

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

13x11 - "New Life"

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 18x11 - "PUZZLE BOX"

Though the Typhon Pact claims that their only intention is to make their destiny separate from Federation/Klingon influence, President Bacco worries that this is a new way to challenge them - diplomatically and economically instead of militarily. On the Tzenkethi homeworld, special agent Alizome Tor Fel-A seeks an audience with Autarch Korzenten Rej Tov-AA. Even the doorway to his residence is a complex puzzle intended to prove that the visitor is worthy of entry. The Autarch sends Alizome to Romulus, where she contacts the powerful Senator Xarian Dor under the guise of a trade negotiator. When Xarian dies of a previously undetected illness, Gell Kamemor is promoted to replace him. Attempting to bolster their position, Bacco and Martok invite the Ferengi Alliance, Cardassian Union, Talarian Republic and Imperial Romulan State to join the Khitomer Accords. They will think about it and get back to her...

TTN 2x11 - "ERROR STATE"

The Null attack is devastating and many Sentries are killed. *Titan* rushes to assist - over Minuet's protests - and is able to drive the Null back into subspace, but Tuvok and his away team appear lost. Red-Gold is furious with *Titan*'s interference, but White-Blue explains that fighting the Null is their purpose... and the attacks have been growing worse. Soon, it could threaten all of known space. Unknown to Riker, Tuvok's team were saved by FirstGen Zero-Three, one of the earliest planet-sized line of Sentries. It claims that the Sentries' designers accidentally created the very subspace rifts that allow the Null through. White-Blue takes Vale to warn the other Sentries that the Null will soon be back bigger than ever. Red-Gold has no interest in anything these "wetminds" say, until White-Blue explains that it was Minuet who calculated this data and defeated the Null. Red-Gold is grateful for the input - and immediately launches an attack on *Titan*, hoping to steal Minuet for the Sentries...

VOY 11x11 - "TRIGGER"

A B'Elanna-Tom-Harry-Nancy double dinner date ends in a brutal argument. Harry is furious at Tom for lying about B'Elanna's death - how could he not trust his best friend? When Kim brings

up the idea of transferring to another fleet ship, Counsellor Cambridge traps the pair in the Captain Proton holo-simulation to work out their differences, with himself playing Chaotica. Chakotay and Eden receive a visit from Neelix, returning Meegan's stolen shuttle. Clearly she must have abandoned it and gone elsewhere. *Voyager* rendezvous with *Achilles* and *Esquiline*, whose Captain Dasht hands over a gift from a recent first contact - an ancient wooden staff that triggers something in Eden's memory. Eden confides in Cambridge that she was adopted by her fathers, and doesn't know where she came from, but going through *Voyager's* records has led her to the possibility that her origins are somewhere out here in the Delta Quadrant...

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EST. VANADWAN MONASTERY - DAY

The complex of buildings clustered around the highest peak of the mountain range, with the tower and its nine spires.

2 EXT. VANADWAN MONASTERY - WALKWAY - DAY

Vedek KIRA walks with purpose down the covered walkway that snakes along the mountainside, connecting the various buildings. She meets ranjen RANSEL part-way along...

KIRA

Ransel! Glad I found you. Could you make sure the Xepolites in room twelve get access to a comm system please? I promised I'd put them in touch with their cousins in the Valo system.

RANSEL

Of course, Vedek.

KIRA

Thanks. By the way, have you seen Raiq? I haven't seen any sign of her or Vexh all day.

RANSEL

I'm sorry, Vedek, no I haven't.

KIRA

Don't worry, I'm sure they're just in their rooms. Thanks again.

Ransel half-bows and goes on her way, as Kira goes on hers.

3 INT. VANADWAN MONASTERY - CORRIDOR / BEDROOM - DAY

Kira walks on, nodding to the nurses in the corridor. She comes to a door, listens a second, hears nothing untoward. So she pushes it open, KNOCKING as she does so...

KIRA

Raiq, are you in there?

But the SIGHTS and SOUNDS coming from inside make her pull back instantly in horror and crippling embarrassment...

KIRA

Oh! I'm sorry, I didn't realise -

VEXH (o.s.)

Why did you stop?

RAIQ (o.s.)

Kira is here.

Mortified, rooted to the spot, Kira feels the door YANKED out of her hand. She looks...

...and is confronted with the nude silvery shape of RAIQ. Kira instantly averts her eyes, desperately trying to look anywhere else than at the naked body filling the doorway.

KIRA

I - I - but - oh Prophets... can you - Raiq, you're naked!

RAIQ

And?

KIRA

Just that... we don't... I'll go, I'm sorry for interrupting.

RAIQ

You are here now, you may as well stay. Why do you cringe so, woman? Is nudity taboo in your culture?

KIRA

Not taboo, exactly, but not something we usually do in front of guests. I'll go, it's fine, it's your room, I shouldn't have just walked in...

Raiq rolls her eyes and walks back into the room. She grabs a sheet off the bed and makes herself decent.

RAIQ

Better?

Kira glances at VEXH and quickly away again. Raiq sighs...

RAIQ

Vexh, cover yourself. Apparently Bajorans are unable to gaze upon the bodies of the True's chosen.

Instead, the male Ascendant gets out of bed, pads across the room completely naked, EXITS to the *en suite* bathroom. Still uncomfortable, Kira nevertheless steps in...

KIRA

I didn't realise you two were... although I guess it makes sense...

RAIQ

That Vexh and I should couple? We are the only two remaining of our kind, are we not?

KIRA

Yes, but I didn't think you felt that way about each other...

RAIQ

If you speak of affection, there is none here. It was my time to mate when we met at the Hearth -

KIRA

- but there was no point if you were all going to be Ascending, yes, I remember you telling me.

RAIQ

Vexh never reached the Hearth, so he was likewise denied. That was three cycles ago, and our bodies have only ripened more since.

KIRA
"Ripened"? That's a hell of a way
of phrasing it.
(beat; excited)
Wait - are you trying for a baby?

RAIQ
We have no goal in this act beyond
relief of biological necessity.

Kira is not really listening - she is already distracted by
a new idea that is overtaking her imagination...

KIRA
You know what, I don't need the
details... just carry on, I'll get
out of your way.

RAIQ
Kira -

KIRA
I'll get Ransel to check you over,
she's a trained nurse - no wait,
she won't know Ascendant anatomy.
Raiq, we need to talk to Julian...
Don't worry, leave it with me!

Raiq sighs again, but Kira is already on her way back out
of the room, closing the door behind her.

KIRA
An Ascendant baby...

Excited and energised, Kira strides down the corridor...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Standard establishing shot...

RO (v.o.)
So... the Typhon Pact.

5 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

RO stands at the head of the table, gripping the back of the chair. She is quietly annoyed at the news she must deliver - yet another problem on their plates. Behind her, EVIK is working the controls of the main viewscreen.

RO
(continuing)
Commander Evik and I just came from an extensive holo-conference with Starfleet Command, in which Admiral Akaar and members of the Federation Diplomatic Corps explained the latest upheaval in galactic politics.

Sat around the table are the rest of DS9's senior staff - CENN, BASHIR, NOG, CANDLEWOOD, TENMEI and MATTHIAS.

CANDLEWOOD
I take it it's not good news.

RO
To be determined. None of this is classified, it'll be all over the news by now anyway. But we wanted to make sure you had the facts in case anyone should ask.

Evik has completed his set up, and begins his presentation with six images along the top of the screen. He will tap each in turn, at which point that image will EXPAND to the centre of the screen and become two images - the nation's LOGO and a FACE shot - before shrinking back for the next.

EVIK

These six formerly independent powers have been conducting their own negotiations over the last few months, and have decided as of now to ally themselves together and form the Typhon Pact.

TENMEI

Now, when you say "pact"...

EVIK

It's an alliance much like the Khitomer Accords, only more deeply connected - for one thing they share a common currency.

CENN

Who are they? I don't recognise all those symbols.

EVIK

(taps Romulan)

Well, we know the Romulan Star Empire, of course. They were one of the four main Alpha Quadrant superpowers until Shinzon's coup.

MATTHIAS

So they've most likely joined up for support after the schism split the Romulan Empire in half.

EVIK

(taps Breen)

The Breen Confederacy - allied with the Dominion during the war, so not a huge surprise they might do so again. Starfleet assumes they see this as an opportunity to expand after the Federation was devastated by the Borg.

BASHIR

How neighbourly of them.

EVIK

(taps Tzenkethi)

The Tzenkethi Coalition - engaged in border wars with the Federation in the past, and most likely see this as protection... against us.

NOG

What have we ever done to them?

MATTHIAS

There's some complex psychology behind that question, Lieutenant. For now, suffice to say they do not like us.

EVIK

(taps Tholian)

Neither do the Tholian Assembly. An enemy of the Federation since its inception, they have held a grudge against us for more than a hundred years, the origins of which were never entirely clear.

CANDLEWOOD

How can they expect us to make it right if they won't tell us what we did wrong?

EVIK

(taps Gorn)

Perhaps the biggest surprise is the Gorn Hegemony. Relations have been largely friendly for decades, so what inspired them to ally against us now is not clear. But Starfleet hopes they will act as a moderating force on the Pact's other, more aggressive members.

TENMEI

Help to keep them in line, you mean. Good luck with that.

EVIK

(taps Kinshaya)

And finally the Holy Order of the Kinshaya. They have no interest in us at all, or in any other nation. As far as we can tell, they joined purely to bolster their position against the Klingons, against whom they have much the same grudge as the Tholians have against us.

CENN

If that's the who, what about the why? Why create this Pact at all?

RO

Because they're fed up of the Federation pushing them around, that's why.

CENN

We've done no such thing.

RO

Maybe we didn't mean to, but we did it anyway. Look at everything that's happened over the last few years. Wars, coups, invasions - all of them involving either us or the Klingons... or both.

(points to screen)

None of these guys' business, but they ended up getting caught up in the mess just the same, simply because of our sheer mass. And they're tired of it.

EVIK

The Pact's stated aims are simply to forge their own destiny in the galaxy, separate from influence by the Khitomer Accords nations.

MATTHIAS

Does Starfleet believe them?

RO

The Kinshaya already invaded two Klingon worlds. The Tholians set up a scheme to interfere with our rebuilding and colonising efforts.

NOG

So they are an opposing force.

EVIK

Yes, some members have a history of belligerence. But others are friendly, or at least neutral. We must not think of the Pact as an anti-Federation, just as another Federation. They've seen the wisdom of cooperating with each other - there's no reason to think they won't cooperate with us as well. Any assumption of nefarious intentions on their part could end up a self-fulfilling prophecy.

MATTHIAS

Nevertheless, Commander, that's still six formerly small nations combining into one large nation. Is the Federation doing anything to counter it, politically?

RO

Bacco and Martok have already put out feelers to the Cardassians, the Ferengi, the Imperial Romulan State, and the Talarians. They're hoping they'll agree to join the Khitomer Accords on our side.

Evik adds more images to the screen - the six potential Khitomer Accords nations along the bottom, paralleled to the six Typhon Pact nations along the top.

BASHIR

I'm not sure that will be any better. In fact I think it will confirm their worst suspicions.

EVIK

How so, Doctor?

BASHIR

Well, look at them. Martok has two Starfleet officers as part of his house, owes his Chancellorship to them. Rom went from a bumbling bartender to leader of a financial empire thanks to living on this station, and he's married to a Federation citizen. Garak fought with us against his own people - now he's the second most powerful Cardassian in the galaxy.

CANDLEWOOD

And Kira will probably be Kai by the end of the week at the rate she's going.

BASHIR

Quite. Now, how do you think all of that might look to some people? It's not a huge heap of logic to imagine the Tzenkethi or the Breen looking at the Klingons or the Ferengi, and thinking they're already run from Earth. We'd be feeding right into that paranoia.

RO

What else do you suggest we do, Doctor? The Federation has been hurt, badly. We need friends if we're going to keep going.

BASHIR

I don't deny that. I'm just saying these Typhon Pact members may have good reason to distrust us - they likely see us as having already allied against them, and they're the ones who need new friends.

EVIK

Exactly why we must work hard to make sure we don't exacerbate an already delicate situation. None of us can afford a war right now, so let's not assume one into existence. Alright?

ALECO (comm)

Ops to Commander Ro.

RO

(taps combadge)

Go ahead, Lieutenant.

ALECO (comm)

Sorry to interrupt, Commander, but you've got two messages waiting.

RO

That's alright, we're about done here anyway. What's the first?

ALECO (comm)

Vedek Kira has just docked. She has the Ascendants with her, and she's asking to see Doctor Bashir.

Ro looks across to Bashir, who is instantly on alert.

BASHIR

Lieutenant, this is Bashir. Did Kira say if it was an emergency?

ALECO (comm)

I don't believe so, sir. She said she'll see you at the Infirmary.

RO

Aleco, tell Kira that Bashir will be right there. And number two?

ALECO (comm)

There's an Admiral Scott from the Corps of Engineers waiting to speak to you on subspace.

RO
Oh! Tell him I'll be right there.

ALECO (comm)
Aye, sir. Ops out.

RO
Okay - Doctor, get down to the Infirmary, see what Kira wants. The rest of you, dismissed. Keep what Evik said in mind - it's unlikely we'll see any of these guys, but if we do, don't make it any worse.

They file out, Bashir more urgently than the rest, leaving Ro and Evik to finish up.

EVIK
Go ahead, Commander. I can close everything up here.

RO
Thanks Nath, you're the best.

Ro heads out...

6 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

It's a normal day in Ops. NOG jumps off the turbolift and heads across to Ro's office, passing Candlewood, Cenn and ALECO on the way.

Ro sees him coming through the glass, and OPENS the door for him, beckoning him in...

7 INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Nog enters...

NOG
You wanted to see me, Commander?

RO
Take a seat, Lieutenant.

Nog does. Ro's news this time is potentially better, but she is still not especially thrilled about it...

RO

So... you know I had a call from the SCE...

NOG

Yes, sir. How is Admiral Scott?

RO

He's fine. But he wanted to talk to me about you. He says he has an important mission coming up, and he's gathering together the best engineers he knows - and you're one of them.

NOG

Always nice to be appreciated. What's the mission?

RO

He couldn't say over subspace - it's too sensitive. But he did say he needs you to transfer on an at least semi-permanent basis.

(deep)

Nog... it would mean you leaving Deep Space Nine.

Off Nog's reaction to that...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE

Picking up from Nog's reaction...

NOG

Leave Deep Space Nine? But...

RO

I wasn't especially happy about that part either.

NOG

The admiral wants me to transfer, but he can't tell me where to, or what I'll do when I get there?

RO

If it helps, there is a promotion to Lieutenant Commander included in the deal.

NOG

A promotion...? Well, that helps me know it's important to him for me to be there - you don't give away anything for nothing. But... do I have any choice in it?

RO

It was phrased as a request, not an order.

NOG

What do you think I should do?

RO

I don't want to lose you, Nog, but this does sound like a hell of an opportunity. Even I know it's a big deal for Admiral Scott to specifically request you by name. And I don't know anything.

NOG

So you think I should take the transfer and the promotion?

RO

I think you should take the rest of the day to think about it. But no longer than that, please - he wants your answer by tomorrow. This mission is due to start by next week. So... dismissed.

Nog gets up and heads out into Ops, dazed...

9 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Raiq lies on a bio-bed as Bashir's instruments scan her head to toe. It is a matter of extreme indifference for her, and she is only putting up with it to make Kira happy.

As Bashir reads off the results from a screen...

BASHIR

It's still tough to get clear readings because of the armour. But from first glance, everything appears to be in perfect working order. You can get up now.

Raiq does so, sitting on the bio-bed. Vexh stands against the wall observing, while Kira is eager and excited. Note that all are now fully dressed.

BASHIR

Honestly, Nerys, I'm not sure why you asked me to scan them. They both seem perfectly fine to me.

KIRA

Good! That's great. That's just what we need.

BASHIR

Need for what?

KIRA
For making babies, of course.

BASHIR
(blink of surprise)
Babies?
(to Raiq and Vexh)
Do you even want babies?

VEXH
Not especially.

RAIQ
Neither of us has any experience
in the matter. Our coupling was
out of mere physical urge, not a
desire to breed.

KIRA
But you're saying it is possible?

BASHIR
Well yes, it's possible. They both
seem healthy, and barring anything
showing up on the deeper scans, I
see no reason why they couldn't
procreate. But Nerys -

KIRA
(to Raiq)
Don't you see what this means?
It's a chance to repopulate the
Ascendant species. I wouldn't be
surprised if the Prophets left you
two behind precisely to do this.

BASHIR
Now, hold on a minute, Nerys.
Enthusiasm notwithstanding, you
can't restart an entire species
with just two individuals.

KIRA
I'm sure you can figure something
out, you are a genius after all.

BASHIR

Nature is nature, Nerys. For your average two-sex species, the rule of thumb is 500 breeding pairs to create a population and maintain it at sufficiently genetically diverse levels to survive. Outside that the potential for anomalies is just too great.

KIRA

But haven't you been working on ways to get around that? The Andorians, the Trill symbionts -

BASHIR

- are both yet to fall below the minimum viable population level. It's not too late to save them. But a species with literally two surviving individuals, even if they are perfectly healthy and reproductively compatible... I'm sorry, Nerys, it can't be done.

Kira takes a moment to absorb that. Into the silence...

VEXH

So is this nonsense finally over?

RAIQ

(sympathetic)

Kira... the healer speaks truth. Vexh and I have accepted this - I was under the impression you had as well.

(beat)

Perhaps you should speak to your Emissary, the man Sisko. He has young, does he not? He may have wisdom to offer on the subject.

KIRA

Sisko... isn't on Bajor anymore.

Off Kira's awkwardness...

10 EXT. SPACE - ROBINSON

The Galaxy-class USS *Robinson* (NCC 71842) flies at impulse across a colourful nebula background...

11 INT. ROBINSON - READY ROOM

SISKO sits behind his desk, reading through a personnel file on the screen in front of him.

ROGEIRO (o.s.)

She's been awarded a ribbon for meritorious service. Consistently high marks for performance at the conn. She's -

SISKO

(sharp)

Commander.

Sat across from him, ROGEIRO clams up at Sisko's tone.

SISKO

I can read for myself. If you'll just give me a moment...

Rogeiرو sits back with a smile that Sisko can't help but be annoyed by, even knowing it's unfair. Sisko reads...

While he waits, Rogeiرو looks around the ready room. There is notably no sign of Deep Space Nine here, no paintings or photos or keepsakes. Just the baseball on the desk.

SISKO

Alright Commander, I've approved Sivadeki's promotion to lieutenant commander. It will take effect as soon as you notify her. Dismissed.

ROGEIRO

Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

Rogeiرو gets up to EXIT back to the bridge, but hesitates at the door. Sisko, who had already moved on, looks up...

SISKO
Commander?

ROGEIRO
I was just wondering if you might like to deliver the good news yourself, sir. Sivadeki's on duty right now, I could send her in.

SISKO
No thank you, Commander. It will be sufficient for you to notify the lieutenant.

ROGEIRO
Aye, sir.

But Rogeiro still doesn't move. Sisko is getting fed up.

SISKO
Can I help you with something else, Mister Rogeiro?

ROGEIRO
May I ask a personal question?

SISKO
No, Commander, you may not.

ROGEIRO
Then may I ask you a professional question?

SISKO
(sigh)
Go ahead.

ROGEIRO
Why do you refuse to answer personal questions?

Sisko gets to his feet, hands on the desk, quietly furious.

SISKO
Is that supposed to be funny?

ROGEIRO

(shrug)

It's a little bit funny...

SISKO

Not to me, it's not.

ROGEIRO

Permission to speak freely, sir?

SISKO

Commander Rogeiro, I've had enough of this. You don't have permission to ask me personal questions, and you don't have permission to speak freely. When you have matters to discuss with me regarding the ship or the crew, by all means do so. Short of that, I know you have other duties to attend to.

ROGEIRO

I'm not sure I have any duty more important than this. And I'm going to speak freely because it matters to this ship and crew that I do. If you feel the need to write me up then go ahead, but it is my duty to tell you what I think.

Sisko seriously considers firing Rogeiro there and then, or at least decking him. But he holds his temper...

SISKO

And what is that, Commander?

ROGEIRO

I think this ship isn't running as efficiently as it should, because you have nothing to do with the crew beyond issuing them orders.

SISKO

I wasn't aware that a captain was required to befriend everybody aboard his ship.

ROGEIRO

It's not friendship I'm talking about. It's your... isolation.

The word resonates, because Sisko knows it is true.

ROGEIRO

We're here patrolling the Romulan border, and we're keeping our eyes and ears open. But you and I have both sat there through more than one shift with absolutely nothing to do. And yet whenever any member of the crew tries to engage you in conversation, you either grunt back a monosyllabic reply or don't bother responding at all. I've seen you head into this ready room rather than tell Ensign Stannis if you've ever been to *Pacifica*.

Sisko doesn't respond, because every word is the truth.

ROGEIRO

Captain, I mean no disrespect. I know what you've achieved in your Starfleet career, and I know that you were away from it for a while before you took command of the *Robinson*. But I don't think any of what I'm talking about has to do with your time away.

SISKO

No, Commander, it doesn't. But I really don't wish to discuss what it does have to do with.

ROGEIRO

For the sake of your crew, and for your own sake, I really think you need to discuss it with somebody.

A pause as Sisko looks out of the window at the nebula.

SISKO
Thank you, Commander. I will take
your recommendation under
advisement.

SHAR (comm)
Bridge to Captain Sisko.

SISKO
Sisko here, go ahead.

SHAR (comm)
Sir, sensors have detected some
traffic in the vicinity you may
want to see...

Intrigued, Rogeiro and Sisko both head out to...

12 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE

...and head straight to the centre seats. SHAR is at the
tactical horseshoe, next to the security chief UTELN.

SHAR
I have placed them on the main
viewscreen, sir, at maximum
magnification...

Sisko and Rogeiro turn to look at the SCREEN, and see three
large vessels travelling in formation. Teardrop-shaped, a
featureless silver skin, and quite menacing looking.

SISKO
Tzenkethi harriers.

Off Sisko's unhappy recognition...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

13 EXT. SPACE

Three silver teardrop-shaped TZENKETHI HARRIERS, rotating around a shared central axis like the tips of a drill-head, as they glide through space together...

14 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE

SISKO, as he glares at the viewscreen, tense...

SISKO

Have they detected us?

UTELN

No change in their heading.

SHAR

Or their power output.

SISKO

Helm, move us inside the nebula.
Quickly but calmly. Don't draw
attention to us.

SIVADEKI

Aye, sir.

The Tyrellian woman at helm, SIVADEKI, works her controls, and we feel the ship move. Sisko takes his command seat, and Rogeiro sits next to him, speaking low but calm.

ROGEIRO

We are within Federation space,
Captain. We have no reason to
hide.

SISKO

I'm not hiding, Commander. But I'm
not about to provide the Tzenkethi
with an excuse to attack us. We'll
just get out of their way for now.

15 **EXT. SPACE**

The *Robinson* slips into the nebula, golden wisps of matter slowly hiding it from view...

16 **INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE**

An ALERT on Shar's science panel...

SHAR

We're losing sensor resolution the deeper we get into the nebula.

ROGEIRO

Uteln, any reaction from the Tzenkethi?

UTELN

Negative.

ROGEIRO

ch'Thane, based on what we know of their sensor capabilities, can they see us where we are now?

SHAR

Unlikely, sir.

ROGEIRO

Alright - Sivadeki, hold position here. Plante, cut power to all systems but tactical and sensors. ch'Thane, keep your eyes open for as much data as you can get with the resources you've got.

SHAR

Understood.

All around, power levels dim as the ship goes to quiet running, hiding in the nebula.

Sisko looks to Rogeiro - a nod of quiet gratitude for accepting Sisko's decision and getting it done. Rogeiro smiles back - don't worry, I've got your back.

PLANTE, the human woman at Ops, speaks up in the quiet...

PLANTE

What are the Tzenkethi even doing here?

ROGEIRO

Presumably on their way home from meeting their new best friends, the Romulans, Commander.

SISKO

We can worry about the why later. Right now I just don't want to get into a fight with them.

ROGEIRO

There is no state of war currently declared between the Tzenkethi and the Federation, Captain. They have no reason to attack us.

SISKO

(gritted teeth)

They don't need a reason, Mister Rogeiro. Need I remind you that the border wars between us started when they interpreted a simple hello as an act of war? I should know... I was there.

As they sit there in the dark, only the lights of the nebula and the beeps of the ship's systems...

RENA (v.o.)

I wish you'd stop hiding in the dark like this.

17 INT. SISKO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

RENA opens the wooden shutters of the restaurant, letting in the bright New Orleans morning light.

RENA (o.s.)

(continuing)

It can't possibly be good for you.

The sudden shaft of bright light finds JAKE SISKO sitting at a table with books, papers and pads before him, working hard. He winces as the light catches him by surprise...

JAKE

I'm not hiding, I'm just busy.
This project is due in to Dean Grant next week. And warn me before you do that, could you?

RENA

It's daylight, Jake. It happens every day.

She opens the last shutter, and the light finally reaches JOSEPH'S MEMORIAL, a tasteful and heartfelt display taking up one entire wall of the restaurant, incorporating one central image of the man himself and several family photos.

Rena turns and catches Jake gazing at this, specifically at the same image that Kasidy keeps on her mantelpiece of the three Sisko men together - Joseph, Ben and Jake.

He realises he has been caught, and quickly looks away, back to his writing project. Rena is not fooled.

RENA

You're really worried about him, aren't you? At least it's better than being angry all the time.

JAKE

(head down)

Shouldn't I be? He abandoned his wife and child, Rena. The one thing I thought my father would never do - could never do...

RENA

He must have a reason.

(Jake looks
up, sharp)

I didn't say a good reason.

Jake sighs, leaving his writing alone for the moment and accepting that he will have to face this question.

JAKE

He's done this before, you know. After my mom died, he shut down and threw himself into designing ships. After Jadzia died, he left DS-Nine in the middle of the war and came back here, spent three months just playing that piano.

RENA

And now his father died. So this is the same, isn't it?

JAKE

No it's not... because he never abandoned his family those times. He went back to them, relied on them. This time, it's like he wants to get as far away from us as possible. I mean, the Romulan border? That's insane!

RENA

Especially with all this Typhon Pact business going on.

Rena suddenly SNEEZES. Fluttering her hands to cover her face, she SNEEZES again and again... and again.

RENA

Sorry, it must be -

JAKE

...oh my god...

Rena looks at Jake, sees the awestruck, amazed expression suddenly filling his face...

RENA

Oh your god what?

JAKE

Are you pregnant?!

RENA
What? Why would you -

JAKE
I know that's what happens - human women get nauseous, but Bajorans sneeze.

She SNEEZES a few more times. She barely has time to get herself under control before Jake BURSTS from his chair and THROWS his arms around her, YELLING in utter elation. Rena can only cling on for dear life, laughing giddily.

RENA
Jake! I'm not pregnant! At least, I don't think I am...

JAKE
We should go see Doctor Sanderson, make sure you're okay.

RENA
What about the restaurant?

JAKE
It's fine, I'll leave a message for Gabrielle, she knows what needs to be done. Come on!

He grabs her by the hand and starts them both running to the door, grabbing some light coats on the way, Rena still mostly just trying to catch up...

NOG (v.o.)
The thing is, I've been here so long.

18 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Nog, Tenmei and Candlewood share lunch in Quark's.

NOG
(continuing)
It feels like I've never been anywhere else.

QUARK himself arrives, handing out drinks from a tray - each glass going down with an annoyed thump.

QUARK

I told you - we're busy. I do have other customers.

NOG

I wasn't talking about you, Uncle. I'm talking about this transfer.

CANDLEWOOD

Besides, aren't Ferengi all about nepotism? Surely the bartender's own nephew should get his drink served before anyone else.

QUARK

The bartender's own nephew can get his own damn drink next time.

Quark harrumphs and takes a spare seat at the table, about to impart wisdom to these young whippersnappers.

QUARK

Listen, Nog. It all comes down to the Ninth Rule of Acquisition.

NOG

(dubious)

"Opportunity plus instinct equals profit?"

QUARK

Exactly. Plus there's always the Sixty-Second Rule...

NOG

(where is this going?)

"The riskier the road, the greater the profit..."

QUARK

And the Seventy-Fifth Rule...

NOG

"Home is where the heart is, but
the stars are made of latinum."
Alright, Uncle Quark, I get it.

QUARK

Good, because I've got customers
to serve. Let me know what you
decide.

Quark gets up again, and heads back to the bar.

TENMEI

He's right, you know. If there are
so many Rules telling you to go
for it, doesn't that seem like
this is where your own personal
Material Continuum is flowing?

NOG

Are you saying you want me to go?

TENMEI

I'm saying we're your friends and
we want to see you succeed in your
career, even if it means leaving.

NOG

(sits back,
looks around)

But can I abandon this place? This
station feels like my own baby.

CANDLEWOOD

A baby that weighs several billion
tons and was around fifty years
before you were even born.

TENMEI

Again, he's right. You've got to
do what's best for you, Nog. The
rest of us will struggle through
without you, somehow.

Nog ponders that, picking up his lunch again...

19 INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE

Nog sits in front of Ro again...

NOG

(excited)

I've decided I'll do it. I'll take
the promotion...

(less excited)

...and the transfer.

Off Ro's reaction, and Nog's determination...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

20 EXT. SPACE

The *Robinson*, still hiding in the nebula...

21 INT. ROBINSON - BRIDGE

The lights still lowered as everyone holds their breath, hoping the Tzenkethi won't spot them...

SHAR

Captain, readings suggest the Tzenkethi vessels are no longer within sensor range.

SISKO

Tactical, do you agree?

UTELN

It's hard to be a hundred percent sure, given our reduced sensor resolution from inside the nebula.

SISKO

But on the information at hand?

UTELN

Then yes, I agree with Lieutenant ch'Thane, sir.

Rogeiرو looks to Sisko, who nods back, granting permission. Rogeiرو stands and begins throwing out orders.

ROGEIRO

Very well. Helm, take us out of the nebula. Ops, bring all systems back to standard power. Science, tactical - keep those sensors open, just in case.

Lights come back on and engine noise rises as the crew do as ordered. Sisko also stands, tugging on his uniform.

ROGEIRO

Your strategy was successful, sir.
We have data about Tzenkethi fleet
movements to pass onto Starfleet,
the Tzenkethi either have no idea
we were here or don't care, and
any conflict was avoided.

SISKO

(blank)

I'm glad you approve, Commander.
Return us to our previous heading
- I'll be in my ready room.

Sisko strides back to the ready room and disappears through
the door without another word, leaving Rogeiro disappointed
that their talk has apparently had no effect.

ROGEIRO

Aye, sir.
(rallies)
Lieutenant Sivadeki, re-establish
our standard patrol route along
the Romulan border, and then join
me in the conference room. I have
good news.

SIVADEKI

Understood, sir.

An alert on the tactical panel - Uteln checks it, brings it
to Shar's attention. As Rogeiro climbs the ramp towards the
conference room, Shar speaks up...

SHAR

Commander Rogeiro - I wonder if I
might also be excused a moment?
Apparently there is a personal
communication waiting for me from
Deep Space Nine.

ROGEIRO

Seems like we have the time.
Permission granted, Lieutenant.
Uteln, you have the bridge.

SHAR
Thank you, sir.

Rogeiuro moves on to the conference room. Shar heads to the turbolift...

22 **INT. DS9 - NOG'S QUARTERS**

Nog sits at the computer, talking to Shar on the screen. Around the room, his belongings are half-packed away.

SHAR (screen)
You're... leaving Deep Space Nine?

NOG
I know, kind of a shock, right?
But it was too good an opportunity
to pass up. I mean, I'm going to
be working with one of the all-
time legends of engineering.

SHAR (screen)
I'm very pleased for you, Nog.
I'm only surprised that you would
leave the place that has been your
home for so long.

NOG
That's exactly what Prynn said.
And I said it would be like
abandoning my baby.

At the darkness that falls over Shar's face, Nog realises his mistake...

NOG
Oh, Shar... I'm so stupid, please
forgive me, I didn't mean to...

SHAR (screen)
Nog. Do not apologise. My child is
gone, there is no use denying it.

NOG
No, I know you don't like to talk
about personal things...

SHAR (screen)

I think perhaps you are the only one I can talk about such things with, Nog. I have appreciated your messages since... the invasion. And please tell Pryn and Laren I have appreciated theirs as well.

NOG

I will. But are you really okay, Shar?

SHAR (screen)

Really? No, Nog, I am not okay. And I'm not sure I will ever be. I joined this ship because it was the easiest way to get as far away as possible. But now I'm here, I have seen others offer the same excuse... and that's all it is. The pain travels with me.

NOG

Maybe you should go home, then.

SHAR (screen)

I have no home, Nog. Not anymore.

NOG

I don't believe that. As long as I've known you, Shar, you've been dedicated to helping your people, even at the cost of yourself. I refuse to believe even the Borg invasion has changed that.

SHAR (screen)

What the Borg invasion did was kill millions more Andorians, driving us further to the edge than ever before. One man cannot alter that truth.

NOG

Depends who that man is.

SHAR (screen)
(sad smile)
I appreciate your confidence in me, Nog. But I am honestly not sure if there is any hope to save my species. Not anymore.

Off Nog's sadness at that...

23 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Time passing...

24 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

RAIQ stands alone at the window on the upper floor, the one people always stop at to gaze out at the wormhole. Vedek Kira approaches, stands beside her...

KIRA
Not a lot of traffic through the wormhole anymore these days. Can't help thinking that's a shame.

RAIQ
Once again you assume. My thoughts were not of the Fortress, but of my brothers and sisters within it.

KIRA
I know how you feel. I used to come here and think about the ones I've lost as well. I wish there weren't so damn many of them.
(brightens)
But we'd be better off dwelling on the future, not the past. And what better symbol of the future than a potential baby on the way?

Raiq turns to Kira, quietly confronting her.

RAIQ
Why are you so determined to force Vexh and I to bear young?

KIRA

Force you? I'm not trying to force you to do anything.

RAIQ

You bring us here from cloister, compel us to see the healer, when Vexh and I had merely coupled as all the True's creatures must...

KIRA

I was just checking it was even feasible -

RAIQ

Kira, I have expressed no interest in having young, neither has Vexh. Yet from the moment you found us enmeshed, you spoke of nothing else. As if it is already agreed upon, an inevitability. I assure you, it is not.

Kira blinks, her actions thrown in her face. She glances around, aware of the public passing by on the Promenade, potentially overhearing a sensitive conversation.

Raiq sees this and throws out a hand, casting a FORCE-FIELD around them as she did in 11x03 "Self Destruct Initiated". Inside the force-field bubble, the usual background WALLA of the station and its denizens is dulled to the faintest whisper. They cannot hear out, and no-one can hear in.

RAIQ

I say this with no enmity, Kira. I wish none between us, as I believe we have grown as close as perhaps any Ascendant ever could with one not of our blood.

Kira smiles, mollified slightly. But Raiq is not done...

RAIQ

But I say again - I wish no young. Vexh wishes no young. Our coupling was not with that goal in mind.

KIRA

But... how else are you going to repopulate the species? Having babies is pretty much the only way I know to do that.

RAIQ

I have no wish to repopulate the species.

Kira is absolutely stunned by that, struggles to recover.

KIRA

I don't believe you.

RAIQ

I speak only truth, woman. I have prayed on it long, and I do not believe the True wish us to rebuild the Ascendants.

KIRA

What?! No, I absolutely refuse to believe the Prophets would want your entire species to just die out -

RAIQ

Have they not already proven so?

Raiq gestures out towards the wormhole to make her point.

KIRA

No! They saved you and Vexh -

RAIQ

And as the healer has told you, two alone cannot save a species. If you still feel guilt over your own role in those events, I can only assure you again that it was the great wish of all Ascendants to enter the Fortress and burn in the Eyes of the True. You followed their path, feel no guilt on it.

KIRA

So you're just going to let your race end with you? Let yourselves die childless?

RAIQ

Our race is already ended, Kira. The healer whose word you trust above all others has already told you so. And if that is not enough, then think on this... even if Vexh and I did bear young, that child would not be Ascendant.

KIRA

I don't understand...

RAIQ

(re wormhole again)

It would not be as my brothers and sisters were... as I am. There is no vessel to cradle it as it grows, to teach it our doctrine. There will be no armour upon its skin, no flames or shield to be cast. Even the name is no longer fitting, as the Ascension is long past. What would we call it?

KIRA

It's your baby. You'd love it whatever it was.

RAIQ

(sad smile)

Even that is not certain. As I have told you, we Ascendants do not mature in the company of our sires. We grow only in harmony with the vessel. Thus we have no knowledge of how to love a child.

Kira stares at Raiq, amazed but unable to deny the logic of what Raiq is saying. Raiq can see she is getting through.

RAIQ

Now, with all that said, and all well within your comprehension I believe, I return to my original question - why force us to have young we do not want?

KIRA

Because... life. There's been too much death, Raiq. I just wanted there to be life, for once.

RAIQ

It is not my people you wish to rebuild, but your own.

KIRA

That's unfair... but maybe there's some truth in it too.

RAIQ

You suffered your own Ascension of sorts, and not willingly. Feel no guilt on it, Kira.

(pointedly,
copying Kira)

I know how you feel.

Kira smiles, and they turn back to stare out of the window together, in the direction of the wormhole.

PULL BACK until we pass THROUGH Raiq's force-field, to where the station's populace pass them by, having no idea of what they were just talking about...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

25 EST. SISKO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Daytime in New Orleans...

26 INT. SISKO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Jake and Rena enter to find the restaurant open for lunch, with a middling crowd. Jake is disappointed but trying his best to hide it, while Rena sees right through him.

They move towards the kitchen, waving hello to customers and the staff who kept things running in their absence...

RENA

I'm sorry, Jake. You were really excited, weren't you? But you've known about my allergies since we first met.

JAKE

(kisses her)

You've got nothing to be sorry for. I guess I just got a little carried away.

RENA

Something else for you to fixate on, you mean.

Once again, he knows she sees right through him. They pass the memorial and out onto the patio, taking a table.

RENA

And we can have as many babies as you want in the future. I'm just not pregnant now, that's all.

JAKE

Do you want to start a family? I don't mean now, necessarily, just... sometime?

RENA

Sometime, sure. But are we ready
for that right now?

Jake pauses, looks over to the memorial of his grandfather.

JAKE

I am pretty busy with my course
work from Pennington, I guess.

RENA

(gestures around)

And I, through no fault of my own,
have ended up running a restaurant
on a whole different planet. I'd
love to have a baby with you,
Jake, but personally, right now,
I think our renewal scrolls are
full. How would you say that?

Jake cannot deny what she is saying. He picks up a plate...

JAKE

We have enough on our plates.

RENA

Exactly. Look, we're still young.
Your dad had Rebecca twenty years
after he had you, didn't he? We
have plenty of time ahead of us.

JAKE

You're right.

A SERVER appears, hands a PADD to Jake. He reads, reacting
with muted surprise...

RENA

What is it?

JAKE

A message from Nog. He's actually
leaving Deep Space Nine, taking a
transfer to work with some high-
powered Starfleet admiral.

RENA

Wow. Okay, well good for him.

Jake sets the padd down, sighs pensively, looks around.

JAKE

Yeah... I guess we've all got our
new lives now.

A bittersweet smile...

27 INT. ROBINSON - READY ROOM

Sisko sits alone behind his desk, watching the stars out of
the window, black and cold.

He turns back to his desk, picks up the baseball, considers
it a moment...

...then puts it back down and boots up his desk computer,
getting down to work.

28 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A new pattern of ships are now arranged around the station.

29 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Nog stands at the centre of all the senior staff - Ro,
Cenn, Evik, Bashir, Tenmei, Candlewood and Matthias.

Also present are Nog's department heads - CHAO, PERMENTER,
K'UHLLO and a new Andorian *thaan* ensign, TH'SHANT (who
replaced Leishman when she transferred to the *Aventine*).

Kira is also there in her Vedek's robes, with Raiq and Vexh
standing back and not really engaging in this. Plus ALECO,
RICHTER, ETANA, MORN, HETIK, TREIR, PIF and as many regular
background faces as we can get hold of.

Quark raises his glass...

QUARK

Here's to my nephew, the soon-to-
be Lieutenant Commander Nog, and
the first and best Ferengi in

Starfleet, as he sets sail upon
the Great Material Continuum to
find his fortune among the stars.

The crowd CHEERS. Quark continues...

QUARK

As a Ferengi businessman, I'm
proud to see my nephew succeed in
the galaxy, even if it has to be
in the profit-forsaken moneyless
wasteland of Starfleet.

Good-natured mutters from the Starfleet officers...

QUARK

But as an uncle, I'm going to miss
the only family member I had left
on this station.

Standing next to him, Ro slips her arm round Quark's waist
and half-hugs him in comfort. She raises her own glass...

RO

To Nog... we'll all miss you.

TENMEI

Hear, hear.

CANDLEWOOD

And never has that phrase been
more appropriate.

Tenmei smacks Candlewood upside the head, and the crowd
chuckles. Then they all raise their glasses...

ALL

To Nog!

NOG

Thanks, everyone. I'll miss you
all too. It's just that I still
dream of being the first Ferengi
captain in Starfleet some day, so
I need to take this opportunity
while it's open to me.

(turns to Quark)
And as far as family goes, the
Sixth Rule of Acquisition clearly
states, "Never allow family to
stand in the way of opportunity".

Quark nods, approving his nephew's embrace of Ferengi ways
even if it means giving up his only remaining family.

NOG
(continuing)
But that doesn't mean that you
guys won't always be my family.
All of you. I mean that.

Another toast, and then the gathering breaks up slightly.
Nog good-naturedly suffers through an infinity of hugs.

KIRA
Good luck, Nog. Did you manage to
get in touch with Jake?

NOG
I left a message, and one for
Kasidy, and I spoke to Shar, and
to my dad and Leeta.

KIRA
Good. Keep in touch with me too,
okay? I don't want to lose you.

NOG
Count on it.

As Kira steps away and Nog turns to his junior engineers,
Bashir catches Kira's attention...

BASHIR
Nerys, do you have a second?

KIRA
Of course. What's up?

BASHIR
Could you grab Raiq and Vexh, and
join me in the Infirmary?

Kira is slightly alarmed, but nods her agreement. Bashir extracts himself from the group and heads out of the bar towards the Infirmary. Kira collects the two Ascendants MOS, and they all move to follow Bashir.

Still at Quark's side, Ro notices their departure...

30 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Kira leads Raiq and Vexh across the Promenade towards the Infirmary door, which Bashir has left open for them...

31 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY (CONTINUOUS)

...and into the Infirmary. AYLAM is on duty, waves hello to Kira *et al* as they enter. But Bashir is waiting for them in his office area...

KIRA
What's going on, Julian?

BASHIR
You know how I said it was tough to get clear readings through the armour?

KIRA
Yeah...

BASHIR
I left the computer analysing the readings all day, and I have a clearer picture now.

VEXH
Come to the point, healer. What did you find? Are we unwell?

BASHIR
Far from it, you're both healthy as a horse. But... I discovered that Raiq is already pregnant. So... congratulations, I guess!

Shocked silence as Kira turns to Raiq. Both have the recent conversation in mind. Then Kira turns back to Bashir, who is a little surprised at the lack of celebration...

KIRA
Are you absolutely sure?

BASHIR
No question.

KIRA
For how long?

BASHIR
There I come up against my usual lack of information on Ascendant anatomy, I'm afraid. I have no baseline from which to judge how far along you are, Raiq, or how long a full term is for a normal healthy Ascendant. Do you know?

Still processing, Raiq takes a moment to find her voice...

RAIQ
Every hundred cycles, we gather at the Hearth to make arrangements for a new generation of knights...

BASHIR
Yes, but how long does that take, between conception and birth?

RAIQ
I... do not know. I have never done this before.

VEXH
Raiq... we discussed this.

KIRA
Her body, her decision, Vexh. Raiq, what do you want to do?

RAIQ
I... am with child...

Raiq looks around at these people she trusts, pondering the implications, trying to decide what the proper course is here. Finally, she turns to Kira and pulls herself up straight, resolute.

RAIQ

I am with child.

Kira smiles in support, although tinged with the knowledge that Raiq never wanted this, and offers a hand in comfort.

Off Raiq's ambivalence about the decision she just made...

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW