

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

14x09 - "Crossroads"

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and on the *Star Trek* tie-in novels
by Pocket Books

TNG 19x09 - "SILENT WEAPONS"

USS *Atlas* is orbiting Orion when there is an alert from the surface - sensors detect a Soong-type android, presumably Data. When Orion authorities capture and arrest Data, he sends a secret message to LaForge asking for help, and *Enterprise* comes running. Thot Konar reports - phase one complete. Arriving, Worf detects *Atlas* transmitting on a secret channel - it means President Bacco is on Orion. After the Boslic summit, the Gorn Emperor requested a more personal meeting, and raised the possibility of leaving the Typhon Pact altogether. *Enterprise* was sent far away to keep the meeting low-profile, but Data's alleged security breach has ruined that. Worse, the Starfleet Intelligence agent whom Data contacted has been found murdered. Picard refuses to believe that Data is capable of such a thing. Elsewhere, a random Orion financial worker is also murdered in his home. Thot Konar reports - ready to begin phase two...

VOY 12x09 - "PROJECT CLCP"

Seven and Dr Sharak arrive at Starfleet Medical - Seven must pass quarantine before seeing Axum, who is "helping them with their enquiries" into the catomic plague. To his great concern, Sharak is *not* allowed in the lab, but continues his research separately. Cadet Icheb uncovers orders for biohazard suits; he uses his Academy ID to sneak in, and is soon caught - but not before hearing screams. When Seven meets Axum at last, he claims to have been treated well, contrary to Seven's nightmares. She demands to speak to whoever is in charge, but no-one is allowed to see "The Commander". The only way they will learn is by experimenting with their own catoms, a prospect made awkward by Axum's hopes for a relationship. Meanwhile in the highest quarantine level, victims of the plague continue to die in screaming horror, and Seven can feel their pain. Despite her love for Cambridge, she finds herself in Axum's arms...

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - OPS

BEEP BEEP BEEP. An urgent alert on a control panel... PAN UP to CANDLEWOOD - he quickly reaches to check it, then calls across from his station to the Central Ops table...

CANDLEWOOD
Eletrix on final approach.

SLAINE nods her understanding, working on about a thousand other things happening simultaneously across the Ops table.

SLAINE
(taps control)
DS-Nine to *Eletrix* - transmitting
your flight plan now, follow it
precisely to lower pylon three,
security will greet you there.

VOICE (comm)
Acknowledged, DS-Nine.

Slaine closes the channel, looks up to CENN, who works on the other side of the table. He smiles back, encouraging.

The atmosphere is controlled chaos - no red alert, but everyone working at top speed to keep it from unraveling.

CENN
They're following the plan.
(another screen)
Ren Fejin has successfully docked
at lower pylon two.

Cenn looks up to ALECO at tactical, also reading panels...

ALECO
Security team two are in position,
no anomalies detected.

Another ALERT on Candlewood's panel...

CANDLEWOOD

Canterbury and *Brisbane* entering
sensor range...

(w/ relief)

...and staying there.

CENN

(waves it away)

That's fine - if they're in our
sensor range then the Romulans are
in theirs. Where's the *Galber*?

SLAINE

They are...

(checks panels;
w/ frustration)

...not where they're supposed to be.

(slaps control)

DS-Nine to *Galber*! I said upper
pylon one, not two. Please
reorient your approach now.

Slaine closes the channel again and hisses in frustration.

CENN

It's okay, *dalin*. No harm done.
The *Robinson's* already docked.

SLAINE

They're Cardassians - they should
know better.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh so you're allowed to stereotype
but we're not?

Slaine looks around at Candlewood, horrified... but he only
grins back. After a moment, Slaine gets it - he's joking
with her. She blushes, flattered, and turns back.

CANDLEWOOD

Hhhaaanyway, on the subject of the
Robinson, the *Xhosa* just commed
ahead from the Bajor route -
they'll be here in an hour.

SLAINE

What?! Ummm... okay... port seven on the docking ring is free, they can go there. Why is everybody coming all at once?

CANDLEWOOD

(still working panels)

This is life at the crossroads of the galaxy, Zivan. Enjoy it! *Xhosa* acknowledges, by the way.

(chuckle)

Takes you back, right, Major?

CENN

(playfully contrary)

No.

Focused, intense Aleco tries to get them back on track...

ALECO

Okay, *Galber* is docked... security team three moving into position. *Eletrix* is nearly there, security team one standing by.

Another ALERT - Candlewood checks...

CANDLEWOOD

Oh for the love of...

SLAINE

What now?

CANDLEWOOD

Oh, it's *Prynn* and *Julian* in the *Rio Grande*.

CENN

(slumps)

Just... runabout pad C. It's fine.

(deep breath)

It's fine.

Slaine and Candlewood share a chuckle at Cenn's expense...

2 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

The Mogai-class Romulan warbird *Eletrix* KERTHUNKS into place on a lower docking pylon...

Beyond it is the Breen freighter *Ren Fejin*, a blocky and asymmetrical affair docked at another lower pylon...

3 **INT. DS9 - LOWER PYLON AIRLOCK**

The airlock CYCLES open, and two Romulan UHLANS step out, unarmed but clearly capable. They step aside to flank...

...and TOMALAK appears, trying his best to project a lack of his usual disdain for humans and their friends.

RO stands in her white DRESS UNIFORM to greet him, with RWOGO stood beside her wearing a formal Ferengi outfit. The corridor to both sides is packed with Starfleet security.

RO

Proconsul Tomalak. I am Captain Ro Laren. Welcome to Deep Space Nine.

TOMALAK

Thank you, Captain. Happy to be here.

RO

And this is my chief of security, Inspector Rwego.

Tomalak looks Rwego up and down - a Ferengi woman? ...Okay.

TOMALAK

Inspector.

(ponders)

Ro... the name is familiar. You served under Picard, did you not?

RO

(part flattered,
part creeped out)

That's correct, Proconsul. I respect Captain Picard a great deal.

TOMALAK

Oh I feel the same way, I assure
you. And speaking of respected
starship commanders...

Tomalak steps aside himself, revealing T'JUL, the Romulan woman with the light eyes and long chestnut hair. She is trying to present herself as dignified and capable, but she doesn't like Tomalak and is nervous about their mission.

TOMALAK

(continuing)

...may I present Commander Orventa
T'Jul, of the *Eletrix*.

T'JUL

Captain Ro. I appreciate your
welcome. I am confident this visit
will be the beginning of a new
relationship for our peoples.

Tomalak smothers an unimpressed eye-roll. Ro politely nods acknowledgement to T'Jul, then gestures to Rwogo.

RO

Inspector Rwogo and her team will
lead you through security, after
which this turbolift -
(gestures)
- will take you to the wardroom,
where we will meet your fellow
commanders for a formal reception.

TOMALAK

I look forward to it, Captain.

RWOGO

If you'll come with me,
Proconsul...

Rwogo after-yous towards the security staff. Off Tomalak's unctuous smile as he follows her directions...

4 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Leaving the *Eletrix* and the *Ren Fejin*...

Circling upwards around the station, past the *Defiant* and various other alien ships on the docking ring...

Past the *Rio Grande* as it touches down on a runabout pad...

...and to the upper pylons, where the Galaxy-class *Robinson* is docked, plus a Cardassian passenger ship, the *Galber*.

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

A less formal arrangement, as passengers of various species file patiently out of the airlock, separating into lines to have their credentials checked by more Starfleet security.

Running one of these checkpoints is Lt Douglas, aka SARINA. She makes polite but mostly disinterested conversation with the person whose ID she is scanning into the computer...

SARINA

I see you've been here before. May
I ask the purpose of your visit?

Reveal that the one in line is HETIK, the Bajoran *dabo* boy.

HETIK

I'm... here to see an old friend.

Sarina hands back the ID and smiles warmly at this handsome stranger - she doesn't know him, he left before she came.

SARINA

Well, welcome back to DS-Nine.

Hetik moves on, nervous about what he's about to face.

By now most of the passengers have passed through, and the line is thinning. Sarina turns to the last in her line-up, takes his ID, still distracted by other thoughts.

SARINA

Thank you.
(scans ID)

Ah! Captain Moresh, skipper of the *Galber*. I don't need to ask the purpose of your visit, obviously. Welcome to DS-Nine.

She hands back the ID with a smile, and he takes it back likewise - revealing he is in fact MORAD, the Cardassian male freighter captain from 14x06 "True Colours."

MORAD

Thank you, Lieutenant. As you say, I'm obviously here to do business.

Morad moves on into the station, satisfied. He's in.

Sarina watches him go for a moment, then turns to observe her security staff finish checking the last few passengers. She is still distracted by her own worrying thoughts...

BLACK OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

POP - the bubbly overflows as Starfleet STEWARDS (probably security officers in disguise) catch it in crystal goblets which go onto a catering tray. Once full, the security-steward carries the tray across the PARTY and towards...

7 THE COMMANDERS

All in formal dress - RO, SSKO, TOMALAK, T'JUL, and two others - Breen captain BELD and Gorn captain SSILITH. They are all trying to act casual and chummy while being careful about what they actually say in front of these... aliens.

Tomalak and T'Jul take their glasses smoothly, familiar with Federation customs. Ssilith grasps his with a clawed hand that could shred flesh. The steward is about to hand a glass to Beld when he stops and glances to Ro and Sisko...

RO

We did install privacy booths, as
your government requested, Master.

The suited Breen turns and peers through his mask...

8 ANGLE - PRIVACY BOOTHS

Across the room, past other milling Romulans, Gorn, Breen and Starfleet officers, are three opaque BOOTHS. Another Breen carries his glass into one booth and locks the door.

9 BACK TO SCENE

Having seen this, Beld turns back to Ro and BUZZES - his words are translated by a computerised device on his suit.

BELD

The courtesy is appreciated. I'll
enjoy the experience another time.

Sisko offers the bland party line of diplomatic functions, but it is clear his heart and mind are elsewhere.

SISKO

That's what this whole mission is about - experiencing new things.

TOMALAK

Quite right. Down the hatch, as you humans say.

Tomalak is also giving the oily smarm of a bullshit artist - Ro sees through it with a smile. Tomalak and T'Jul both *Cheers!* and sip delicately, make the appropriate noises.

Ssilith throws the wine back in an enormous toothy mouthful and BELCHES with satisfaction. Ro likes him the most.

RO

So, what are your plans for the Gamma Quadrant, Commander?

T'JUL

Captain Sisko and I have chosen separate but intertwining paths through unexplored space.

TOMALAK

That way we can each enjoy our own adventures, but still meet from time to time to compare notes.

Ro looks to Sisko - he has nothing to say. How did *she* of all people end up as Starfleet's diplomat? Ro presses on...

RO

Makes sense. What about the Gorn, Captain Ssilith?

The gorn HISSES and GROWLS, also translated by computer.

SSILITH

We still need new breeding worlds. My crew will survey for suitable prospects. Far from the Dominion.

RO

Glad to hear it. Master Beld?

BELD

I plan to speak with your Ferengi Ambassador. I hope he will inform us of lucrative opportunities for commerce in the Gamma Quadrant.

RO

Oh, Quark will happily talk your ears off, don't worry about that.

BELD

(looms forward)

How do you know I have ears?

A moment of awkward silence - has Ro made a *faux pas*? Then Beld throws back his head and BUZZES in what can only be a laugh. The Romulans chuckle and the Gorn roars in laughter. Ro relaxes - apparently Breen have a sense of humour too.

RO

Well, you are all very welcome in Quark's. In fact that's where the real party is, after here.

TOMALAK

Thank you, Captain - not that your security officers aren't doing a fine job pretending to be servers.

Tomalak smiles, letting Ro know he's on to her tricks. Ro smiles back - she won't rise to his bait.

RO

You and your officers are free to roam the station - with certain exceptions, of course. No offence.

T'JUL

None taken, Captain. If our places were reversed, I certainly would not be taking you on a tour of the *Eletrix's* engines or laboratories.

T'Jul says it with a genuine chuckle, softening the blow. She is a Romulan officer, but not a monster.

Tomalak's smirk is much less light-hearted - oh these silly Starfleet children, they have no idea what we're up to.

Sisko is just gazing out of the windows at the many ships, sipping his drink, clearly a million miles away.

Ro notices all this, and tries to process all of it without giving anything away. But her spidey-sense is tingling...

10 **INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK CORRIDOR**

BASHIR stands at the controls, waiting to close and seal the airlock. He calls impatiently back into the passage...

BASHIR
Are you coming?

Bashir himself is tense, distracted, in a bad mood. But the sight of TENMEI slumping out of the airlock, depressed and withdrawn, is enough to rouse his sympathy.

BASHIR
I was going to ask "Are you okay?"
but of course you're not. Sorry.

Bashir makes the airlock roll closed, then turns back to find that Tenmei hasn't moved. Just staring at the deck.

He gently leads Tenmei down the corridor - she follows, body on automatic, emptied of emotion. But ahead of them...

11 **ANGLE - ON BREEN**

...are a trio of BREEN walking across the T-junction at the end of the corridor. They move on, not even noticing...

12 **ANGLE - ON TENMEI**

...Tenmei as she stops dead, staring. Bashir notices...

BASHIR
Prynn? What is it?

TENMEI
Breen. Not seen them since...

BASHIR

(gently)

They're here as part of Bacco's peace initiative. Besides, they've got the Romulans and the Gorn keeping them on a tight leash.

TENMEI

(cold laugh)

Yeah, the Romulans who tortured my dad for weeks. The Gorn who were our friends until they sided with the enemy. They're the ones to stop the Breen causing trouble.

BASHIR

Look, Pryn... I have to get back to the Infirmary. But I don't want to leave you alone when you're in this state.

TENMEI

(dismissive)

Just go. I'll be fine.

Bashir is unconvinced, but he does have other places to be. He nods and heads off down one arm of the T-junction.

Tenmei pulls herself together as much as she can and turns the other way down the T-Junction...

...where she can still see the backs of the three BREEN walking ahead of her like they have every right to be here.

She grinds her teeth and stalks on after them...

13 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Ro tries to engage with Sisko as they stand apart from the others. The rest of the party continues without them.

RO

You've been quiet, Captain.
Something on your mind?

SISKO
(caught out)
Oh... just looking forward to
getting out there and exploring
again. It's been a while.

That's not the full truth, but it will do for now.

RO
I kind of envy you, actually. I've
been into the Gamma Quadrant, of
course. But I guess I just never
saw myself as the exploring type.

SISKO
Neither was I. I was an engineer,
then a commander, then...
(a father)
...but Elias changed his life. No
reason we can't do the same.

Ro is sombered at the mention of Vaughn. She ventures to
ask a personal question without really asking it...

RO
Captain... When you were first
promoted, how long did it take
before it felt... right?

Sisko is surprised at the question - it makes him think.

SISKO
Feels like a lifetime ago. The
compulsion to recheck your work
three times instead of two. To
spend twice as much time second-
guessing your decisions. Even if
your day-to-day hasn't changed.

RO
Is that kind of thing common?

SISKO
Almost every new captain I've ever
met went through the same thing.
Including Nerys... and Elias.

RO
Sounds like the kind of thing a
good counsellor could help with.

Sisko considers it, for his own sake as well as hers.

SISKO
That's probably a good idea.
(beat)
Will you make my excuses, Captain?
I have a prior engagement.

RO
Of course. Thank you, Captain.

Sisko places his glass down on the ward room table and
heads out. Ro watches him go, then goes to join the party.

14 **INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR**

Tenmei plods along, in no better mood than before. Ahead of
her she spots...

...more BREEN and ROMULANS emerging from the ward room,
followed by SISKO. Neither wants to talk, but it would be
rude not to, so they stop and make stilted conversation.

SISKO
Lieutenant Tenmei.

TENMEI
Captain.

SISKO
I hear you're serving as the
Defiant's first officer now.
Congratulations. I'm sure your
father would have been proud.

She knows he didn't mean anything by it, but in her current
emotional state she can't stop herself from hissing...

TENMEI
He's not dead yet.

SISKO
(wrong-footed)
I... didn't...

TENMEI
He's a good man. Even though it
seems like everybody just wants
to forget about him.

SISKO
Prynn, I could never forget your
father. And you know he never
wanted to leave you -

REBECCA (o.s.)
Daddy!

Sisko turns, and sees his daughter REBECCA pelting down the
corridor towards him, arms out, ready to hug him to death.
KASIDY walks behind her, warm but not exactly blazing.

Sisko crouches down and lets Rebecca run into his arms, all
other thoughts instantly out of his head. He thrills to be
back with his daughter, holding her tight. Looking up...

KASIDY
Hello, Ben. Major Cenn said you
were in the ward room, so...

SISKO
Hi, Kas. Thanks for coming.

Seeing her opportunity to escape, Tenmei nods to Kasidy...

TENMEI
Captain Yates.

...and heads on down the corridor. Kasidy is curious, but
would rather watch her husband and daughter be together.

15 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Dalin Slaine makes her way through the busy crowd of non-
allied civilians and aliens roaming the Promenade, a bit
nervous. She reaches Quark's, peers through the window...

...and spots Candlewood sitting and laughing, part of the regular engineers' gathering. She heads on into the bar.

16 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR - ENGINEERS' TABLE**

Candlewood, CHAO, PERMENTER and K'UHLLO are there, laughing at John's last joke, sipping their drinks. They sense a new presence, look up... Slaine is hovering timidly.

SLAINE

Hello, everyone. May I join you?

CANDLEWOOD

Zivan! Of course, grab a seat.
Looks like we have a couple spare
tonight for some reason.

Candlewood gentlemanly pulls out a chair - she smiles and demurely sits. She looks at the others, hopeful.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh yeah, you haven't met. This is
Bryanne Permenter, and this is
Op'ah K'Uhllo. They're engineers.
And you already know Jeanette.
Everyone, this is Zivan Slaine.

Polite "hellos" around the table. Slaine is the odd one out here, but they're all willing to be nice and welcoming. Slaine nods back politely to them all, before getting to her real reason for coming here. She turns to Candlewood...

SLAINE

John, I've enjoyed working with
you the last few days in Ops.

CANDLEWOOD

Well, I am awesome. But you're
right, it's been good. We make a
solid team.

SLAINE

I thought so too. That's why I
wanted to ask if you would like
to join me in a Cardassian sauna
programme in the holosuite.

CANDLEWOOD

Sounds like fun! And by next week,
Prynn and Vakell should be free -

SLAINE

No, not them. Just you and me.

Slaine is innocently hopeful. Wonders why everyone else has suddenly gone quiet.

Chao and the engineers avert their eyes, staying well out of it... this is so awkward.

Meanwhile Candlewood is like that gif of Mal Reynolds being speechless in *Firefly*. Just... what? Does not compute.

HETIK (o.s.)

John?

John whips around - and HETIK is standing a few feet away.

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik...

Off Candlewood's amazement - his boyfriend is back.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

17 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR - LOWER LEVEL

Where we left it. Candlewood bolts up from his chair and dashes to Hetik, excited and hardly able to believe he is really here. Hetik is a bit nervous about how this will go.

(Slaine is left very confused - the guy she was just in the middle of hitting on is suddenly talking to this stranger. She watches from afar, while Chao etc remain awkward.)

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik - what are you doing here?
Are you okay? Are you back?

HETIK

I came on the *Galber*... it stopped
off at Argaya on the way. And...
no, I'm not staying. I'm already
booked on the next Bajor shuttle.

Candlewood's enthusiasm is dimmed - his boyfriend hasn't come back to him after all. Still, it's nice to see him.

Hetik's eyes drift across to the *dabo* table, his old haunt. Now SEBRIGAR the Nausicaan and TREIR the Orion run it for the sneering Romulans, roaring Gorn and efficient Breen. He also notices Slaine watching him with confusion from afar.

HETIK

I see some things have changed
while I was gone.

CANDLEWOOD

What...? Oh, yeah. Joint missions,
exchange officers... Ro's a
captain now.

HETIK

Good for her. Well... I wanted to
check in... make sure you're okay.

(beat)

It's good to see you, John. Bye.

Hetik turns away to leave. Candlewood almost lets him go...

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik, wait.

(he turns back)

You know what? Don't walk away again. You did that once and it's not fair. It's not fair to me.

HETIK

John... I know I may have handled things badly, and I'm sorry -

CANDLEWOOD

(not unkindly)

Yeah, you did. And I'm not letting you do it again. This time, I want what I deserve.

HETIK

What do you mean?

CANDLEWOOD

I mean the proper Bajoran break-up ritual. We've been on-again-off-again for what - five years now? If we're really off for good, then I want the Rite of Separation. One last night together to remember the good things. You owe me that.

HETIK

John, I don't know...

CANDLEWOOD

(sly grin)

Come on, Hetik. You know it's the "rite" thing to do.

Hetik chuckles - he *has* missed Candlewood's terrible jokes.

HETIK

Alright, fine. But where? I don't even have a room to get changed.

CANDLEWOOD

You could come back to mine...

HETIK

(can't fool me)

I'll ask Treir if I can use hers.

Hetik makes to move off, pauses a second to look at John as if he can't believe he's doing this, then heads to Treir.

Candlewood returns to the engineers' table, leans against the back of his chair, mind reeling...

CANDLEWOOD

How the hell am I going to find somewhere to take Hetik out for the night at the last minute? Everywhere will be booked up.

SLAINE

So... you know him?

Candlewood suddenly remembers - oh yeah, she was hitting on him, wasn't she? He forgot. Awkward...

18 STAIRCASE

QUARK heads down the spiral staircase, Sisko (in casuals) and Kasidy behind, Kasidy holding little Rebecca's hand.

QUARK

You know my policy, Captain. No refunds. Not my fault the little one hates baseball.

SISKO

She doesn't hate it, Quark. She just... doesn't love it. Are you going to find us a table or not?

As they reach the bottom of the stairs, and look around...

QUARK

Look around, Captain. It's a busy night here at Quark's Bar.

SISKO
But you'll figure something out
for an old friend, right?

QUARK
(grudging)
Wait here.

Quark moves off, leaving Sisko and Kasidy holding Rebecca close, smiling tightly at this crowd of nominal enemies.

19 AT THE BAR

Quark enters some orders on a PADD, shoves the padd across the bar at a Ferengi bartender, turns back...

QUARK
Bah!

Candlewood is *right there*. Quark catches his breath...

QUARK
Thought you were one of those
frinxing puppies again. What do
you want?

CANDLEWOOD
Did I hear you have a holosuite
suddenly going free?

QUARK
Available, yes. Free, no.

CANDLEWOOD
How much?

Quark activates schmooze mode - there's a deal to be made.

20 ENGINEERS' TABLE

Slaine is processing what she has been told by the others.

SLAINE
So... he was never expressing a
romantic interest in me?

CHAO

Sorry. He was just being friendly.
His interests lie... elsewhere.

Another newcomer has arrived - TENMEI, looking tense and tired. She was heading to join the table, but she stopped to glare at the Typhon Pact aliens filling the familiar space. Breen, Romulans, Gorn... she bites her tongue.

CHAO

Prynn...? Come join us.

Pulled out of her anger, she turns and sits at the table. Everyone can see she's in a bad mood, if not why.

TENMEI

John not here? Or th'Shant?

K'UHLLO

John just left for an emergency date. And th'Shant took an extra maintenance shift on the pylons.

PERMENTER

We weren't sure you were coming either.

Slaine has no idea what's going on with Tenmei either - these humans are so confusing - but she tries her best.

SLAINE

Shall I get us some drinks?

21 AT THE BAR

The Ferengi bartender takes an order from a customer...

MORAD

Romulan *kali-fal*, please.

The Ferengi moves off to fill the order. Morad notices a Romulan beside him at the bar, looking at him strangely. Why would a Cardassian order a Romulan drink?

MORAD

In the spirit of the occasion.

The Ferengi returns with his drink, Morad thumbs the padd to pay, offers *Cheers!* to the Romulan, and heads off. After a moment, the Romulan heads off in the opposite direction.

22 **SISKO'S TABLE**

Morad carries his drink up the staircase to the top level. Sisko, Kasidy and Rebecca sit under the stairs, hidden and protected from the crowds. Quark delivers drinks and food.

KASIDY

(re the crowds)

You sure this is all safe, Quark?

QUARK

Hey, you're the ones who struck the deal. I just made it happen. Besides, half these Starfleet are security. Our new Inspector isn't taking any chances.

On cue, one Gorn gets a bit too rowdy at the *dabo* table. Sebrigar the Nausicaan quickly puts the Gorn in his place.

QUARK

Plus, that Nausicaan is a lot more intimidating than his predecessor.

SISKO

Seems like the perfect opportunity for an enterprising businessman.

QUARK

You've no idea. I'm selling things I've never sold, hearing news I've never heard... I even get to flex my diplomatic muscles. The Breen alone are a latinum mine. They actually asked me to recommend a couple of stops in the Gamma Quadrant, in return for a cut of their profits when they get back.

With a grin, Quark heads back to his bar.

23 **TOP LEVEL**

On the very highest level of the bar, where we rarely go, Morad the Cardassian sits alone at a table, sipping his Romulan ale, gazing down at the crowd below.

After a moment, another STRANGER appears - heavily cloaked and hooded, enough to effectively disguise any sign of race or gender. Morad looks up expectantly. The stranger speaks in a distorted voice, as if processed through a machine.

STRANGER

You're a long way from home.

MORAD

I like to travel.

The stranger sits at the table, still fully disguised...

24 **SISKO'S TABLE**

The Sisko family eat. Sisko gazes adoringly at Rebecca...

SISKO

I still can't believe any child of mine actually yawned at a baseball game. Yawned!

KASIDY

If anyone ever heard about it, I'd never be able to show my face at a Pike City Pioneers game again.

Kasidy grins, letting Rebecca know they're only kidding.

REBECCA

But it takes so long! It's boring.

SISKO

Some things skip a generation, I guess.

A beat, then *faux*-casually...

KASIDY

So when do you leave?

SISKO
Tomorrow at eleven-hundred.

KASIDY
Are you excited?

SISKO
Actually... yes. After everything that's happened, it'll be nice to do something that's actually constructive, instead of just trying to avoid destruction.

Kasidy nods quietly. He's excited to be away from her and Rebecca. She goes back to her food...

25 **TOP LEVEL**

Morad and the cloaked stranger sit opposite each other. The stranger pushes a datarod across the table to Morad, who picks it up smoothly, without drawing attention.

STRANGER
The datarod contains an encrypted number for an account at the Bank of Luria. The account contains the funds you requested.

MORAD
That should be very useful. The devices you requested are in a cargo bay at upper pylon one. You won't have trouble gaining access?

STRANGER
No trouble. We don't anticipate having to use the bombs. But as long as they're there, they give us an advantage.

MORAD
Then I believe we're done here.

Morad knocks back the last of his Romulan ale - HISSES as it burns his throat - and gathers himself to leave.

MORAD

Please pass along the thanks of
the movement... as well as my
personal gratitude.

Morad stands, but before he leaves, he bends down, whispers
into the stranger's cloaked and hidden ear...

MORAD

The True Way is very grateful to
Chairwoman Sela for her support.

Morad moves off. The cloaked figure stays sitting...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

26 INT. SENTINEL - BRIDGE

Flashback - stock from SCE ep 1x21 "War Stories, pt 1".

The sparking, damaged bridge of an Akira-class ship. Beta shift conn officer Ensign TENMEI, young but already plucky, is nevertheless scared and tense as she works at the helm.

Captain AMALFITANO, exec officer PATEL and tactical officer GRIMNAR discuss the urgent situation. Tenmei is too junior to contribute, so she just listens and tries not to panic.

AMALFITANO

Work quickly, Gomez. The Jem'Hadar called for back-up.

She cuts the channel to engineering. Grimnar reacts...

GRIMNAR

Long-range sensors are picking up a Breen ship.

PATEL

How long before they get here?

GRIMNAR

One hour ten minutes.

As young Tenmei realises that her death is an hour away...

CUT TO:

27 BREEN OFFICERS

with heads back and BUZZING their strange laugh, several of the suited aliens sat together at one table in Quark's...

28 TENMEI

glaring across the bar in disgust and hatred. But then a body crosses her vision, distracting her out of it...

29 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

...Slaine bringing back their drinks order on a tray. The thing with Candlewood may have gone wrong, but she still wants to make friends here. She hands out the drinks...

SLAINE

Kiriliona punch, trixian bubble juice, voodai ginger ale...
(finally to Tenmei)
...and double vodka on the rocks, the real thing, not synthehol.

This alone is a worrying sign to Chao, who looks cautiously to Tenmei. (Slaine sits with her own glass of *kanar*.)

CHAO

How's your father doing, Prynn?

Tenmei snaps around as if Chao said something unforgivable. But rather than answer, she turns back and glares again...

TENMEI

Our guests seem to be enjoying themselves.

CHAO

(going with it)
I suppose it's weird having them here. But it probably felt weird having Klingons around once too.

SLAINE

(trying to join in)
Or Cardassians.

K'UHLLO

Depending on the human, it still feels weird.

Tenmei isn't in the mood for jokes. Chao tries again...

CHAO

You don't have to talk about your father if you don't want, Prynn.

TENMEI
(sharp)
I like talking about my father.

Chao places a comforting hand on Tenmei's arm - but Tenmei snatches it away angrily. The sympathy only makes it worse.

CHAO
Prynn, you need to calm down -

TENMEI
Don't tell me what I need!

The noise dies and heads turn, Khitomer and Typhon alike. Embarrassed, Tenmei grabs her vodka, knocks it back in one burning gulp, SLAMS the glass down and stands to stomp off.

PERMENTER
Prynn, wait -

She ignores them. Pulse thumping. Breath hitching. Fists clenched. Tears threatening. At the door, she turns back, glaring again at the Breen, the Romulans, the Gorn...

TENMEI
(whisper)
Murderers.

Her hand raises, ready to point and scream and accuse...

...but her arm is captured, she is spun on the spot and finds herself being walked forcibly away from the bar.

Candlewood calmly leads a hyperventilating Tenmei into...

30 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

...where RWOGO looks up in surprise at the new arrivals. Candlewood holds Tenmei close, speaks over her shoulder...

CANDLEWOOD
Inspector, could we borrow your office for a minute please?

RWOGO
Of course. As long as you need.

Rwogo gets up and EXITS to the Promenade and bar.

Once her breathing steadies and her pulse slows, he gently leads her to a guest chair, keeping hold of her hands.

CANDLEWOOD

I'm here. Tell me.

TENMEI

My father. I went to see him. On Bajor. And I decided... I decided to let him go.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh Prynn... I'm sorry. Is he...?

TENMEI

Not yet. Part of me knows it's the right thing to do. Dragging it out is only making it harder, like Julian said. I need to move on.

(beat)

But part of me feels like I'm killing him all over again. Opaka said he was still in there. What if she's right?

Candlewood has no answer for that. She looks at him, and his fancy evening outfit instead of his uniform...

TENMEI

Why are you dressed like that?

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik's back, just for one night. But I don't have to go...

TENMEI

Of course you do - it's Hetik. I'll be fine...

Candlewood smiles his gratitude, comes to hug Tenmei...

CANDLEWOOD

I love you, you know that?

TENMEI
Get out of here.

Tenmei pushes him away with a teary smile, waves him on his way. He heads to the door...

31 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Candlewood emerges from security and spots CHAO watching from the door of the bar. He beckons her over...

Chao nods and heads over immediately, thanking him MOS for handling it and heading into security to take his place.

Crisis managed for now, Candlewood heads back to the bar...

32 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Past HULPESH the *Sti'ach maitre d'* on his little podium...

Past RWOGO keeping an eye on the crowd from the bar...

...and stands nervously by the stairs, waiting for Hetik.

After a moment, he enters the bar, and Candlewood's breath catches. The Bajoran looks amazing - sexy but not trashy, dignified and elegant, befitting one last night together.

As Hetik crosses towards Candlewood and they greet, heading up the stairs towards the holosuites...

...Slaine watches their obvious attraction for each other. She smiles sadly, and knocks back the last of her *kanar*.

SLAINE
This has been quite an educational evening. But I think I'll head back to my quarters. Good night.

PERMENTER
G'night. Nice to have met you.

Slaine heads out, leaving Permenter and K'Uhllo the only ones left at their regular table. They share a look...

K'UHLLO
I'm telling you, humans are crazy.

Permenter the human glowers at the Damiani ensign...

33 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE - LOWER LEVEL

Slaine emerges from the bar and heads absently towards a turbolift, considering how the evening didn't exactly turn out like she planned. Maybe these humans are crazy.

As she waits for the lift to come, she looks up, past the milling crowds of all kinds of various aliens...

...and sees MORAD also leaving the bar from the upper level and heading away. The only other Cardassian face here.

Surprised and alarmed, she forgets the turbolift and moves quickly for the spiral staircase, heads up to...

34 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE - UPPER LEVEL (CONTINUOUS)

Slaine reaches the upper level, pushes random extras out of the way, trying to see where Morad went to...

There. In the distance, past other milling aliens, walking away from her. She quickly chases after him...

She struggles through the crowd, momentarily losing sight of him and then spotting him again far ahead of her...

Finally he turns again... she puts on an extra spurt of speed to catch up before she loses him for good...

Another turbolift door is just closing...

Slaine catches up, SPOTS a glimpse of Morad inside the lift just before the door closes and the lift whisks him away...

She turns back, frustrated and worried...

35 CANDLEWOOD AND HETIK

...face to face, breathing heavy, noses touching, staring deeply into each other's eyes...

OPEN UP to reveal...

36 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

The Las Vegas crooner's lounge is transformed into a Latin dance club, with a band playing dramatic TANGO MUSIC for a decent sized crowd who fill the dance floor.

Clear among them, with eyes for no-one else, are Hetik and Candlewood. The two men slink sensuously around each other in a close hold, dancing a sexy ARGENTINE TANGO together.

NOTE: Don't make this cheesy or clichéd. These are two men who know how to dance and do it well. And the tension is growing with every step. This is foreplay, pure and simple.

As Hetik SPINS Candlewood then pulls him back in tight...

HETIK

I've missed you.

CANDLEWOOD

I noticed you didn't put up too much of a fight.

Candlewood lifts his right foot, crosses over, and uses it to stroke the outside edge of Hetik's right leg - *lustrada*

HETIK

I am sorry, you know.

Legs flick, kick and hook lightning fast - *patada y gancho* - until Hetik leads them both in a tight fast carousel - *calesita* - then stops dead, chests pressed together...

HETIK

I still think we're probably no good for each other...

(Candlewood smirks)

...but I know I handled it badly.

CANDLEWOOD

You're handling it great right now.

Hetik leads Candlewood in more twists, stalks and flicks...

CANDLEWOOD

We always did move together well.
Otherwise we wouldn't have kept
coming back for another... dance.

After another elaborate spin, they end up in reverse hold, Candlewood leaning back into Hetik's chest as the Bajoran heaves with the exertion of the dance...

HETIK

Do you hate me?

CANDLEWOOD

Never.

Hetik is relieved, and drives Candlewood forwards from behind in a passionate promenade step...

37 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE / SECURITY OFFICE

RWOGO heads back from the bar, satisfied with the state of security affairs. She heads into her office...

...but stops at the sight of SLAINE waiting for her.

SLAINE

Inspector... we have a problem.

Off Rwego's wariness...

38 INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS

BASHIR looks up from the couch, where he has been waiting, as SARINA enters. He's trying to be civil, but it's hard.

BASHIR

You're late. Where've you been?

SARINA

You know where I've been. I'm the deputy chief, I was in charge of security for the upper pylons.

BASHIR

That was hours ago.

Sarina just wants to rest after a long day. Moves on into the bedroom and starts undressing. Bashir doesn't move.

SARINA

I took an extra shift. It's been a busy day, they needed my help, and since you were on Bajor anyway, I didn't think it would be an issue.

BASHIR

I heard some interesting news just before I came home. Seems Slaine recognised someone who shouldn't be here - the *Galber's* captain.

SARINA

Uhh... Moresh, wasn't it?

BASHIR

No, not Moresh. Morad. The one who attacked the slipstream factory on Cardassia. The one where Kira was.

Sarina emerges from the bedroom in a negligee, although it is clear that Bashir is not in the mood for sexytimes.

SARINA

He served his time, didn't he? The man's gotta work.

BASHIR

That's not the point. You said he was Moresh. You checked him into the station as Moresh. But Slaine watched Morad's trial, and she recognised his face.

SARINA

Okay, so he had a false ID.

BASHIR

Which you, as the deputy security chief, not to mention a fully trained and genetically enhanced Starfleet intelligence agent no less, somehow didn't catch.

SARINA

Well maybe I was distracted by the fact that my boyfriend has looked at me like a monster ever since I told him the truth about myself.

BASHIR

Maybe. Or maybe you knew exactly who he was all along... and let him in deliberately.

Sarina sighs, tired of the argument. Bashir presses on...

BASHIR

Why would he even need to lie about who he was, if he wasn't planning on doing something bad?

SARINA

Maybe because he's tired of people condemning him over one mistake.

BASHIR

Ironic, isn't it? Here we all are, so worried about the Typhon Pact causing trouble... when maybe we should have been watching out for someone from the Khitomer Accords all along.

As Bashir stares Sarina down...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

39 INT. DS9 - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

RO (normal uniform) is *pissed*. She may even punch the desk.

RO

How the hell did he get off the station?

RWOGO and SLAINE stand before her, being dressed down.

RWOGO

The *Galber* left late last night, at the height of the celebrations, while *dalin* Slaine was off duty. I have no doubt that was deliberate.

RO

And why wasn't I told about this?

RWOGO

You were hosting the reception for our guests. I believed it would be inappropriate to interrupt you.

RO

Who was running security on the *Galber*?

RWOGO

Lieutenant Douglas.

Something passes between Ro and Rwogo - does that explain things? Slaine notices the look, wonders what it means.

RWOGO

Frankly, Captain, I didn't want it to look to the Pact like we can't keep our own ledgers in order. We had just barely avoided Lieutenant Tenmei creating a scene in public. A security alert would have caused more problems than it solved.

Much as she hates it, Ro is forced to agree with that.

RO

And you're absolutely certain it was him?

SLAINE

Yes, Captain. We Cardassians are very good at remembering faces.

RO

Then I want to know how in fire a freighter pilot and ex-prisoner got hold of a fake ID good enough to fool Starfleet security.

RWOGO

We'll begin immediately. Without the Typhon Pact finding out.

Ro nods and dismisses them both, leaving her to stew alone.

40 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS

HETIK lies in bed, eyes closed, half asleep. He mumbles and rolls over, eyes peeking open, and sees...

...CANDLEWOOD also in bed next to him, propped up on his elbow, watching and smiling. Hetik mutters groggily...

HETIK

What happened to you not being a morning person?

CANDLEWOOD

If it's my last chance to watch you sleep...

Hetik forces himself awake more, props himself up likewise.

HETIK

I'm glad we did this. I'm glad you made me do this. We needed it. We just about danced our hearts out.

CANDLEWOOD

(emphatic)

Yes we did.

(beat, calmer)

But now we need to talk.

Hetik nods and pulls himself up to a sitting position in bed. Candlewood joins him, sheets gathered around waists.

CANDLEWOOD

I don't understand. Was it really all about the Cardassians?

HETIK

Not all. But they were in there. I was more prejudiced than I knew.

CANDLEWOOD

That's understandable. Not good, but... you know... understandable.

HETIK

Some stayed behind, on Argaya. And they were helping. You were right, there's a whole new generation of Cardassians who are... good.

CANDLEWOOD

(no accusation)

But not good enough for you to come back to me?

HETIK

(sad smile)

I think it's a little too late for that now, isn't it?

CANDLEWOOD

Not necessarily. I'm here, Hetik. I'm not gonna spend my life pining for you. And I'm sure not gonna be a monk. But if you ever need me, you know where to find me.

Hetik smiles, leans in, and KISSES John. Unlike the passion of last night, this feels chaste, companionable... final.

The door CHIMES. The two boys don't move.

CANDLEWOOD

Come in!

The door opens and TENMEI enters - one hand holding a heavy object draped in a cloth, the other covering her eyes.

TENMEI

Are you decent?

CANDLEWOOD

Depends on your definition.

HETIK

Put some pants on, John. She's suffered enough.

CANDLEWOOD

Ugh, fine. Keep your eyes closed.

TENMEI

Not a problem.

While Tenmei waits, she hears the boys getting out of bed and throwing on some quick clothes. After a few moments...

CANDLEWOOD (o.s.)

Okay, you can look now.

Tenmei peeks tentatively between her fingers, fearing the worst... but it's safe. She steps further into the room.

TENMEI

So I researched this little ritual of yours. The Rite of Separation. And I brought you this.

She whips the cloth off the object she is carrying - it is a clay bowl on a golden stand. The boys recognise it.

TENMEI

You were there for me last night when I needed you, John. I wanted to do this for you in return.

Candlewood is touched. He looks to Hetik for his approval.

HETIK

We'd be honoured, Prynn.

Tenmei grins, relieved, and runs off screen to the bathroom - we hear the tap running water into the bowl. Meanwhile Hetik and Candlewood prepare themselves...

CANDLEWOOD

You ready for this?

Hetik shrug-smiles - as ready as he'll ever be. Tenmei re-enters with the bowl, hands it to the boys, places the gold stand on the bed between them, then backs off to watch.

HETIK

Our paths have grown apart.

He takes a drink from the bowl, hands it to Candlewood.

CANDLEWOOD

What was one is now two.

He also takes a sip, hands the bowl back.

HETIK

The time of sharing is over.

Hetik SMASHES the bowl onto the golden stand.

HETIK

May the Prophets guide you toward
the path of happiness.

CANDLEWOOD

And may they walk with you always.

The boys lean together as if to kiss, but just before their lips touch, they turn their heads away. It's all over.

Hetik takes a moment, nods to himself - as if reassuring himself that he has done the right thing - then gets up from the bed and heads off-screen to the bathroom.

Candlewood gathers up the broken pieces of bowl. Tenmei took her own meaning from witnessing the ceremony.

TENMEI

You okay?

CANDLEWOOD

Surprisingly, yes. You?

TENMEI

(nodding)

It's a good ceremony. Makes a lot of sense. All things must end. But no point dwelling on the bad when there's so much good to remember.

CANDLEWOOD

The Bajorans are an ancient and wise people.

The door CHIMES again. Hetik appears in the bathroom door, coming to see who it is. Candlewood calls out again...

CANDLEWOOD

Come in!

The door opens, and SLAINE enters - but stops dead at the sight of Hetik and Candlewood half-dressed early morning, plus Tenmei there as well. Now she really *is* confused.

CANDLEWOOD

...Zivan?

SLAINE

Uh... yes. Lieutenant. I require your help with a digital forensic analysis. But if you're busy...

CANDLEWOOD

No it's fine. Come on in.

HETIK

I'll get out of your way. All my stuff's still over at Treir's, and since I missed my shuttle, Captain Yates offered to take me to Bajor.

Hetik grabs what remains of his clothes, throws them on, comes to Candlewood for a last hug.

HETIK

Bye, John. It was good to see you.

CANDLEWOOD

You too, Hetik. Stay safe.

Hetik hugs Tenmei too, awkward acknowledgement with Slaine, then he EXITS. Tenmei waves goodbye, then EXITS as well.

Slaine and Candlewood are left alone. She doesn't know what to do now, but he just casually gets on with his morning.

CANDLEWOOD

Right, gimme a few minutes to get ready, then we'll head to the lab.

He runs off to the bathroom, leaving her stranded.

41 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The *Galber* has left the upper pylons, but the *Robinson* is still there. The Breen and Romulan ships are still at the lower pylons, with the *Defiant* and the *Xhosa* on the docking ring, and more Starfleet ships patrolling in the distance.

42 INT. DS9 - SCIENCE LAB

Last seen in DS9 13x02 "Live and Let Die." Now Candlewood and Slaine work on separate panels while computers whirr.

CANDLEWOOD

No response to that recursive algorithm. Damn it - everything I throw at it comes back negative.

SLAINE

It is frustrating. We know it's a fake, we just have to prove it's a fake. But it's a very good fake.

(beat)

Lieutenant... about last night...

CANDLEWOOD

When did you stop calling me John?

SLAINE

When I humiliated us both publicly and offended the only friend I've managed to make while here.

Candlewood stops and turns to her...

CANDLEWOOD

Hey - you never offended me. And you didn't humiliate me either. Surprised and confused me, yeah. But offended me, no.

SLAINE

Cardassians use overt irritation to signal a romantic interest. I read that humans often use humour instead, hoping to make themselves attractive to a mate. I thought...

CANDLEWOOD

Hey, believe me, I am the king of misreading people's signals. And Prynn accuses me of not knowing how to act like a normal human all the time. So don't beat yourself up about it. We're still friends.

SLAINE

I'm glad.
(beat)
So the Bajoran is your mate?

By now Candlewood has turned back to his work, and talks absently, letting out more than he probably should...

CANDLEWOOD

Not anymore. He broke up with me over that whole business with the Argaya system and getting your lot into the Khitomer Accords. But it's fine, we worked it out. Let's try a fractal algorithm instead...

While Candlewood works, Slaine is a bit disturbed...

SLAINE

He terminated your relationship
because of Cardassians?

CANDLEWOOD

(distracted)

Well, yeah. Kinda. Ish.

An insistent and repeating BEEP from the computer - John's
algorithm has produced a result.

Curious, Slaine comes to read Candlewood's readout with
him. He scrolls through the screen, face growing darker
with each scroll, until finally...

CANDLEWOOD

Okay. Yeah, this is definitely not
good. We need to speak to Ro, now.

Off their unhappy realisation...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

43 INT. DS9 - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

Candlewood hands a padd to Ro, while Slaine stands nearby.

CANDLEWOOD

It's the True Way. Denison Morad works for the True Way.

RO

They still exist?

SLAINE

I'm afraid so. They were behind the incident at Andak, where I grew up. It also explains why he attacked the slipstream factory.

Ro begins to pace, pondering this new complication...

RO

But why was he here? What does a Cardassian separatist group want on DS-Nine?

CANDLEWOOD

No idea. Something nefarious, I'd imagine. But wait - there's more.

SLAINE

The True Way were only ever a low level, inept operation. There's no way they have the skill to create a fake ID of this quality.

CANDLEWOOD

Somebody must have helped them. There's just no other explanation for this level of impenetrability.

RO

Who? The Obsidian Order?

SLAINE

Ironically, the Order are the ones who don't exist anymore. But it is something they could have done.

CANDLEWOOD

So could Starfleet Intelligence, for that matter. It could be any of them. We just don't know. Yet.

RO

We'll keep working on it - in fact we'll add your algorithm to the standard security checks.

CANDLEWOOD

Aye, sir.

Ro stops and gazes out onto Ops...

RO

Who would support the True Way?

CUT TO:

44 TOMALAK

...smiling his usual oily, insincere smile.

TOMALAK

Captain Ro, I thank you. It has been an absolute pleasure.

OPEN OUT to reveal...

45 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

...Now back into its business configuration, although the meeting has already happened, and TOMALAK, T'JUL, BELD and SSILITH are saying their formal goodbyes to RO and SISKO. Ro offers her most diplomatic smile to them all...

RO

It was our pleasure to have you here, Proconsul Tomalak...

(nods to each)

...Commander T'Jul, Master Beld,
Captain Ssilith. I wish you all
the best luck with your mission.

Tomalak almost can't hide his smirk...

TOMALAK

Very gracious, Captain. Picard
would be proud.

Off Ro's not-at-all genuine smile, Tomalak leads the others
out of the room. Sisko nods his own acknowledgements and
makes to follow them out, but Ro holds him back...

RO

Captain... now they've gone, I
should probably tell you...

Sisko is curious, and allows the door to close...

RO

We had a True Way agent come aboard
last night. We don't know why yet,
but we suspect they're getting help
from someone else. Someone bigger.

SISKO

And you're afraid it's someone
from the Typhon Pact?

RO

I don't know. There's so many
people I feel like I can't trust
anymore, I'm spoiled for choice.

SISKO

Sounds like the kind of thing a
good counsellor could help with.

Ro smiles, appreciating the returned advice.

RO

That's probably a good idea. I
guess I just wanted to warn you
to be careful out there.

SISKO

Oh, I was planning to be, Captain.

Off their mutual worry...

46 **INT. DS9 - LOWER PYLON AIRLOCK**

The two Romulan UHLANS flank the airlock again, with some nameless Starfleet security as their opposites, watching...

Tomalak and T'Jul heading back into the airlock. As soon as the door rolls closed...

TOMALAK

Our agent accomplished his task?

T'JUL

So I'm told. Trop Kazren is also aboard the *Eletrix* as we speak.

TOMALAK

Is that necessary?

T'JUL

He performed admirably at Utopia Planitia. He is not to blame for whatever went wrong after that.

TOMALAK

Feeling a touch defensive, T'Jul?

T'Jul doesn't dignify that with an answer. The Romulans enter their ship...

47 **INT. DS9 - LOWER PYLON AIRLOCK**

Master BELD of the Breen greets one of his suited brethren at another airlock, hands him the Breen version of a padd.

They BUZZ freely at each other, confident that the human Starfleet security can't understand. ON-SCREEN SUBTITLES...

BELD

Thot Trok. Here are the Ferengi's suggested commercial destinations.

THOT TROK
(off padd)
So many?

BELD
It needs to be convincing.

THOT TROK
I am simply eager to get to work
for the Confederacy. Specialist
Kinn's work is also complete. The
device is installed and tested.

BELD
Excellent. Then all is in place.

The two Breen head on into their own ship...

48 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE - UPPER LEVEL

SISKO crouches near a window, holding Rebecca, pointing out
into open space for her benefit. Kasidy stands nearby.

SISKO
Right there. You can't see it now,
but the wormhole is right there.
That's where I'm going.

REBECCA
You promise you'll send a message
every week?

SISKO
Every week, I promise. You'll send
one back?

REBECCA
I promise, daddy.

Sisko stands and turns to Kasidy. Not ready to hug or kiss
yet, but keeping it warm and light for Rebecca's sake.

KASIDY
I hope you find what you need out
there, Ben. And I hope you stay
safe. Rebecca needs her father.

SISKO
And I need her. As for staying
safe, at least with me out
there... you'll be safe here.

Kasidy doesn't argue, accepts that at least he believes it.

Sisko kisses Rebecca's head, nods goodbye to Kasidy, and
heads off. Kasidy watches him go...

49 INT. DS9 - BASHIR'S QUARTERS

BASHIR and SARINA are both putting the finishing touches to
their uniforms before leaving for the morning shift. Boots
on, hair tied back, jacket zipped, combadge straightened.
But the atmosphere is no warmer than it was last night.

SARINA
You know Quark is already taking
bets on when we'll get married.

BASHIR
Quark knows a good bet. Usually.

SARINA
Do you think we could at least
pretend to be civil with each
other outside these quarters?

BASHIR
Pretend. How apt.

Bashir gets up and heads for the door. Sarina calls out...

SARINA
Julian.

He grudgingly stops, half turns. Still can't look at her.

SARINA
I am not your enemy.

Bashir considers that, then keeps on walking out the door.
Sarina sighs, then follows him out.

50 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

Kasidy now supervises and marks off on a manifest padd as her freighter crew - including familiar faces BRATHAW and PARDSHAY - manoeuvre crates into the docked *Xhosa*.

HETIK (o.s.)
Captain Yates?

Kasidy turns - HETIK is there with bag on shoulder.

KASIDY
Hi, Hetik. Just in time.

Then the door opens again, and SLAINE enters.

KASIDY
Dalin Slaine. Is there a problem?

SLAINE
No problem, Captain. I was hoping
I could have a moment to speak
with your passenger before you go?

Hetik has no idea what this is about, he barely even knows who Slaine is. Kasidy senses the awkwardness...

KASIDY
Of course. We're about done here.

She stashes her padd, ushers her crew along with the last of the crates, and enters the airlock to the *Xhosa*.

HETIK
Did you need something?

SLAINE
I'm just wondering, do you have a
problem with Cardassians?

HETIK
I beg your pardon?

SLAINE
I said, do you have a problem with
Cardassians. A simple question.

HETIK

Who even are you?

SLAINE

Zivan Slaine. I'm John's friend.

HETIK

His friend? Wait - you like him, don't you? Hah! That's not gonna get you very far.

SLAINE

Yes, that's been explained to me quite thoroughly, thank you. But it's not the point. I talked to John. You treated him unfairly.

That gets through - Hetik's spiky exterior drops. He's still struggling with his guilt.

HETIK

I know that. But it's between me and John. And to answer your question... I'm a child of the Occupation, of course I had a problem with Cardassians.

SLAINE

Had? Past tense?

HETIK

Wasn't there something about us being allies now? About letting the past stay in the past... no matter how difficult it is...

He's talking about so many things - John, the Cardassians, the Occupation... He is obviously hurting. Now Slaine feels guilty for how she has treated Hetik too. She steps closer.

SLAINE

You're right, there was. That's why, when I actually do manage to make a friend on this station, I'm going to defend that friendship.

HETIK

John's a grown man, he doesn't
need you to defend him. But...
It's nice to know he has friends.
Just because I messed up doesn't
mean he should suffer for it.

A moment between the young Cardassian and Bajoran. He turns
away to head towards the *Xhosa*. But Slaine calls out...

SLAINE

What are you going to do now?

HETIK

I'll figure something out.

She nods goodbye and lets him go.

51 **INT. DS9 - OPS**

Back to the controlled chaos of Ops. CANDLEWOOD is at his
station, working hard. He hears the TURBOLIFT arrive, looks
up... and sees TENMEI arriving. She walks over to him.

TENMEI

I figured it out.

CANDLEWOOD

The meaning of life? Good for you.

TENMEI

No. What to do about my dad. I'm
going to throw him a party.

CANDLEWOOD

He's brain dead, Prynn. He's not
gonna get up and do the cha-cha.

TENMEI

I will punch you in the face. I'm
going to get all his old friends
together and have a ceremony so we
can all say goodbye, then turn off
his life support. And let him go.

Candlewood finally gets serious... and smiles wistfully.

CANDLEWOOD

That sounds lovely, Prynn. When?

TENMEI

Well, given that Sisko's heading into the Gamma Quadrant right now, Kira's on Cardassia, and Dax is god only knows where, it'll be a few months off yet. But that's fine. Gives me time to prepare.

On cue, SLAINE's voice sounds out from the Ops table...

SLAINE

DS-Nine to *Robinson, Eletrix, Ren Fejin* and *Sess'lessar*. You are cleared to depart. Please follow your assigned flight paths away from the station, towards the wormhole... and good luck.

SISKO (comm)

Thank you, DS-Nine. We'll see you soon. *Robinson* out.

Reaction shots - Candlewood and Tenmei at sciences, Slaine and Cenn at Ops, Chao and Aleco at their own stations...

...and ending on Ro, stood outside her office, daunted at everything that could possibly go wrong.

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW