

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

8x13 - "Horn and Ivory."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novella

"Horn and Ivory"
by Keith RA DeCandido

appearing in

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Gateways
Book 7 - What Lay Beyond

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 MONTAGE FROM EPs 8x11 - 8x12

-- The Starfleet meeting in the holodeck:

ROSS

The Iconians were a hugely advanced race who existed in this quadrant some two-hundred millennia ago.

VOICEOVER

Previously, on Star Trek: Deep Space Nine.

ROSS

They're most famous for their gateways, which provided instant transport between two points. There is no gateway activity within ten light-years of Bajor.

VAUGHN

The wormhole?

KIRA

We've had reports that the colony at Europa Nova is suffering a planet-wide catastrophe, possibly as a result of this gateway thing.

-- On the *Euphrates*, Kira piloting the ship:

TARAN'ATAR

There is no known way to dispose of theta radiation on this scale.

KIRA

Just like the good old days. Piloting skimmers around Dakhur Province in the dead of winter, avoiding Cardassian patrols... Great, now I'm getting nostalgic

for the Occupation. What does that say about my life?

SILVERIO (screen)

As long as you're in charge, I'm sure we'll get through this.

-- On the Delta Quadrant planet's surface, Kira opens the hatch of the runabout and steps out, looking around at the desert. She solemnly watches the runabout lift off without her. Her tricorder shows THETA RADIATION LEVELS.

KIRA

One hour to fatal levels.

-- She stops, and begins to pray.

KIRA

Is this how I'm to have my faith rewarded? Dying on an unnamed wasteland thousands of miles from home, theta radiation chewing up my cells and spitting them out? I don't want to die like this. Not here... and not Attainted.

-- Covered in blisters, boils and cracked skin, Kira has finally reached the gateway. She steps through and into the white light of the Celestial Temple, and disappears.

VOICEOVER

And now, the conclusion.

2 EXT. OPEN FIELD

A vicious hand-to-hand battle is going on, not with phasers or guns, but swords, axes and shields. One woman stands alone at the crest of a small hill, defending herself with a large wooden staff against two or three attackers.

The feeling of the whole scene is medieval, although all those present are Bajorans, wearing old rough fabrics and beaten iron armour.

As we close on the central woman, we see that she is KIRA NERYS, and she is fighting for her life.

One of Kira's attackers SWINGS a large axe at her head - she dodges back just in time. His armour only covers his chest and groin, so she swings at his unarmoured legs with her staff, and we hear the bones break, his scream of pain.

Out of immediate danger, she takes a breath to look around the battlefield. A large and bulky Bajoran male approaches her, red-haired and bushy bearded, an ally. This is TORRNA, and he is grinning with shared victory.

As he approaches, another pair of attackers run up to them both. Kira knocks down the first with a SWIPE of her staff, but the second manages to strike at Kira with a sword, gashing her left arm badly but not fatally. Kira BONKS the attacker over the head with her staff, and holding her right hand over the wound, continues over to Torrna.

Nearby, the thin sound of a HORN can be heard being blown, and most of the fighters who are not already dead or dying start to RUN away from Kira and Torrna.

TORRNA

(laughing)

They retreat! We've done it,
Ashla. We've driven the last of
them off!

KIRA

(grinning)

Yes, we have. As last stands go,
this was a pretty weak effort.

TORRNA

The Lerrit Army has lost all
control of the port, and without
the port they will never hold the
peninsula. Victory is ours! At
last, we are free!

A ragged, exhausted cheer goes up around the battered few soldiers on Kira and Torrna's side. Kira joins in, but she looks like she is just going along with it. She is not entirely sure how she ended up here, but knows she has to play along for the moment.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 EXT. ANCIENT BAJOR - MEETING BUILDING

A small town in a coastal area, the PERIKIAN PENINSULA. The stone buildings, identifiably Bajoran in design but pre-industrial and primitive, have been battered by long warfare, but the central meeting building remains standing. We are on Ancient Bajor - thousands of years in the past.

4 INT. MEETING ROOM

A large stone room, tall and draughty, recently repaired from war damage. It's habitable, if not pretty. A dozen battered Bajorans sit around a large table, the highest-ranking members of the PERIKIAN ARMY. Most aren't wearing a Bajoran earring, and they have worn, uncared-for teeth.

At one end of the table sits Torrna, impatient and blustery. Near the opposite end is INNA, a smart uniformed woman, a Navy Admiral with tightly tied hair.

Another woman, small and tough, enters the room, and takes the the head of the table, opposite Torrna. This is NATLAR, the leader of the Perikian state. Everyone rises for her.

Kira stands against the wall, and during what follows, she keeps to herself, observing and occasionally glancing out of a dirty, cracked window. Through the scene, we will see quick flashes of memory, as events remind Kira of her own life. No dialogue, just enough to remind us of that time.

NATLAR

Thank you everyone for coming.
Please, be seated.

Most sit, but there aren't enough seats for everyone.

NATLAR

Or stand, whichever you prefer.
(serious, proud)
I hereby call to order the first
meeting of the government of the
Perikian Republic.

Another CHEER, stronger and louder than before.

NATLAR

Admiral Inna, once again we thank you and the nation of Endtree for all you have done for us.

INNA

We simply followed the road the Prophets laid out for us.

The general reaction suggests most people don't believe in the Prophets. Kira notes that Inna is the only one wearing an earring, if simpler than the types we usually see.

TORRNA

(cynical)

I doubt that the Prophets were the ones who put those cannons on your ships, Admiral.

NATLAR

Be that as it may, I'm afraid we have more business with our neighbours in Endtree.

INNA

With all due respect, Prefect -

Kira flinches at the title.

INNA (cont)

I'd rather leave any such business to the politicians. I was happy to aid in casting out those Lerrit leeches. Their shipping tariffs were an abomination. But whatever further relationship there is to be between our two governments, it is not for me to arrange. I would simply like to return home and await new orders.

NATLAR

I, however, would rather you did not return home just yet. While General Torrna has assembled a fine army, we are still vulnerable at sea. Lerrit does have a navy of their own, after all, and the moment we lose the protection of your fleet, they will return and take us back with little trouble. I'd therefore like to request that Endtree leave behind a delegation of five ships to protect the port.

TORRNA
(slamming table)
Prefect, no!

NATLAR
(calmly)
Is something wrong, General?

TORRNA
We just fought for independence.

INNA
(pointedly)
With our help.

TORRNA
For which we thank you, Admiral.
(to Natlar)
But if we allow them to remain, we become as dependent on them as we were on Lerrit! We'd be exchanging one oppressor for another!

FLASHBACK - 1x01 "EMISSARY"

Kira rants to the Bajoran Provisional Government about inviting Starfleet in after the Cardassians have just left.

BACK TO SCENE

INNA
My people do not oppress, General.
The Prophets -

TORRNA

I'm fully aware of your people's religious beliefs, Admiral. They don't change the fact -

NATLAR

Many people worship the Prophets. It is not a reason to dismiss Endtree as a potential ally.

TORRNA

I still think -

NATLAR

General, can we adequately defend the port with our current forces?

TORRNA

Given a few months, we can assemble a fleet that -

NATLAR

And until that fleet is assembled?

Torrna is furious at having been out-argued, but keeps his tongue for the moment.

INNA

One of my ships is setting out for home tomorrow. I will send your request, which will be put before the Council.

NATLAR

Thank you, Admiral. General Torrna will serve as your liaison to me, and should the Council see fit to honour our request, he will continue in that duty.

TORRNA

What?!

A young girl, PRILLA, enters the room. Natlar looks happy for the interruption.

PRILLA

Excuse me, but three men are here,
claiming to represent the Bajora.

NATLAR

Send them in.

Kira's eyebrows lift - this is another surprise. The girl goes out, and three MEN enter wearing robes similar to a Vedek's, but again simpler, and also wearing earrings. They are somewhat obsequious and snooty.

BAJORA 1

Greetings to you from the Bajora.
Do we have the pleasure of
greeting Natlar Ryslin?

NATLAR

I am Prefect Natlar, yes.

BAJORA 1

We would like to extend our
respects to your provisional
government, and -

Kira reacts again to the familiar words, but Torrna is already out of his chair and thundering.

TORRNA

There is nothing provisional about
it! We are the Perikian Republic,
and we will be treated with the
respect we deserve!

BAJORA 1

My apologies for the imprecision
of my speech. Regardless, we do
come to you with an offer.

TORRNA

Really? The battle has been done
less than three days, and already
the Bajora have sent their envoys.
Were you flown here by *remla* bird
with this offer?

NATLAR
General, please.

Biting his tongue again, Torrna reluctantly sits down.

NATLAR (cont)
General Torrna's point is well
taken. You cannot have received
word of our victory and composed
any offer in so short a time.

BAJORA 1
You are correct. We have been in
the city for several weeks now,
awaiting the outcome of your war.
If you were victorious, then we
were prepared to offer you entry
into the Bajora. And if you lost,
then we would simply await a more
felicitous time to add this region
to the glory of the Prophets.

TORRNA
The Prophets?! You wish to make us
part of your theocracy?

BAJORA 1
(snippily)
We are not a theocracy, sir. The
Bajora is a democratic government
of the people. We wish to unite
the planet, once and for all.

FLASHBACK - 1x01 "EMISSARY"

Sisko tries to reassure Kira about his noble intentions.

BACK TO SCENE

TORRNA
(derisive)
Really?

BAJORA 1

For too long, we have squabbled
and bickered in conflicts much
like the one you just finished.

TORRNA

That was hardly a squabble.

BAJORA 1

True, many lives were lost. And
they need not have been, for if we
were a united world, there would
be no such conflicts. Sister need
not fight sister, blood need not
be spilled recklessly. We would
all be free to follow our *pagh*
without worrying about who rules
us or who we will fight tomorrow.

(to Natlar)

I urge you, Prefect, to consider
our offer. The Bajora can only
bring you benefit in these
difficult times. You would have
the service of our navy to guard
your port, you would have the
benefit of our assistance in
repairing your soil -

TORRNA

And all we'd have to do in return
is worship your Prophets, yes? A
small price to pay, I'm sure.

BAJORA 1

And does this man speak for you
all? Will you let one man stand
between you and progress?

NATLAR

General Torrna does not speak for
us all. He simply speaks loudest.

A small chuckle; Torrna fumes at the insulting dismissal.
Kira sympathises - she said the same seven years ago.

BAJORA 1

You have been weakened by this conflict. The Lerrit have too, but they have greater resources. The Bajora have greater resources still, and we're expanding. It is only a matter of time before we have united the entire planet.

NATLAR

You have given us much to think about. We do not have the finest accommodations, but Prilla will show you to a chamber where you may refresh yourselves while we discuss your proposal.

BAJORA 1

We thank you for your hospitality and your indulgence, Prefect.

The girl reappears and the envoys leave with her.

TORRNA

You cannot possibly be considering their request, can you?

NATLAR

Of course I am considering it, General. I would be a fool not to.

TORRNA

It would be foolish to accept their offer! We'd be trading one oppressor for another!

Another man, MALDIK, pipes up.

MALDIK

You keep saying that, Torrna. Are you saying the Bajora, Lerrit and Endtree are all the same?

TORRNA

That's exactly what I'm saying.

MALDIK

Then you're even more naive than I thought.

TORRNA

(furious)

I'm naive? We are free, Maldik!
But we are not going to remain
free if we just let someone else
do exactly what Lerrit did.

FLASHBACK - 1x01 "EMISSARY"

Kira expresses her displeasure to Sisko - loudly.

BACK TO SCENE

Torrna calms down a bit, tries to regain some self-control.

TORRNA

You're right, Maldik. Lerrit,
Endtree and the Bajora are not the
same. But from our perspective,
they are all outsiders, and that
is what concerns me - what should
concern all of us. If we are
simply going to allow ourselves to
be subsumed by the next power that
comes along, then I have to wonder
what we have been fighting for.

The room pauses to consider what he has said.

5 INT. TORRNA'S ROOM

A medieval look again - stone and wood, surprisingly clean and tidy. Torrna sits at a window, looking out to the port far in the distance. Several sea vessels rock in the water, bearing the Endtree flag. Kira ENTERS a little exasperated.

KIRA

You want the good news or the bad news?

TORRNA

I find it impossible to believe
that there is good news.

KIRA

Well, there is. Natlar rejected the Bajora's offer.

TORRNA

Amazing. I wouldn't have given her credit for thinking that clearly.

KIRA

Why not? You think you're the only one who was fighting out there?

TORRNA

I sometimes wonder. I don't want to see everything I - we fought for ruined by short-sightedness.

KIRA

But give the Bajora some credit too. I know you don't believe in the Prophets, but what they're doing is bringing the world together. Don't let a little agnosticism blind you to that.

TORRNA

What a wonderful way of phrasing it. Perhaps you're right. But even if I thought the Bajora were the most wonderful people in the world, I wouldn't want to become part of them. Someday maybe, but not today. Not after all we've fought for.

KIRA

(gestures around)

That why you had the cleaning frenzy?

TORRNA

(laughing)

Well, it was either that or punch through the walls - and I do have to live here.

KIRA

Actually, no you don't. That's the bad news - the prefect wants you to relocate to the port and set up your Endtree liaison office there.

Torrna's face drops, and he is suddenly furious again.

TORRNA

An office? Inna hasn't even asked her government's permission yet, and Natlar wants me to set up an office?

KIRA

She's hoping for the best. Besides, after your performance today, I think she wants to keep you as far away from the capital building as possible.

TORRNA

Yes - to keep my voice from being heard.

KIRA

Torrna, even from the port, your voice is going to be heard.

Torrna's anger deflates, and he chuckles.

TORRNA

How do you do that, Ashla? You have been a most valued right hand. And one I am reluctant to lose. If I am to be exiled to the port, I want you by my side. To guard my back and keep me from making a complete ass of myself.

KIRA

(ponders a moment)

Can I think about it?

TORRNA

Of course, let me know tomorrow.
It will take me that long to pack
up my own things and inform Lyyra
and the boys that we'll be moving.

LYYRA (o.s.)

Moving where?

They turn to see LYYRA entering. She is Torrna's wife, red-haired and stocky like him, and she works as an army medic.

TORRNA

I am to be the new liaison with
the Endtree fleet that will occupy
the port.

LYYRA

Good. The change in climate will
do some good. The humidity opens
your pores, you know. How are you,
Nerys? Is the arm healing well?

KIRA

Well enough.

LYYRA

I still want to know what you did
to keep your teeth so perfect.

Kira doesn't want to answer that question, since of course she is from the future, where they have better dental care.

KIRA

Nothing special. I need to get
going, and think about your offer,
Torrna. I'll talk to you tomorrow.
Good to see you again, Lyyra.

Kira leaves.

6 **INT. ARMY BARRACKS**

A room of rickety bunk beds and recovering soldiers. Kira lies on her front on one bed, writing with an ink-well pen before an oil lamp, in modern Bajoran script in a diary.

KIRA (v.o.)

Just like the good old days, I said. And here I am, right in the middle of them. My memories of how exactly I got here are hazy... The last thing I remember clearly was that desert planet in the Delta Quadrant. I was dying of radiation poisoning... I was already dead.

FLASHBACK - 8x12 "DEMONS OF AIR AND DARKNESS"

Kira drags herself across the desert, half-dead.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA (v.o.)

And now I'm somehow in Bajor's ancient past, fighting a war that my history barely remembers. I don't usually bother thinking about it too much. I don't even know exactly how far back I've gone, or how long I've been here. All I know is there's no more radiation sickness... and that the Prophets put me here for a reason.

(beat)

I know the Prophets didn't build the gateways, the Iconians did. But from the reports I read on the way from Deep Space Nine to Europa Nova, it seems the gateways work in all sorts of different ways. Some are fixed to one location, some change between several. Some even work inter-dimensionally. So it stands to reason they could take you through time as well. But then, so can the Prophets.

(beat)

And Torrna... he's a good man, if a little short-tempered. He calls me "Ashla" - it's Ancient Bajoran for "giant" - because I'm so much

taller than most of the women from this time. Fighting with Torrna and the resistance against the Lerrit army - that was an easy decision to make. I don't want to do anything to significantly alter the past, but I feel it in my *pagh* that I'm here for a reason. There are too many similarities to my own life for it to be coincidence.

She pauses as she comes to her decision. Not like there was really ever any choice in the matter.

KIRA (v.o.)

So I will go with Torrna to the port. I went when my government wanted to get me out of the way, after all.

She stops writing, closes her diary, puts out the light, and settles down to sleep.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

7 EXT. PERIKIAN PORT

A bustling port, filled with merchants, sailors, soldiers and average people going about their day. In the distance, a large Endtree WARSHIP grows closer. It's a fairly nice and sunny day, as a brisk seaside breeze fills the air.

Kira stands talking to a very worried looking MERCHANT.

KIRA

Look, Torrna's not going to bite your head off if you take this complaint to him.

MERCHANT

Are you sure? I've heard about how he drove off the Lerrit Army by breathing fire and setting them alight!

KIRA

(amused)

I can assure you that his fire-breathing days are over. Just go to him and tell him that you object to the inspections. I can't guarantee that he'll do what you ask, but he will listen. Just give him a chance.

MERCHANT

(unsure)

If you say so.

KIRA

I say so.

The merchant walks away, and Kira approaches the docks, just as the Endtree ship draws close. Now she can see that underneath the flapping militaristic Endtree flag there is another, smaller one - the more agrarian-styled flag of the Perikian Republic.

People all around CHEER to see the ship and their flag - Kira joins in too.

As the ship docks, the gangplank comes out and Torrna and Inna disembark, chatting amiably MOS, a far cry from their earlier relationship.

FLASHBACK - 4x07 "STARSHIP DOWN"

Sisko and Kira are finally bonding as friends over baseball, after three years of just being colleagues.

BACK TO SCENE

Torrna and Inna part; Inna walks another way while Torrna approaches Kira. They talk as they walk together back to their office.

KIRA

So what happened?

TORRNA

We found the pirates and took care of them in short order. They didn't have anything to match Inna's cannon.

KIRA

It wasn't that long ago you only ever referred to her as "the Admiral" or "that damned woman."

TORRNA

I suppose so. But she showed me something on this trip that I didn't expect. She was efficient yet merciful with the pirates, she was very effective in questioning their leader without being unnecessarily brutal, and she agreed to fly the Perikian flag.

KIRA

I was going to ask about that.

TORRNA

(shrug)

It took surprisingly little argument. I pointed out that her fleet was there at the invitation of the Perikian government, and to protect Perikian interests, so it made sense that they should fly our colours. Of course, she didn't give in entirely...

KIRA

Let me guess - you wanted the Perikian flag on top?

TORRNA

(seriously)

These are our waters, Ashla. Never forget that.

8 INT. TORRNA'S OFFICE

Basically the same room as before, but laid out as an office with a large wooden desk and various parchments strewn about. Torrna is settling into his seat behind the desk as Kira enters after him.

KIRA

So what did the pirate leader say when Inna questioned her so efficiently and mercifully?

TORRNA

Actually, the most interesting intelligence wasn't from the pirates, but from their slaves. They were refugees from a disaster in the Fire Caves.

FLASHBACK - 7x25 "WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND"

The formerly dead Fire Caves burst into life with torrents of roiling supernatural fire.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA
(quietly stunned)
What?

TORRNA
Apparently the entrance to the
Fire Caves collapsed, and
completely destroyed the city of
Yvrig. Some of them claimed there
was some kind of blue fire when
the caves collapsed, but I don't
put much stock in that.

FLASHBACK - 6x21 "THE RECKONING"

Kira is possessed by a Prophet, with blue flames licking
around her body.

BACK TO SCENE

Kira knows instantly what has happened - the Prophets have
banished their enemies the *pagh*-Wraiths, to the fire caves.

KIRA
We've got to help those people!
There may be -

TORRNA
Sit down, Ashla. This happened
more than two weeks ago. There's
very little we can do.
(she settles)
However, this does mean that we're
going to see a significant
increase in traffic at the port.
Without Yvrig, we're the only
viable port on the southern coast
of the continent.

FLASHBACK - 8x12 "DEMONS OF AIR AND DARKNESS"

Deep Space Nine is very busy, every docking port filled
with Starfleet and Bajoran convoy ships.

BACK TO SCENE

TORRNA

We'll need to work on expanding the marina to accommodate more ships. Maybe now Marta won't close her tavern like she's been threatening to. Hell, we might need a new tavern...

KIRA

We'll need more ships from Endtree - or to start building our own.

TORRNA

What for?

KIRA

To hold off the pirates... and the Lerrit Navy.

TORRNA

The Lerrit Navy is barely worth giving the name.

KIRA

Don't be so sure. We got another dispatch from Moloki while you were away. He says that the Lerrit have employed shipbuilders from the Bajora to completely rebuild their navy. And with this change in geography, they're going to be more interested in taking us back than ever.

FLASHBACK - 5x26 "A CALL TO ARMS"

Dukat and Weyoun walk through the Promenade, led by a garrison of Jem'Hadar, as the Dominion takes the station at the start of the war. They are met by Kira, Odo and Quark.

BACK TO SCENE

TORRNA

(slumps)

Damn it, I was actually starting to enjoy the good news.

KIRA
I'm sorry, but -

TORRNA
No, that's alright. I don't blame you, Ashla. That's why I keep you around. You have the knack for dragging me back to reality.

KIRA
Well... I'm glad you and the admiral are getting along better, anyway.

TORRNA
Yes. Her tiresome insistence on giving those silly Prophets of hers all the credit aside, she's quite a brilliant tactician. You should have seen...

They settle in for a happy, relaxed conversation, except...

SMASH-CUT TO:

9 INT. LERRIT DUNGEON

Kira FALLS on her face onto a cold stone floor, beaten, bruised and bloody. A small and dingy dungeon, with muck everywhere, insects scurrying, and smelling disgusting. The only light comes from a small window very high up in the dark stone wall, far out of Kira's reach.

She has been here for some time, and she is filthy. She looks over from her spot on the ground to the opposite corner, and there is Torrna in a similar condition, huddled in a ball and cradling an injured left arm, where a nasty wound is looking infected and verging on gangrenous.

Behind her, a huge and heavy iron door CREAKS slowly open. She turns to it, but the brighter torchlight from outside makes her wince and crease up her eyes.

A GUARD enters, big and threatening in a dark uniform, and looks down on them with disgust.

Behind him comes PRINCE AVTRA, the monarch of the LERRIT nation. He is young but carrying himself with a haughty superiority, quite taken with his own importance.

He is dressed in clean white clothes befitting his station, with a cloak over them to protect him from the grime of the dungeon. Torrna and Kira both look up at him, contemptuous.

KIRA

Prince Avtra. You look better on your coins, Your Highness.

The guard SLAPS her hard across the face in response.

AVTRA

You will rise in the presence of royalty, General.

TORRNA

As soon as I'm in the presence of some, I'll consider it.

FLASHBACK - 6x01 "A TIME TO STAND"

In the commander's office, Kira spits her anger right into Dukat's face.

BACK TO SCENE

The guard KICKS Torrna in the stomach. He coughs hard for several seconds, but is not deterred.

TORRNA

I'm disappointed, Prince. I was hoping that Her Royal Highness herself would come to gloat over our capture. It is, after all, the only true victory you have won in this war.

Avtra laughs out loud at that.

TORRNA

Something amuses you?

AVTRA

My dear mother has been dead for some time, fool. Do you truly think she engineered this war? Or our alliance with the Bajora?

Torrna remains stony-faced, refusing to give Avtra the satisfaction of a reaction. Avtra is not deterred.

AVTRA

I can see by your face that you appreciate the position you're in, General. With the Bajora behind us, the Lerrit will destroy Endtree, squash you upstart rebels and finally control the entire southern coast. Now, I don't suppose you'll tell me what the troop movements are from your little band of spear carriers?

TORRNA

If I thought you were worth wasting the spit, I'd spit on you right now.

AVTRA

(shrug)

I thought as much. Besides, I can't imagine even your soldiers are so stupid as to retain the same battle plans after one of their generals has been captured. Still, I had to ask. And I had to see the infamous General Torrna in a Lerrit dungeon for myself.

FLASHBACK - 6x06 "THE SACRIFICE OF ANGELS"

Kira and her anti-Dominion resistance cell are behind a force field in one of the station's security cells.

BACK TO SCENE

AVTRA

(simply)

You will be publicly executed at dawn tomorrow. It was going to be yesterday, but the demand for tickets was simply outrageous. We had to have extra seating built for the stadium.

(re Kira)

As for this one... I suppose we should let Torrna have one final night of companionship before we take her to the front lines. She'll make fine arrow fodder.

He turns to leave, dismissing them as beneath his notice.

AVTRA

Enough of this. I need to get this dungeon stink off my person.

Avtra leaves, and the guard closes the door behind them. Kira and Torrna look to each other in worry.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

10 INT. LERRIT DUNGEON

Alone again after the Prince has left, Kira goes to Torrna.

TORRNA

We have to get out of here.

KIRA

I'm open to suggestions. You know there's no exit. The only ones who have free rein out of here are the insects.

Torrna tries to stand up, but unthinkingly braces himself with his wounded left arm, and collapses under it with a GROAN. Kira tries to help, but he waves her away.

TORRNA

I'm fine - just forgot the damn wound. Stupid arm's gone numb. Damn those foul Bajora - I hope their Prophets strike them down with lightning.

Kira shakes her head silently - she knows the Prophets don't work like that. Torrna struggles to get up again, grimacing. He is hurt worse than he is willing to show.

TORRNA

We have to get this intelligence back to Prefect Natlar and Admiral Inna. If the Queen is dead, and the Bajora are supplying the Lerrit... we can change our strategy, try to hit the supply lines the Bajora are using...

The door suddenly OPENS again, and a different guard enters. He looks nervous and furtive, and he closes the door behind him once he has entered. Kira is confused - guards never do that.

This is MOLOKI, the Perikian spy in the Lerrit camp. He is playing the Quark role in the prison break scene from "The Sacrifice of Angels," although personality-wise he is more like Garak, with his fussiness and patriotism.

MOLOKI

(hands keys)

C'mon, c'mon, we haven't got much time. Take these.

TORRNA

Who the hell are you?

MOLOKI

Right, right, the password. *Pree-o calee-waar veyot amska-fey.*

TORRNA

Moloki?

MOLOKI

In the very frightened flesh, yes.

TORRNA

We thought you were dead.

MOLOKI

Probably will be after this stunt, believe me. Don't know what I was thinking, coming up with this ludicrous plan. They'll use my guts for building material.

KIRA

What happened to you?

MOLOKI

Nothing happened as such. I simply couldn't get any messages out. The moment Her Royal Senility dropped dead, all hell broke loose. A spy can no longer make anything like an honest living in this world.

TORRNA

Can you get us -

MOLOKI

Yes, yes, I can get you out of here, just give me a moment to collect myself. I've never been much for impersonations, and I had to pass myself off as one of those imbecile guards that the Prince likes to employ. Stomping round all day, bellowing so loud you can't think! No style at all.

FLASHBACK - 4x22 "FOR THE CAUSE"

Kira watches Garak putter around his tailor's shop.

BACK TO SCENE

Moloki pulls a parchment out from inside his cloak.

MOLOKI

In any case, here's a map of how to get out of here, as well as a map that shows the supply lines the Bajora are using. Assuming you get home alive, that should be fairly useful. Let me make this abundantly clear, General - it will not be easy to get home. It will involve going through a swamp and then through a mountain range. Deviate even slightly from the route I've marked, and you're guaranteed to be captured.

KIRA

And if we stay on the route?

MOLOKI

You're only likely to be captured.

TORRNA

I was afraid of that.

KIRA

(re Torrna)

He's not going to make it with his
arm in the shape it's in.

MOLOKI

He has to, dammit!

(composes himself)

Avtra is sterile. He can't produce
any heirs. I had hopes that his
pathetic dynasty would finally
lose its choke hold on the Lerrit,
and we could be a good people
again, like we used to be. This
ridiculous alliance with the
Bajora changes that, of course.
Now they've got a toe in the door,
they'll use it to take over once
the Crown Moron finally dies.

(pulls out a
short sword)

You'll need this more than I will.

Kira takes the sword and hefts it to test. It'll do. Torrna
is now on his feet and sweating more than he should.

KIRA

You okay?

TORRNA

No, but it doesn't matter. Moloki
is right, we must return with this
news or everything we've fought
for will be lost!

MOLOKI

You're as much of a crazed zealot
as I suspected, General.

(Kira protests)

I meant it as a compliment, my
dear, believe me. I can say that
as the craziest of crazed zealots
myself. Now come on, let's go over
this map quickly before someone
decides to check up on us...

They huddle and begin to plan.

11 **EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - ESTABLISHING**

Cold and snowy peaks, whipped with winds.

12 **EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE**

Kira half-crouches in a snow drift, peeking out from behind a large rock to make sure no-one is waiting for her. She is shivering badly, but also shiny with sweat, running a very bad fever, but holding on through sheer force of will.

Torrna leans against the rock, feverish and cradling his wounded arm. Neither is well dressed or fed, and they are suffering badly from the cold. Looking over to Torrna, Kira sees that he has actually fallen asleep - or passed out.

KIRA

(slaps him)

Torrna! Torrna! Dammit, wake up!

TORRNA

(weak, confused)

Ash... Ashla?

KIRA

Yes, it's me. We're still not being followed. And we've only got a few more kilometres to go. Think you're up to it?

TORRNA

(struggling to
get up)

I think so. I just - aarrgh!
Sorry... keep forgetting that the
arm doesn't really work.

She reaches for him, trying to get to the arm. He grabs her with his good hand to stop her.

KIRA

Let me look at it.

TORRNA

No! I'm sorry, Ashla, but you
fussing over it isn't going to

change the fact that it feels like someone's driven a flaming hot poker through my shoulder.

KIRA

Once we get back home -

TORRNA

It'll be too late. Ashla - I need you to cut the damn thing off.

KIRA

(laughing at
the thought)

What? I'm no surgeon. If I cut your arm off now, you'll bleed to death.

TORRNA

And if you don't, I'll die from the infection anyway.

KIRA

Torrna, if I just hack your arm off with no alcohol, no bandages, no cauterising agent...

TORRNA

Okay, okay, you've made your point. I suppose this means I'll just have to make it back to Perikia then.

Nodding, Kira helps him to his feet. They head out into the snow, and start to make their way across the mountains. They trudge and trudge and trudge...

FLASHBACK - 8x12 "DEMONS OF AIR AND DARKNESS"

Kira drags herself across the desert, withering from radiation poisoning, towards the gateway and rescue.

BACK TO SCENE

Kira is increasingly feverish, but being the strong one and forcing Torrna to carry on. She mutters to herself.

KIRA

Maybe it's just nonsense. Maybe all of this is. Maybe I'm just here because it's where the gateway sent me. There's no purpose, no path the Prophets have put me on. I'm just here because a portal happened to show up when I needed it.

TORRNA

(groggily)

What?

KIRA

Nothing.

TORRNA

We will make it, Ashla. We must. There is no other way. If we do not, Perikia will be lost. It's our land - the Lerrit don't belong there, and I'll do everything I can to keep them out. But we can't do it if we can't get Moloki's information back to the prefect.

Kira looks at him, the determination on his face. It encourages her.

KIRA

We'll make it.

Then her knees BUCKLE, and she collapses to the snow.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

13 EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE

Kira lies prone in the snow, face down, as Torrna reaches out to her in worry. Slowly WHITE OUT.

We go into a series of flashbacks from previous episodes, seen as if in a dream, with the ghostly over-exposed feel of a *pagh-tem-far* vision from the Prophets...

14 FLASHBACK - 4x07 "STARSHIP DOWN"

The *Defiant* bridge - Sisko wounded, Kira caring for him.

SISKO

Major?

KIRA

Sir?

SISKO

Tell me another story.

15 FLASHBACK - 5x10 "RAPTURE"

Kira and Kai Winn face off on the Promenade, arguing over Kira's time in the Bajoran resistance.

WINN

You had your weapons to protect you... All I had was my faith... and my courage. Walk with the Prophets, child. I know I will.

16 FLASHBACK - 5x10 "RAPTURE"

Kira and Sisko in the holosuite with the reconstruction of the B'Hala obelisk.

SISKO

I was there....

KIRA

Sir?

SISKO

B'Hala. It was the eve of the Peldor Festival. I could hear them ringing the temple chimes.

KIRA

You were dreaming.

SISKO

No! I was there! I could smell the burning *bateret* leaves, taste the incense on the wind. I was standing in front of the obelisk, and as I looked up, for a moment, I understood it all. B'Hala, the Orbs, the Occupation, the discovery of the wormhole, the coming war with the Dominion...

17 **FLASHBACK - 8x11 "GATEWAYS"**

Kira and Taran'atar in the runabout, discussing "home."

KIRA

A people can be defined by where they come from. Who the Bajorans are is in part shaped by our world. It's part of what ties us to the Prophets.

TARAN'ATAR

You believe caring for your home brings you closer to your gods?

KIRA

I suppose that's one way of looking at it.

TARAN'ATAR

Yet your gods cast you out.

KIRA

Not my gods. Just some people who claim to represent them.

18 **FLASHBACK - 6x21 "THE RECKONING"**

Sisko speaks to Prophet-possessed Kira outside the shrine.

SISKO
Why have you taken this woman's
body?

PROPHET KIRA
This vessel is willing. The
Reckoning - it is time.

SISKO
The Reckoning... what is it?

PROPHET KIRA
The end, or the beginning.

19 **FLASHBACK - 5x10 "RAPTURE"**

Sisko on the biobed in sickbay, post-vision.

SISKO
But what do the locusts represent?
And why Cardassia...?

ADM WHATLEY
You were dreaming. And dreams
don't always make sense.

SISKO
This was no dream!

20 **FLASHBACK - 5x10 "RAPTURE"**

Kira, Worf, Jadzia Dax and Chief O'Brien in Ops, as Sisko undergoes emergency surgery.

KIRA
The captain is not going to die.
He is the Emissary, and the
Prophets will take care of him.

O'BRIEN

With all due respect, Major, I'd rather see Julian take care of him.

KIRA

Chief, I know you're worried, but the Prophets are leading the Emissary on this path for a reason.

WORF

Do not attempt to convince them, Major. They cannot understand.

DAX

Since when do you believe in the Prophets?

WORF

What I believe in... is faith. Without it, there can be no victory. If the captain's faith is strong, he will prevail.

DAX

It's not much to bet his life on.

KIRA

You're wrong. It's everything.

21 FLASHBACK - 4x07 "STARSHIP DOWN"

Sisko wounded, Kira caring for him...

SISKO

Major?

KIRA

Sir?

SISKO

Tell me another story.

22 INT. PERIKIAN INFIRMARY

The fog recedes and Kira's eyes flutter open onto the ramshackle infirmary of the Perikian Army. Standing over her and tending to her is Maldik.

MALDIK

Nerys?

KIRA

Where... where am...

MALDIK

You're in the infirmary -

FLASHBACK - 4x25 "BODY PARTS"

Bashir hovers over Kira as she lies on a biobed in sickbay.

BACK TO SCENE

MALDIK

- at Fort Tendro. It's me, Maldik.
How are you feeling?

KIRA

Thirsty. And warm.

MALDIK

That's good. Both very encouraging signs.

KIRA

Wait a minute. What about Torrna?
We were in the mountains, and -

MALDIK

He's already gone back to the capital. You'd both been declared dead by the Lerrit, you see. They claimed to have executed you. It came as something of a surprise to see him stumbling into the fort, carrying you on his shoulder. In any case, he left immediately to pass on some news or other about the Lerrit, and also let his wife and children know he was alive.

KIRA

Lyyra must have been devastated.

MALDIK

I wouldn't know. The general did ask me to pass on a message. He said, and I think I'm quoting this precisely, "Thank her for me."

KIRA

Thank me? What did I do, besides fall on my face?

MALDIK

Well, you didn't actually come out and tell him you were dying of pneumonia while you were stupidly trudging through hip-deep swamps and freezing mountains.

KIRA

(weakly)

I didn't want to worry him.

MALDIK

No, better to wait until you fall unconscious and completely frighten him.

Kira ignores his sarcasm.

KIRA

What about his arm? Were you able to save it?

MALDIK

Barely. You did a good job of keeping the wound clean. If you'd continued your summer stroll for much longer, it would have been infected, but he got the two of you here in time. Enough gossip, you need your rest.

KIRA

I'm fine...

She tries to sit up, but her head spins and she relents.

KIRA (cont)

On the other hand, maybe rest
isn't such a bad idea.

MALDIK

(rolls eyes)

Soldiers make wonderful patients.
Try listening periodically, it'll
do you wonders.

As he turns away to his medical instruments and Kira lies
back to stare at the ceiling...

23 **EXT. PERIKIAN PORT**

Formerly busy, happy and full of life, the port has been
bombed and attacked by the Lerrit. Docks and buildings are
collapsed or on fire, people walk around shell shocked,
trying to help the injured. There are some dead bodies.

Kira stands with Maldik looking out over it with dismay. As
she does, the memories come thick and fast.

KIRA

What happened here?

MALDIK

Lerrit's last stand, I would say.
General Torrna pretty much beat
them on land, but the Lerrit Navy
threw their whole armada at us.

KIRA

It looks like it.

MALDIK

Oh, the admiral, she threw back
pretty good. Cost her her life.

KIRA

(shocked)

Inna's dead?

FLASHBACK - 7x25 "WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND"

Sisko and Dukat tumble over the edge of the Fire Caves and fall into the flames.

BACK TO SCENE

MALDIK

(nodding)

Just what we needed after everything else. Natlar was killed too. We won, but not without a cost, if you know what I mean.

(gestures around)

A kind of "If I can't have it, no-one can" gesture.

FLASHBACK - 7x25 "WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND"

Sisko, Admiral Ross and General Martok walk through the devastated Cardassian cities, destroyed by the Dominion as a final act of spite before surrendering.

BACK TO SCENE

The Merchant from earlier is among the battered people; he spots Kira and Maldik.

MERCHANT

Thank the Prophets she's here. Maybe she can talk some sense into him.

Kira looks worried - is he talking about Torrna?

24 INT. TORRNA'S OFFICE

Torrna slouches behind his desk, which is covered with a mess of papers and objects, plus empty alcohol glasses. The room is the total opposite of the neatness from earlier.

He is extremely drunk and totally destroyed with grief, having long since forgotten the glasses and begun drinking straight from the bottles. The chaos of the port shows through the window outside.

TORRNA

They're dead. Dead dead dead dead.

Kira stands just by the doorway, looking on with worry and sympathy. She empathises - she has been through this too.

KIRA

I know, Maldik told me about the prefect and Admiral Inna. But -

Torrna drunkenly swipes one of the empty glasses off the table and it SMASHes to the floor.

TORRNA

No! Not them. I mean, they're dead too, but that's not who I mean.

KIRA

Then who -

TORRNA

Lyyra! She's dead!

Kira is stunned to speechlessness. His wife...

FLASHBACK - 5x19 "TIES OF BLOOD AND WATER"

Occupation-era Kira walks into a resistance cave hideout, FUREL behind her, and sees the dead body of her father.

GANTT

He died calling your name.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA

What about the kids, are they - ?

TORRNA

They're dead too. All of 'em, dead dead dead dead. An' they din't know.

KIRA

Didn't know what?

TORRNA

(in tears)

That I was alive! Damned Lerrits told 'em I was dead, but by the time I got home, they were dead, and I never got chance to tell 'em I was alive!

KIRA

(grasping at straws)

Maybe they found out from the dispatches.

TORRNA

Doesn't matter. Nothin' matters.

(gestures)

They want me to take charge now't war's over. Ain't gonna do it.

KIRA

What do you mean?

He snuffles, looking around at the bottles on the table.

TORRNA

Gonna drink m'self to death. If that doesn't work, I'm gonna cut m'throat. Don't wanna live in this world without her.

FLASHBACK - 7x25 "WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND"

Odo morphs into a tuxedo suit before melting back into the Great Link, as Kira waves him goodbye.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA

Listen to me Torrna - you can't just give up.

TORRNA

(thumping desk)

Why not? Haven't I done enough?

FLASHBACK - 8x03 "AVATAR, pt 3"

Kira sits behind her desk, trying to bury herself in work after her Attainder by Vedek Yevir.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA

No, you haven't! You've spent all this time fighting, you can't give up now! Perikia needs you! They couldn't have fought this war without you, and they certainly wouldn't have won it without you!

TORRNA

Doesn't matter. Without Lyyra -

FLASHBACK - 3x13 "LIFE SUPPORT"

Kira cries over her ex-boyfriend Bareil's body as he slowly dies, bit by bit on an infirmary biobed.

FLASHBACK - 6x26 "TEARS OF THE PROPHETS"

Kira looks on distraught as Bashir draws the sheet over Jadzia Dax's dead body.

BACK TO SCENE

KIRA

There are still hundreds of people out there who fought and died for Perikia - including Lyyra. Without Natlar, without Inna, they'll need your strength. They need the man who beat the Lerrit Army. They need the man who trudged through the swamp and the mountains to get home. They need you.

FLASHBACK - 1x13 "BATTLE LINES"

Kira wails over Kai Opaka's dead body after the runabout crash in the Gamma Quadrant.

FLASHBACK - 5x19 "TIES OF BLOOD AND WATER"

Her father's dead body on the resistance cave floor.

BACK TO SCENE

TORRNA

Can't do it. Just can't.

With a snarl of frustration, Kira goes around to Torrna's side of the desk and tries to haul him out of his seat by his shirt. He's too heavy, plus drunk, so it doesn't work.

KIRA

Get up!

TORRNA

Wha' for?

KIRA

I said get up!

He stumbles to his feet. She drags him forcefully over to the window, where they look out at the devastated port, the fires and injured people. She is losing patience with him.

KIRA

You see that?

TORRNA

I don't see anything but -

KIRA

The bodies! Look at the bodies! Those people died fighting for Perikia! So did Natlar, so did Inna, and so did Lyyra. You have no right to give up now, because if you do, Lerrit has won. There's no-one who can unite these people the way you can now - you're a hero! Without you, they'll fall apart, and either Prince Avtra or the Bajora will be able to come right in and take over.

Torrna stares out at the view, tears in his eyes. He stares for a long time, before finally turning back to Kira.

TORRNA
I'm sorry, Ashla.

But realisation has dawned on Kira's face at last. She finally understands what this has all been about. With a look of distant amazement, she turns away from Torrna and walks calmly out of the room.

TORRNA
Ashla? Ashla, where are you going?

25 **EXT. PERIKIAN PORT**

Kira walks firmly through the damaged port. She looks at it as she walks past, but she has a goal, a purpose. She understands something now that she did not before, and somehow she knows exactly where she is going.

26 **EXT. OPEN FIELD**

The battle field where it all began. On the small hill where we first saw Kira, with more dead bodies of Lerrit, Perikians, Endtree and Bajora all around, there stands a GATEWAY. Person-sized, glittering in the air, in the middle of nowhere with no explanation or visible means of support.

Kira approaches, looking at it with determination. She doesn't know where it will send her, but she is confident and knows there is a purpose at work here. She steps through the gateway and disappears.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

27 EXT. SPACE - MILKY WAY GALAXY

The entire galaxy, the full sprawling spiral, seen as if from outside it, looking up at it.

Slowly PULL BACK until we see that Kira is looking up at this too, gazing at it in wonder and fascination. She is as far from home as she has ever been.

Pulling further back, we see that she is back in the Starfleet desert uniform she wore when she first stepped through the gateway. She is standing on an oval platform that seems to just hang there in inter-galactic space, without any walls or visible force-fields.

A HAND reaches into Kira's view, pointing at the area of the galaxy that contains Bajor. A VOICE speaks, deep and rumbling but friendly. Kira is so fascinated by the view that she doesn't even react to the hand or voice.

ICONIAN (o.s.)

It's here.

Kira finally turns and her eyes follow the hand up the arm to the entire body. She sees a very tall and slim being, possibly eight feet tall, beside her on the platform.

It is humanoid but dressed in a deep burgundy robe that completely obscures its features. This is a real ICONIAN, genuinely worthy of the legend. Behind him is a control console that matches the ones from TNG 2x11 "Contagion" and DS9 4x23 "To the Death."

She is not scared, but perhaps awed - it is all part of the experience and she simply accepts this being's presence.

KIRA

Wh-what?

ICONIAN

The world you come from is here. I believe you refer to it as Bajor.

KIRA
Who are you?

ICONIAN
(considers a moment)
You could say I'm an emissary of
the people who built this outpost,
but that might have unfortunate
connotations for you. Suffice to
say, I am custodian of this place.

KIRA
You're an Iconian?

The figure nods subtly under his hood - that is as much of
an answer as she is going to get.

ICONIAN
You'll be pleased to know that I
was able to cure you of that
unfortunate energy.

FLASHBACK - 8x12 "DEMONS OF AIR AND DARKNESS"

Kira looks at her tricorder, showing THETA RADIATION LEVELS
and the rising line.

BACK TO SCENE

ICONIAN
I assume you wish to take the gift
that has been given to you and
then go home?

She wonders for a moment, still a little overwhelmed, but
then duty reasserts itself.

KIRA
Actually, I need to return to
Europa Nova. I made a promise that
I would do everything I could -

The Iconian is already gliding eerily back over to his
console, and he checks various instruments.

Kira cautiously follows him, and looks at the display, a holographic projection that hovers over the console.

It shows a blue dotted line bisecting the image, with one star system and various alien symbols on one side, and another on the other. The Iconian inspects the display.

ICONIAN

Ah, I see. One of our *hezlat* gateways is in orbit of that planet.

KIRA

(confused)

Hezlat?

ICONIAN

Many different types of gateways were constructed over time. Some large and inelegant, some small and functional, others that could be held in the palm of one's hand. The *hezlats* were among the first, and also among the largest. This one is stable - it links System X-two-seven-pi-L with System J-five-five-delta-Q.

KIRA

Someone decided to dump radiation into that *hezlat* of yours. We had to evacuate everyone from the planet before the levels became fatal.

ICONIAN

Yes, I see that now. But there is something blocking the gateway.

KIRA

(relieved)

That's one of our vessels. That's how we travel, by ship. I used mine to block the radiation from coming through and -

ICONIAN

I understand, Colonel. I observe your ships traversing the galaxy all the time from here. It is a hobby not shared by all my people.

KIRA

There are more of you, then?

ICONIAN

Yes. Some of them are dealing with this crisis now.

KIRA

What about Europa Nova?

ICONIAN

Hmm? Oh, yes. I am searching now.

He hits more controls, and the display changes to include a third star system.

ICONIAN

Ah, there we are. System O-two-two-psi-T has a star that will suffice for the purpose. I can reprogram this particular *hezlat* gateway to transport the radiating matter on both sides into the star in that system, which will render it inert.

(works more controls)

I will also remove the object blocking the gateway. Would you like it in System O-two-two-psi-T, System X-two-seven-pi-L or System J-five-five-delta-Q?

KIRA

Uh... the second one. Is the place where you're sending the waste uninhabited?

The Iconian seems to suggest that's a stupid question.

ICONIAN

I assume by the state you arrived in that your species is vulnerable to this type of energy?

KIRA

Yes, very vulnerable.

ICONIAN

In that case, you must be careful. The gateway can remove the matter, but some of the energy will remain around that planet. Repopulating it will be a challenge.

KIRA

Like I said, I made a promise.

ICONIAN

It is time for you to leave.

The Iconian presses more controls, a blue light shoots out from the console, and a gateway opens up right on the edge of the platform.

Through it, Kira sees Ops on DS9, same as it looked last time, with EZRI DAX at the central table and lots of bustle going on around her. Kira looks back to the Iconian.

KIRA

We thought there was a natural phenomenon preventing your gateways from functioning in the space around my planet. But this one on Deep Space Nine, and the one on the Perikian peninsula thousands of years ago... that's not true, is it?

ICONIAN

No. But we respect the beings who watch your worlds. And we long ago promised never to interfere with them. Unless invited to do so.

KIRA

Worlds...? Plural?

ICONIAN
Farewell, Colonel.

Realising that she is not going to get any more out of him, she turns and prepares to enter the gateway. But before she does, she takes one last look at the galaxy entire. Looking up, she points at various parts.

KIRA
If that's the Alpha Quadrant...
and that's the Delta Quadrant...
then that must be the Gamma
Quadrant.
(pause)
You don't look so far away from
here, Odo.

ICONIAN
One of the things that doomed the
Iconian Empire, Colonel, was that
the gateway technology meant we
could no longer travel. We lost
sight of the journey in our desire
to achieve the destination. Don't
make the same mistake.

KIRA
I won't.

With a smile, she steps through the gateway yet again, and disappears.

28 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Finally back home. The station is still busy with ships, but none of the Starfleet ships are there - just Bajoran and civilian ones, plus the Cardassian ship *Trager* docked at an upper pylon.

29 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Ezri Dax stands at the central table, closely inspecting her consoles and a number of padds at once. She is busy, a little stressed. SHAR is at the sciences station, extras elsewhere.

After a few moments of quiet busy-ness, Kira suddenly APPEARS in their midst on the lower level. There is no gateway as such - Kira simply appears as if stepping out of one, and drops the couple of inches to the deck.

Dax jumps, SHRIEKS aloud and throws her padds up into the air with shock and surprise. She blinks several times as if not believing her eyes.

DAX
Colonel?

KIRA
Yes, Lieutenant, it's me.

Dax rushes forward and HUGS Kira tight - completely non-regulation, but she doesn't care. Everyone else is pretty boggled too. Eventually Dax lets go. Kira is happy, serene.

KIRA
Report.

DAX
(pulls self
together)
Europa Nova has been completely evacuated. Most of the refugees are on Bajor, but the station's filled almost to capacity too. Ro, Etana and Quark have returned, and Ro says she's got some good news regarding the Orion Syndicate. And Taran'atar's in the infirmary.

KIRA
(surprised)
He's alright?

DAX
I wouldn't go that far, but he'll recover. Whatever he fought gave him quite a beating. Apparently enough to cause delusions, since he reported that you were dead.

KIRA

I think I was, for a moment.

DAX

It's good to have you back, Nerys.
I don't think this place could
have taken losing another
commanding officer.

KIRA

It's good to be back, Ezri. And
don't worry, I'm not going
anywhere. I've still got too much
work to do.

30 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

The station is packed with human refugees from Europa Nova, as well as its usual throng of alien visitors. Kira stands in her Bajoran Militia uniform, looking out of an upper level window in the direction of the wormhole.

KIRA (v.o.)

Station log, Colonel Kira Nerys
reporting. Dax explained what
happened with the gateways.

(pause)

Apparently Captain Picard of the
Enterprise succeeded in contacting
the real Iconians and getting them
to help him shut down the network.
It's going to take the whole of
Starfleet to do it, so Commander
Vaughn has taken the *Defiant* to
join the effort. Meanwhile the
Corps of Engineers is already
moving in to clean up the mess,
including figuring out how to make
Europa Nova habitable again.

(pause)

As for the fake Iconians, these
Petraw found some way into the
technology years ago and tried to
use it to find their long-lost
homeworld. When that didn't work,
they tried to sell them to the

highest bidder to finance another attempt. All they wanted to do was go home.

She turns and begins walking through the Promenade, down the spiral staircase to the lower level. She walks proudly, comfortably. This is her home.

KIRA (v.o.)

Gul Macet and the *Trager* have been invited to stay at the station for a while as a prelude to some kind of diplomatic dialogue with Cardassia. Councillor zh'Thane, Ensign ch'Thane's mother, is still on board the station, helping the refugees. Lieutenant Bowers has been dispatched back to Europa Nova to pick up the *Euphrates*. And we have a lovely new piece of technology in the shield enhancer from the tanker ship.

(pause)

Dax is busy reassuring everyone, including First Minister Shakaar and Kasidy Yates, that contrary to reports I am very much alive.

31 INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - INFIRMARY

Kira stands talking to BASHIR, while TARAN'ATAR can be seen on a biobed in the background.

KIRA (v.o.)

I made sure to look in on Taran'atar as well. A good deal of my life, I owe to him.

BASHIR

Absolutely astonishing. If any other humanoid had taken those kind of injuries, even a Klingon, there's no way they would have survived. But he's recovering faster than anything I've ever seen. Of course, he hates being

stuck here. But even laboratory-bred super-soldiers need their rest when they've had the stuffing beaten out of them.

Kira now beside Taran'atar's bed, him still pretty badly damaged but healing, and as relieved-looking as he can be.

TARAN'ATAR

It is good that we have both reclaimed our lives.

KIRA

You don't know the half of it.

32 INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira sits behind her desk, looking through records of Ancient Bajor on her computer monitor and dictating her log. Captain Sisko's baseball sits in its place of honour on the desktop.

KIRA

I've tried looking into historical records about the war between the Lerrit and the Perikians. There was distressingly little from so long ago. In fact, no mention at all of the Lerrit. But the name of General Torrna came up quite often. Historians have debated over the enormous significance he had on the area. Streets and landmarks are named after him. Apparently he took my advice. Now I have to take my own advice too.

She pauses to think it through, put the pieces together.

KIRA

I wavered. But the Prophets and the Iconians worked together to put me back on track. I know now I'm where I need to be, doing what the Prophets need me to do.

She reaches out and picks up the baseball, the symbol of Benjamin Sisko's command of the station, left behind when he "died." She rolls it in her hands, considers it.

KIRA

I kept thinking in the back of my head that the Emissary was going to return. Hoping he'd return and take the burden off me. That he'd take the station back and everything would go back to normal.

(pause)

But that's not going to happen. This station is mine now. I may have lost Benjamin, Odo, Jadzia, I may be Attainted... But I've still got responsibilities, just like Torrna did. And dammit, I'm going to live up to them.

She reaches down, opens a drawer inside her desk, puts the baseball inside it, and closes the drawer again.

KIRA

I'll hold it for you, Benjamin, for when you come back. But I need this to be my office now.

With a satisfied sigh, she gets up from behind the desk and walks out into Ops. The doors close behind her, and we look out from the office onto Ops, as Kira goes down the steps and joins Dax at the central table, ready to face the day.

FADE OUT:

THE END