she is, calm and relaxed in the bluish light.

This is who she's here to meet. She heads over to him. As she approaches, he politely stands to greet her.

RO
Commander...?

VAUGHN

Lieutenant. Thanks for coming.

He reaches out to shake her hand. She's a little surprised by that, but takes his hand and shakes it. That done, he sits back on the bench and gestures for her to join him. She does, a little tentatively.

VAUGHN

I imagine you're somewhat bewildered as to why you're here.

RO

A private message, level seven security clearance, asking me to come alone and meet with an unnamed person in a public area, on Bajor, at night. Bewildered might not be the word I'd use.

VAUGHN

You're armed?

She pats her leg pocket. He nods, understanding.

VAUGHN

A wise precaution. But I assure you, you're in no danger here. And besides, these modules...

He gestures to the transporter enhancer modules...

VAUGHN (cont)

...as well as sending out false sensor readings to any listening devices, and casting a transporter scattering field over the entire area, they also create a general dampening field against energy weapons. Your phaser is useless.

Worried, she quickly reaches into her pocket and pulls out the small hand phaser she'd secreted there. She tests it, checks the settings - only gets a dull squittering noise. Dead. Frustrated and confused, she puts it back away.

RO

Alright, what the hell is going on here, Commander? Why all the cloak and dagger?

VAUGHN

I need to have a very important conversation with you, Lieutenant. And I don't want to be overheard.

RO

Overheard by who?

VAUGHN

That'll become clear in time. For the moment, I'm going to have to ask you to be patient, and trust me.

RO

Not like I have a choice, is it?

VAUGHN

Absolutely you do. That's one thing I want to make completely clear from the start. If you want, you can turn around and walk away right now, and no more will be said. I'll be disappointed, no question, but I'll understand and I won't hold it against you. Of course, that also means you won't find out why I asked you here in the first place.

RO

(chuckle)

I think you've been playing this spy game too long, Commander.

VAUGHN

(ponderous)

Well, yes, I suppose I can't deny that.

RO

But I'll play along. For now.
What's going on?

VAUGHN

Not so fast. I need to ask you to do something else first. I need to ask you to make me an absolute, solemn promise that what we discuss tonight goes no further. Between you and me.

RO

Commander, you're starting to freak me out.

VAUGHN

Promise me, Lieutenant. Or this ends right now.

Ro is getting concerned - whatever this is, it's obvious that Vaughn feels very strongly about it. She takes the moment it deserves, considers it seriously. This is not a time for jokes or snarky remarks.

RO

Alright... I promise.

VAUGHN

(relieved)

Good. Thank you. I apologise for being so dramatic, but as I say, the more we discuss tonight, the more you'll realise why it's necessary.

RO

So tell me. Tell me what's so bad that we need to go through all this mystery just to have a conversation.

Vaughn smiles and takes a pause. He looks out across the park, tries to take comfort from the peace and tranquillity of the memorial and the gardens. He's no more eager to do this than she is, but it has to be done.

VAUGHN

I wouldn't be so quick to dive in
the deep end if I were you,
Lieutenant. Because the fact is,
if I've made the right choice -
and I believe that I have - then
after what I tell you tonight...
your life will never be the same.

On Ro's disquieted response...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Vaughn sits on the bench. Ro crouches, reaching out to caress the gentle white flowers that edge the path and surround the memorial. There's an air of quiet patience.

VAUGHN

Esani blossoms. I'm quite fond of them myself.

RO

I remember.

She looks back up at him with a knowing smile - he's thinking of Opaka. With a deep breath, she stands, creaking her delicate back with a wince of mild discomfort.

VAUGHN

How is your back?

RO

It's fine.

Wanting to avoid the subject, she steps back over to the bench and sits beside Vaughn.

VAUGHN

On that topic, how are things between you and Taran'atar?

RO

What's that got to do with it?

VAUGHN

Be patient with me, Lieutenant. We'll get there. But we have a lot to go through, and no-one is served by pointless questions.

RO

Well, excuse me.

VAUGHN

Pointed questions are entirely welcome. They show you're paying attention. But no melodramatic gasps of disbelief, please.

(insistent)

So... how are things between you and Taran'atar?

Ro pauses to consider the question.

RO

Distant, if I'm being honest. I thought we were doing okay, until the L'Haan thing hit. Then everything got tangled...

VAUGHN

In what way?

RO

You know... him going haywire again. Just... reminded me. Of things.

VAUGHN

And since then?

RO

Haven't really spent much time with him. Maybe I've been sub-consciously avoiding him, I don't know... but then he's not been in the most cooperative of moods lately, has he?

VAUGHN

You're referring to the Bajor-Dominion alliance.

RO

What alliance? He said he'd rather die.

VAUGHN

And how do you feel about that?

RO

How do I feel? I feel surprised. An alliance is exactly what Odo wanted. So for Taran'atar to say no is... uncharacteristic.

VAUGHN

He's not the only one who has a problem with the idea.

RO

Julian.

VAUGHN

Yes, Julian. But that's not who I was referring to. Surely you're aware of the protests on Bajor. Once word of Kira's proposal leaked to the media, the public made their feelings on the matter quite plain.

RO

Well, they don't have to worry about it now, do they?

VAUGHN

Kira can be very persuasive when she puts her mind to it. But you're quite right that Taran'atar's recent behaviour runs rather contrary to his role as Dominion Ambassador. And there's a reason for that.

RO

He gave a reason, didn't he?

VAUGHN

He did. One that amounted to throwing a tantrum just because Bajor initially wanted to be friendly with the Ascendants. Even though by the time Kira actually

asked for the alliance, that hope
had been lost.

RO
Doesn't make a lot of sense.

VAUGHN
Precisely. And as I say... there's
a reason for it.

RO
Which is?

VAUGHN
I'll come to that in a moment.

Ro is annoyed with Vaughn's evasion, but holds her tongue.

VAUGHN
First - another question. How much
do you remember about the Sindorin
mission? Specifically my
involvement in it?

Ro blinks in confusion. That's a bit of a curveball. She
racks her brains a bit. Then, as the answer comes to her,
she tenses. Pulls away from Vaughn, suspicious and wary.

RO
I remember Bashir becoming
suspicious of you. Of your odd
lack of background.

VAUGHN
(nods)
He suspected I was a member of
Section Thirty-One.

RO
Is that what this is about? You're
trying to recruit me into Section
Thirty-One?

VAUGHN
(chuckle)

Oh, good lord no. Quite the opposite. Who do you think rescued the surviving Ingavi from 31's slaughter?

RO

I know that was you. You told me it was you at the time. What's your point?

VAUGHN

Didn't you ever wonder how I was able to do that? How I had access to the resources and intelligence to pull that off?

RO

I just assumed your old covert ops contacts. Didn't really think about it. I was just glad the Ingavi were okay.

VAUGHN

That's part of it. But mostly it was because I happen to be part of a secret group within Starfleet myself.

RO

So you are a spy.

VAUGHN

A good spy. A small number of us work together to oppose Section Thirty-One and their activities. We have done since the time of Kirk and the original *Enterprise*.

RO

You're not that old.

VAUGHN

(chuckle)

No. But I'm not the first of us. I only discovered Thirty-One's existence about thirty years ago.

We don't have a name as such. No kind of organisational structure. We just do what we can. But of course it helps to have friends in the right places.

RO

Like who?

VAUGHN

Well, think back a few months. To Starfleet's review of our activities after the incident in the alternate universe.

Ro frowns, thinks back...

3 FLASHBACK - 10x01 "EMANCIPATION"

The scene in the docking ring corridor, as Kira and Ro receive the four admirals. Ro is wearing the mechanised armature brace to support her back and legs.

Admiral Akaar has just handed his padd to Kira. He steps aside, and as he does so, he looks disdainfully down at Ro. She glowers back up at him, equally unimpressed.

4 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

RO

Not that blowhard Akaar...

VAUGHN

No, not Akaar. Not Nechayev. Not Ross.

RO

Well there's only one left.

5 FLASHBACK - 10x01 "EMANCIPATION"

The last of the four admirals emerges from the airlock - the bland and bumbling bureaucrat Marta Batanides. She fumbles with her padds, reaches out to shake Kira's hand.

6 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

RO
(w/ disbelief)
Batanides? But she's a nobody. She
couldn't change a light bulb
without burning herself.

VAUGHN
So you'd think. But in reality
she's one of the keenest minds
I've ever known.

7 **FLASHBACK - 10x01 "EMANCIPATION"**

Vaughn's secret meeting with Batanides. They stand in the
empty quarters, lit only by the stars and the transporter
modules. She hands him a data chip with a knowing smile.

8 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

VAUGHN
She's one of us. She maintains her
cover by working in a department
that has nothing to do with
intelligence or covert activities.
And by deliberately cultivating an
image as a bumbling, colourless
administrator. All carefully
constructed, however.

RO
Does Kira know any of this?

VAUGHN
She knows some things. She knows
about me. She knows there are
others, but not who they are.

RO
And she lets you do whatever you
want?

VAUGHN
We have an arrangement, ever since
Sindorin. She helps me when I need
it. Looks the other way. She

trusts me to let her know what she needs to know to keep herself and the station safe. But no more.

RO

Plausible deniability.

VAUGHN

Quite right. I have complete respect for Kira, but in matters of Section Thirty-One, I report solely to Admiral Batanides. In fact, she pushed through my transfer to DS-Nine in the first place, over the significant objections of some other admirals.

RO

So all those reasons you gave for coming here... about wanting a new life away from war and death... all that was a lie?

VAUGHN

Not at all. I wanted to be here. I'm only saying that the admiral had her own reasons for allowing me to be here. Placing an agent on Deep Space Nine, where we already knew Section Thirty-One had a vested interest, was too good an opportunity for us to pass up.

RO

A "vested interest?" You mean Doctor Bashir.

VAUGHN

They've been trying to recruit the doctor for some years now. A man with Bashir's abilities, not to mention as comparatively normal in other ways... They must want him a great deal. Either that or they're awfully confident of their ability to eventually turn him to their

side. Otherwise they'd have had him removed long before now.

RO

They do that? Kill people who turn them down?

VAUGHN

Of course. They have to maintain their secrecy at all costs.

RO

Then how did you find out?

VAUGHN

How do you think?

RO

(realising)

They killed someone.

VAUGHN

My friend T'Prynn.

RO

Your friend T'Prynn had an interesting life, apparently. What did they have against her?

VAUGHN

Oh, T'Prynn was something special, Lieutenant. A bona fide tactical genius, even among Vulcans. She was a sought-after intelligence operative decades before I even met her. She pulled the wool over my eyes more times than I'm comfortable admitting.

RO

So they wanted her to join them.

VAUGHN

Can you imagine a better agent? The sheer intellect, the eidetic memory, the emotional suppression

and compartmentalisation. Vulcans make the perfect infiltrators, Lieutenant, if for no other reason than no-one would ever believe them capable of it. Just one problem - she didn't agree with them any more than I do.

RO

So they killed her.

VAUGHN

Oh, not straight away. No, there was a period of cajoling, of sweet-talking... eventually of threatening. Not that I knew any of this at the time, you understand. T'Prynn could keep a secret like few others.

9 FLASHBACK - 8x22 "GREATER GOOD"

The even earlier flashback to Vaughn's life as a covert operative with Ruriko and T'Prynn.

Vaughn works feverishly at the controls of a transporter. But there's nothing he can do. The transport results only in a charred, burned corpse on the pad - T'Prynn.

10 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

VAUGHN

It was only after her death that my investigation led me to her secret files, and the answers that lay within.

RO

And that's when you started fighting them.

VAUGHN

Yes. Partly out of revenge, I suppose. But the more I learned about them, the more I despised everything they stand for. And

gradually learned that I wasn't alone. There were others.

RO

Alright, fine. You're on an anti-Section Thirty-One crusade. I have no problem with that. Why are you telling me?

VAUGHN

Again, think back. Connect the dots. You said things started changing ever since the L'Haan-Taran'atar situation.

RO

Yeah, so?

VAUGHN

Remember what I said about Vulcans making perfect spies?

She ponders, and realisation slowly dawns on her face...

RO

Oh, Prophets...

VAUGHN

(nods sadly)

Yes. We had a Jem'Hadar soldier possessed by the undead spirit of an "evil" Vulcan woman from the alternate universe... and who do we get to help us with our problem...

11 FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"

L'Haan mind-melds with Taran'atar in the Infirmary...

VAUGHN (v.o.)

...but a member of Section Thirty-One.

12 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

On Ro's dumbstruck reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Vaughn sits on the bench. In a burst of frustration and fury, Ro is up and pacing the path in front of him.

RO

Damn it, Vaughn! If you knew she was Section Thirty-One, why the hell did you call her in?

VAUGHN

I didn't know. At least not at the time. Believe me, I'm not proud of it. But either way, we still needed her help with Taran'atar. He was going insane with the other L'Haan in his head, and our L'Haan was the only solution I could think of. I'm fully aware this is all my fault, Lieutenant.

Ro sees that he's genuinely troubled by this. She softens, and comes back to the bench.

RO

How did you figure it out?

VAUGHN

Just a feeling something wasn't quite right. I was curious when we couldn't find L'Haan's name anywhere in the records at first. And then suddenly there it was, as if we'd simply overlooked it the first time through.

14 FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"

Vaughn and Kira have just received the report from Cenn and Shar. Vaughn frowns, suspicious of something going on. But he keeps his own counsel for the moment...

15 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

RO

That's pretty slim evidence.

VAUGHN

I know. And I could have been wrong. It could have been just what it seemed - an oversight. Things like that happen every day. It needn't necessarily have been someone waiting to see what we were looking for, before creating exactly the profile we needed. So I had to make sure.

RO

How?

VAUGHN

With Doctor Bashir's help.

RO

Bashir? You mean the guy who just walked out on us?

VAUGHN

Yes, that guy.

16 **FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"**

Vaughn enters the Infirmary, straight to Bashir...

VAUGHN

Doctor, are you busy?

BASHIR

Umm... well, I was in the middle of getting ready for -

VAUGHN

Your staff can handle that. I need to speak with you, please. In private.

Vaughn turns and walks away. Bashir follows.

17 **INT. DS9 - EMPTY QUARTERS**

The same set of empty quarters where Vaughn met Batanides. Now he walks into the room with BASHIR following. The transporter modules are already in place and functioning. Vaughn is controlled but clearly agitated and urgent.

BASHIR

Commander? What's going on? I have an important operation to prepare for.

VAUGHN

I know you do. And that's why I have to talk to you now. Take a seat.

Baffled but intrigued, Bashir does as he's told.

18 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Where Vaughn and Ro share the bench, at night.

VAUGHN

I told him my suspicions. He'd been looking for a chance to do something about Section 31 ever since Sindorin. It was easy enough to convince him.

RO

To do what?

VAUGHN

Something completely unethical and in violation of diplomatic immunity all over the galaxy. To implant a scanning device inside Taran'atar.

RO

What?!

19 **FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"**

After the mind-meld. Everyone leaves the infirmary, except for Bashir and Vaughn, who share a significant look.

20 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

VAUGHN

He scanned Taran'atar during the mind-meld, of course. But what our L'Haan did to him was much more subtle than what the other L'Haan had done. Much more difficult to detect.

RO

How do you know she did anything?

VAUGHN

Again, I didn't. Not for sure. If nothing happened, Bashir could invent a reason to have Taran'atar back in the Infirmary - a follow-up scan, whatever - and remove the device. But we'd never know if we didn't check.

RO

So what did you find?

VAUGHN

A hypnogogic suggestion. Not unlike what Iliana Ghemor had done to him last year.

RO

Prophets... that poor guy. He must be so confused. What did she tell him to do?

(beat)

Wait - she told him to block the negotiations, didn't she?

VAUGHN

Good, you're starting to put things together. We didn't know what, until after our encounter with the Ascendants had gone so

spectacularly wrong, and Kira proposed the new alliance with the Dominion.

21 FLASHBACK - 10x12 "HERESY"

In the wardroom, Taran'atar looms at the far end of the table, with Kira, Vaughn and Sisko at the near end.

VAUGHN (v.o.)
Until he emphatically denied us that alliance, despite it being in both his and our best interests...

22 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Bashir is working in the Infirmary, alone. An alert goes off on one of his panels, and he goes to look...

VAUGHN (v.o.)
And Bashir's scanner went into overdrive at that exact moment.

Bashir reads the results of the scan with increasing dismay. It's just what they were hoping it wouldn't be.

23 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Back to the bench...

VAUGHN
Given that, it was a simple matter of two plus two. Section Thirty-One wants to keep Bajor from allying with the Dominion.

RO
Why would they want that?

VAUGHN
You mean aside from the same reasons that all of Bajor is protesting about, and Bashir himself resigned over?

RO

Well, yeah.

VAUGHN

Isn't that enough?

RO

Okay, now you're confusing me.

VAUGHN

My point is, it's exactly the same reasons. Or at least I would guess it is. Keep Bajor out of the fighting. Stop Kira from putting Federation lives at risk over a non-Federation world. And keep the Dominion fighting itself, so weakening another potential enemy.

RO

Well, you know what, I can kinda see their point. Look at Cardassia. They allied with the Dominion, and it didn't exactly turn out too well for them.

VAUGHN

Don't you want to help the Eav'oq?

RO

They don't want our help.

VAUGHN

Then what about yourself? The Ascendants are coming for us, Lieutenant. Once they're done with the Eav'oq, we're next.

RO

You don't know that.

VAUGHN

Unfortunately, yes I do. And as things stand right now, we're on our own. The Federation already refused to help any more than they already have. Batanides pushed for

more. So did Akaar. They were denied. We need the Dominion. But Section Thirty-One is keeping that from us too.

Ro reluctantly accepts his reasoning - for the moment.

VAUGHN

And there's Taran'atar himself to consider. Thirty-One is using him as their pawn. Taking the free will of a sentient creature for their own purposes.

RO

Oh, come on. Are you seriously asking me to feel sympathy for Taran'atar?

VAUGHN

You did just call him "that poor guy."

Ro blinks - yes she did. Her feelings are confused...

VAUGHN

Listen, Lieutenant. Whatever your feelings may be regarding Taran'atar...

24 FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"

Ro talks to Taran'atar in the corridor...

RO

I forgive you.

25 FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"

An invisible shape barrels Ro over in the corridor outside L'Haan's quarters. Taran'atar unshrouds and hisses at her.

A moment later, when he talks to the imaginary MU-L'Haan.

TARAN'ATAR

If I promise to go with you...
freely, of my own will... will you
spare them?

Ro is surprised, almost a little touched...

26 **FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"**

In Ro's quarters, where with teary eyes, she knowingly and
deliberately injects herself with the hypo of painkillers.

27 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

She remembers all this silently, while Vaughn continues...

VAUGHN (cont)

...what Section Thirty-One did to
him is a violation of his rights.
It's completely unethical.

Ro smirks smugly, knowing she just caught him out. Vaughn
realises he said the wrong thing. He grits his teeth.

VAUGHN

I only asked Bashir to do that to
undo what Thirty-One did. My goals
were noble. Theirs weren't.

RO

You're not really selling your
case here, Commander. What I'm
hearing doesn't paint you much
better than Thirty-One themselves.

Vaughn is getting a bit indignant now. He doesn't like
being compared to his enemies.

VAUGHN

I am nothing like Section Thirty-
One.

RO

They want to save Federation
lives, don't they? You want to put
them in danger.

VAUGHN

I'm trying to save the Eav'oq. Putting our own lives in danger to help innocents is exactly the Starfleet way. And it wouldn't even be Starfleet. It would be Jem'Hadar. And they love risking their lives.

RO

For the Founders. Not for us.

VAUGHN

If Odo orders them to do it, they'll do it. And Odo will do whatever Kira wants him to.

RO

Then why aren't we talking to Odo directly?

VAUGHN

We tried. Kira begged Vannis to talk to him. She refused. Her orders are to follow Taran'atar's lead. Believe me, Lieutenant, I've tried every angle. We need the Dominion, and that means we need Taran'atar in his right mind. And that means we need to find L'Haan and convince her to fix what she did to him.

RO

Can't another Vulcan do it?

VAUGHN

I have no doubt she'll have placed telepathic failsafes around her handiwork to block anyone else's intrusion. It has to be her.

Ro again reluctantly accepts his reasoning.

RO

Okay, fine. It has to be L'Haan.
Now how exactly do you expect to
convince her to undo it?

VAUGHN
By giving her exactly what she
wants.

Off Ro's curious and confused reaction to that...

28 **FLASHBACK - 10x12 "HERESY"**

As Bashir hands the padd to Kira in front of all of Ops.

BASHIR
This is my letter of resignation
as DS-Nine's Chief Medical
Officer, effective immediately.

29 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Ro's jaw drops in amazement as she realises...

RO
Bashir? That's why he quit? To go
join Section Thirty-One?

VAUGHN
That's why they think he quit.

RO
But all those things he said about
refusing to go along with Kira's
plan...

VAUGHN
Well, of course. He had to be
convincing. I'd already tried to
track L'Haan myself...

30 **FLASHBACK - 10x10 "IN TWO MINDS"**

In Kira's office, during their first meeting with L'Haan.
Vaughn hands her the padd with the rituals on it...

VAUGHN (v.o.)

...using the DNA sample I took
from the padd I gave her.

31 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Ro smiles, impressed. Sneaky.

VAUGHN

Naturally, she was too smart for
that. And the shuttle she took
from here back to Vulcan...
"Unexpectedly diverted" thanks to
a plasma storm. So I sent an
encoded message to Batanides...

32 **FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"**

As Vaughn and Nog receive the new crew transfers from the
Aurora. Vaughn makes eye contact with one young ensign,
just enough to convey that they are each other's contacts.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

...and she sent a message back
that confirmed my suspicions.

33 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Back at the bench...

VAUGHN

That's when I told Bashir that his
mission was a go.

34 **FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"**

Vaughn and Prynn are on the lower level of Quark's, having
lunch. They look up to the upper level, just in time to see
Dax shoving her chair back from the table she had been
sharing with Bashir and stomping away in disgust.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

He began deliberately starting
arguments with people.

35 **FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"**

On the bridge of the *Defiant*. Bashir has just told Kira and Sisko what he thinks of their plan.

VAUGHN (v.o.)
Expressing his dissatisfaction and
disdain for Kira's plans.

36 FLASHBACK - 10x12 "HERESY"

The guest quarters of the *Blackthorne*, as Bashir records his message to Section 31.

VAUGHN (v.o.)
All the things I knew Section
Thirty-One would want to hear to
make them believe he'd finally
come around to their side.

37 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Back to the bench. By now, Ro is up and pacing again, trying to process all of this.

VAUGHN
Whereas in fact, he's on a top-
secret mission from me to worm his
way into their good graces, find
L'Haan... and then bring her back
to us.

On Ro's astonishment, and Vaughn's determination...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

38 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Ro stands, absorbing everything Vaughn's told her. It's hard work.

RO

Alright. Why are you telling me this? If you've got Bashir, what do you want with me?

VAUGHN

(sigh)

Well, the most immediate reason is that circumstances have changed since I set that plan in motion. I thought we'd have more time.

RO

What do you mean?

VAUGHN

I mean Prynn. And Nog, Shar, Jake and Rena. They went on a road trip into the Gamma Quadrant.

RO

(a what?)

A road trip?

VAUGHN

A road trip. And in the course of doing so, they found some rather remarkable information... that forced me to change my plans.

Vaughn remembers...

39 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

In the lounge area, KIRA and Vaughn sit together on one couch. Opposite are NOG and PRYNN.

KIRA

You've done amazing work, all of you. I can't thank you enough.

VAUGHN

Quite right. A reliable source of information, straight from the Ascendants themselves. You should all be very proud.

NOG

We would be, sir, if we hadn't had to watch an entire planet destroyed to find it.

KIRA

This information will help us stop that from happening again, Nog. We're a step ahead of them now. We could set a trap...

(sags)

...if we had anything to face them with. As for the rest... I said months ago Iliana was still out there somewhere. But with the Ascendants...

PRYNN

Not just with them, Captain. She's their leader. Their equivalent of the Emissary. They'll do whatever she wants them to do.

KIRA

And what she wanted to do was kill me.

Kira exchanges a worried glance with Vaughn. They share something silently, then turn back to the junior officers. Kira's earlier enthusiasm is rather dampened.

KIRA

Keep this to yourselves for now, Lieutenants. I'll discuss it with Asarem, see how much she wants to reveal. Till then...

40 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Vaughn completes Kira's sentence...

VAUGHN

...this is classified.

Ro nods her understanding, and slumps back onto the bench with weary wonder. Yet more revelations for her to handle.

RO

Iliana Ghemor. She was enough trouble with just a band of random criminals under her control. Now she's got her own personal army to do whatever she wants with? Hell...

VAUGHN

Not only that. The Ascendants are actively searching for Bajor. The one Nog met, he'd just found out about the former New Bajor colony in the Gamma Quadrant.

RO

And Iliana knows exactly where Bajor is... because she has all of Kira's memories.

VAUGHN

Not quite. She only has Kira's memories up until the point she was kidnapped by the Obsidian Order. That was long before the wormhole was discovered. Maybe that explains why they're not already burning down our door.

RO

Even so, it can't be much longer. They could be here any minute.

VAUGHN

Exactly. And that's why I need to move up my plans as regards Taran'atar and L'Haan.

RO

But I still don't get what you want with me. What can I do?

VAUGHN

I don't have time to wait for Bashir to wheedle his way into Thirty-One and find L'Haan any more. He doesn't have this new information. So I'm going to have to take a chance... and force the issue.

Ro slowly realises what he means...

RO

You're going up against them yourself.

VAUGHN

I am. And I want you with me.

Ro's eyes flare in shock and surprise.

RO

Me? But...

VAUGHN

You're my protégé, Lieutenant.

RO

First I'm hearing of it.

VAUGHN

I know. And that's partly my own fault. Marta warned me not to leave it too late to bring someone new in. Of course, I did exactly that. Stupid old fool.

(beat)

I've followed your career for a long time, Laren. I've been

impressed with you for a long time. Since even before Garon Two. I've wanted it to be you for a long time.

RO
(frustrated)
Wanted what to be me?

VAUGHN
The one who replaces me.

Ro is dumbfounded for a moment. She gets up again, paces again. Vaughn lets her have a second - it's a tall order.

VAUGHN
I'm not going to last forever, Laren. I've already lived much longer than I have any right to, considering the kind of work I do. My luck has to run out sooner or later. And I need someone I can trust to take the reins when I'm gone.

RO
But me? Me of all people? The biggest screw-up in Starfleet history?

VAUGHN
Don't be so hard on yourself. We've all made our mistakes. And we all have our scars.

RO
But Garon Two... the Maquis... I've made a career out of betraying everything I'd sworn an oath to.

VAUGHN
No, you've made a career out of choosing what's right over what's expedient, regardless of what your orders said. As a result, I've

supported you wherever I could.
Argued on your behalf. Even
suggested to Kira that you would
make a suitable second officer for
the station.

RO

(darkly)

So now you're telling me I didn't
even get the job on my own merits?

Vaughn sighs, hangs his head. She can be such hard work.

VAUGHN

You need to get past this idea
that things are either A or B,
with no overlap, Lieutenant. It's
entirely possible for me to
believe in you and promote your
career because you deserve it, and
to want you in a certain position
for my own purposes at the same
time. They're not mutually
exclusive.

Ro begrudgingly accepts that, with a mutter.

RO

But you've got Bashir. He's on a
mission for you right now. He's a
genetically engineered superman,
and he's obviously got the
motivation. Wouldn't he be the
better choice?

VAUGHN

I thought so for a little while.
After the Sindorin mission...

41 FLASHBACK - 8x08 "ABYSS"

Vaughn and Bashir meet on the darkened, abandoned Promenade
of Empok Nor. As they talk...

VAUGHN (cont)

...we spoke at some length about his joining me in the fight against Section Thirty-One. But with some further consideration... I began to change my mind.

42 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Back to the moonlit park...

RO

Why? What did he do wrong?

VAUGHN

Not wrong as such. It's just... Julian would make a fine agent. But the problem is, he thinks he would too. He's been playing spy games on the holodeck for years, learning at the feet of Mister Garak. I'm afraid he thinks of it as... fun.

RO

Is that a bad thing?

VAUGHN

It could be. It might lead to overconfidence. Treating it like a game. And at the same time, he has too much of a conscience. I suppose that comes with being a doctor. I'm worried he wouldn't be able to do what he needs to without worrying it to death.

RO

And you think I wouldn't? You think I don't worry myself into a coma about everything?

VAUGHN

After the fact, maybe. But in the moment, you just act. I need that. You have the instincts. You certainly have the tactical

training, I saw to that. Bashir was necessary for this particular assignment. But he's not right for the long-term mission.

(w/ feeling)

You're the one, Lieutenant.

RO

I'm not sure I am.

VAUGHN

Why not?

RO

Haven't you been listening to me? Aside from the fact that I've been in and out of Starfleet more times than a Klingon says the word "honour," I'm recovering from a broken back -

VAUGHN

(interrupts)

I thought you said it was fine.

Ro stops, caught out. She remembers...

43 FLASHBACK - 10x12 "HERESY"

Ro sits in her quarters, shivering and hugging herself on her bed. She looks across the room to where a hypospray sits on the table...

44 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

She covers again, blinking too fast...

RO

It is. I'm fine. But I can't just... you know... go around doing back-flips and pirouettes all day long.

VAUGHN

I should certainly hope that's not part of the job description.

Ro smiles a little. She sits back down again.

RO
It's not just that. I'm not the
right person for the job,
Commander. I'm just not.

VAUGHN
Why? Explain it to me.

Hesitantly, she drags the admission out of herself.

RO
When Bashir was talking about
wanting to stay out of the Eav'oq-
Ascendant business... about how it
was none of our concern... I
agreed with him.

45 FLASHBACK - 10x12 "HERESY"

Ro talks to Dax outside Kira's office in Ops...

RO
Maybe it's just cause I don't
follow the Prophets or
something... but I really don't
see why this is our problem.

46 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

On the bench, Ro is downcast, almost embarrassed...

RO
You say Bashir was pretending.
Faking it. I wasn't.

Vaughn is not upset or offended. He sits and ponders.

VAUGHN
Is that really how you feel?

RO
Yeah. It is. So I guess this
conversation is over.

VAUGHN
Why's that?

RO
(duh)
Because I agreed with Section
Thirty-One. "Stay out of it."

VAUGHN
And what did you do about it?

RO
Nothing.

VAUGHN
Precisely. Whatever your own
misgivings, you trust Kira enough
to go along with her plan. You
didn't send someone to brainwash
an ambassador so you could get
your own way.

(beat)
I know you're the right person to
help me fight Section Thirty-One,
Lieutenant. Shall I tell you why I
know that?

RO
You can try.

VAUGHN
It's because you've already worked
for Section Thirty-One yourself.

Vaughn smiles at her calmly. As Ro's eyes flare in alarm...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

47 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Ro's eyes are wide with alarm. What on earth is he talking about? Does he suspect her of something? How could he? She hasn't done anything... has she?

He's just smiling calmly back at her, unruffled, enigmatic.

RO

Commander, I don't know what you're talking about.

VAUGHN

It's alright, Lieutenant. You can relax. I know all about it. In fact I probably know more than you do.

She gets up yet again, begins to look around the park area anxiously. Is she in danger here?

RO

Look, if you're talking about what happened at Sindorin, you know that wasn't on purpose. Section Thirty-One lied to us to get us to do their dirty work...

VAUGHN

I'm not talking about Sindorin.

RO

What the hell are you talking about? Because if you're going to accuse me of something, I wish you'd just get on with it instead of sitting there all smug and mysterious.

VAUGHN

Do you remember what I said to you
the last time we sat in this same
spot together?

48 FLASHBACK - 9x10 "FRAGMENTS AND OMENS"

Ro and Vaughn sit together on this same bench, in this same
park, but in bright sunlight, just after meeting Opaka.
Vaughn looks around at the park, the memorial...

49 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Back in the night time, Ro frowns, still wary...

RO

Yes. You said you were glad I was
back in Starfleet.

VAUGHN

Do you remember why I said it?

RO

Frankly I never understood why.
But you did say you knew what
really happened on Garon Two.

VAUGHN

Exactly. And that's why I know
you're the right person for the
job, whatever your self-image
tells you.

RO

What happened on Garon Two was
that I killed my own commanding
officer.

VAUGHN

I suppose, strictly speaking, yes,
you did do that. But the thing is,
I know why.

RO

I told you why! Not everything is
some grand conspiracy.

VAUGHN

Not everything, no. But this was.
And if you'll just calm down and
take a seat, I'll explain it all
to you.

50 **EXT. SPACE**

The usual starfield. The USS *Wellington*, a Niagara-class cruiser (like an Ambassador crossed with a Constellation), is just settling into orbit of a planet.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

Ten years ago, before I even met
Marta Batanides, there was another
man who was a part of my little
group. His name was Commander
Daniel Wade.

RO (v.o.)

(astonished)

Wade?!

51 **FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"**

The earlier flashback to Ro's memories from Garon Two. Ro is a young Ensign, wearing an early TNG-era red uniform and her customary headband. She and her crewmates from the *Wellington* - including Commander Wade and Lieutenant Caputo - are hiding in their crumbling basecamp, under fire from the alien Seraphami. Focusing on Wade as he gives orders...

52 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Back to the park...

VAUGHN

Yes. He was a good friend and a
good agent. But he made a fatal
mistake. He let them know he knew.

RO

A lot of people know, don't they?
The entire senior staff of DS-
Nine, for example?

VAUGHN

But they can't prove anything. And if they wanted to tell, who would believe them? The Council would refuse to believe such a thing was even possible.

RO

But Section Thirty-One didn't kill Commander Wade.

VAUGHN

Didn't they?

RO

No!

53 FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"

In the canyon, where the Seraphami appear to be in their healing trance, Wade is up on the rocks, about to shoot. Ro takes aim at him instead... and FIRES.

54 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Ro is insistent on her version of events, on taking all the blame for herself...

RO

I killed him. Well, I only stunned him... but it basically shone a spotlight on his position so the Seraphami could kill him.

VAUGHN

All completely true, and yet completely wrong at the same time. I wasn't sure myself for many years. I had my suspicions of course, but nothing I could prove. You helped me slot the last piece of the puzzle into place yourself, Lieutenant.

(off Ro's look)

When you lost your memory.

55 **FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"**

Vaughn sits across the Ro on the couch in her quarters, while she relates the Garon Two tale to him...

56 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

On the bench...

VAUGHN

I realise it wasn't the most pleasant experience for you. But I have to admit it proved remarkably useful for me.

RO

How so?

VAUGHN

It was the tiniest thing.

57 **FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"**

Ro and Caputo are alone, laying down covering fire from their basecamp while Wade and the others head out...

CAPUTO

Pretty fragile for terrorists, if you ask me.

Ro reacts to Caputo's use of the T word...

58 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

On the bench...

VAUGHN

You mentioned how you flinched at the Lieutenant's use of the word "terrorist" to describe the Seraphami.

RO

Yeah, so?

VAUGHN

Well, that told me that you were obviously still sensitive to the issue of terrorism as regards the Bajoran resistance. And then it all made sense.

RO

(frustrated)

What did? Seriously Commander, start giving me some straight answers or I'm gonna start getting really annoyed.

VAUGHN

(smile)

Ah, the passion of the Bajoran woman. Magnificent to behold. That's what they were counting on, you know. Section Thirty-One. Your passion for a cause. Here's what I've pieced together.

59 **FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"**

In the basecamp as the *Wellington* crew fire back at the Seraphami...

VAUGHN (v.o.)

Section Thirty-One used their contacts in the admiralty to have the *Wellington* assigned to protect the colonists in the Walepti system. Now, that was an area that had seen a marked rise in activity by Seraphami so-called freedom fighters. Thugs, really. They had nothing to fight for freedom from. I'm sure Thirty-One also had access to your official Starfleet record. Littered with disciplinary notices, complaints about a bad attitude, refusal to follow orders, but best of all, Bajoran. So they hatched a plan.

Out in the canyon, the Seraphami clamber down from the rocks and begin to advance on the Starfleet outpost...

VAUGHN (v.o.)

They leaked intelligence to the Seraphami that a Starfleet team was in their neighbourhood. Undetectable back channels, naturally. That all but guaranteed they'd come in firing.

The Starfleet team scrambles out of the line of fire...

CAPUTO

Where did they come from? There were no life signs!

As the rest of the scene continues...

VAUGHN V.o.)

Obviously Commander Wade would be down on the surface. He was the *Wellington's* First Officer, that's just standard Starfleet procedure. And as a rising star in the tactical department, you were very likely to be on his team. So the stage was set.

60 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Where Vaughn continues to explain...

VAUGHN

As a Bajoran, you had a unique sensitivity to the concept of freedom fighters, whatever the cause. So they forced you and Wade and the Seraphami all into a pressure cooker... and cooked themselves up a nice massacre.

Ro's face drops as she puts it all together...

RO

They... made me do it?

VAUGHN

I wouldn't say "made you," so much as created a set of circumstances in which your actions were... inevitable. You sided with the Seraphami over your sympathy for some fellow "terrorists," and the result was eight dead officers, including the one man they actually wanted dead...

RO

...Commander Wade.

Vaughn nods, and goes quiet. Gives Ro a chance to absorb. She's sitting on the bench, almost fetal. Her hands are shaking. She lifts one, looks at it silently...

61 FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"

Having just been left in command of the station by Kira, Ro steps into Kira's office, her hands shaking in shock and withdrawal. She hides out of sight in the lounge area, sits down. Pulls a hypospray out of her boot and injects herself with the painkiller. The shaking slowly subsides.

62 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Back at the bench, Ro is still shaking. She thinks of that hypospray. God, how she wants an injection right now.

She looks down at her boot - there's a hypo stashed inside it. But of course she can't do it in front of Vaughn.

RO

I went to prison for that.

VAUGHN

Yes.

RO

They made me their patsy.

VAUGHN

Yes.

RO
Used me to kill a good man.

VAUGHN
Yes.

Still shaking, she takes her fury and shock and forges it into determination. She looks back up at Vaughn...

RO
I'm in.

Vaughn doesn't respond at first. He gives her a moment to let her own decision sink in.

VAUGHN
Are you certain?

RO
(grit teeth)
I said I'm in.

VAUGHN
Take a moment here, Lieutenant.
I've giving you the opportunity to make this decision in full knowledge of what you're getting yourself into. You can't jump in with both feet now out of sheer fury, and then decide it's too deep for you later. If you're in, you're in. For life.

(beat)
Because if you're not, you can turn around and walk away now. I won't argue. I said that before and I meant it.

RO
(scoff)
Please. After everything you've told me tonight? I pretty much have to be in now, don't I?

VAUGHN

Not at all. If you decide here and now you don't want to be a part of this, you can leave and not say another word about it.

RO

(baffled)

But... what about everything you've told me? All the names? All the secrets?

VAUGHN

(casual)

Oh, that won't be a problem. You see, I drugged you with a retroactive memory suppressant the moment you arrived.

Ro's eyes flare as she remembers...

63 FLASHBACK - EARLIER

The top of the episode. Ro has just arrived and she walks up to Vaughn... and he shakes her hand.

64 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Ro realises. Vaughn stares at her calmly...

VAUGHN

If I don't give you the antidote, you'll go to bed tonight and wake up tomorrow with no recollection that you ever got any message, that you ever came to Bajor, or that you and I ever had this conversation at all. So... what do you say?

Off Ro's astonished reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

65 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Ro is staring at Vaughn with disbelief and something like betrayal. Did he really drug her? How could he do that?

RO
You... drugged me?

VAUGHN
Completely harmless. No side effects past a mild headache.

He is infuriatingly calm and assured about this. She is still amazed he would actually do that to her. Then she gets a new idea, and she smiles wryly.

RO
I get it. I get it. This is one of those spy test things, isn't it? You knew all along you could get me to say yes. And once I do, you'll admit you never really drugged me in the first place.

Vaughn gazes back at her, calm.

RO
(insistent)
Isn't it?

VAUGHN
I don't play those kind of games, Lieutenant. I can't afford to. The stakes are too high. I've told you nothing but the truth all night. Why would I stop now?

Ro looks down at her hand - the one Vaughn shook earlier. Looks at the skin of her palm, rubs it. It feels normal, no signs of drugs. She shows it to Vaughn, victorious, as if it proves her case.

RO
There's nothing there.

VAUGHN
That's because I didn't put it on
your hand.

66 FLASHBACK - EARLIER

Before Ro arrived. With only two of the four transport inhibitor modules set up, Vaughn walks around the area, spraying the contents of a small aerosol can into the air.

VAUGHN (v.o.)
It's in the air.

67 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Vaughn continues...

VAUGHN
Odourless. Dissipates naturally within a couple of hours. Never shows up on any standard medical scan. But one hundred per cent effective. I took the antidote myself before you arrived. I have more for you if that's what you decide you want. But if you'd rather forget all about it, then walk away now, and live your life.

RO
I could tell the whole station before I go to bed.

VAUGHN
Well, let's see. First of all, you gave me your word that this would remain between us, and I intend to hold you to that. Second, you'd be putting Doctor Bashir, me, the entire mission, and every person on the station in danger.

RO

It's a three-hour ride back to the station from here. Plenty of time to type it all up into the computer.

Vaughn gives her a look of mild derision and pity, as if to say, "Come on, don't be so naive."

RO

But of course you'd just delete it. I bet there's no trace of any message on my comm system either, is there?

VAUGHN

This isn't my first time, Laren. I have to protect my interests just as much as Section Thirty-One do. But, as I've been attempting to make clear to you all night, in all the important ways I am nothing like them. They killed T'Prynn. They killed Wade. I'm prepared to let you walk away and live the rest of your life in blissful ignorance. I don't lie or threaten. You have the choice of whether you want to join this life or not. If you want out, I'll let you out and I'll go it alone. But if you're in, it's for good. This is the night you decide the course of the rest of your life. So take your time and understand what I'm asking you to do.

Vaughn has been quite eloquent. Ro does think it over.

VAUGHN

I'm asking you to dedicate your life to fighting an insidious cancer within the very heart of the Federation. To protect the citizens of the Federation and beyond from the immoral actions of that disease. By my side for as

long as I am able, and alone if
need be once I'm gone. Which
likely won't be much longer now.
And to do so in such secrecy that
no-one but no-one can ever know
the good you've done for them.

Ro doesn't respond yet. She's doing just what he told her -
thinking about every word.

VAUGHN

I'm sorry to be burdening you with
the kind of life I've had to live,
Lieutenant. I don't do it lightly.
But it's precisely because of
everything you've already lived
through, and come out the other
side, that I know you're strong
enough to handle it. And I'm sorry
to be blunt, but the fact that you
have no family, no significant
romantic entanglements...

Ro reacts to that thought...

68 FLASHBACK - 10x09 "BLANK SLATE"

In the Infirmary, after Ro has recovered all her memories.
She steps up to Quark, thanks him, and places a tender but
definitely meaningful kiss on his lips.

69 EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT

Vaughn finishes the thought...

VAUGHN (cont)

...no long-term ties anywhere,
well, that just makes you the
ideal candidate for the job.

RO

(quiet)

Good for me.

VAUGHN

I suppose I can't say that you and I have ever been friends, exactly. And maybe we'll never be friends. My impression is that you deliberately keep people at arm's length to avoid getting hurt any more than necessary. That's certainly understandable, given your history. But whether we're friends or not, I respect you. A great deal. I believe in you, even if you don't believe in yourself. I'm proud of what you've achieved in your life. I'm honoured to think you'd be the one to carry on my legacy. But I don't want you to do anything you don't want to do. So it has to be your choice.

He finally goes quiet. He's said everything he can say to try to convince her. It's up to her now.

She takes a deep breath. Slowly stands, steps onto the path. She looks up at the memorial, the broken girder in its stone base. She orders her thoughts.

Finally she turns back to Vaughn. Entirely calm and sober.

RO

I'm in.

VAUGHN

Why? Tell me your reasons.

RO

There's a bit of retribution in there, I won't deny that. You already told me you felt the same. If it's good enough for you, it's good enough for me.

Vaughn nods simply, accepting that.

RO

And I've seen first hand what Section Thirty-One are prepared to

do. Even if I agreed with their reasons, which I freely admit I occasionally have done, I'm never going to agree with their methods. I've made my mistakes, and I've paid for them every time. They never pay for anything. They have no oversight. They answer to no-one. That's a recipe for dictatorship.

VAUGHN

The road to hell...

RO

...is paved with good intentions. But it doesn't matter what their intentions are. It matters what they do about them. And what they do deserves to be punished. I always was.

VAUGHN

Anything else?

Ro pauses, considering it. Yes, there's something else.

70 **FLASHBACK - TNG 7x24 "PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE"**

The moment when Ro first decides to join the Maquis. The old paternal figure Macias is on the ground, dying from phaser wounds after a Cardassian raid. Ro holds his hand, urging him to hold on...

MACIAS

When an old fighter like me dies... someone always steps forward to take his place...

Macias looks into her eyes for a last time, and dies.

71 **EXT. TALUNO MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT**

Ro stands, Vaughn sits...

RO

You were right before. It is an honourable cause. It's right for someone to carry it on after you. I'm flattered that you think I'm capable of it. And I'll try not to let you down, sir.

Vaughn takes a moment. He's profoundly relieved, a little flattered himself, and proud to boot. He gets up, stretches his own aged bones. He stands beside Ro on the path.

VAUGHN

Thank you, Laren. And I think you can call me Elias now.

She stretches out her own hand, grasps his, and they shake. It's a handshake that will change Ro's life forever. That done, she takes another breath and steadies her nerves.

RO

Now what?

VAUGHN

Now we go into action. When you return to your office, you'll find an invitation to join the advanced tactical training course on Kel-Artis Station. Once at Kel-Artis, you'll come down with an aggressive strain of Ankaran flu and remain in your quarters for the entire duration.

RO

What about you?

VAUGHN

Julian already resigned, so he's covered. Even so, having three senior officers away from the station all at once would send up a red flag. So I'm not going anywhere, at least not officially. Kira will submit regular status reports in my name, fake the replicator activity in my

quarters, and so on. To any outside observers, should there be any, I'll appear to be at my post as usual.

RO

But what about the rest of the Ops crew? What about Prynne? Someone's bound to notice you're not actually there. Somebody's going to realise the truth.

VAUGHN

It doesn't matter what the truth actually is. It only matters what enough people think the truth is. If we play this right, Section Thirty-One should have no idea we're coming for them until it's too late.

RO

And once we're away from the station, what then?

Vaughn pauses to emphasise the gravity of this.

VAUGHN

I want you to understand the kind of mission we're about to embark on. I'm used to battling the intelligence agencies of enemy states. That's old news. But this is the first time I'll be directly confronting an agency of our own government.

(beat; sigh)

I don't think they even know my little group exists. Up to now, I've managed to keep their worst excesses in check without revealing myself. That won't be possible this time. If we're going to find L'Haan, then it means infiltrating Thirty-One directly, dealing with them face to face.

Vaughn gazes up at the memorial. Ro lets him.

VAUGHN

I suppose I've always known this day would come, ever since I first took up the fight. And if they find out about me... that means they'll find out about you too. I can't help that. Just the nature of the mission. And if they know you're working against them, they'll take that into account. And that means you'll have to work all that harder.

RO

We'll have to work harder. We're in this together, Elias.

VAUGHN

I hope so, Laren. I truly do. But I can't shake the feeling that your first mission against Section Thirty-One... could very well turn out to be my last.

As Vaughn and Ro stand together in the dark...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW