

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

**8x12 - "Demons of Air
and Darkness."**

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novel

*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Gateways Book 4
Demons of Air and Darkness*

by Keith RA DeCandido

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - EUROPA NOVA SYSTEM

The outskirts of the Europa Nova star system. A Cardassian GALOR-CLASS ship settles into orbit about one of the outer planets. Starfleet runabout *Euphrates* approaches the ship head on, holding position, making its intentions clear.

2 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Steeling herself for what might happen, Colonel KIRA hits the comm, while TARAN'ATAR sits beside her...

KIRA

Trager, this is Colonel Kira Nerys
in command of a joint Federation-
Bajoran task force. What business
do you have in this system?

A Cardassian face appears on the screen, and from all appearances, it's the face of the man Kira hates more than anyone in the galaxy. It's GUL DUKAT.

DUKAT (screen)

Greetings, Colonel.

KIRA

(with a snarl)

Dukat.

(to Taran'atar)

Arm phasers, prepare to fire.

Kira is ready to blow Dukat out of the sky right now. But on screen, Dukat holds his hands up, hoping to pacify her.

In fact, this is not Dukat at all. The bone structure and skin tone are both slightly different, and he has some tiny wisps of facial hair on his chin.

It's actually GUL AKELLEN MACET (TNG 4x12 "The Wounded"), the first Cardassian ever seen (same actor). As well as the physical differences, his speech is much less superior and condescending, but naturally warm and friendly...

MACET (screen)

I believe you've mistaken me for someone else, Colonel. I am Gul Macet. Dukat was my cousin, and I assure you, the family resemblance has done me no favours.

KIRA

Surprised to hear a Cardassian say that.

MACET (screen)

I know you have history with Dukat, Colonel. I only ask that you hold it against me no more than you would against his daughter.

KIRA

I wouldn't go there if I were you, Macet. What do you want?

MACET (screen)

Simply to help. The *Trager* is at your disposal to aid in the evacuation of Europa Nova.

KIRA

Out of the goodness of your heart?

MACET (screen)

You've been willing to make use of my services in the past. Although perhaps you wouldn't know it. The *Trager* is the ship that destroyed the Vorta cloning facilities on Rondak Three.

KIRA

(realising)

You were in Damar's resistance...

TARAN'ATAR

(unimpressed)

You were one of those who betrayed the Dominion.

MACET (screen)

That would be your view. The so-called observer I've heard about. I admire your courage, Colonel, if not your common sense.

KIRA

Alright, Macet. I can't say I understand why you're doing this, but I'm in no position to refuse, and I don't have time to argue.

TARAN'ATAR

(off panels)

Sensors show that the *Trager* is equipped with Dominion technology.

MACET (screen)

That's true, Colonel. We have sensors and transporters on a par with a Jem'Hadar vessel - at least that's what the Dominion told us.

TARAN'ATAR

Then those transporters will still be viable for another six hours.

MACET (screen)

In that case, we'll begin scans and beam-outs immediately.

KIRA

Thank you, Gul. We'll investigate the gateway, see if we can stop this radiation at the source. Captain Emick of the *Intrepid* is in charge while I'm gone.

MACET (screen)

Understood. And Colonel, it's a pleasure to be working with you.

KIRA

I hope I can say the same when this is all over. Kira out.

His face disappears from the screen, and Kira starts the runabout moving back to Europa Nova...

TARAN'ATAR

You should not trust him.

KIRA

Why, because he worked for Damar's rebellion? I worked for that resistance movement, Taran'atar, but you follow my orders.

TARAN'ATAR

I follow your orders because a Founder instructed me to. I have received no instructions to trust Cardassian Guls who are known betrayers. You don't trust him either, yet you are willing to give him this responsibility.

KIRA

I am. Because I have no choice.

(back to panels)

I'm setting a course for the gateway. Let's see what's on the other side...

3 EXT. SPACE - EUROPA NOVA ORBIT

The planet's orbit is growing thicker with the toxic green waste. The *Euphrates* approaches and dives straight into the densest concentration, until it disappears into the gases.

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Busy busy busy - every docking port is filled with another convoy vessel, some just attaching, some pulling away having already delivered their cargo of refugees. The *Defiant* is gone, on its way back to Europa Nova.

5 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Lt DAX stands at the doorway of some guest quarters, where a large WOMAN 1 is busily complaining at her.

WOMAN 1

The replicators don't work. I've been trying to make an espresso for the last hour.

DAX

Oh, I'm sorry. Let me look.

She enters the quarters, goes to the replicator...

DAX

Computer - espresso, unsweetened.

A small cup MATERIALISES, Dax picks it up, sips gently...

DAX

It seems fine.

WOMAN 1

It's horrendous!

DAX

I know that things are difficult,
Ms DellaMonica, but --

WOMAN 1

Everything that means anything to
us, Lieutenant, we left behind.
We may never see it again.

(more)

WOMAN 1 (cont)

That's the way the universe works,
and I accept that. But all things
considered, I don't think it's too
much to ask to at least get a
decent espresso. And this is not
a decent espresso.

Dax smiles, checks her padd, taps her combadge...

DAX

Dax to McAllister.

MCALLISTER (comm)

Go ahead, Lieutenant.

DAX

Could you report to the Habitat
Ring, level four, section forty-
eight and have a look at the
replicator, please? The people
here will explain the problem.

MCALLISTER (comm)

On my way.

WOMAN 1

Thank you. Without my caffeine, I
get cranky.

DAX

That's alright. Don't hesitate to
call me with any other problems.
And Ms DellaMonica, we're doing
everything we can to reunite you
with your espresso maker.

WOMAN 1

I appreciate that, Lieutenant.

Dax leaves, quite pleased with herself at a job well done.

DIFFERENT QUARTERS, with an old man in the doorway:

MAN 1

It's too hot in here.

DAX
I'll have the temperature reduced.
The last occupants were Ovirians -
you know how they like it hot.

MAN 1
What's an Ovirian?

DAX
They're from the planet --

MAN 1
(horrified)
Aliens? You put aliens in my room?
I don't want to share my space
with aliens!

ANOTHER DOOR - a younger man:

MAN 2
I've got a terrible rash!

DAX
Have you been to the infirmary?

MAN 2
There's an infirmary here?

ANOTHER DOOR - a middle-aged woman:

WOMAN 2
Where's the kitchen?

DAX
These quarters have replicators.

WOMAN 2
Oh. So how do I cook food, then?

ANOTHER DOOR:

MAN 3
The lights are too bright.

ANOTHER DOOR:

WOMAN 3

These beds are terrible!

ANOTHER DOOR:

WOMAN 4

I can't get the shower to work.

ANOTHER DOOR:

MAN 4

The lights are too dark.

ANOTHER DOOR - a small, timid woman:

WOMAN 5

Someone stole my necklace.

Dax, who has been growing gradually less patient with each of the previous complaints, SNAPS like a crazy person...

DAX

How could you let someone steal your necklace? Why were you wearing a necklace anyway? You knew you'd be crowded in with a bunch of people! Any idiot knows to keep an eye on your belongings when you come to a place like this! I can't believe you'd be so completely idiotic!

ENSIGN GORDIMER (male human, South African, security) has come around the corridor corner just in time to witness this. The poor woman cringes back, terrified. Coming to her senses, Dax is utterly horrified with herself...

GORDIMER

Are you alright, Lieutenant?

DAX

I'm fine. Ensign, this woman has had some jewellery stolen. Could you taken her statement, please?

GORDIMER
Of course, Lieutenant.

DAX
I'm very, very sorry, Ms Bello. My
behaviour was completely uncalled
for.

The woman just flinches back, not daring to speak. Dax
decides to go while she can, leaving Gordimer to it...

6 **EXT. SPACE - EUROPA NOVA ORBIT**

The *Defiant* is back in orbit, among still-increasing waste.

7 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

VAUGHN in the captain's chair, BASHIR standing nearby, the
latter full of righteous indignation...

BASHIR
Commander, we can't do this! We
had a chance when we started, but
with the tortoise-like pace we've
been going, that chance has gone.
People are going to die.

VAUGHN
We had this conversation in Ops,
Doctor. The chances were poor to
begin with. We don't give up just
because the math is bad.

BASHIR
I understand that. But we have a
bigger problem. Look at this.

Bashir hands Vaughn a PADD, which he looks at calmly...

VAUGHN
Yes, I know. Captain Mello told me
about this already.

BASHIR
If that mass comes through --

VAUGHN

I'm aware of the danger. Tell me, Doctor, do you have any actual business on the bridge besides telling me things I already know?

BASHIR

I'd like to know why I wasn't informed of this! And I'd like to know what's being done!

VAUGHN

Since you've been busy with relief efforts, keeping you briefed was not a priority. Neither is panicking or flailing about in outrage. We'll deal with the problem.

Bashir is not mollified...

8 EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT

The *Euphrates* emerges on the other side of the gateway, pushing through the thick green fog that surrounds it.

Around it are more large chunks of waste matter, including one that is bigger by far than even the one that hit the planet in 8x11 "Gateways". Bits of debris from the destroyed HIROGEN vessel float about too...

9 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Kira checks the screen display and looks out the window; both show the enormous meteorite on course for the gateway.

KIRA

That single mass is putting out more radiation than everything that's in orbit of Europa Nova combined. If we let that go through, the planet is dead.

TARAN'ATAR

Colonel, I'm picking up a vessel. It is the source of the waste.

10 **EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT**

The waste material parts to reveal...

...the gigantic MALON TANKER looming ominously over the tiny runabout. It is heavily damaged by weapons fire, its tanks buckled and opened to space, and the waste pouring out towards the gateway...

11 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

KIRA

Do you recognise it?

TARAN'ATAR

It does not match anything in your records, nor any ship I am aware of. Fully ninety percent of the ship is dedicated to cargo space. Indeterminate weapons capacity. I believe the ship is a barge for the hazardous material.

KIRA

(sneer)

And they thought they found the perfect dumping ground. Must have been thrilled with themselves.

TARAN'ATAR

At present, most of their systems are offline. I am not reading any life signs.

KIRA

None at all? That ship's gotta have a crew of several hundred. Could the radiation be interfering?

TARAN'ATAR

It could, but not so much as to mask that many life signs. There is also a Class-M planet in this system, less than a million kilometres from our position.

KIRA
Alright, I'm going to assume that
someone is alive over there.
(hits keys)
Unidentified vessel, this is the
Federation runabout *Euphrates*.
Respond please.

In response, an unfamiliar TRANSPORTER effect takes them both, and they disappear from the runabout...

12 **INT. MALON VESSEL - BRIDGE**

The disgusting, grimy, smoky control room of the Malon tanker, as seen in 8x11. Kira lies unconscious on the floor, her wrists bound behind her back with organic rope.

She JERKS awake with a start. With some struggle, she gets herself into a sitting position, and looks around.

She sees the bodies of the three Malon bridge crew - MARSSI, KRON and GRIL. They are slashed and slaughtered in pools of their own greenish-blue blood. There is no sign of Taran'atar anywhere.

Out of the smoke in the room, a silhouetted FIGURE stomps heavily towards her. From Kira's perspective by the floor, it looks gigantic, at least eight feet tall. The figure finally steps into the dim green light of the bridge...

It's the HIROGEN hunter, looking down at Kira with a snarling grin...

HIROGEN
Prey.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 EXT. SPACE - ORION SHIP

Re-establishing the Vulcan-designed, Orion Syndicate-owned ship in space alongside the hourglass-shaped Iconian ship.

14 INT. ORION SHIP - MEETING ROOM

QUARK - panicked with an Orion weapon pressed to either side of his head...

GAILA - fairly beaming with happiness, smiling his best "I won" smile...

TREIR - uninterested, this kind of thing happens all the time on this ship...

MALIC - holding his elaborate padd, leering back over his shoulder at TAMRA the blond and bubbly dabo girl...

MALIC

Just so you know, Quark, after
you're dead, I'm taking the dabo
girl for myself.

Tamra smiles right back at him, because now we finally pay attention to her face instead of her bosom --

-- and it is RO, DS9's security chief wearing a blonde wig.

Ro grabs a heavy tassel off her skimpy outfit, THROWS it --

-- and an enormous FLASH goes off. The guards SHOOT --

-- but they're blinded and can't aim for toffee.

In the confusion, Ro PUNCHES Malic to the ground...

...GRABS Quark and Treir, and makes a RUN for it...

QUARK (v.o.)

I've got a bit of a problem.

15 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

Ro is in uniform behind her desk, Quark standing in front.

RO

Let me guess - Malic. He came to
you two days ago to extort your
cooperation in a business venture.

Quark sighs and slumps into the seat opposite Ro, defeated.

QUARK

I have this friend on Cardassia,
Deru. We arrange to get supplies
to needy people on Cardassia in
return for their land.

RO

You kick people out of their homes?

QUARK

(pouting)

You make it sound like a crime.

RO

If you didn't know it was a crime,
you wouldn't be here. So Malic
threatened to tell Starfleet?

QUARK

It's not Starfleet I'm worried
about. It's Garak.

(no reaction)

You ever met Garak?

RO

I know him by reputation, and I
honestly don't think we'd ever
find your body. So what does Malic
want you to do?

QUARK

Just some negotiations for the
Syndicate. I don't know what for.
But once he gets what he wants,
he'll probably tell on me anyway.

Ro sits back and ponders the problem for a moment...

RO

Alright Quark, I'll help you. But you have to help me in return.

QUARK

How?

RO

By going through with the deal, and helping me to infiltrate the Orion Syndicate.

QUARK

What?! I'm not infiltrating the Orion Syndicate, Laren!

RO

Oh yes you are. Because if you don't, I'm going to tell Starfleet and Garak what you've been up to.

QUARK

I don't believe this! You help me get out of being blackmailed by Malic by blackmailing me with the same thing?

RO

Great, isn't it? So you go and do whatever it is Malic wants you to do, only you'll have a dabo girl along for company.

QUARK

What use is a dabo girl?

Ro hangs her head in exasperation - he's such a moron.

Quark finally gets the message, and then gets a pleasant mental image - maybe this won't be so bad after all...

Ro sees what he's thinking, and glares a death stare...

16 **INT. ORION SHIP - CORRIDOR**

Ro DRAGS Treir in one hand, Quark in the other as ALARMS blare out around them...

QUARK

I still think this is insane.

Two more Orion GUARDS round the corner, weapons raised...

Ro lets go of the other two, lifts two more tassels off her skimpy dabo dress, aims them -- and they fire PHASER BEAMS.

The guards THUD to the deck, she snatches up their weapons, tucks one into her waistband, hands the other to Quark --

QUARK

What am I meant to do with this?

RO

Take a guess.

-- GRABS Treir again, and off they go...

17 **EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT**

Re-establishing the massive, damaged MALON TANKER among the masses of toxic green waste matter and gas...

18 **INT. MALON VESSEL - BRIDGE**

The HIROGEN sneers at the three slaughtered Malon bodies...

HIROGEN

They were diverting prey - barely. Their ship was the true enemy. My vessel was destroyed. My trophies, my weapons, my life - all of it wiped away by these insignificant creatures. After I killed them, I awaited fresh prey. Then you came.

KIRA

You tie up all your prey before hunting them? Some predator.

HIROGEN

No, you are bait. For the other one. I transported two over, but only one is here. The other is somewhere on the ship. It will show itself eventually.

Kira knows he is referring to Taran'atar, and takes hope...

KIRA

He's probably long gone.

HIROGEN

He is near. I can feel it in --

Suddenly the Hirogen is TACKLED from behind by the unshrouding Taran'atar, knocking both of them to the deck. They WRESTLE on the ground, but the Hirogen is hugely well-built, bigger and stronger even than the Jem'Hadar.

Kira rolls out of the way, struggles to her feet, KICKS at the Hirogen's helmeted head - it's like kicking a stone, but he is surprised enough for Taran'atar to THROW him off. Landing gracefully and easily, the Hirogen smiles...

HIROGEN

At last. Worthy prey.

KIRA

Move!

She BOLTS for the open doorway into the body of the ship, and Taran'atar follows right behind...

19 INT. ORION SHIP - CORRIDOR / TURBOLIFT

Ro and Quark turn a corner and see a turbolift opening. Stepping out is a decrepit old ORION MALE. Ro points her weapon at his head - the man SHRIEKS a wailing scream.

RO

Stop. Screaming.

He does, although still blubbering, and they all get back into the turbolift together. The doors close.

RO
Take us to the lowest deck.

ORION MALE
D-d-d-d-d-deck seventy-one.

The lift starts moving. They wait, and wait. The male still blubbering, Treir apathetic. The doors finally open --

-- onto a half-dozen ORION GUARDS all pointing weapons.

20 **INT. MALON VESSEL - CORRIDOR**

Kira and Taran'atar are also on the run through the dark, grimy, slimy and smoky corridors of the Malon tanker...

KIRA
So you know these guys?

TARAN'ATAR
A Jem'Hadar unit encountered a Hirogen ship several hundred years ago. They are nomadic hunters with an impressive level of technology. We however are currently unarmed - our weapons are either still on the *Euphrates* or destroyed.

KIRA
Kira to *Euphrates*. Two to beam up.

COMPUTER (comm)
Unable to comply due to theta radiation interference.

KIRA
Can you locate this vessel's transporters? They must be able to beam through the radiation.

COMPUTER (comm)
Deck twelve, fore section.

At Kira's nod, Taran'atar pulls his *kar'takin* blade from behind his back and leads them down the corridors again...

21 INT. ORION SHIP - CORRIDOR

Faced with a crowd of Orion GUARDS pointing their weapons, Quark thinks it's all over...

...but Ro smoothly takes her weapon off the male Orion in the turbolift with her -- and points it at Treir instead.

RO

Let us go or the slave gets it.

To Quark's amazement, the Orions hold their fire. Ro moves forward cautiously, her gun at Treir's head, dragging the blubbering male behind her. As she reaches the guards...

...she SHOVES the male at them, and they TUMBLE to the deck together. She makes a run for it, dragging Quark and Treir.

Round another corner, Ro pauses, GRABS another tassel off her dress, THROWS it back towards the struggling guards --

-- and there is a SOUND like multiple phasers firing, then the THUD of multiple bodies hitting the floor.

RO

Concussive grenade. Should keep them out for a while.

QUARK

You couldn't do that before?

RO

You really can be a whiner, can't you, Quark?

Ro grabs one last tassel off her dress and PRESSES it - she, Quark and Treir dissolve in a transporter beam...

22 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

...and rematerialise into a small Bajoran ship. A Bajoran woman in a red Militia uniform, ETANA, is in command.

RO

Sergeant Etana Kol, meet Quark.
Quark, Etana.

RO (cont)
(to Treir)
You're free to come with us. You
can start over in the Federation
or on Bajor. You don't have to be
a slave anymore.

TREIR
Did it even occur to you that I
liked being a slave?

RO
Honestly? No, it didn't.

TREIR
Good, 'cause I didn't. But Malic
might have something to say.

RO
He has to find us first. Etana,
set course back to the gateway
Quark and I came here through.

QUARK
What's the point? I'm doomed
anyway. You heard Malic - all it
takes is one command into his
padd, and Garak will know all
about my deal with Deru.

RO
You mean this padd?

Nonchalantly, Ro reaches about her skimpy outfit and pulls
out Malic's PADD, the fancy one he never lets out of his
sight. Quark's jaw drops - he is so in love with her...

23 INT. MALON VESSEL - CORRIDOR

Kira and Taran'atar hurry through the corridors, and come
across another slaughtered MALON worker. Looking at him...

KIRA
When we arrived, I wanted to kill
these people. Now they're dead, I
actually feel sorry for them.

TARAN'ATAR

Their battle is done, and they did
not reclaim their lives. Our
battle is not yet over.

KIRA

Damn right it isn't.

They reach a door and pry it open...

24 INT. MALON VESSEL - TRANSPORTER ROOM

There is a TRANSPORTER PLATFORM, but while Taran'atar
begins to work the controls, Kira notes some other complex
equipment, including one large central device about the
size of a TV set. She rushes to examine it...

KIRA

This is like the shield enhancers
we had in the resistance.

TARAN'ATAR

Colonel, the Hirogen may be here
at any time...

KIRA

Taran'atar, this may be what we
need to save Europa Nova!

TARAN'ATAR

As you command.

Together they begin to disconnect the device...

KIRA

It'll be an hour until the Torona
gateway is full. The *Defiant* can't
disrupt the gateways until then.
But that huge mass of waste will
go through sooner. If we can use
this to enhance Nog's shields, we
might be able to use the runabout
to block this gateway completely.

They set the shield enhancer onto the transporter platform.
Kira stands with it, Taran'atar goes to the control panel.

TARAN'ATAR
I have locked onto the *Euphrates*.

KIRA
Good. Get up here.

TARAN'ATAR
If we both leave, the Hirogen will
simply beam us back. One must stay
here to distract the hunter while
the other installs the shield.

Kira pauses - obviously Taran'atar is the better choice to
stay, but she hates the idea of leaving anyone behind...

KIRA
That thing could kill you.

TARAN'ATAR
I am already dead. I go into
battle to reclaim my life. This I
do gladly, because I am Jem'Hadar.
(beat)
One more thing, Colonel. I said
earlier that I believed my gods had
cast me out. Perhaps I was wrong.

Kira understands - he is about to fight for his Vorta and
his Founder. That is all he's ever wanted to do.

KIRA
Energise.

Taran'atar works the controls - Kira BEAMS OUT. He steels
himself and turns back to the corridors of the ship...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

25 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Kira is working quickly to attach the shield enhancer...

COMPUTER

Warning. Power requirements of
module exceed present capacity.

KIRA

Dammit. Computer, can you divert
enough power from other sources to
allow it to function?

COMPUTER

Affirmative.

KIRA

Can it still be done if impulse
power is left active?

COMPUTER

Affirmative.

KIRA

Okay then, do it.

COMPUTER

Unable to comply.

KIRA

(stay calm,
deep breath)

Why not?

COMPUTER

Life support must be terminated.

Damn it. There's no choice, she knows she has to do it.

KIRA

Computer, set a course...

26 **INT. MALON TANKER - CORRIDOR**

The HIROGEN prowls the ship, hunting for Taran'atar...

...but we are seeing him from Taran'atar's POV, shrouded and following the Hirogen himself from a safe distance.

The Hirogen turns a corner, finds a MALON worker, scared out of his wits, skin cracking from the radiation...

MALON
Oh gods, please don't kill me!

The Hirogen absent-mindedly ATOMISES the screaming worker with his rifle, and moves on. Our POV lingers at the SCORCH MARKS on the bulkhead... and then moves on as well.

27 **EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT**

The *Euphrates* flies back into the depths of the waste field and approaches the Delta side of the gateway...

28 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

The shield enhancer ACTIVATES, then most other systems cut out and drop to emergency power only. But as we PAN AROUND, we realise the ship is EMPTY, running on autopilot...

29 **EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT**

As the ship holds position right in front of the gateway, its SHIELD BUBBLE is visible against the swirls of green gas, growing and thickening until it blocks the gateway...

30 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

VAUGHN is in command, TENMEI is at the helm, BASHIR is still quietly fuming, and NOG is at engineering,...

NOG
Captain! Kira did it - the toxic radiation stream coming through the gateway has reduced by ninety percent. And there's an incoming message from the *Euphrates*...

VAUGHN

On audio, Lieutenant.

Kira's voice comes through, badly broken by interference...

KIRA (comm)

This is Colonel Kira Nerys on the
Euph... fleet vessels at Europa
Nova ...using the *Euphrates* to
block that and any further waste...
need to... chances on the fifth
planet... as soon as it's feasible
to disrupt the gateways, do it,
regardless... or I have returned.

VAUGHN

Can you clean that up, Nog?

NOG

I'm afraid that is the cleaned up
version, sir.

VAUGHN

Alright. Keep an ear out for more
repetitions, see if we can pick up
more pieces of the puzzle.

BASHIR

Captain, we still have at least
half an hour before we've hit our
quota for the Jarada.

VAUGHN

Will the tachyon burst be ready by
then, Lieutenant?

NOG

It should be, sir. But I'd feel
better if Ensign ch'Thane were
here to look over the specs one
last time. It was his design. May
I ask why he didn't accompany us?

VAUGHN

You may not ask, Lieutenant...

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

DAX walks the corridor, disgusted with herself from the earlier lapse. Just as she approaches an intersection --

VRETHA (o.s.)

In Uzaveh's name, Thirishar, you cannot afford to take such risks when you know what is at stake!

SHAR (o.s.)

Exploring the Gamma Quadrant is hardly a risk, *zhavey*.

Dax stops short so as not to interfere, but still listens in, even knowing she shouldn't. Peeking round the corner...

...she sees SHAR and VRETHA amid their regular argument. She stern and intimidating, he furious and indignant...

VRETHA

Please tell me you're not that naïve. If you want, I can quote you starship casualty figures going back two-hundred years.

SHAR

That won't be necessary.

VRETHA

Then what will it take? To what part of you do I appeal? Clearly you feel no sense of duty to your own kind. Are you even thinking about anyone besides yourself?

That does it - Shar lashes out and PUNCHES a dent into the wall, startling his mother. Voice seething with emotion...

SHAR

I have thought of everyone but myself my entire life, *zhavey*! That's how all Andorian children are raised, no? We don't live for ourselves, always for the Whole.

VRETHA

Then why are you doing this?

SHAR

Because it isn't working! I've kept track, zhavey, I've seen the numbers. And I see what we're doing to ourselves because of them.

VRETHA

And your answer is to turn your back on us? On everyone?

SHAR

(quiet, deadly)

You don't understand. You never did.

VRETHA

Don't walk away from me, Thirishar -

Dax realises too late... Shar reaches the corner... but stops short in shock at the sight of Dax. Vretha appears behind him - *awkward*. Dax tries to rescue the situation...

DAX

You must be Councillor zh'Thane.
I'm Lieutenant Ezri Dax.

VRETHA

You used to be Curzon Dax, yes?

DAX

Two hosts ago, yes.

VRETHA

Well, I'll try not to hold that against you. If you'll excuse me.

Vretha gathers herself, walks away down the corridor. Dax turns to Shar, who looks as miserable as he ever has...

DAX

Do you want to talk about it?

SHAR

I'm afraid I can't, Lieutenant.

DAX
I take it there are three people
back on Andor waiting for you?

SHAR
You... know about the *shelthreth*?

DAX
I've known a few Andorians in my
three-hundred years, Shar. I know
how important the *shelthreth* is...

SHAR
Not you too, Ezri. I've made up my
mind. Being in Starfleet is all I
ever wanted. I'm not going to give
it up, and I'm certainly not going
to let *zhavey* hold me personally
responsible for the fact that the
Andorian species is dying.

Off Dax's sympathetic but troubled reaction...

32 **EXT. DELTA QUADRANT PLANET - DAY**

Kira trudges through the endless desert, shading her eyes
from the blinding sun. She wears Starfleet DESERT GEAR and
carries an emergency kit and a phaser. Exhausted, sweaty
and depressed. She stops, pulls out a tricorder...

INSERT - TRICORDER

The screen shows the words THETA RADIATION LEVELS and a
graph with a rising line

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA
One hour to fatal levels.

Kira pulls up her sleeve - her SKIN is already starting to
break from the radiation. She puts the tricorder away,
pulls out a HYPOSRAY instead, and injects herself. She puts
the hypo away again, looks out across her view with a sigh.

She taps her combadge and begins to talk as she walks...

KIRA

Colonel Kira, personal log. I promised myself I wouldn't think about Odo. I know he did what he had to do. But I could always talk to him. And if not him, there was always someone - Jadzia, Kasidy, Lupaza, Furel, Bareil... Benjamin. Every single one of them is dead or gone. And who have I got now? How screwed up is my life that my closest friend is a Jem'Hadar? To think, people say the Prophets don't have a sense of humour.

(beat)

Is this how I'm to have my faith rewarded? Dying on an unnamed wasteland millions of miles from home, theta radiation chewing my cells up and spitting them out?

(beat)

I don't want to die like this.
Not here... and not Attainted.

Suddenly, her tricorder BEEPS. She takes it out, studies the screen, and her face drops in shock and amazement...

ELSEWHERE IN THE DESERT

A person-sized GATEWAY stands clearly on the sand, in the middle of nowhere, glittering in the air.

BACK TO KIRA

She is stunned - and saved.

KIRA

It's a sign, Nerys. The Prophets have given you a sign. They have not abandoned you. They've given you a way off this hellhole, you just have to get there. So move!

She gathers every bit of strength left and heads off...

NOG

We just received a message from the *Gryphon*, Commander. The last of the five-hundred-thousand allowed by the Jarada have been evacuated through the gateway.

VAUGHN

Were you able to get a clearer message from Colonel Kira?

NOG

No sir.

VAUGHN

Very well. Prepare the tachyon burst, Lieutenant.

BASHIR

Sir, Colonel Kira -

VAUGHN

Colonel Kira specifically ordered us to try the tachyon burst as soon as it was feasible. Are you questioning her orders, Doctor?

BASHIR

...No, sir.

VAUGHN

Good. Helm, take up position forty thousand kilometres from the mouth of the gateway.

Tenmei obeys without acknowledging...

NOG

Ready on your order, sir.

VAUGHN

Then consider the order given, Lieutenant.

34 EXT. ORBIT OF EUROPA NOVA

Facing the gateway, the *Defiant* releases a bright stream of ENERGY from its navigational deflector array, aimed right at the gateway. In response, the gateway BURSTS into a rainbow kaleidoscope of colours, then goes dark...

35 INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE

Nog checks his panels...

NOG

Power output of the gateway is zero, and we're no longer reading the Delta Quadrant.

(checks different panel)

Power output on the Costa Rocosa gateway is also nil, sir. We did it. The gateways have been shut down.

36 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Ro and Etana in the front seats, with Quark and Treir behind, minding their own business. Looking through the front window, they see their gateway hanging in space...

ETANA

So far, no sign of pursuit. But that could change at any moment.

(quietly, re Treir)

What are you going to do with her?

RO

I'm not sure. She didn't run when I let go of her hand to shoot the guards. She didn't even flinch when I put the gun to her head.

ETANA

She's been a slave all her life. Maybe she doesn't know how to be anything else.

RO

Maybe. For now, let's just get through that gateway and --

The gateway BURSTS into colours, and then goes dark, to general consternation in the shuttle...

RO
I'm not reading any power
signature from the gateway.

ETANA
I'm not picking up the Clarus
system anymore either.

RO
Dammit.

ETANA
It gets better - the Orions have
found us. Two of their fighters
are on an intercept course...

37 EXT. DELTA QUADRANT PLANET - SURFACE

Kira is still exhausted but pushing herself to the limits to reach the gateway. She is looking more and more cracked and blistered from the increasing radiation, but she is determined to get off this planet rather than die here.

Finally, just at the edge of her vision, she sees it glittering on the horizon. She has her tricorder out, confirming readings, dragging herself closer and closer.

Then the gateway BURSTS into a rainbow of colours, and disappears. The signal on Kira's tricorder goes dead.

Stunned and heartbroken, Kira drops to her knees on the once-again-empty sand. She's going to die...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

38 EXT. SPACE - ORION SHIP

Ro's Bajoran shuttle is under attack by two small fighters
- it is evading well, but still taking a few hits...

39 INT. ORION SHIP - MALIC'S ROOM

MALIC is pacing, furious... a GUARD is at a console...

MALIC

What do you mean, the gateway has
gone offline?

ORION GUARD

Just what I said. There is no
power reading from the gateway,
and we're not reading the Clarus
system on the other side. And I've
monitored half a dozen other
communiqués that indicate all the
other gateways have gone dead too.

MALIC

Quark and his accursed nephew.
It's time I had a conversation
with these Iconians. I'll be in
the conference room.

He starts to head out the door - the guard calls him back.

ORION GUARD

Malic, I've got life-form readings
on the Bajoran ship. Two Bajorans,
one Ferengi... and one Orion.

MALIC

They've still got Treir. Make sure
the fighters disable the ship, not
destroy it. If any harm comes to
Treir, whoever is responsible will
compensate me for her full value.

Heading out again, he casually puts his hand in his pocket to pull out his padd, and realises it is not there. He is so stunned he almost forgets to be furious...

MALIC

Check the tracer on my padd. Now!

ORION GUARD

Uh, you're not going to like this.

40 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Etana is frustratedly trying to get the fancy PADD to work, while Ro pilots the ship and avoids the fighters...

RO

How are you coming with that padd,
Sergeant?

ETANA

I don't think I can get it done,
Lieutenant.

QUARK

You need a code broken?

RO

Quark, sit down and shut up.

QUARK

I need something to do, Laren. And
I'm an expert codebreaker.

ETANA

Expert? I spent most of my time in
the resistance cracking Cardassian
codes.

QUARK

Oh please, any idiot can crack
Cardassian codes.

RO

Let him have a shot. We've got
nothing to lose.

41 **INT. MALON TANKER - BRIDGE**

The HIROGEN prowls back into the Malon bridge, THUMPS the doorframe on the way in, GROWLS with frustration. Deserted.

He slings his gigantic RIFLE over his shoulder on a strap, goes to the main console in the middle of the room...

Behind him, unnoticed, the shrouded SHAPE of Taran'atar creeps into the room too, moves silently to face him...

...prepares himself...

...and LAUNCHES towards the Hirogen full speed, UNSHROUDS as he goes, VAULTS up onto the console, SLASHES with his knife, catches the rifle strap and the Hirogen's face both.

The two bodies CRASH to the deck, rifle clattering away, the Jem'Hadar on top of the Hirogen, struggling...

Taran'atar STABS down again towards the Hirogen's face --

-- but the Hirogen CLAMPS his hands over the blade --

-- SWINGS to the side, throwing Taran'atar off --

-- and both combatants jump to their feet. Taran'atar spots the fallen knife and rifle, judges which is closer...

...and quickly SNATCHES the knife up, brandishes it.

The Hirogen presses a button on his armour, and a knife of his own POPS out of his sleeve - serrated, vicious, movable but still connected to the armour. He GRINS with amusement.

They size each other up across the bridge... As strong and powerful as the Jem'Hadar is, the Hirogen is even bigger.

HIROGEN

Curious prey. You yourself set the terms for combat with blades, yet you do not attack. Instead you wait, try to gauge my attack even as I wait to gauge yours.

Taran'atar does not reply - it would be a waste of energy.

HIROGEN

Do you not speak, prey? Very well.
If you will not strike, I will.

And they LAUNCH at each other, and the weapons CLANG --

42 INT. ORION SHIP - MEETING ROOM

GAILA and the ICONIANS stand to one side, wondering what's going on. Malic and his guards enter, not at all pleased...

MALIC

Would you care to explain why all
the gateways have gone offline?

GAILA

What?!

One of the Iconians finally speaks - a small, squeaky voice that really does *not* suggest awesome and ancient power...

ICONIAN

It is of no concern. We wish to
conclude these negotiations.

MALIC

And I'm telling you now that no
deal will be consummated until I
have a satisfactory answer as to
why a relative of your negotiator
has sabotaged your own product.

GAILA

You mean Nog? Why would you assume
our relationship is meaningful?

MALIC

For the same reason you assumed
his relationship to Quark was
meaningful. You proposed that as
sufficient reason to discredit him
- does the same not apply to you?

ORION GUARD

Malic! A message from the bridge.

MALIC

Excuse me, Gaila. While I take this, see if you can come up with a compelling reason for me not to have the three of you shot.

Malic goes over to the guard, who speaks *sotto* to him...

ORION GUARD

The gateways came back online. As far as Loga can tell, they seemed to just reboot after ten minutes.

MALIC

Very well.

ORION GUARD

There's more. We've monitored the Iconian ship, and they've been in constant contact with these two.

MALIC

That's to be expected.

ORION GUARD

Yes, but we were finally able to break their code...

Malic smiles - that's very good news.

43 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Still swerving to avoid the attacking fighters...

QUARK

I broke the code!

ETANA

What?! That's not possible!

QUARK

Let me rephrase. I broke one of the codes. That's why it was giving you trouble, Sergeant - there were two. The Iconians' and the Orions'.

RO
You broke the Orions'?

QUARK
Nope - the Iconians'. I've got a full translation of the last five minutes of comm chatter, and I must say, it's very interesting.

Ro is intrigued...

44 INT. ORION SHIP - MEETING ROOM

Malic's guards have their WEAPONS trained on Gaila and the Iconians. Gaila is starting to panic...

MALIC
You're lying. You're not Iconians at all, are you? This is all an elaborate plot by the Ferengi, the Bajoran Militia and Starfleet to undermine the Orion Syndicate.

(beat)
We have weapons trained on your ship. Don't be fooled by the fact that this vessel was built by pacifists. It's very well armed.

GAILA
There's no need for hostilities! We can discuss this like rational beings!

MALIC
The time for discussion is over. It's obvious now that you withheld intelligence on the gateways, not as a bargaining tactic but because you didn't have that intelligence. You had no idea why there are no gateways near the Bajoran system, and you have no idea why they all just crashed and rebooted. You've lied to us. The Syndicate doesn't appreciate being made fools.

GAILA

It was Quark! He made fools of us
all! He's a crafty one, my cousin!

MALIC

Be silent, Ferengi. I've learned
the hard way not to trust anyone
from your wretched species.

(to Iconians)

And you? Have you nothing to say
for yourselves?

The lights go out, and the room ROCKS from weapons fire...

ORION GUARD

We're under attack!

45 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

While the two larger ships battle it out nearby...

QUARK

We've got to save Gaila.

RO

I beg your pardon?

QUARK

He's still on that ship. The
Orions and the Iconians, or
whoever they are --

ETANA

They're called the Petraw, based
on these comms we've intercepted.

QUARK

Well, they can both kill each
other for all I care, but we have
to save Gaila.

RO

Why the sudden compassion? He was
the one who betrayed you in there.

QUARK
Pah, that was just business. He's
still family.

RO
Isn't there a Rule about how
family should be exploited?

QUARK
(grinning)
And how am I supposed to do that
if he's dead?

Looking out the window at the ongoing FIREFIGHT between the
Vulcan-Orion ship and the Iconian-Petraw ship..

Ro knows he is right. *Damn him.* Bringing the ship around...

RO
Here goes nothing.

46 EXT. SPACE - ORION SHIP

The Bajoran shuttle turns around and heads back into the
firefight, swerving like crazy to avoid the crossfire...

47 INT. MALON TANKER - BRIDGE

Knives CLANG against each other as the Hirogen keeps the
Jem'Hadar on the defence, getting closer all the time...

The Hirogen tries to manoeuvre closer to his rifle...

...so Taran'atar manoeuvres the Hirogen back away again.

The Hirogen makes repeating SLASHing motions with his knife
- right, left, centre. Right, left, centre. Taran'atar gets
into the same rhythm of deflecting those attacks...

Suddenly the Hirogen changes his pattern, slashing left
instead of right. Taran'atar doesn't block in time --

-- and the knife SINKS deep into the Jem'Hadar's right arm.

As Taran'atar ROARS in pain --

48 EXT. DELTA QUADRANT PLANET - DAY

KIRA lies flat on the sand, half-dead. Skin is broken and bubbled, sweating but shivering, one breath at a time.

Finally the repeated BEEP from her tricorder penetrates - she turns to the sand beside her, grabs the device --

-- and her eyes widen. *The gateway is back.*

She gathers what tiny strength she has left, hauls herself to her feet, and sets off across the desert yet again...

49 INT. ORION SHIP - CORRIDOR

The ship ROCKS under attack. Lights FLICKER and BURST...

...And Gaila RUNS in a blind panic. He turns a corner --

-- and another Orion GUARD points a gun right at Gaila...

Gaila is sure he is about to die --

-- but then the Starfleet TRANSPORTER beam takes him.

50 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Gaila BEAMS into the shuttle - to face a grinning Quark.

GAILA
Quark.

QUARK
Pleasure to see you, cousin.

Gaila couldn't possibly loathe Quark any more right now.

51 INT. MALON TANKER - BRIDGE

Taran'atar GRUNTS at the Hirogen's knife in his arm --

...and the Hirogen slowly DRAGS the knife out of him. It's total *agony*, but the Jem'Hadar refuses to cry out in pain.

The Hirogen STABS forward again --

-- Taran'atar LEAPS into the air, FLIPS over the Hirogen --

-- the Hirogen's knife SINKS into the console instead --

-- and Taran'atar LANDS across the room. Only seconds until his enemy gets free, but he is now injured and sluggish...

CRUNCH - the Hirogen snaps the tip of the knife to free himself. He comes at the Jem'Hadar with a ROAR --

-- knocks him to the floor, and proceeds to BEAT the bloody hell out of him with his fists. Taran'atar goes down.

Finally, the Hirogen gets up, goes to grab the rifle...

Taran'atar painfully drags himself up to stand...

HIROGEN

Resourceful prey. I'm impressed.
But this hunt is over.

TARAN'ATAR

Not... while... I... live...

And he LAUNCHES back at him again, punching weakly...

Annoyed, the Hirogen TWISTS and THROWS Taran'atar back onto the deck, STAMPS on his good arm with his giant boot --

HIROGEN

I repeat... this hunt is over.

-- and he STABS the jagged edge of his broken knife right down into Taran'atar's chest.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

52 EXT. SPACE - DELTA QUADRANT

The enormous and battered Malon tanker, still sitting there dark. It is surrounded now by a thick field of green fog and toxic matter - with the gateway blocked by Kira's runabout, there is nowhere for it to go, so it builds up.

53 INT. MALON TANKER - BRIDGE

The Hirogen TWISTS his knife in Taran'atar's chest. The Jem'Hadar splutters blood... and then goes limp.

With a grunt of satisfaction, the Hirogen stands, goes to the central console. An ALARM is going off - why?

INSERT - THE CONSOLE

A clear DIAGRAM of the tanker, including a GRAPHIC showing a series of bars, slowly going dark one by one...

BACK TO SCENE

The Hirogen THUMPS the console in anger.

HIROGEN

To lose my own vessel was bad
enough. Now I lose this as well!

He works the console, and the graphic changes to show him a series of ESCAPE PODS covering the skin of the ship.

A CLATTERING sound - the Hirogen spins --

-- and Taran'atar is standing, wrecked and bloody, hanging on to life, pointing the Hirogen's huge RIFLE back at him. The hunter is almost pleased - such worthy prey!

TARAN'ATAR

Victory... is... life...

He FIRES, and the Hirogen dies with a smile on his face.

54 **EXT. SPACE - EUROPA NOVA ORBIT**

The full fleet is in orbit - *Defiant*, *Intrepid*, *Gryphon*, *Trager*, the *Rio Grande*, various freighters and cargo ships, and the ten Bajoran convoy ships. Not the *Euphrates*.

55 **INT. DEFIANT - MAIN BRIDGE**

Vaughn in command, Tenmei at helm, Nog at Ops station...

NOG

Commander Vaughn, the last of the
refugees have been evacuated from
Europa Nova.

CHEERS and WHOOPS of celebration from the crew. Tenmei gets up, hugs Nog, turns to look at Vaughn. She hesitates...

...then smiles, gives him a nod of acknowledgement at a job well done. He smiles back, relieved. She returns to helm.

NOG

According to Captain Emick,
President Silverio was the last
person to board the *Intrepid*.

VAUGHN

Good for her. Open a channel to
the entire convoy please.

NOG

Yes sir, channel open.

VAUGHN

Excellent work, all. We still have
a long way to go, but the most
important thing - getting the
Europani out of danger - has been
accomplished. At this time, we
will bring the last remaining
refugees to Bajor and Deep Space
Nine. Lieutenant Bowers, you and
the *Rio Grande* will stay behind
and wait for any new signals from
Colonel Kira or Taran'atar.

TENMEI

The convoy ships are moving into formation for the return trip, Commander. Except for the *Trager*.

VAUGHN

Open a channel to the *Trager*.

Gul Macet's face appears on the main viewscreen...

MACET (screen)

What can I do for you, Commander?

VAUGHN

I just wanted to confirm that you will be returning to DS-Nine with us, Gul Macet.

MACET (screen)

Of course, I simply wasn't sure where to align myself.

VAUGHN

Have your helm confer with Ensign Tenmei. If you don't mind my asking, sir... why are you here?

MACET (screen)

Because we have worked against the galaxy, Commander. At a time when the entire Alpha Quadrant was united against a common threat, we alone stood with that threat. Well, we and the Breen. Now many of us, including myself, believe that we are better off trying to become part of the quadrant once more. You may consider this the first step on that road.

VAUGHN

Thank you for your candour, Gul. And perhaps when we arrive back on Deep Space Nine, we can discuss further steps on that road.

MACET (screen)
I would like that very much,
Commander. *Trager* out.

Macet's face disappears, and Vaughn sits back thoughtfully.

VAUGHN
Let's go home, Ensign Tenmei.

Tenmei gets the ship underway...

56 EST. DEEP SPACE NINE

Busy but triumphant - many ships docked and offloading...

57 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Ro is back in uniform, at her desk, still trying to figure out Malic's padd while Treir loiters nearby...

TREIR
Excuse me, but how long am I
supposed to stand here?

RO
Treir, I'm really busy right now.
Can't you go somewhere else?

TREIR
Where? I'm not exactly dressed for
walking around in public. And I
don't have a change of clothes.
In fact, I don't have much of
anything now, thanks to you.

RO
You were a slave!

TREIR
Oh please, you didn't take me
hostage for my own sake. Did you
for one second think about what
your actions would mean for me?

Ro is about to blow up -- when Quark enters the office.

RO
Quark, I really don't have time --

QUARK
Actually, I have a solution to
your problem.

RO
Which one?

QUARK
This one.

He puts his arm around Treir - and she seductively drapes
herself over him like she had Malic, an instant chameleon.

QUARK
As it happens, I haven't been able
to find a decent dabo girl to
replace the one who married my
brother and moved to Ferenginar.
How would you like the job?

TREIR
(sigh)
Fine. It's not like I've got a lot
of alternatives.

RO
Good luck.

QUARK
Excellent. Come along, my dear.
We'll find you a proper dabo girl
outfit and get you started.

TREIR
No, you'll find some real clothes
and we'll discuss my salary.
(back to Ro)
Oh, and Lieutenant? You might want
to try the Hynerian coding system.

Ro looks down to the padd in her hand, then back up -- and
Treir is just leaving the room on Quark's arm. Ro smiles
after them - she has to admit to liking Treir after all...

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

Quark leads Treir into his bar, beckons a Ferengi server, explains what to do with Treir, sends them off together. Quark heads behind his bar. There is a message waiting for him - he taps the screen absently. GARAK's face appears...

GARAK (screen)

Good day, Quark. I hope you're well. I wanted you to know that I recently spoke with DS-Nine's new security officer, Lieutenant Ro. Such a delightful young woman. She suggested I look in on an acquaintance of yours, a gentleman named Deru. It seems he's been saying the most slanderous things about you, Quark. Rest assured, I set him straight. Lieutenant Ro vouched for you, and after all, I knew you to be such an upstanding individual from our time together.

(beat)

Well, I must be going. We should catch up soon. Goodbye for now.

Garak has been nothing but charming and erudite the whole time. And yet Quark has never been more terrified...

59 **EXT. DELTA QUADRANT PLANET - DAY**

The GATEWAY stands alone and glittering in the desert, switching periodically between two different locations.

KIRA gazes at it in amazement, basically dead on her feet, covered in blisters, boils and cracked skin.

Through one view -- DS9, with Dax stood at the Ops table.

Through the other -- the warm white light of the Prophets.

Should she go back to where she has no friends, a job that is grinding her down, where she's not even allowed to pray?

Or should she go to *heaven*? Why not? She's dead anyway.

60 **EXT. ORBIT OF EUROPA NOVA**

One solitary runabout holds position near the gateway,
still surrounded by the remaining toxic waste...

61 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

BOWERS and RONESS (human female, security) in command...

 RONESS
Lieutenant, something's coming
through the gateway.

 BOWERS
Looks like an escape pod. It's
just managing to squeak past the
blockage created by the *Euphrates*.
Don't recognise the configuration.

 RONESS
Me either. I'm getting a life sign,
though. It's Jem'Hadar!

 BOWERS
I'm trying to get a transporter
lock... Damn, too much radiation.
Can we get a tractor beam?

 RONESS
Yes sir.

62 **EXT. SPACE - EUROPA NOVA ORBIT**

The runabout sends out a TRACTOR BEAM...

...and GRABS the small, green-grey escape pod. It begins to
DRAG the pod out of the system, away from the radiation.

63 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Taran'atar BEAMS IN on the transport pad - broken, battered
and bloodied. His right arm hangs limp, an enormous WOUND
fills his chest, his face is swollen, and more.

He immediately collapses to his knees -- Bowers and Roness
rush up with a tricorder...

RONESS
What happened to him?

BOWERS
What happened to Colonel Kira?

TARAN'ATAR
Kira... did not... survive...

Bowers and Roness react with horror...

TARAN'ATAR
The radiation... no life signs...
I must return.

BOWERS
No, you need a doctor right now.
Ensign, set course for DS-Nine,
maximum warp.

She rushes back to the helm to comply...

RONESS
What about Colonel Kira, sir?

BOWERS
For now? Hope to hell he's wrong.

64 EXT. DELTA QUADRANT PLANET - DAY

Right on death's doorstep, Kira makes her choice.

With finality, expecting death and looking forward to
meeting the Prophets, she STEPS THROUGH the gateway and
into the bright white light...

WHITE OUT:

THE END