

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x06 - "Miracles."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novella

"The Lotus Flower"
by Una McCormack

appearing in

Star Trek: Worlds of Deep Space Nine
Book 1 - Cardassia / Andor

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. CARDASSIA CITY - PUBLIC SQUARE - AFTERNOON

Re-establishing the government buildings in the capital city, with the crowds of needy people huddling against the drizzling grey rain to receive their meagre rations under the watchful eyes of Starfleet and Cardassian security...

2 INT. CARDASSIA CITY - GHEMOR'S OFFICE

The blank news screen, and its blinking red power indicator mocking them with the lack of any actual news feed. O'BRIEN paces back and forth in front of it...

O'BRIEN

What in the bloody blue blazes is
going on there?

Castellan GHEMOR turns to O'Brien, grim, hand lowering from where he's been listening to a comm device...

GHEMOR

Miles... It's not good news. I'm
sorry. From what we're able to
make out, it seems there's a siege
situation in the lecture hall.
Someone in there has a bomb, and
is threatening to detonate it...

Miles puts his hands to his head in anger and guilt. His family are there. He should have known this would happen. Once again, the HAND falls on his shoulder, he FLINCHES --

-- but it's just GARAK, trying to offer some silent solace. O'Brien tries to pull himself together...

O'BRIEN

What do they want?

GHEMOR

Well, it appears they have a whole
series of demands. But I don't
know yet in detail what they are.

GHEMOR (cont)

There's a whole bevy of reporters inside the hall, but all of their transmissions have been cut and it isn't really clear why...

JARTEK

Well, that's a bit of good news.

Garak shifts forward, instantly on guard around JARTEK, Ghemor's slimy assistant who stands to the back. Garak's tone of voice is quiet, pleasant and totally deadly...

GARAK

That's an odd remark. Perhaps you might like to elaborate on it?

Jartek steps forward, irritated at Garak's questioning...

JARTEK

What I mean, Garak, is that while the situation isn't under our control, at least that fact isn't being broadcast to the whole planet. We've got time to find out what's going on, get things under control, decide on a proportional response, and get the message out that Alon deals effectively and promptly with threats like this.

GARAK

(cold smile)

Is that right?

GHEMOR

Garak --

JARTEK

There are political implications to all of this, Garak, whether you like it or not. It could be a disaster for this government. And someone has to be thinking ahead to the political capital we can make out of it --

O'Brien SNAPS. In a second he has Jartek PINNED against the viewscreen, one hand gripping his throat, the other pulled back ready to pulverise him to a pulp...

Ghemor stands, speaks quickly and strongly - now we get a sense of why he is the man in charge of an entire planet.

GHEMOR

Mister O'Brien. I feel I ought to remind you that Mev Jartek is the chief political advisor to the Cardassian Castellan. And since you're the Federation's main representative here... I don't think you want to do that.

Garak hasn't moved, hasn't reacted at all. He murmurs...

GARAK

Let him go, Chief. He's not worth it. It's not a... proportional response.

GHEMOR

You're not helping, Garak.

O'Brien continues to hold Jartek, fighting the urge to hit him. All the tension, all the stress of being here on this planet is driving him. At this moment, Jartek represents everything he has ever hated about Cardassia...

O'BRIEN

We should never have come here.
Should have never brought our children into this pit of vipers.
They turn on you and they bite.

GHEMOR

Mister O'Brien...

O'Brien finally gives in, lets go of Jartek - who pulls up, rubs at his throat. O'Brien returns to pacing...

O'BRIEN

Bloody hell!

GHEMOR

Well, that's one crisis resolved at least. Mev, I'll bear in mind everything you've brought to my attention. But why don't you... why don't you go and have a chat with security, find out how soon they can find someone for me to talk with at Andak?

Still rubbing his neck, Jartek nods and leaves quietly...

O'BRIEN

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have lost my temper. Don't know what came over me.

GHEMOR

I do. Mev's sharp and he gets the job done, but he can... lack tact.

Garak snorts - Ghemor turns to him, annoyed...

GHEMOR (cont)

He also doesn't know when to shut up.

GARAK

Can I at least say this? You need to get someone down there to Andak as soon as possible. Someone you trust.

GHEMOR

Offering your services, Garak?

GARAK

Well, I'm flattered that you hold me in such high esteem. But I was going to suggest Macet. Much as it pains me to say, Jartek does have a point. You need to deal with this promptly and effectively. I think Macet's the man to do it. He's experienced, and he's good in a crisis. He's also the military man least likely to score political points off you after it's over.

Ghemor thinks for a moment, then nods his agreement and turns to touch his comm device again...

GHEMOR

Get a hold of Gul Macet for me,
will you?

Meanwhile, Garak moves to O'Brien to comfort him...

GARAK

Might I make a suggestion, Chief?
Go back to Andak with Macet. I
hardly think the committee will be
reconvening today.

O'BRIEN

Macet won't want me breathing down
his neck. And I can't do anything
to help. I've gotta sit and wait.

GARAK

I beg to differ. The authorities
at Andak are all inside that hall.
You're the only one outside with
the requisite experience.

O'BRIEN

I'm just an engineer...

GARAK

(indulgent smile)

You, Miles O'Brien, are just an
engineer in exactly the same way
that I am just a tailor.

As O'Brien considers Garak's words...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

KEIKO sits hugging herself, shivering, trying not to move.

She looks down at MOLLY in the front row, scared and quiet. Keiko attempts a reassuring smile; Molly doesn't return it.

The other children are all in a similar state, parents and guardians trying to keep them calm. It's eerily quiet in here, punctured only by scuffs of seats and nervous coughs.

At last, Keiko looks where the rest of the room is looking - at NYRA, a 14-year-old Cardassian girl, TELA's daughter.

The girl rocks nervously back and forth, device strapped to her chest, with at least one obvious button to detonate it. She mutters to herself occasionally, just as scared as anyone else, but determined to go through with it.

Tela sits in a seat on the stage, face down, staring at the floor, fingers working ever more anxiously at her bracelet. YEVIR sits beside her, hand gently on her arm in comfort. Keiko and FERIC sit together on the other side of Nyra.

A louder COUGH sounds in the silence, quickly stifled. Nyra JERKS in response, hand twitching towards the detonator.

A moment, and she relaxes back, begins her speech - learned by rote, repeated many times already with shaking voice...

NYRA

Cardassia is being polluted by
alien influence and alien ideas.
So this is our message for Alon
Ghemor. He claims to be our
leader. He pretends to be our
leader. But he is really diluting
us further and further, giving
away all that we have left, piece
by broken piece... It is time for
this to be stopped. It is time
for us to become pure again...

As Nyra takes a halting breath, Feric leans in closely to Keiko and whispers, keeping his eyes on Nyra...

FERIC

What do you think's going on
outside?

KEIKO

They'll have people here as soon
as they can. I'm sure they'll try
to start talking to Nyra soon...

Nyra glances quickly in their direction, making them hold their breath in silence. Once Nyra has turned away...

KEIKO

Let her keep making her speech. As
long as she's talking, she's not
blowing us up. We just have to not
startle her.

(reassuring)

They'll be here soon, Feric.

NYRA

This is what Ghemor's false and
treacherous government must do.
First, that government must be
disbanded. It is the idea of
aliens - of Bajorans and humans.
It does not speak for any true
Cardassian. Second...

(turns to Feric,
he flinches)

The Oralian Way claims to show the
way back to Cardassia's past. But
we are not taken by their lies. We
want these people stopped, their
practises forbidden. Finally...

(points at Yevir,
then Keiko)

...all aliens must leave Cardassia
immediately. Cardassia must find
its own, true way.

There is more to come...

4 EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - AFTERNOON

The square between the various settlement buildings. It is sparse now, quiet and tense....

...then a Cardassian TRANSPORTER signature delivers O'Brien and Gul MACET (last seen 8x26 "Unity, pt 3") into the square, along with a phalanx of Cardassian soldiers.

A Starfleet ensign runs up to them - EMMETT is young and keen, but eager to hand over the responsibility...

EMMETT

Chief O'Brien, you're here...

O'BRIEN

Emmett, good lad. This is Gul Macet...

He gestures to the Cardassian at his side - Emmett's eyes widen in shock, until he gets himself under control...

EMMETT

Umm... Gul... Macet.

Emmett exchanges a subtle look with O'Brien - *that's not... is it?* Macet stays strong, he's had much worse reactions.

MACET

Ensign. Can you take me to your operations centre?

EMMETT

Well... we're in the Director's office if that's what you mean, seemed like the sensible choice...

Emmett beckons O'Brien and Macet to follow him. Macet gives quick orders to one of his officers, then follows...

5 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

O'Brien, Emmett and Macet enter together - a Cardassian GLINN snaps to attention at the sight of Macet. The Gul nods acknowledgement, and the Glinn relaxes...

EMMETT

We were watching the vedek's speech on the monitors, and then she stood up and started up the stairs. We thought it was odd, but it was her mother up on stage, so it might have been --

O'BRIEN

(shocked)

Her mother?!

EMMETT

(realising)

Oh no, Chief - not Molly. It's Tela Maleren's daughter, you know, Nyra. She's the one with the bomb.

O'BRIEN

What?!

MACET

Do you want to explain to me the significance of that?

O'BRIEN

Nyra's just a kid, Macet. She's, what, fourteen?

EMMETT

Something like that.

MACET

That could certainly complicate things. Go on, Ensign.

EMMETT

So she got up on stage, started issuing all these demands, said there was a bomb. I wasn't sure what to do... but I knew there was a ten second delay on the transmissions, and I thought if this gets out, it could mean panic, you know, wide-scale... so I pulled all the transmissions.

O'BRIEN
Oh that was you?

Emmett nods, bashfully proud...

MACET
It was a good move, Ensign. Well done. Are you still getting the signal yourself?

EMMETT
Yes, there's one journalist, the Bajoran woman, Teris Juze, she's getting good shots.

MACET
I see. Well, first things first. Can we get that signal back to Ghemor? Without the rest of Cardassia seeing it?

Emmett flaps - no idea. Macet turns to O'Brien...

O'BRIEN
I'm on it.

O'Brien immediately works the controls of the screen on Keiko's desk, pulling and switching wires. Meanwhile Macet beckons the Glinn back to the door...

MACET
I'll advise my soldiers of the situation. Glinn, join me.

With the Cardassians gone, Emmett turns to O'Brien...

EMMETT
The youngest children aren't in there, Chief. They were in the crèche, and I had them all moved as far from the hall as I could.

O'BRIEN
Thanks, Emmett. At least that means Kirayoshi's safe.

EMMETT

Chief... are we sure about this?

O'BRIEN

About what?

EMMETT

About putting the Cardassians in charge of security. They're not exactly known for their subtlety, are they? And this Macet - he's the spitting image of Dukat.

O'Brien pauses his work, swallows down the bile...

O'BRIEN

I know how you feel. Bloody hell do I know. But I think Macet's a good guy. For a Cardassian anyway.

EMMETT

But Chief --

Macet re-enters - and Emmett immediately clams up. It's pretty obvious they were just talking about him, but Macet doesn't comment, just stays professional...

MACET

Chief, Ensign. I've placed soldiers at every entrance to the lecture hall, and others around the settlement, in case there's more to the plan.

O'BRIEN

Good idea. Emmett - why don't you go and join them, do whatever you can to help.

Subtext - a Starfleet influence might help to keep things calm. Emmett nods awkwardly to both older men, and exits...

O'BRIEN

Look, I'm sorry about him. He's still young.

MACET

Chief, please believe me, I've had significantly worse reactions to my... "family resemblance".

O'BRIEN

Still, I'll give him a talking to. And as for me... we've actually met before. A long time ago.

MACET

Oh, I know. Transport manager on the USS *Enterprise*, wasn't it?

O'BRIEN

(tense smile)

There's that Cardassian memory we've all heard about. Look, I know you're not Dukat. And Garak seems to trust you. So I guess if anyone has to be in charge here, I'm glad it's you. But I would like to remind you that my family is in there --

MACET

-- As are about a hundred other people, Chief, none of whom do I want to see killed. As for being in charge... I've seen the respect you command. Officers deferring to you despite your non-commissioned rank. I would... appreciate... any advice you're willing to give me.

A moment - O'Brien can see that Macet is really trying...

O'BRIEN

Well alright then. Anyway, I think I've got this working...

(re screens)

This is a live feed from inside the hall, no ten-second delay anymore. And it's going straight to Ghemor's office. And this one is so you can talk to Ghemor yourself.

The first SCREEN now shows the feed from Teris and Lamerat again, as we saw from Ghemor's office, but muted, with Nyra standing on the stage and repeating her speech MOS...

MACET

Excellent, thank you Chief. Now, speaking of transporters, can we beam in there? Or beam her out?

O'BRIEN

(shrug)

There's a basic cargo transporter for bringing in equipment. But I wouldn't be surprised if the bomb is set to go off if anyone tries.

MACET

Is that possible?

O'BRIEN

Easy enough to set up a sensor on the same frequencies. She wouldn't even have to trigger it herself - it would all be automatic.

MACET

You speak as if from experience.

(O'Brien tenses)

She could be bluffing, of course.

O'BRIEN

You wanna bet on it?

MACET

No. Alright... that leaves us with just two other options. Either we get her to stand down by means of persuasion... or we get her to stand down by means of force.

O'BRIEN

What, storm the building?

MACET

Not exactly a subtle response, but it would resolve the situation.

O'BRIEN
Out of the two, I prefer option A.

MACET
As do I, Chief.
(reacts to screen)
Although... we may have just had
that choice taken away from us...

Alarmed, O'Brien looks at the screen...

6 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

...it's NAITHE, the chatty Bolian sociologist. He has stood up, and is slowly walking towards the stage.

Keiko silently, frantically tries to dissuade him, urge him to sit back down, but he keeps coming.

Nyra panics, hand inching towards the detonator...

7 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet quickly works the controls, reactivates the sound...

NAITHE (screen)
Now, my dear little lady. I think
that you should listen to me...

O'BRIEN
Bloody idiot's gonna get everyone
killed!

As Teris and Lamerat's camera feed refocuses, ZOOMS in...

...on Nyra's hand almost touching the detonator control...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

NYRA on the stage - hand trembling, on the verge of panic at the unexpected development of NAITHE confronting her...

TERIS and LAMERAT focusing in on Nyra's hand...

MACET (comm)

Nyra?

She JUMPS again - where has this sudden voice come from?
Her hand almost hits the control...

MACET (comm)

Wait, Nyra.

(she does)

Thank you, Nyra. Thank you for
waiting.

KEIKO and FERIC nervously glance to each other - this is
what they were hoping for, but will it work?

TELA is still hanging her head, YEVIR comforting her.

A random audience member grabs Naithe, forces him to sit.

MACET (comm)

I'm outside the hall, Nyra, in the
director's office. Do you know
where that is? Can you picture me
there?

(Nyra nods)

Good. Can I tell you my name,
please, Nyra?

NYRA

O-kay...

MACET (comm)

Thank you, Nyra. I'm Akellen
Macet. I'd like to talk to you, if
that's alright with you.

NYRA

Why?

MACET (comm)

I've only just arrived at Andak,
Nyra. I haven't heard what it is
you want. Will you tell me?

Nyra pauses, still scared...

NYRA

Alright...

(deep breath)

I am here today... to speak out
for the future of Cardassia.
Because that future is in danger,
and because no-one will act to
preserve it... we must act.

As she launches into her speech all over again...

9 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet releases a control, so that they can still hear Nyra
speak in background, but she can't hear them. O'Brien has
been gazing worried at Keiko on the screen...

MACET

Well, at least now she's talking
to us. We just have to hope there
are no more heroes in there...

As they look on...

10 INT. CARDASSIA CITY - GHEMOR'S OFFICE

Ghemor sits behind his desk, glaring at the screen, showing
Teris and Lamerat's news feed. Nyra's speech continues in
background. Jartek silently refills Ghemor's tea cup before
melting back into the corner...

GHEMOR

So... stalemate.

GARAK

Stalemate? Perhaps.

Garak leans against the back wall, observing everything. How tired Ghemor looks, how nervous Jartek is. Something's going on he knows nothing about, and it frustrates him...

GHEMOR

Garak, whoever is currently directing events on Cardassia, it is clearly not the democratically elected government.

GARAK

No. And whoever they are, they're prepared to use a teenage girl to blow a Bajoran ambassador all the way back to his Prophets.

GHEMOR

Either that, or I give the order to send in the troops and cut her to ribbons with disruptor fire.

Garak suddenly steps forward - and Jartek flinches.

GARAK

Play the transmission back. Just a few moments...

Jartek objects to being ordered around - but Garak gives him The Look, and Jartek quite wisely reconsiders. Clears his throat, steps to the screen, works the controls...

GARAK

There. Play it from there.

The signal begins normal playback again...

NYRA (screen)

...all aliens must leave Cardassia immediately. Cardassia must find its own, true way.

Garak sighs, relaxing. Everything is back under control...

GARAK

Cardassia must find its true way.

GHEMOR

I heard her. But neither of you
are making much sense...

GARAK

The True Way. You've never heard
of them?

(Ghemor shakes head)

A-ha! The True Way was a curious
little organisation with which I
had some dealings in the past.

JARTEK

(sneer)

You mean you spied on them.

Garak sighs, rolls his eyes. Why must Jartek be so crass?

GARAK

Yes, Jartek, I spied on them. It
was a radical group opposed to any
semblance of peace with Bajor, and
very firm in its belief that all
the woes of Cardassia could be
blamed directly on the Federation.

(re Nyra)

This is just their kind of thing.
As I say, only a small outfit, but
quite effective, for fanatics.
There's a legate - former legate,
I should say - called Korven, who
was key to the Way's operations
when I had them under observation.
And I think it's high time that I
paid him a little visit.

GHEMOR

How do you know he's still alive?
Did you look him up or something?

GARAK

I looked up a lot of people when
my exile ended. You never know
who's going to be able to provide
assistance.

JARTEK

Then why didn't you arrest him? If this Korven was so important to the True Way - a terrorist group, according to you - why leave him free to commit more crimes?

Garak smiles coldly at Jartek, quietly condescending...

GARAK

Because sometimes, Jartek, it is helpful to keep people in places where they are less likely to surprise you. Or, as my father used to say... keep your friends close, and your enemies closer.

As Jartek gulps in barely disguised fear...

11 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet and O'Brien are still watching their own screen. Nyra is currently quiet, just rocking back and forth...

O'BRIEN

To be honest, I'm surprised she's not gone ahead and done it yet. I thought suicide bombers just went in and did the job.

MACET

That's true. Which tells me she's not really a suicide bomber.

O'BRIEN

Now you're the one who sounds like you're talking from experience.

MACET

Oh, don't misunderstand me. In the eyes of her controllers, she's entirely expendable. I'm sure I can get her to understand that... but what would be the outcome? Am I better off pointing out that she has other loyalties too?

O'BRIEN
What other loyalties?

MACET
Well, she knows all the people in
that room. Friends, relatives...
your daughter. Do you think she
really wants to see them dead?

O'Brien considers...

12 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

As everyone sits quiet and scared...

MACET (comm)
Nyra? Can you still hear me?

Nyra twists away, trying to ignore Macet's voice...

MACET (comm)
Nyra? Can you tell me if you can
still hear me?

NYRA
Yes!

MACET (comm)
I'd like you to keep on talking to
me, Nyra. Please.

NYRA
I don't want to keep on talking!
We've been taking for ages! When
are you going to do what I want?

Nyra's shaking hand creeps back towards the detonator, with
a red light that pulses like a heartbeat...

NYRA
I'll do it, you know! I mean it!

MACET (comm)
I believe you, Nyra! I believe
you. But are you sure it's what
you really want to do?

NYRA
What do you mean?

MACET (comm)
You don't have to do anything you
don't want to do, remember that.
But tell me... isn't that your
mother next to you on the stage?

TELA lets out an audible sob, head still hanging. Yevir
holds her tighter...

Nyra's scared shaking gets worse than ever, breath ragged
and panting. This was clearly the wrong move...

13 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet and O'Brien react with fear and worry, afraid that
Macet has just pushed Nyra over the edge...

MACET
Don't tell me we've lost it...

YEVIR (comm)
Nyra...

On screen, Nyra looks to the side...

The camera image SWERVES towards Tela and Yevir. The priest
is sitting straight in his chair, looking at her...

YEVIR (comm)
That is your name, is it not?
Nyra.

O'BRIEN
Bloody hell! Not again.

YEVIR (comm)
My name is Yevir, Nyra. Yevir
Linjaren.

Macet and O'Brien both tense, fearing they've lost control.
Macet presses the button and speaks into the microphone
again, making sure to keep his voice level and calm...

MACET

Vedek Yevir, I am sure that your intentions are good. But Castellan Ghemor has asked me to speak on his behalf to Nyra --

Yevir turns and looks directly into the camera, talking directly to Macet. It's a little unsettling...

YEVIR (screen)

That may be so, Gul Macet. But it is my distinct impression Nyra no longer wishes to speak to you.

Then Yevir turns back to devote all his attention to Nyra. Macet cuts the audio connection...

MACET

What I am hoping... is that Vedek Yevir has just got on the right side of Nyra.

O'BRIEN

Good cop bad cop, eh?

MACET

If she won't talk to me, let's see what she has to say to the man she claims she wants to kill. Violence becomes a little more difficult when you can put a name and face to your victim. There's not many people with the stomach for it...

Speaking of which...

14 INT. KORVEN'S HOUSE

A small, claustrophobic room, dark and cluttered. The room is packed with as much memorabilia of Cardassian culture as a person can collect. Every surface and wall is covered.

The man who lives here, KORVEN, has tried to hold on to the better things in this post-apocalyptic world, because it is all he has. It is the futile gesture of an exhausted man.

He sits in a chair, at a table, watching a flickering and beaten-up old comm SCREEN which is displaying a different news report, from outside the lecture hall at Andak. He watches it with no pleasure, just tired resignation.

Suddenly, the power cuts out. The screen goes dark, and the few tepid flickering electric lights die. Korven JUMPS in an old man's fear. He gets up wobbly-legged from the table, goes to pull a heavy curtain away from a window...

Outside, he sees that it's almost NIGHT now, the dirty RAIN still hitting the window. Then he sees that other houses nearby still have their power. What few streetlights there are still shine. The power cut is specific to his house.

Then there is a firm KNOCK at the door. Korven jumps, ever more terrified.

He cringes away from the door, but the KNOCK comes again, undeniable. Korven shuffles to the door, going to his doom, and opens it. Of course, GARAK is there, smiling warmly...

GARAK

Korven! Long time no see.

Korven does not answer, just stares as if seeing a ghost.

GARAK

Don't worry, I'll let myself in.

Garak steps nonchalantly past him into the house. Korven turns to watch Garak's progress. Garak sits at the table, his back to the TV screen, and smiles back at him...

GARAK

You will join me, won't you, Korven?

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

15 INT. KORVEN'S HOUSE

Shuddering in fear, Korven closes the door but remains as far away from Garak as he can. Garak raises a small device, clicks it, and the SCREEN comes back to life, showing the scene at Andak. It is edging towards night there.

The few people not inside in the hall, as well as numerous Cardassian security, can be seen on screen. But Garak keeps his eyes firmly on Korven as a newsreader voice-overs...

NEWSREADER (screen)
...and at least forty reporters,
including Bajoran News Network's
Teris Juze and Lamerat Anjen. A
spokesperson from Alon Ghemor's
office has said that the situation
is sensitive, but under control...

Garak flexes his fingers. Korven watches this, fascinated, terrified. Then Garak points to the chair opposite his...

GARAK
Sit. Down.

Unable to refuse, Korven shuffles to the table, sitting opposite Garak. He stares shaking into Garak's eyes...

16 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

Keiko is caught between absolutely exhausted and too wired to rest. She looks around the room - some of the children have gone to sleep, but almost everyone else is as tense and still as ever. Naithe sits with arms folded, pouting.

Meanwhile, Yevir is speaking to Nyra, his voice soft and flowing. She replies sharp and nervous, angry...

YEVIR
I wonder if you have heard very
much about Bajor, Nyra.

NYRA

I've heard all about your superstitions. And about how you're trying to bring them here. We don't need them. Cardassia doesn't need your lies!

YEVIR

It's a shame that's all you've ever been told about Bajor. Did no-one ever tell you what it looked like? How green it is? The rivers, the waterfalls?

NYRA

If it's so perfect on Bajor, why don't you go back there? Why are you here?

YEVIR

Oh, that's quite simple. It's because from far away, Cardassia is unfathomable. Close up, perhaps I can find out more about you. And I'm hoping that we might find that we have something in common.

NYRA

We're nothing like you!

YEVIR

Are you so sure of that, Nyra? Have you heard of the Occupation? I doubt you're old enough to remember anything about it.

(sigh)

If you ever came to Bajor, Nyra - and I like to think that you will - you'd see a lot more than rivers and gardens. You'd see broken buildings too, just like here on Cardassia. You'd see places where the fields will never be green again, because an army once went there and poisoned the land.

NYRA
(whisper)
What happened?

YEVIR
Bajor was occupied, Nyra, just like Cardassia was. For years. For decades. People were born and grew up not knowing anything other than that Bajor was an occupied world. And these occupiers were cruel, Nyra - as cruel as the Jem'Hadar were to Cardassia. So yes, I think we have a lot of things in common. But understanding cruelty isn't the only thing we share, I hope.

Yevir pauses, as much to pay homage as to let Nyra consider his words. Which she is, learning things she didn't know...

17 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet and O'Brien still watching the exchange on-screen...

O'BRIEN
Hell of a time for a history lesson. What's he gonna tell her about the resistance, d'you reckon? Think he'll mention how successful they were blowing things up to achieve their political goals?

MACET
He's already passed on drawing her attention to Cardassian involvement in the Bajoran Occupation. Perhaps he's a little more skilled at this than Naithe was.

Macet moves to check on an array of other SCREENS that his officers have set up to show other perspectives...

...including armed soldiers holding place at the doors...

...and the same external news feed Korven was watching...

18 **INT. KORVEN'S HOUSE**

...except that GARAK has Korven's full attention now, as he moves around the room, inspecting the collectibles at a leisurely pace. He finds a bottle of *kanar* and a couple of glasses. He brings them back to the table, sits with his back to the TV screen, silhouetting himself, and pours...

KORVEN

Wh-what do you want, Garak?

GARAK

Well, what do you have for me?

KORVEN

I c-can't think... why you're here. Not after all this time. After all th-that's happened...

GARAK

Stop talking.

Korven does, instantly. He reaches out with a shaking hand, grabs the drink, downs it in one...

GARAK

(re screen)

This bears the unmistakable mark of the True Way. You were the True Way, Korven. It couldn't exist without you then, and I don't believe it could exist without you now. So don't try to tell me you're not involved.

(pause)

You can start talking again now.

KORVEN

Ever since G-Ghemor took power, we've been reforming. You know as well as I do that what C-Cardassia needs is f-firm leadership...

GARAK

I'm not interested in your justifications.

GARAK (cont)

In your wisdom, you decreed that there is no place for democracy on Cardassia, and also no doubt that you and yours are best qualified to replace it. See? I can make all that up for myself. So skip it, and give me some facts.

KORVEN

Andak was a n-natural target, at least it was once Ghemor staked so capital much on it. And when we heard Yevir was going there...

GARAK

Yes, that must have been very exciting for you. Two birds with one stone, as they say. Yevir's peace mission finished, Ghemor's government discredited...

(beat)

So, what else, precisely, has the True Way got planned?

Korven blanches...

19 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

O'Brien paces around, impatient again...

O'BRIEN

I can't just stand here. Keiko's relying on me. There must be something I can do...

MACET

Such as what?

O'BRIEN

Well... what if we gave up on the transporter idea too quickly?

MACET

You said yourself that the bomb is likely wired to react to that.

O'BRIEN

Yes, and if there was someone here
persuading Nyra to do this, then
they could probably find out the
frequency of the cargo transporter
and programme it into that bomb...

(beat)

But what if I can reprogramme it to
use a whole different frequency?

MACET

(smile)

Well, you do have over a decade of
experience as a transporter expert.
Not to mention a reputation as one
of Starfleet's miracle workers.

O'BRIEN

Oh, well, I don't know about that.
But whatever Garak may think, I'm
an engineer at heart. And if I'm
going to save my family, I'm going
to do it by being an engineer.

Macet stands straight, issues his orders with a smile...

MACET

Proceed, Mister O'Brien. But do it
quickly, please. The longer this
goes on --

(re the screen)

-- the more our options dwindle.

O'Brien nods and rushes out of the office...

20 **EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - NIGHT**

...and back into the square.

O'Brien dashes up to the lines of armed Cardassian soldiers
waiting outside the lecture hall, EMMETT the lone Starfleet
officer among them. The young green ensign carries a phaser
rifle now, and looks sick at the thought of using it...

EMMETT

Chief...?

O'BRIEN
Emmett, I'm going to try to get
around that transporter sensor.

EMMETT
You need some help?

O'BRIEN
It'd take longer to explain than
it would to just do it myself. You
stay here. Just try and give me as
much time as you can.

EMMETT
Understood, Chief.

Emmett hefts his rifle, obviously disappointed at not being
allowed to shirk this unpleasant task. O'Brien heads off...

21 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet watches O'Brien on one of his many screens...
...then moves back to the main screens on the desk...
...where Yevir is still talking to Nyra...

22 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

Yevir's voice continues in background, but we are with...
KEIKO, as she sits waiting, praying for a saviour...

23 INT. ANDAK - TRANSPORTER ROOM

A cargo bay type room, with boxes and crates, and a large
TRANSPORTER PLATFORM at the back, dusty and industrial.
O'BRIEN rushes in, looks daunted at his task...

O'BRIEN
She called me the most important
man in all of Starfleet.
(beat)
And right now, for her... I am.

So he gets to work.

24 **INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE**

Macet watches the screens...

...until a new MESSAGE beeps on the second one, the direct line to Ghemor. Macet taps to receive...

Ghemor sits at his desk, from the perspective of his own screens. Jartek lurks silently in the background...

GHEMOR (screen)
Care to give me some on the spot analysis, Macet?

MACET
Well, Vedek Yevir has her talking. Correction - he has her listening, which is the next best thing.

GHEMOR (screen)
Then my next question has to be, is the topic of conversation likely to make her want to blow something up?

Macet pauses, thinks about it. He comes to a conclusion he doesn't like, but it's the only one he can see...

MACET
He's a Bajoran, sir. The target of this entire attack. I believe that the longer he's left talking to her, the more likely she is to activate the bomb. I'm ready to order my men in whenever you want.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

25 EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - NIGHT

...as the tension rises, Cardassian soldiers ready to storm the lecture hall...

26 INT. ANDAK - TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'BRIEN crouches down, hands inside the machinery, breaking and remaking connections as quick as he can. Manual work done, he scrambles up, works the control panels instead, reprogramming the computer at lighting speed...

O'BRIEN

(slap combadge)

O'Brien to Emmett. What's going on out there?

EMMETT (comm)

The Cardassians look impatient, Chief. I'm worried they're gonna storm the lecture hall any minute. How are you doing?

O'BRIEN

(as he works,
frustrated)

This damn thing wasn't designed for this level of precision. It's meant for equipment and supplies, not delicate technology that might explode and kill everybody.

EMMETT (comm)

I suggest you keep working on it, Chief. It can't be much longer...

O'Brien slaps his combadge again, grumbles under his breath - *what does the kid **think** he's doing* - and keeps working...

O'BRIEN

Just hold on, Keiko...

27 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...on KEIKO, who hasn't moved from her spot on the stage,
but is now watching YEVIR just as rapt as Nyra is...

YEVIR

Some people on Bajor began to lose
hope. They started to believe that
the occupiers would never leave.
That Bajor would be kept prisoner
forever. But they did leave, Nyra.
We made them leave. Do you know
how we did that?

From Keiko's perspective, the hope in Nyra's face is clear
- *if it worked for Bajor, maybe it could work for us too...*

NYRA

(whisper)

How did you make them leave?

YEVIR

We fought them, Nyra. We shot them
and killed them and blew them up,
and in time, we drove them out.

(beat)

But then, once Bajor was no longer
occupied, we put down our weapons
and we tried to live in peace.

NYRA

But Cardassia is still occupied!
By the Federation, by all kinds of
alien influences that want to
destroy the little we have left --

YEVIR

Nobody wants to destroy Cardassia,
Nyra! Cardassia has seen enough
destruction. We only want to help.

NYRA

We don't want your help!

YEVIR

Are you so sure of that, Nyra?

28 **EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - NIGHT**

...on EMMETT, reluctant to go in with the Cardassians...

 YEVIR (v.o.)
Are you certain you speak for
everyone on Cardassia?

29 **FLASHBACK - 8x05 "THE LOTUS FLOWER"**

...the seemingly endless line of beaten down people waiting
to be given food or medicine from the government offices...

 YEVIR (v.o., cont)
For all the people fighting off the
fever they caught from the water?

30 **FLASHBACK - 8x05 "THE LOTUS FLOWER"**

...on the desperate refugees surviving in roadside tents...

 YEVIR (v.o., cont)
All those who lost everything and
everyone they love, and struggle
to live on another terrible day?

31 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...on YEVIR, gesturing around the room, TELA beside him...

 YEVIR (cont)
For all those here at Andak, who
only want to help heal Cardassia?

 NYRA
What I'm doing will make things
better --

 YEVIR
How? By killing more people? By
leaving another part of Cardassia
nothing but dust?

 NYRA
 (tearful)
That's all there is left!

Then Yevir slowly and deliberately STANDS UP...

YEVIR

No. You're wrong.

32 **INT. CARDASSIA CITY - GHEMOR'S OFFICE**

...on GHEMOR as he jerks forward at the view on his screen, powerless to intervene. Behind him, Jartek hisses...

33 **INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE**

...on MACET as he tenses, curses under his breath...

MACET

What the hell is he doing?

34 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...on LAMERAT as he focuses his camera, TERIS beside him...

TERIS

(whisper)

Keep filming...

Yevir stands tall, speaking gently but powerfully to Nyra. She looks up at him, scared and fascinated and confused and angry all at once. He takes a tiny step towards her...

YEVIR

When the Occupation ended, Nyra, Bajor celebrated. Everyone was happy. Because we were free at last. But I... I was not happy. When I looked around the world, it seemed to me that everything was drab. That there was no purpose to it, no point. I didn't feel free at all, Nyra. I felt lost.

(another step)

And then I found it. What I was missing, Nyra.

NYRA

(whisper)

What did you find...?

YEVIR
Purpose, Nyra! Meaning! And
then... oh, and then...

...on KEIKO, as she listens enchanted to Yevir's words...

YEVIR (v.o., cont)
...the whole world transformed,
before my eyes. All that drab...

FLASH

...on a LOTUS FLOWER, opening to the sun in time-lapse, all
its colours and beauty blossoming in a dirty swamp...

YEVIR (v.o., cont)
...all that grey - it was as if I
could see colours again!

BACK TO SCENE

...on KEIKO as she relates to all this...

YEVIR (o.s., cont)
...and I understood my place in it
all, Nyra.

...and back to YEVIR, inching ever closer to Nyra...

YEVIR (cont)
You understand all of this, Nyra,
don't you? What it is to have
purpose? Do you not want to live
to see that purpose fulfilled?

He's about an arm's length away from her now - she barely
notices. She is looking up into his eyes, crying...

NYRA
It's not the same. It's not the
same... I saw it.

YEVIR
What did you see, Nyra?

NYRA

Where she taught. The Academy. It
was everything she stood for,
everything she loved...

Keiko looks sympathetically towards TELA, still sobbing
silently to herself in her seat...

35 INT. ANDAK - TRANSPORTER ROOM

...on O'BRIEN as he works feverishly on the transporter...

NYRA (v.o., cont)

I was going there too, I was going
to study there and be like her. It
was what the women in our family
did. Our tradition...

Finally, O'Brien steps back and slaps his combadge again...

O'BRIEN

Emmett... I'm as done as I'm going
to be.

EMMETT (comm)

Do it now, Chief.

O'BRIEN

I... I can't.

EMMETT (comm)

What? Why not?

O'BRIEN

Because I don't know if it's going
to work! What if I've done it
wrong? What if it sets off the
bomb, and kills Keiko, and Molly,
and all the others...

EMMETT (comm)

Chief... I may only be an Ensign,
but I'm still an officer. I could
order you. Do you want me to?

As O'Brien considers - would that help? Make it easier?

36 INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL

...on NYRA, in absolute agony...

NYRA
And now it's ruins. It's all gone.
There's nothing left. No future.
No future left, for any of us.

Her hand begins to move slowly back to the detonator button on her chest... with its pulsing red heartbeat... as if trying to escape the pain the only way she can...

37 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

...on MACET as he tenses, pulls himself straight, turns to the second screen, with Ghemor, grimly determined...

MACET
There's never a right decision,
Castellan. Only the best one in
the circumstances. You just have
to act in good faith. Let me send
them in.

38 INT. CARDASSIA CITY - GHEMOR'S OFFICE

...on GHEMOR, watching Nyra and Yevir on one screen and Macet on another, as he makes the only decision he can...

GHEMOR
Do what is necessary, Macet.

Then he closes his eyes and hangs his head.

39 INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE

Macet nods economically and emotionlessly...

MACET
Understood, sir.
(touches wrist-com)
Macet to all troops. Proceed now.
Terminate the target.

As Macet refuses to look away from the screen...

40 **EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - NIGHT**

...on EMMETT as he hears the order relayed to the soldiers.
He sees the GLINN from sc 5 counting down for his troops,
and prepares to do his duty, hating every second of it...

41 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...on KEIKO, as she searches out Molly's little face in the
front row, and whispers to her - "I love you"...

42 **INT. ANDAK - TRANSPORTER ROOM**

...on O'BRIEN as he reaches out with trembling hand to
slide his hand up the transporter controls, a task he's
done a million times before... but never like this...

43 **INT. ANDAK - KEIKO'S OFFICE**

...on MACET, who won't permit himself to look away...

...from Nyra's startled reaction as the doors of the
lecture hall come CRASHing down...

44 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...letting armed Cardassian soldiers rush into the room.

Nyra's hand JERKS. But as it moves towards the detonator...

...she finds it held by Yevir's hand, unable to move any
further. She looks up at him, sees him looking at her...

Feric shoots to his feet, shouting to the soldiers...

FERIC

Wait! Don't shoot!

Emmett sees too, urgently shouts to the rest...

EMMETT

Hold your fire!

(slaps combadge)

Chief! Stand down! Stand down
right now!

45 **INT. ANDAK - TRANSPORTER ROOM**

 EMMETT (comm, cont)
 Don't do it! It's under control!

...and O'BRIEN pulls back his hand, slumps to sit on the transporter platform, on the verge of tears...

46 **INT. ANDAK - LECTURE HALL**

...and finally back to NYRA, still gazing tearfully into Yevir's gentle and forgiving eyes...

 YEVIR
 (softly)
 There is a future, Nyra. Have
 faith in that. Have hope.

...on KEIKO, panting with relief, Feric on one side, Tela on the other...

...on the Bajoran news reporter, TERIS, as she lays her head onto the shoulder of her cameraman, LAMERAT...

 TERIS
 (tearful
 whisper)
 Did you get that?

 LAMERAT
 (puts arm
 around her)
 Of course I did, Juze.

As ending on Nyra as she continues to gaze into Yevir's eyes, and he holds firmly on to her hand...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

47 INT. CARDASSIA CITY - GHEMOR'S OFFICE

On SCREEN, the moment is replayed - the soldiers barge in, Nyra reaches for the trigger, Yevir stops her. Teris and Lamerat's feed is now featured on every news report going.

Ghemor glares at it, while Jartek pours him tea...

GHEMOR

They're going to win an award for this, aren't they? What's that thing called, Mev?

JARTEK

The Wurlitzer, Alon.

GHEMOR

That's the one. They'll win the Wurlitzer for this.

JARTEK

That depends. On how - and if - you let these pictures out.

GARAK (o.s.)

Ah, freedom of the press. Another watershed moment for Cardassia, eh Jartek?

Jartek JUMPS again - he didn't even realise Garak was there. Garak enjoys the slimy assistant's discomfort...

JARTEK

Just making sure the right message gets across, Garak.

GARAK

(simply)

I bet they win the Pulitzer.

Jartek grinds his teeth at Garak's showing him up.

GHEMOR

And what prize do we take away
this evening, Garak?

GARAK

Oh, all manner of trophies. But
what I found most satisfying was
the discovery that, during his
erstwhile career in the military,
Korven was the commanding
officer... to one Councillor -
formerly Gul - Entor.

GHEMOR

You've got to be joking...

It takes a second, then the grin spreads on Ghemor's face.
Garak shakes his head, smiling. Ghemor begins to chuckle...

GARAK

It's not final proof of a link
between Entor and the True Way.
But close enough for our purposes,
I think. Embarrassing enough.

GHEMOR

Enough for the Directorate to drop
their opposition to Andak? Garak,
you are a miracle worker.

GARAK

Let's just say that while Chief
O'Brien has his talents, I have
mine. Attention to loose ends, for
one. Serves me well in tailoring,
and in many other occupations.
Speaking of which, there's one
more thing I have to check on...

GHEMOR

Yes, yes, thank you Garak. Mev,
get me Councillor Entor on the
comm, will you?

As Garak exits, and Jartek works the controls, Ghemor turns
back to the screens with a victorious smile...

48 **EXT. ANDAK SETTLEMENT - NIGHT**

The village square, as citizens hug their loved ones in joy and relief. Among them O'BRIEN and KEIKO, with Molly...

KEIKO

I'm going to be stuck here for a while yet...

O'BRIEN

I know. I'll take the kids. You come home when you can.

With a last kiss they pull apart, and O'Brien carries Molly off towards the residences. Keiko spots FERIC emerging from the lecture hall, goes over for another relieved hug...

KEIKO

Are you going home? Go to bed?

FERIC

No... I think I'll stick around a while. See if there's anything I can do to help.

KEIKO

Just don't overdo it. I'll need you. Tomorrow... and all the days afterwards.

FERIC

Don't worry. They won't beat us, Keiko. We won't let them. We're here to stay.

Then they both notice NAITHE also emerging. He stops dead at the sight of them, dread on his bright Bolian face...

KEIKO

(angry mutter)

Naithe. Maybe not everyone is here to stay...

FERIC

Don't be too harsh on him, Keiko.

Naithe gives an awkward nod, and scuttles away. Feric heads back into the lecture hall, and Keiko walks on towards MACET, looming in the darkness with his soldiers...

MACET

Director, thank you for your time.

(Keiko nods)

According to our sources in the capital, the project was targeted by a terrorist organisation known as the True Way. Nyra Maleren appears to have been recruited by them. I'll conduct investigations to discover how that happened.

KEIKO

Where is Nyra now?

MACET

In your office. We've been asking her some questions in there. I hope that's acceptable, Director.

KEIKO

Of course, whatever you need. Is her mother with her?

Off Macet's hesitancy to answer that...

49 INT. ANDAK - CORRIDOR

...to TELA, sat on a bench outside the closed door. Hands resting comfortably, not twisting her bangle. She looks up at the sound of Keiko's FOOTSTEPS... then back down again.

TELA

Nyra will not see me.

KEIKO

I imagine she's very confused at the moment.

TELA

Indeed, I would imagine so. Also, I believe she holds me responsible for what has happened today.

KEIKO

Oh no, Tela. That's just not --

TELA

(looking at her)

Not true? Where precisely do you think, Director, that Nyra learned to be suspicious of Bajorans and humans, even the Oralian Way, if not at home? Where did she learn the idea that she should protest against them in some way?

KEIKO

But whenever you had a problem with things, you always followed procedure. You were always willing to discuss things. Surely it was clear to everyone that you had no desire for any more violence.

TELA

And yet, evidence suggests such subtleties are lost on children. I have no doubt Nyra proved easy prey for whoever persuaded her to do this. They would find much of the work already done for them.

They are interrupted when the door opens, and YEVIR steps quietly out, closing it behind him...

YEVIR

Nyra and I have been talking for some time, Professor. I believe she is willing to see you now.

Tela stands calmly, trying to maintain some dignity...

TELA

Thank you, Vedek. I hope you'll remain outside. No doubt Nyra will want to see you again shortly.

YEVIR

I'll stay as long as I'm needed.

Tela opens the door and steps through, closing it behind her. Yevir turns to Keiko, as exhausted as everyone else...

YEVIR

Well, Director, I must say this was rather an excessive response to my visit. If you had not wanted me to give a speech, you only needed to refuse my request.

Keiko can't help but chuckle. She likes the guy after all.

KEIKO

How does it feel to be a miracle worker, Vedek?

YEVIR

I have worked no miracles here. All I did was find a little common ground. The Prophets guided my hand. The Prophets will have to take care of the rest.

(beat)

You look tired, Director. Perhaps you should go home to your family. Too many at Andak are not able to do that tonight.

KEIKO

Yes, thank you. You'll always be welcome here at Andak, Vedek.

She turns away and heads home. Yevir sits and waits...

50 **INT. ANDAK - O'BRIEN'S APARTMENT**

Late night now. Keiko stands in the room, quietly tending to the flower on the table. Miles enters from the other room, goes over to slowly massage Keiko's shoulders...

O'BRIEN

I'm still so angry with him.

KEIKO

You're angry with him? But he saved our lives.

O'BRIEN

He took a bloody risk. He's lucky
he didn't get you all killed.

KEIKO

Is that what it looked like to you?
Because from where I was sitting,
it looked like Yevir judged his
intervention very carefully. Almost
scientifically. The ones I despise
are - what did Macet call them?

O'BRIEN

The True Way.

KEIKO

What a horrible name. What's true
about using children like pawns
to... well, to die, just because
of their hate! Poor Nyra...

(Miles grunts)

What does that noise mean, Miles?

O'BRIEN

Just that... well, I have to
wonder if Nyra even thinks she's
done anything wrong.

KEIKO

But Miles, what she did... it's
incomprehensible. Can you imagine
Molly doing something like that?

O'BRIEN

No, but Molly's not a Cardassian,
is she?

Keiko pulls away, turns to face him, appalled...

KEIKO

Miles, what an ugly thing to say!

O'BRIEN

Now, hang on a minute! I'm not
saying all Cardassians are mad.

(more)

O'BRIEN (cont)

Macet's someone to respect, so's Ghemor. Hell, Garak's the closest thing I've got to a friend on this planet. Of course I don't think Molly's going to hit her teens and start planting bombs. But Molly's not from a culture that's spent the last ten years in decline, fought and lost a brutal war, and then been burned to the ground. I have to wonder if there's a whole generation of Nyrras growing up out there. What kind of society can you make out of children who've been traumatised like that?

A long pause as Keiko considers his words...

KEIKO

Do you wish we hadn't come here, Miles? Do you wish we hadn't brought our children into this?
(no answer)
Miles?

O'BRIEN

What do you want me to say, love? If it meant you and Molly wouldn't have to go through what you did today, then of course I'd say we shouldn't have come. But you don't want to leave... so, we'll stay. You don't want to leave, do you?

KEIKO

I did, at one point today. I was sitting there, looking at Molly, and I thought - what were we thinking, coming here? But as I listened to Yevir, I realised it would be wrong to go. More than that... it would be irresponsible to leave, when there are things you and I can do here that will really make a difference.

O'BRIEN
So we're staying, whether
Cardassia wants us or not?

A pause... and then Keiko pulls herself straight. O'Brien does the same. It's agreed. Then Keiko returns to tending her plant, and Miles goes back to massaging her...

51 EXT. CARDASSIA - HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Three Cardassian men gather overlooking the capital. They include the older, unconcerned MAN 1 from 9x05 "The Lotus Flower" and the younger, more cautious MAN 2...

MAN 2
We ought to come to a decision
about Korven. Can we depend upon
him now? Is he still reliable?

MAN 1
We shall see.

MAN 2
Is he - forgive me, I have to ask
- now surplus to requirements?

MAN 1
(firmer)
We shall see.

MAN 2
What about Garak?

The older man pauses to think about that thorny question...

MAN 1
Who can say? But you may leave
that... 'decision'... to me.

The younger man accepts his elder's authority. The third man has never spoken. Man 1 turns to his colleagues...

MAN 1
Gentlemen.

...and leaves to walk back into the murky darkness.

52 **EXT. CARDASSIA CITY - PUBLIC SQUARE - NIGHT**

Where Garak met O'Brien for breakfast only this morning. It is now deserted at the dead of night - no crowds of waiting people, no Starfleet security patrols...

JARTEK exits the government building and begins the long walk home. He huddles into his coat against the cold night, looking out at the makeshift, half-rebuilt buildings.

About half-way across the square, GARAK seems to magically appear at his side, walking calmly alongside him. Jartek manages to control his reaction - Garak frightens him, no doubt, but he'll be damned if he'll show it...

JARTEK

Garak. Have you been waiting for me all this time?

GARAK

It was no trouble. You're going in my direction, it seems.

They walk in silence for a few steps. Jartek is not quite as smooth as he'd like to be. Garak could do this all day.

GARAK

So tell me, Jartek. Are you content with how today's events have turned out?

JARTEK

All things considered, I'd have to say yes. It could have been an awful lot worse. Imagine if that bomb had gone off. Disastrous for the government.

GARAK

It's certainly been something of a triumph for the Vedek - again.

JARTEK

For the Castellan too. He ordered a prompt and effective response --

GARAK

Macet did his job there very well,
I thought.

JARTEK

It was Alon who gave the orders.
That'll be clear enough, wait
until you see the news tomorrow.
It matters to people who's running
the show. And even better, it all
comes with the added benefit of
securing the funding for Andak.

(preening)

Yes, I think we can say that today
has been a success for the Ghemor
government.

Just as they enter into a darker, narrower passageway...

...Garak GRABS Jartek with one quick expert movement, SLAMS
him hard against the wall, one hand on his throat just like
O'Brien had earlier. Jartek GASPS in surprise, choking...

JARTEK

What the --

GARAK

Shut up.

(whisper)

Now you listen to me. You'd better
be just half as good as you think
you are. Because if you've left a
single fingerprint, anywhere, we
can kiss goodbye to Ghemor.

JARTEK

What d'you mean? I don't --

GARAK

Don't. Lie. To me. I've played
this game too long, Jartek. Tell
me what you did! What did you give
Korven? Information? Money? Both?

Garak grips Jartek's throat even tighter. Jartek is barely
able to nod his head...

GARAK

So the True Way would make a move,
yes? And you'd be there, a step
ahead, ready to discredit them?
All so that Ghemor could be seen
to do the right thing?

Another nod from Jartek...

GARAK

Korven didn't know it was coming
from you, did he?

Jartek shakes his head, terrified...

GARAK

You're not stupid then. What else?

JARTEK

Nothing, I swear, nothing...

GARAK

Are you quite sure of that? You
didn't, oh to pluck an example out
of thin air, leak the classified
report about Setekh to the press?

JARTEK

Yes, yes, that - that too!

GARAK

And tell me - and you'd better be
very very certain of this, Jartek
- have you left any fingerprints?

JARTEK

None, I'm sure of it - please!

GARAK

Oh, you'd better be. Anything else
you'd like to confess? While we're
both here, and no-one else?

JARTEK

No...

Garak takes a moment to judge Jartek's honesty, making sure to keep a tight hold on his throat...

JARTEK

You're choking me...

GARAK

(leaning in)

Next time you get a clever idea,
you talk to me. Do you understand
that? You do nothing before you've
told me everything.

JARTEK

I swear, I will...

GARAK

Oh, I believe you.

Garak finally lets go. Jartek slumps against the wall, rubbing his throat, catching his breath. Garak looks him up and down, unimpressed...

GARAK

One last thing... get yourself a
better suit.

Then Garak turns and walks away down the passageway into the night, leaving Jartek spluttering on the ground...

GARAK

(to self)

Now that's what I call a
proportional response.

Off Garak's satisfaction...

BLACK OUT:

THE END