

STAR TREK: LOST PROPHETS -- PART ONE

By

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This project is dedicated to the memory of all those we have lost, that were part of the vision, and through their work will never really be gone.

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Many thanks Draft.

BLACK:

TEXT FADE IN:

"This is where hero's are made. Right here, in the wilderness." - Julian Bashir

"This wilderness, is my home." - Kira Neryes

TEXT FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

A nearly cloudless sky.

Moving slightly lower, the crest of a far off mountain range begin to fill the horizon. Closer in, details emerge from the shadows of the peaks. The mountains form a protective wall surrounding the far side of a vast city.

The city looks ancient by any standards, but is still clearly well maintained. In the center of the city, an open courtyard is full of people coming and going.

Closing in on the courtyard, one man has stopped to take in the sights. He looks up to the nearby hill and the magnificent waterfall that flows over the crest. The thundering water falling over the cliff, dissipates quickly as into the calm pool below. A powerful mist rises from the contact and showers anyone that dares come within range.

In the center of the pool stands the four sided, slightly angled Bantaca Spire. The engravings on each side are clearly etched into the stone.

The camera finally begins to pan around to reveal the face of the man and the familiar ridges that run horizontally across his nose.

He is Bajora, and it's finally clear where he is.

TEXT FADE IN:

BAJOR - B'HALA THE DISTANT PAST

The ancient city looks much as it did in the painting from 'Rapture'. Now however it's a vibrant metropolis of people representing a spirited culture. Beautiful gardens grow in every corner and crevice. It is a paradise.

High in one of the cities temples, throngs of people await an approaching figure. Climbing one of the walkways to the temples upper level, a RANJEN is greeted by the assembled parishioners.

Their voices overlap as they all ask questions. Though one question manages to call louder than the rest.

PARISHIONER
 (shouting)
 Is it an orb?

The Ranjen stops, faces the crowd, and answers the question.

RANJEN
 That remains to be seen. What we do know is it isn't dangerous and poses no threat to any of us. Now please, leave those that understand such things in peace so we all may benefit from this gift.

The Ranjen turns to leave. The crowd ignores his requests and goes back to shouting questions and demanding answers.

Upon entering the Temple, the Ranjen navigates a series of long corridors. He arrives at an inner sanctum where the object in question has been secured.

He is stopped by two armed guards. They carry some type of energy weapon less advanced than a phaser, but more advanced than a projectile rifle.

The young monk shows them his ID, and after a moment, they allow him to pass. When he enters the room, the Ranjen approaches the elder Vedek.

RANJEN (cont'd)
 (amazed)
 ...another one?

TRAKOR takes a step back to reveal the object. The familiar sight of an orb chest rests on a pedestal at the center of an elaborate altar.

Inside the open chest is the unmistakable glow of an orb, a *Tear of the Prophets*.

Trakor turns for the first time. He is somewhat startled, yet mesmerized by the object. He barely takes his eyes off it to speak to the Ranjen.

TRAKOR
 What else could it be.

RANJEN
 Have you discovered its purpose?

TRAKOR

I believe it's a gift from the
Prophets.

The Ranjen is suddenly overcome with joy. It's all he can do to stay in one place and not run forth and spread the word of this discovery to everyone.

RANJEN

We should share these gifts with
the people!

Trakor is quick to answer.

TRAKOR

No! These gifts are much too
powerful to be so carelessly
tended.

The Ranjen scours in disappointment at Trakor's chastising.

TRAKOR

Now please leave me. I must study
this new discovery.

The Ranjen exits, leaving Trakor alone with the orb. He opens the case letting the light spill into the room.

He stares at the orb for a full minute, studying it's complexities. After a time, the white light begins to build and finally bursts forward with a force all it's own.

The sudden force is too much for Trakor to handle and it knocks him across the room. Trakor screams out more in fear than in pain.

INT. TEMPLE - ADJOINING CORRIDOR

Hearing a scream and a loud thud, the guards rush into the room to investigate.

The noise also brings the Ranjen running back. He rushes to the side of the Vedek, helping him off the floor and back to his feet.

RANJEN

(confused)

Vedek! What happened?

TRAKOR

(intensely)

It was overwhelming, almost too
much to bear...

(CONTINUED)

He pauses a moment, realizing what has happened.

TRAKOR (cont'd)
(amazed)
I believe it was a vision from the
Prophets.

TRAKOR (cont'd)
For an instant, I could see the
future as well as the past.

Trakor looks to the guards who are still present. The Ranjen notices his concern.

RANJEN
(to the guards)
Please wait outside. I will tend
to the Vedek.

They agree with no protest and return to their posts.

The Ranjen leans in closer to the Vedek so that they might speak confidentially.

TRAKOR
I believe this was a sacred vision.

Trakor pauses briefly, realizing what has just happened.

TRAKOR
A pagh'tem'far.

RANJEN
What did you see?

Trakor sits up a bit straighter as he begins to compose himself.

TRAKOR
(dazed)
Faces I have never met, other
beings not of Bajor... It's hard to
make sense of it all.

RANJEN
(reverent)
I envy you, Vedek Trakor. You've
truly been touched by the Prophets.
(beat)
At the very least, we should try
and write down what you saw.

Trakor is aghast. An expression of dread washes over his face.

(CONTINUED)

TRAKOR
(fearful)
There is more.

RANJEN
(intrigued)
Tell me.

TRAKOR
(terrified)
I saw great horrors, terrible
suffering inflicted upon our people
and our world...and the complete
decimation of our way of life.

Trakor falls back into his seat, exhausted from the entire experience. The Ranjen attempts to calm himself and steady his breathing.

TRAKOR (cont'd)
But I also saw a great hope: a
golden age herald by an Emissary of
the Prophets.
(resigned)
But not in our lifetime.

The Ranjen begins to help Trakor back to his desk.

TRAKOR (cont'd)
I must try and write it all down
before it fades away.

Trakor opens a journal and begins writing. The Ranjen falls back out of view.

Trakor writes for a very long time. Eventually the candles in the room begin to fade. In the dim light of the room, the surroundings slowly fade to the B'Hala of the twenty-fourth century.

A single candle casts dancing strands of light through the darkened room. In places, the walls and ground are still covered with dirt and rock.

A Bajoran priest is reading from a very old manuscript by candlelight, almost in the same position where Trakor was sitting and writing.

As the camera moves, it reveals the mans identity as former Vedek YARKA from the episode "Destiny." He begins to read aloud, his voice growing from a whisper to a normal volume.

YARKA

...in a time of peace with former oppressors, an impostor will expose the temples gates; casting them neither open nor closed. The Prophets will weep as they lose their way, and all those that see will be made to suffer.

Yarka is getting on in years, but has not lost any of his spirit. He is however no longer a Vedek.

He collects his belongings, and places the book in his satchel. He pulls a cloak over his shoulders and a dark hood down over his head. He calmly walks through the corridors of the city to avert suspicion. He makes little contact with those that he passes, but doesn't attempt to avoid them either.

Back on the surface, Yarka looks up at the many brilliant points of light in the night sky. In fact, several of the points of light move across the sky with playful abandon.

A young man approaches Yarka. They move away from the ruins heading towards the nearby camp erected for the excavation. It's mostly tents and a few small prefabricated buildings, but it's all covered in same thick dust.

YARKA (cont'd)

(to his aid)

It is much as I feared.

AID

You are no longer a vedek. They will not listen.

YARKA

We can only hope for a sympathetic ear.

Yarka pauses a moment, quickly making the decision.

YARKA (cont'd)

Arrange travel to the capital at once.

The young aid moves off to follow his orders.

YARKA (cont'd)

(to himself)

I only hope they listen.

(CONTINUED)

Yarka finds a stool to sit on, and thoughtfully watches the camp. He opens the book he has been carrying, flips through a few pages, and arrives at the desired passage with a decisive nod.

He reads several pages. He traces the ancient Bajoran script with a hovering finger.

He stops reading, closes the book, and composes himself. His eyes glitter uncertainly in the dim light.

YARKA (cont'd)
(a whisper to no one)
Isolation...

The camera begins to pull away from the surface, in one continuous shot, through the sky and the upper atmosphere and out into space. The camera changes direction, continuing the shot until it reaches the light side of the planet where...

EXT. BAJOR - ORBIT

...An Intrepid-class starship moves towards the planet.

PRESENT - 2381

A parking lot is forming around the planet. Ships from dozens of races: Starfleet, Vulcan, Andorian, Romulan, Klingon, Tellarite, Coridian, Ferengi, and even a pair of Cardassian cruisers orbit Bajor.

An Akira-class cruiser slips past the Intrepid-class ship. The Intrepid-class ship flies over the catamaran hulls, and crosses the the saucer from back to front.

The lines of each panel that crisscross the words U.S.S. Specter printed across the pristine white-gray hull.

Crossing the bow, a shuttle bolts from the Specter's forward launch bay, and heads_towards the planet.

The shuttle drops through the dark upper atmosphere of Bajor's night side with a thermal flare. The searing heat casts off tail of flames that trail the shuttle for half a kilometer.

Breaking through the lower cloud deck and into daylight, directly ahead sparkles a Starfleet Shuttle Port. Resembling more of a modern day airport from a booming metropolis, the Shuttle Port is alive with activity.

(CONTINUED)

Every ship in orbit is passing shuttle craft of various sizes and class, through the port. Ranging from human to Carassian, from shuttle-pods to runabouts and larger commercial flights, the majority of people coming to Bajor are passing through this place.

The Specter's shuttle makes its final approach. As the shuttle touches down, a Starfleet officer dashes across the tarmac before the passengers can debark.

When the shuttle is finally down, the rear door opens, allowing Starfleet Captain KIRA NERYES and JAKE SISKO to step onto the tarmac.

Kira wears a standard duty uniform, while Jake is dressed in the latest style of 24th century fashion.

KIRA
Are you alright?

JAKE
Fine.

KIRA
Then at least try to look as if
you're happy to be here.
(beat)
The fifth anniversary of Bajor
becoming a Federation member is an
important event. Your father
would've...

Kira stops herself mid sentence, afraid of what she might say as Jake watches her.

KIRA
I know your father is very
pleased. This is the culmination
of everything he worked for.

JAKE
(flippant)
I know. I was here remember?

Kira grabs Jake by the arm, spins him around, and glares angrily at him.

KIRA
What's your problem Jake?

Jake waves his arm in the general direction of everything around them.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE
(bitterly)
It's only a reminder of what my dad
gave his life for.

KIRA
Then you should be proud of what
he...

JAKE
It only reminds me that he's gone.

Kira lets go of his arm, She wears a shocked expression.

They begin to walk away from the shuttle.

KIRA
How's Kasidy? I haven't been able
to see her as often as I'd like.

JAKE
(sullen)
Fine.

Kira is about to say more when her attention is drawn to
the Starfleet Officer rushing out to meet them. The Officer
slows to a dignified stroll and stops them before they can
get too far from the shuttle. She looks beyond the man
curiously at the activity around them.

STARFLEET OFFICER
Captain.

Kira snaps back to see the officer.

STARFLEET OFFICER
Lieutenant Commander Haddad. I'll
be your liaison while on planet.

JAKE
(flippant)
That's good. We wouldn't want to
get lost on the very planet where
Kira grew up.

Kira gives Jake a disappointing look. Jake doesn't seem to
care.

KIRA
Lead the way Commander.

Lieutenant Commander Haddad turns on a dime and leads them
away from the shuttle.

HADDAD

Captain, we've arranged for transport to the capital for you and your guest.

Haddad motions to the hover transport parked at the end of the tarmac.

JAKE

Why couldn't we take the shuttle to the capital?

HADDAD

A no fly zone has been established within a hundred kilometers of the capital. Likewise, a transporter inhibitor field has been erected to cover the same area.

KIRA

(concerned)

Something we should be worried about Commander?

HADDAD

I'm sure I have no idea Captain.
Kira nods and begins looking absently around.

Jake notices something is distracting Kira.

JAKE

What is it?

KIRA

Probably nothing, but stay close to me today, ok.

They enter the hover car, and it begins to pull away.

EXT. BAJOR KOLA MOUNTAINS- FEDERATION - EMBASSY - DAY

The compound stretches over three kilometers across the foot of the mountain, with a terraced courtyard that sits behind high walls. The compound is flanked by sheer cliffs, leaving only the front passage open.

Within the walls, vast open courtyards criss cross the base between the buildings and the massive twin towers that jut into the sky. Between all these structures, all manner of exotic flora from a hundred worlds cover carefully landscaped gardens.

(CONTINUED)

A shuttle port, smaller than the one Kira and Jake landed at, extends out of the left side. To the right, sit the imposing main relays and emitters for the planetary defense grid and the newly constructed weapons platforms already in orbit.

Along the dark stoned walls that were cut from Bajor itself, small weapons emplacements are mounted along strategic locations.

At the front gate, a throng of Bajorans shout angrily at the guards.

These guards are unique however. Each carries a standard issue hand phaser on their hip, a tricorder in a holster on the other hip, and a phaser rifle slung at the ready across their chest. If this wasn't enough to distinguish them from the rest of Starfleet security, the brown color of their Marine uniforms certainly does.

The crowd of Bajorans protesters are out in force.

All the signs they carry are written in Bajoran, but as each one passes, a translation is be shown.

The first sign reads: Starfleet - Go Home!

The second sign reads: We won't be assimilated!

A third sign reads: The wormhole belongs to Bajor!

Moving on, approaching the front of the main building, the fades into...

INT. BAJOR FEDERATION EMBASSY - UNDISCLOSED ROOM

...a darkened room within the Embassy. The blinking relays of the Secondary Command Processor that is housed in the room, and the light from the single computer console give off the only light. It isn't nearly enough to make out anything...

...except someone is there. Someone hiding in the darkness, straying into the light only to interact with that one console.

The stranger reaches out of the darkness, and connects some kind of cable to the side of the console. When he does, a small light begins to blink on the main screen, before a larger UNAUTHORIZED USER graphic pops up.

The person quickly reaches up, trying to bypass the warning...

INT. BAJOR FEDERATION EMBASSY - CIC

The Command Information Center of the Embassy.

COLONEL SHERANROAK SC'FHANE, an Andorian is the second in command. Everyone calls him ROAK.

COLONEL ROAK

I don't care if Doctor Geiger can rejuvenate my entire cellular structure. I don't really have the time to care...

An ALARM sounds.

COLONEL ROAK

Report.

LIEUTENANT

An intruder alarm has been tripped in the Secondary Command Processor bay.

Roak taps his comm badge:

COLONEL ROAK

Master-at-Arms, to the Secondary Command Processor bay. Take him alive, chief.

The master at arms answers the call.

MASTER-AT-ARMS

We're on it.

INT. BAJOR FEDERATION EMBASSY - SECONDARY COMMAND PROCESSOR

The man is still trying to bypass the ALARM.

After a few seconds of work, which sounds like it's being done on something like a tricorder, the warning graphic disappears off the screen. The intruder breathes a quick sigh of relief and continues his work.

INT. BAJOR FEDERATION EMBASSY - CORRIDOR

A squad of four Starfleet security officers running down a corridor.

The security officers wear the same Marine uniform as the guards we saw earlier outside the embassy.

INT. BAJOR FEDERATION EMBASSY - SECONDARY COMMAND PROCESSOR

The door opens and four figures storm into the room.

The guards drop night vision goggles over their eyes

turning the dark room into a tactical graphic.

The LEAD GUARD fires one sort blast at the man.

LEAD GUARD

Lights.

The lights come on.

LEAD GUARD

Turn around.

LEAD GUARD (cont'd)

You're in a world of hurt, boy.

A Bajoran boy of about nineteen nervously straightens to his full height, and faces the Marines.

EXT. CARDASSIA PRIME

Approaching the planet

Fade In: Text

CARDASSIA PRIME

OFFICIAL DOMINION WAR DEATH TOLL: 1,086,723,224

The text fades over the planet, as it becomes apparent that this is not the Cardassia we have ever seen before. There are only a few Cardassian ships in orbit and those that are present are older models and show obvious signs of wear and tear.

Most of the parking lot is consumed with ships from other worlds. We can clearly see Federation, Klingon, Romulan, Bajoran, and Vulcan ships. These are not limited to full ships of the line however, as there are equal amounts of large and small, impressive cargo liners as well.

(CONTINUED)

As we move closer the the planet, a Romulan ship passes before our POV and we briefly see the long nacelles of a Sovereign class starship. It only appears for a few seconds though as it moves off screen, fading out as we move to...

The capital city.

The large domed structure that once housed Central Command and the civilian Cardassian government lies in ruins.

The destruction seems even worse then what was seen in 'What You Leave Behind.' What was once a thriving metropolis is now a wasteland of bio-hazards and smoldering debris.

It's a testament to Cardassia's ability to survive and weather hardship that anyone even attempts to live there. Though in reality, anyone that doesn't have to be there stays away and all but the most resilient of animal life has long since moved elsewhere.

We move closer to a smaller building, standing next to the ruins of the former capital.

INT. CARDASSIAN - NEW CENTRAL COMMAND

The room is a makeshift command center. Several Cardassians are present, some in military uniforms and others in civilian clothing.

It's here that we find NATIMA LANG. She stands at a large oval window, looking out at the ruined city that surrounds the capital.

GARAK enters the room, and approaches Natima from behind.

Natima is instantly aware of him, but doesn't show any sign of being concerned.

NATIMA LANG

You can't change your mind now,
Garak. You've already agreed to go.

Garak stops, surprised by her words.

GARAK

I suppose I have. That
doesn't however mean I intend to
parade myself around as a token
Cardassian war casualty for the
Bajorans to take pity on.

Turning to face him.

NATIMA LANG

Nor would we let them. We have as much to gain from this experience, as we have to lose.

GARAK

I'm hardly in a position to argue.

NATIMA LANG

No doubt you will try anyway.

GARAK

No doubt.

NATIMA LANG

Let's have it then.

GARAK

The Bajorans...the Federation...I trust them...some of them...as much as anyone can trust a former adversary. These others...the Klingons and the Romulans...we play a dangerous game throwing our lot in with them.

NATIMA LANG

We have little choice. The treaty dictates...

GARAK

(shocked)

Is this what we have become now? A beaten people, destroyed and worse...now only acting by the dictates of a treaty signed by no living Cardassian.

Natima appears tired and annoyed, as though she has had this very conversation many times before.

NATIMA LANG

(passionately)

Our world has been burnt to the ground. People starve in the streets, and die from the most basic medical needs. So I ask you: what more do we stand to lose? If it equals what we stand to gain from this endeavor then, I hardly see the point.

(CONTINUED)

GARAK

The Bajorans have a long memory. And as much as they praise the forgiving nature of their so called gods, there are many among them that are less inclined to do as they preach.

NATIMA LANG

We stand to gain a voice in our future. That is unless you want the Romulans, the Klingons, and the Federation simply take up where the Dominion left off.

GARAK

There are differences Natima, nuances between each that make some worth fighting, and others worth embracing.

NATIMA LANG

You will do this for me, Garak. As a personal favor or from the sense of duty that I know you clutch close to your heart; you will do this.

The door BUZZES.

NATIMA LANG (cont'd)

Enter.

A pair of soldiers in full military garb come into the room.

SOLDIER

The ambassador's ship is ready for departure.

Natima takes one last look at Garak, smiling as though she has just conned him into the ultimate scam.

NATIMA LANG

Be well, Garak.

Garak seems visibly disturbed, as if he knows trouble awaits him.

GARAK

Keep in mind that I also have a long memory.

(CONTINUED)

NATIMA LANG

Oh, I never let myself forget
anything regarding you, Garak.

As Garak vanishes in a transporter beam, we move to...

EXT. CARDASSIA PRIME - THE LAKAT CITY RUINS - NIGHT

A group of Cardassians in dark clothing, non-military uniforms run through the ruins of the city.

The city is devastated. No buildings stand more than a meter high. The city is even more dead than the capital.

The three Cardassians run amongst the ruins as though they have done it before and know exactly where they are going.

They stop at a fallen wall that has created a makeshift shelter.

Two of the Cardassians turn with tricorders in hand to scan the path they have taken, making sure they were not followed.

The first, TELVACK, is a large, brutish fellow who is more muscular than any Cardassian we have ever seen. He has very short hair, unlike most Cardassians.

The Second, is nearly Telvack's opposite. Tall and lean, QUALF looks wiry and as though he was once a fine athlete, though now has missed more meals than his pride would allow him to admit.

TELVACK

Are you sure it even works?

MAREZ

The first transporter is over a kilometer beneath the surface, and the central core is even deeper than that. It would've been the safest place to be during the attack.

Marez retrieves a device from the inner pocket of his garment. It's similar to a tricorder in appearance, though obviously modified for some other purpose.

MAREZ (cont'd)

This won't be pleasant. Prepare yourself.

(CONTINUED)

Telvack and Qualf both signal that they are ready.

Marez activates a device previously concealed beneath his cloak.

The three Cardassians are taken in a transporter beam...

INT. CARDASSIA - SUBTERRANEAN STRUCTURE

...but only two columns of green energy form in the darkness of the room.

Telvack and Marez activate their flashlights searching the area around them, making it clear that one of them is gone.

TELVACK

Where's Qualf?

MAREZ

I guess he didn't make it. I suppose it's true what they say: You get what you pay for.

Telvack seems to be disturbed very little by this turn of events, and Marez cares even less.

Telvack and Marez begin shining their flashlights through the room; periodically taking readings from their tricorders.

Suddenly, Telvack's flashlight cuts across the room.

TELVACK

Is that it?

We pan over to Marez's POV to reveal as his own light moves to the object and we see an ORB CHEST.

As Marez walks over to the chest:

MAREZ

If it's not, we've come a long way for nothing.

When he opens the chest, the orb isn't glowing its usually bright white/blue colors. It's much more gray, and then we see why. A piece of it is missing, as though a shard has been broken off.

Marez closes the chest and secures it in a pack he has brought with him.

(CONTINUED)

MAREZ

Let's go. We wouldn't want to miss
our ride.

Telvack grabs the orb chest.

EXT. CARDASSIA PRIME - U.S.S. ENTERPRISE

The U.S.S. Enterprise is in orbit.

CAPTAIN PICARD(V.O.)

Captain's log, stardate, 5912.6.
We've arrived at Cardassia Prime by
order of Starfleet Command to
escort the assembly delegation to
Bajor. This is not a place I want
to be.

Near the Enterprise are ships from a dozen other
worlds. Most are relief ships, present to help Cardassia
rebuild. In higher orbit are warships that watch everyone,
just waiting for someone to make a mistake.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

PICARD and WORF exit from the Captain's ready room in mid
conversation. Neither seems to be particularly pleased to be
stuck with escort duty.

WORF

They can't escort themselves to
Bajor?

PICARD

Apparently the Cardassian
Provisional Government is worried
about reprisal from the Klingon and
Romulan forces in the area.

WORF

Neither are known for their
forgiving nature. Perhaps their
fears are justified.

PICARD

And it's our job to make sure their
fears don't become reality.

Picard takes his seat.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (cont'd)
Hopefully the sight of the
Federation flagship will make them
think twice.

WORF
When has that ever been the case?

Picard gives Worf a wry look.

Before Picard can comment further, he is interrupted by the
new Operations Officer, Lieutenant Commander ROBIN LEFLER.

COMMANDER LEFLER
Captain, the Relkash is
approaching.

PICARD
On screen.

The view screen quickly switches to a view of Cardassia
Prime's northern pole where a rather old and run down
looking Galor class warship is moving towards the
Enterprise.

WORF
I doubt they'll make it to Bajor in
that.

LEFLER
We're receiving a message Captain.
It would seem the Relkash is only
capable of warp three.

Picard sighs.

PICARD
Signal them to get underway. Helm,
put us off her port bow and keep us
within weapons range.

At the helm is Lieutenant SARIEL RAGER, a human with short
curly back hair.

RAGER
Aye sir.

Rager executes the order.

EXT. SPACE - CARDASSIA PRIME ORBIT

The U.S.S. Enterprise begins to pull away from orbit and takes up a position near two Cardassian cruisers. The three ships take up a triangle formation with the Enterprise taking the lead.

As the small formation heads away from the planet, they slingshot into warp.

INT. CAGE - DOOR

Total darkness begins to fade into the adjusted sight of night vision. Random beams of light cut across the space and dance across the jagged surface of rock walls, but it does little to reveal the details of this location. Falling though the light, dripping water, more heard than seen, has swollen puddles and eroded the floors into sheets of slick ice.

There's a gate on the door. Low tech and not much more than an assortment of metal bars, but it's clearly been built to stand the test of time.

A sound in the distance.

Three transporter beams form in the near distance. The light from the energizing beams, give way to the existence of the cavern that is barely wide enough for two people to walk shoulder to shoulder.

The clatter of boots thundering in lockstep echo through the small space.

A guard, unseen until this point, leaps to his feet out of the shadows at the sound of the transporter. He draws his weapon. Pointing it at the approaching noise, his hands shake as they approach.

A phaser beam lances out of the darkness and stabs him through the chest. He dies instantly, crumbling to the floor.

INT. CAGE

From within the only room at the end of the cavern, brighter beams of light criss-cross through the cavern as people approach.

On a bench there sits a broken man.

(CONTINUED)

The commotion briefly awakens his interest, but it doesn't last.

His hair drops past his elbows in a tangled mess. An unkempt beard sprouts from under the tawny main. He looks up enough for one of the lights to catch his features...mainly the ridges on his nose.

INT. CAVERN

Two men stand in front of the door, blocking our view of the third individual.

MAN

Tahna Los?

LOS

Los is dead. What's left is just a technicality.

MAN

(to his companions)

Cut it.

The two companions, pull a plasma torch from a tool kit, and begin work on cutting through the bars.

Los shields his eyes as they work.

A loud CLANK sounds through the room as the gate lock is finally cut. The Man opens the gate, and steps into the small space before the cage.

Los stands up His hair is a mess, his clothes are tattered, and he could stand a bath.

LOS

What do you want?

The Man walks into the light revealing his Vedek's robe.

VEDEK

Haven't you heard. The rebirth is at hand.

A devilish smile crawls across the mans face as he motions for his companions to help Los out of the cell.

EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS

A TITLE APPEARS:

CARDASSIAN OCCUPIED TERRITORY: FEDERATION SECTOR

An open star field is visible. In the far off distance is the familiar spinning cyclones of the Badlands plasma storms. The swirling fire of the storms dance across space with a majestic beauty, but...

...it's soon interrupted by the oddly familiar pattern of a gangly BREEN WARSHIP tumbling across the screen. It lingers for only a few seconds before a barrage of phaser fire blasts it apart. The ship erupts in a spectacular fireball before quickly being extinguished by the vacuum of space.

The U.S.S. DEFIANT plows through the debris, as she heads for another almost identical ship. The Breen Warship makes several passes against the Defiant.

In an tight series of maneuvers that no other ship could hope to pull off, the Defiant manages to dodge most of the weapons fire, but a few well placed shots find their mark.

INT. DEFIANT BRIDGE

The red alert klaxon still pulses steadily. Damage control and medical teams come onto the bridge. Each team moves to their respective duties, tending to the various needs that present themselves.

There are few familiar faces are on the Bridge. NOG and EZRI DAX both work at stations on opposite sides of the bridge.

In the center seat is COMMANDER LUCIUS THORNE, the Defiant's new CO. An Orion male, Throne's uniform barely covers the tribal tattoos that run from his hands up to his sharp jaw line. Tall, muscular, and with a short military-like haircut, he is all business, if not a bit strange to be seen sitting in command of a Federation starship.

Throne sits comfortably in the center seat as though the responsibility of the moment weighs little on him.

THORNE

Report!

From her tactical station to THORNE'S right, Lieutenant Commander JENDA RHONE, replies without looking back. She is absorbed in her work.

(CONTINUED)

Jenda is human...mainly. A slightly pale blue tint to her skin and slight points on her ears suggests a variety of alien heritages.

The ship rocks again as they take another strafing hit.

Ezri sits next to Jenda on Thorne's right. Lieutenant Commander pips sparkle on her collar.

DAX

These new guys are packing quite a punch.

JENDA RHONE

Try getting us around for a clear line on their fourth quarter.

THORNE

Kirby, lets see about getting the Commander a clear shot.

Kirby moves into action to carry out her orders. Kirby is human, young, but experienced.

KIRBY

Aye sir.

EXT. SPACE - THE BADLANDS

The Defiant and the remaining Breen Warship fly past each other with only meters to spare. Both ships let fly a near full barrage of weapons fire. Most of it flies harmlessly past it's target, but a few stray shots find their mark.

Both ships pull away. The Breen Warship turns wide to come back around on the Defiant. The Defiant pulls in tight to pivot through all three axes', to come up behind the Breen Warship.

The small ship kicks in her impulse engines for a hard burn and takes off towards it's target.

Now in position, twin white quantum torpedoes sail forward, impacting the Breen Warship. A violent explosion tears across the ship.

The Defiant moves quickly, angling for a better approach to finish off its prey. Finding a perfect balance, the phasers open, slicing through space.

CLOSE SHOT on the Defiant's phasers firing.

(CONTINUED)

When the warships warp core finally blows, the explosion finishes her off. The fire is quickly extinguished by the vacuum of space. Damaged but not destroyed, the enemy ship begins to move off, but the Defiant is already on the move.

In the end, the Defiant moves off, making the whole thing look easy.

INT. DEFIANT BRIDGE

Back on the bridge the crew is recovering from the battle.

THORNE

Well done, people.

(beat)

Maintain red alert. I don't want to be caught off guard out here.

Thorne turns to see two medics help an injured crewmen off the bridge.

THORNE

(to Dax)

Signal the MALINCHE we're heading back to our patrol route.

DAX

Aye, sir.

THORNE

Lieutenant Kirby, get us back to where we're supposed to be.

KIRBY

Aye, sir.

Sitting at one of the side engineering stations, NOG turns to Commander Thorne.

NOG

She still doesn't handle like the old Defiant.

Thorne turns towards NOG.

THORNE

This ship is spec for spec identical to the old Defiant in every way that matters, Chief...minus one piece of Romulan technology of course. She handles just fine.

(CONTINUED)

NOG
If you say so, Captain.

Thorne turns to the opposing side of the bridge.

THORNE
That was some impressive work,
Lieutenant.

Lieutenant JENDA RHONE turns from the tactical station.

JENDA
There's nothing impressive about
beating the Breen sir. Their ships
may look threatening, but one on
one they're no match for any ship
in Starfleet.

Dax turns from her station.

DAX
Someone should tell the Breen that.
Maybe then they would give up these
raids along the boarder.

JENDA
I wouldn't count on the Breen
giving up anything without us first
making it painfully obvious to
them.

On cue, Lieutenant Commander Dax turns from her station.

DAX
Captain, the Malinche is signaling
they have three Breen cruisers
approaching their position. ETA is
four minutes.

Throne

THORNE
Helm, set a course to rendezvous
with the MALINCHE and engage at
maximum warp.

EXT. SPACE - DEFIANT

The Defiant turns hard, increases speed to high impulse, and
slingshots into warp. In the wink of an eye the ship is
gone.

EXT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY

An establishing shot of the Federation Embassy.

INT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY

General Quin, a Vulcan, is the commanding Officer.

GENERAL QUIN

Status?

COLONEL ROAK

Commander Kendrick is standing by
to beam down.

GENERAL QUIN

Very well. Stand by to transfer
the prisoner to his his custody.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER KENDRICK materializes on the
transporter pad. He's a clean cut human in his mid
thirties.

Three Starfleet security guards bring in a Bajoran male in
shackles. It's the kid that was caught earlier.

KENDRICK

This is him?

COLONEL ROAK

We found him in one of the
secondary command processor
bays. He had this device plugged
into the main terminal.

Roak hands Kendrick the device in question.

COLONEL ROAK

We're checking the codes, but my
engineers still haven't figured out
what he was doing.

Kendrick looks at the Bajoran, an expression of disgust
across his face.

KENDRICK

I doubt it was coincidence.

GENERAL QUIN

We concur. Use whatever means you
feel are necessary, Commander.

(CONTINUED)

Kendrick nods that he understands. He takes the boy by his arm leads him over to the transporter.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAJOR - THE CAPITAL

IN THE SKY the Clouds that cover the majestic blue sky, give way to the city below.

The capital building is a massive structure reaching towards the sky and covering several city blocks. Incredibly complex spires reach up from the surface to connect to arching pathways. Intricate detail work on every stone and metal surface

INT. CAPITAL BUILDING - CONFERENCE LOUNGE

In a conference room adorned with Bajoran religious and political icons, First Minister AKIMA SONYA and her chief of Staff, MALA TOFF sit across from a Federation Delegation.

Akima Sonya is much younger than SHAKAAR was when he was first elected to the position. In her late 30's to early 40's, she has a slim, muscular build, long black hair and a more oriental look than most Bajorans.

Her most noticeable feature is she doesn't wear a worn-out, downtrodden look. She hasn't gone through things that no person should ever have to see, like most have.

Her Chief of Staff, MALA TOFF sits to her left. The man is old, in his seventies, and has that look as though he has seen and personally suffered through everything that Akima missed.

Together, the Federation Delegation of Vulcan, Andorian, Tellarite, and Human Ambassadors are an imposing group. However, Akima and Mala Toff appear resolute." A bit more concise again.

MALA TOFF

What good does it do any of us to plan for the future if we do not acknowledge the role relations with Cardassia will undoubtedly play in such events?

AMBASSADOR LOJAL, the Vulcan ambassador and head of the delegation leads the discussion. He's cold, calm, and calculating with just a hint of an arrogant superiority complex.

(CONTINUED)

AMBASSADOR LOJAL

Assuming for the moment, a Cardassian Delegation was invited to the celebration, there is neither a working government nor any official representatives to receive such a request at the present time.

AKIMA

The Cardassians are beaten and the entire quadrant knows it. It's time we put all that behind us, and begin healing these wounds.

MALA TOFF

After all, a stable and friendly Cardassia is benefits all of us.

The Andorian Ambassador, is the oldest of the group. It's not clear whether s/he is male or female. S/he carries himself less formally than his companions, but still clearly holds himself to a level of professionalism.

ANDORIAN AMBASSADOR

This isn't the time and place to handle such things. Allowing the Cardassians to dictate terms to the Federation is beneficial to no one. We will dictate terms to them, less they forget who it was that started the war.

The Andorian Ambassador sits back, obviously very pleased with the point s/he has made, but at the same time deeply disturbed by the need to make it. It's clear that the war has taken a great toll on him/her, and s/he isn't ready to so easily forgive the Cardassians.

Akima instantly picks up on this, but before she can respond, her Chief of Staff is already on the defensive.

MALA TOFF

(disbelief)

What arrogance makes you assume they can corner the market on grief and suffering? Or have you so quickly forgotten the Occupation?

AMBASSADOR LOJAL

I have no doubt you will never let such a thing happen.

(CONTINUED)

ANDORIAN AMBASSADOR

The Cardassians dug their own grave, and now they're paying for it.

MALA TOFF

And I say they paid enough. Or are a billion casualties not enough to keep you up nights?

Akima, trying to hold back a smile, places her hand on Mala's arm to restrain his outburst.

AKIMA

(rising from her seat)

The Cardassia that butchered our world, and made bedfellows of the Dominion, is gone. What's left is broken, battered, and defeated.

Akima walks across the room to the window that looks out over a private courtyard.

AKIMA (cont'd)

Besides, we've already sent the invitation.

AMBASSADOR LOJAL

(clearly irritated)

You should not have acted without consulting us.

AKIMA

Perhaps, but there's no going back now.

ANDORIAN AMBASSADOR

First Minister...

In the middle of all this, Yarka bursts through the doors. He runs past the guards, and completely ignores the Federation representatives.

YARKA

First Minister, I must speak with you.

The federation security officer's immediately restrain him and draw their weapons.

SECURITY GUARD

We don't know how he got through the check points...

(CONTINUED)

MALA TOFF
 (to the guards)
 Remove him.

YARKA
 First minster...Sonya, please.

AKIMA
 Release him.

The guards don't pay attention to her. They grab Yarka by each arm.

AMBASSADOR LOJAL
 This is highly irregular, First Minister.

AKIMA
 It's ok, I know him.

The guards look to Ambassador Lojal for directions.

AKIMA (cont'd)
 (to the guards)
 I'm the one calling the shots here. I said release him.

The guards release Yarka.

AKIMA (cont'd)
 What prophecy of doom do you have for us today, Yarka?

AMBASSADOR LOJAL
 We hardly have time for such things.

Akima holds up her hand, motioning that she intends to hear what Yarka has to say.

AKIMA
 Please continue.

YARKA
 (to Akima, ignoring the Vulcan)
 I believe we are in the final stages of Trakor's ninth prophecy.

MALA TOFF
 Would you be so kind as to refresh our memories on the specifics?

(CONTINUED)

YARKA

(speaking from memory)

...in a time of peace with former oppressors, an impostor will expose the temples gates; casting them neither open nor closed. The Prophets will weep as they lose their way, and all those that see will be made to suffer.

There is a silence as his words trail off. No one is exactly sure what to say, or how seriously to take his pleadings. The federation officials turn to the Bajorans to handle it.

YARKA (cont'd)

Call off this celebration, and do not allow the Cardassians to attend.

Akima looks to Ambassador Lojal who seems to almost be grinning.

AKIMA

I'm afraid it's not that simple. But I assure you, we have everything well in hand.

YARKA

The Prophets will never forgive us if we go forward...

AKIMA

Would you rather us ignore the Cardassians, and keep them bottled up until they can cause much more damage?

YARKA

Of course not, but the Celestial Temple is more important. The Prophets will abandon us because of our actions!

AKIMA

That's quite enough. Show him out please.

The guards move in to take Yarka away.

Yarka seems puzzled by her instance that he be removed and not allowed to plead his case.

(CONTINUED)

YARKA

Sonya?

AKIMA

Now please.

Yaraka rushes her and grabs her hand tightly,

YARKA

The temple will burn!

He continues to yell as he is escorted down the corridor. Slowly the meeting begins to take shape again as those involved retake their seats.

AID

That's number twelve this week.

MALA TOFF

They seem to be coming out of the
woodwork.

AMBASSADOR LOJAL

But you listen to them nonetheless?

Akima merely shakes her head in the affirmative before returning to her seat.

Ambassador Lojal looks back, still able to see the guards escorting Yarka down the corridor. He is strangely fascinated by the entire incident.

EXT. BAJORAN - CAPITAL

A busy city street. Hover cars whisk by on the road, as throngs of people simply pass by YARKA and the MONK without noticing them or even running into them.

MONK

They did not listen?

YARKA

No...but there was more. That
woman...I hesitate to call her the
First Minister, but that
woman...perhaps it is true that the
position changes a person.

The Monk doesn't quite follow that he is talking about.

(CONTINUED)

MONK

What shall we do now?

Yarka moves closer to the street to hail a transport. The transport approaches the curb and comes to a stop. Yarka moves to the car as the door opens, but turns back to the Aid to give him his final instructions.

YARKA

We must seek the council of other minds.

MONK

Who?

YARKA

The chosen one of Bajor...and the only one who will listen. But first we must speak with those who once held his ear. You must find Kira Neryes.

Yarka enters the taxi, which quickly moves off leaving the Unnamed Aid standing on the curb. The Unnamed Aid quickly pulls himself together, and heads off to make the necessary preparations for the trip to DS9.

A Wide shot of the city, panning across the landscape from a different angle than the earlier pass.

The SHOT continues, pulling back into the lower clouds and into the upper atmosphere.

In space, the SHOT pans across Bajor's orbit to fall on an Akira Class starship.

EXT. BAJOR - ORBIT - U.S.S. SPECTER

An establishing shot of the Specter.

INT. U.S.S. SPECTER - TRANSPORTER ROOM

In the transporter room, a pair of figures materialize on the pad. When they are completely materialized, one is Lieutenant Commander Kendrick.

The other person is an older Bajoran male that can barely stand on his own. his flesh is covered with bruises, scrapes, and various other signs of physical abuse.

Holding his arm, Kendrick drags the man off the pad, to stand in front of the two waiting security guards.

(CONTINUED)

CLOSE shot - on his face. He is the same Bajoran teen from the first Embassy scene.

KENDRICK

Put him in a cell. I'll be back.

Kendrick turns to leave.

SECURITY OFFICER

He needs a doctor.

Looking back at the Security Officer.

KENDRICK

He's going to need more than that if he doesn't tell me what I want to know.

BAJORAN MALE

The Prophets will forsake you all.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

The embassy is requesting your security identification.

KENDRICK

Jonathon Kendrick, Lieutenant Commander, Starfleet, security division. Authorization Kendrick-one-seven-seven-omega-red.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

Your authorization has been accepted.

Kendrick turns and walks back to the transporter pad.

KENDRICK

Energize.

Kendrick is beamed away.

INT. DEFIANT - MAIN ENGINEERING

The familiar sight of the Defiant's engineering compartment like most of the ship: cramped. Jenda and Nog are working together at one particular console. Nog is on his back under an open panel, while Jenda is working at the console directly above.

(CONTINUED)

JENDA
Try inverting the primary phase
inducers.

Nog stops for a moment to look at her, an expression of
bewilderment shock on his face.

NOG
(annoyed)
When has that ever helped anything?

JENDA
Well?

Nog goes back to work, making Jenda's suggested adjustment.

A moment passes.

NOG
Nothing.

JENDA
It was worth a shot.

NOG
(irritated)
That's one way to look at it.

Without either of them noticing, Commander Thorne has
entered engineering and is standing near them. The two
continue to work without acknowledging his presence.

THORNE
Nothing serious I hope.

JENDA
Captain. Nothing we can't handle.

JENDA (cont'd)
Nog, if you've got this....

NOG
Yeah.

THORNE
We're being pulled off escort duty.

NOG
Good to hear.

Thorne gives Nog a peculiar look, as though he never
suspected such an answer.

NOG (cont'd)

There's nothing wrong with escort duty, sir, but when most of the border is ripe with activity, there's more we could be doing.

THORNE

You're not like most Ferengi I've met, Chief.

NOG

There's more to life than the pursuit of profit...

The comm suddenly chirps.

DAX (V.O.)

(filtered)

Captain, we're picking up some activity on long range sensors.

THORNE

Let me see it down here.

Thorne and Nog cross the small space. Nog activates a panel and sensor display

THORNE (cont'd)

Are those what I think they are?

DAX (V.O.)

(filtered)

Yes sir.

A graphic appears on the screen, highlighting the Starfleet emblem.

DAX (V.O.) (cont'd)

(filtered)

And that one, is definitely one of ours.

THORNE

Damn.

Thorne pauses a moment, before deciding to act.

THORNE

Dax. Helm set course 3-4-7 mark 6-1-8; maximum warp. Execute. And contact the Malinche, we may need back up.

Thorne turns to leave engineering.

(CONTINUED)

ext. space

An establishing shot of the Defiant at high warp. The ship moves into a steep turn and heads off in a new direction.

EXT. BAJOR - JANIR - NIGHT

On a part of Bajor we've never seen, we find a city that is much like what you might find in most cities here on Earth.

The city is a large urban sprawl with buildings that have been around for decades and were probably rundown back when the Cardassians were still hanging around. Crunched in close together, multiple stories high with apartments that are cheaper than dirt...it's a wonder that anyone would choose to live there. Most that call it home never had the chance to make such a choice.

EXT. BAJOR - JANIR - OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT BUILDING

Moving closer to one of the apartment buildings we begin to see that unknown to the few people that happen to be passing by, two men are standing in the shadowed alley between two of the apartment buildings.

The first man takes a step back to allow a random ray of light to glance over his face. It isn't much, but it's enough to reveal that it's the Vedek we saw free Tahna Los earlier.

VEDEK

I hope you appreciate the seriousness of the request we're granting.

Los steps into a similar ray of light, to reveal his identity.

LOS

(nonchalant)

And?

VEDEK

We expect your full cooperation from here on in.

Los looks upwards through some sort of fire escape type railings that extend between both buildings. moving over to the hanging ladder that doesn't quite reach the ground, he turns to the Vedek for a moment...

(CONTINUED)

LOS
You'll have it.

Los begins to pull himself up the ladder and climb through the fire escape as though he knows exactly where he is going.

INT. BAJOR - JANIR - TAHNA RESIDENCE

Los is standing in the living room of the apartment, looking at a picture on the wall above a small shrine. In the picture are a young, tall blond woman, two small children, and Los...his family.

Caught up in the moment, Los doesn't realize someone is walking up behind him with a frying pan.

Hearing a creak in the floor, Los spins to grab the hand of the person who was about to bash his head in. Holding her hand, with the pan just inches over his head, Los looks at his wife for the first time in years.

TELLA
Los?

Tella pulls away from Los. He lets her go.

TELLA
How did you..?

LOS
I can't stay long.

TELLA
You escaped haven't you?

LOS
I was released...so to speak.

Tella turns her back on Los.

TELLA
Please leave. If the children...

LOS
I will.

Los begins to leave, but stops when he reaches the door.

LOS (cont'd)
Are they well?

(CONTINUED)

TELLA

It's difficult for them to have your name. All of them embrace the Federation and our new future.

LOS

I thought I taught you better than that.

TELLA

I don't care.

Los turns back to her, angered that everything he though he taught her has been forgotten.

LOS

We can't allow the Federation...

Tella cuts him off, and pushes him away. She is angered by the fact he would make such a shallow gesture in thinking that all would be forgiven with his simple return.

TELLA

I don't care. I can't worry about the future or what the Federation is going to do to our world. I'm raising a family on my own and that is all I care about.

(beat)

It should be all you care about as well.

LOS

Someone has to make sure the Bajor we fought to protect isn't given away to another oppressor in nicer clothes.

TELLA

We have a government.

LOS

That is so wrapped around the Federation's hand it can't think or act...

TELLA

I don't want to have this argument again!

A voice calls out from another room.

(CONTINUED)

DOMO

Mom...

TELLA

Coming.

TELLA (cont'd)

(whispering)

Hide.

LOS

They're my family to.

TELLA

Not anymore. You forfeited any
right to a family when you left us.

(beat)

Don't make me ask again.

Los does as he is told, and hurries into the other room.

Tella walks around the corner to the hallway where Domo is standing. He's the spitting image of his father.

DOMO

I thought I heard...

TELLA

It was nothing. Just the
news. Come, I'll walk you back to
bed.

Once they are out of sight, Los walks back into the living room. He begins looking around as though he no longer knows the place anymore. However he does see one familiar thing.

He walks over to the alter, and kneels down.

LOS

(whispering)

Prophets...hear my prayers. Watch
over Tella...her children Domo &
Eska...give them the strength to
follow your will so that they might
forgive my mistakes....forgive me
for the things that I have done,
and the things that I have left to
do.

Los looks intently at a picture of his family set above the alter.

The Vedek, lurking in the shadows, suddenly appears behind him.

(CONTINUED)

VEDEK

Finished?

Los isn't surprised to see him.

LOS

Yes.

VEDEK

Then say one last goodbye, because
you'll never look upon this place
again.

The Vedek takes a few steps away, as Los takes one last look at his home and the life he is leaving behind.

Los leaves the apartment, closing the door behind him.

A few moments later, Tella walks back into the living room, somewhat surprised that Los is really gone...maybe even a bit sad he left.

EXT. SPACE CARDASSIAN OCCUPIED TERRITORY-ROMULAN SECTOR

The Enterprise and a lone Cardassian warship travel at low warp.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Commander Worf holds the bridge, however no other familiar faces are present.

LEFLER

Commander, you better take a look
at this.

Worf gets up and moves down to the ops position. We see for the first time that he's wearing the rank pips of a full commander. Worf makes a few adjustments to the sensors, checking for something specific.

WORF

Bridge to engineering.

LAFORGE (V.O.)

(filtered)

Yeah Worf?

WORF

Geordie, can you boost the sensor
gain on the ventral array?

INT. U.S.S. ENTERPRISE - MAIN ENGINEERING

Geordie stands next to the Master System Display.

LAFORGE

Give me a second.

Geordie crosses the room to another panel on the far wall. Once there, he makes some adjustments.

LAFORGE (cont'd)

How's that?

INT. U.S.S. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Worf stands over the sensor console, looking over the readout.

WORF

It will suffice.

Worf studies the sensor display before making the conclusion:

WORF

Romulans.

LEFLER

That'd be my guess.

WORF

Bring up a tactical display on the main viewer.

The ensign brings up a map on the main viewer, showing what ships are in the area. The camera briefly shows the screen, revealing several Starfleet ships in the area, but we can't make out their names.

Worf studies the display briefly, makes a quick decision, then gets up and types in a message.

WORF (cont'd)

Send this message.

Worf inputs his message into the her station.

LEFLER

Aye, sir.

(CONTINUED)

WORF
Captain Picard to the bridge

Picard exits his ready room and enters the bridge.

PICARD
Report.

WORF
We've detected three sensor echoes moving with too much precision to be anything other than cloaked vessels. They have altered course to intercept us.

In the background we see the turbo lift door open and LaForge walks out onto the bridge. Worf acknowledges his presence as he activates the bridge engineering station.

LAFORGE
I had to come see the new sensors in action.

WORF
We've just detected three cloaked warbirds on an intercept course.

PICARD
(turning to LaForge)
It would seem the new sensors are functioning well.

LAFORGE
We learned a lot from the Romulans over the last year. Riker is making a lot of progress.

WORF
Perhaps someone neglected to let these Romulans know.

LEFLER
Captain, the Romulan ships have increased speed. ETA is now just over a minute.

PICARD
Alter our course to intercept theirs, and signal the Relkash to follow our lead.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - OPERATIONS

Ops. is a flurry with activity and there is not a senior officer above lieutenant commander in sight. There are many more people than we have previously seen on duty, with the vast majority of them being Bajoran. Everyone almost seems to be working in teams of two or three.

In the center of all this, directing everything from the table in the center of the room is a Starfleet officer. A Caitian, S'RASS. His feline features are strangely familiar yet distinctively...alien.

UNNAMED BAJORAN OFFICER

Lieutenant, we've got a problem.
There are three ships claiming they
have clearance to dock at pylon
one.

S'RASS

What's the problem?

BAJORAN OFFICER

There's only one free space on
pylon one.

S'RASS

The Defiant's birth.

BAJORAN OFFICER

Yes sir. We might have slightly
overbooked the docking schedule.

S'RASS

Let me see the list.
(he studies the information
before him)
The Gemenon is a heavy freighter.
Send her to the Defiant's birth.

BAJORAN OFFICER

Sir, we have orders...

S'Rass cuts him off.

S'RASS

Now you have new orders. Get a
cargo team down there with antigrav
sleds to help them get unloaded.

S'Rass paused for a moment as he looked back to the console and the list of docking schedules.

(CONTINUED)

S'RASS (cont'd)

Get a pilot to landing pad E and get that Runabout out of there. Tell him to take her around the system for the next hour. Then have that light transport set down on pad E.

BAJORAN OFFICER

What about the Venture.

S'RASS

Send this message.

(beat)

Captain Cortez. This is Commander S'RASS. As you can no doubt tell, we've got a bit of a traffic problem over here. You have my word the next free space on any one of the pylons is yours. Thank you for your patience.

BAJORAN OFFICER

A nice bit of maneuvering there, but we're going to have problems again in about an hour.

S'RASS

Then let's try to sort through this before the Major finds out.

Major Rannon Yndar arrives on the turbolift, catching the tail end of the conversation.

YNDAR

Before I find out what.

S'RASS

Just some trouble with the docking schedules, Major. Nothing we can't handle with a little creative scheduling.

YNDAR

Do I want to know?

S'RASS

Not really.

S'RASS (cont'd)

The Defiant has just reported in. They should arrive on schedule.

(CONTINUED)

YNDAR

That's good to hear. I'll sleep easier when they get back.

S'RASS

Never figured you one for worrying, Major.

YNDAR begins to walk around the upper level towards the office.

YNDAR

I'm not. But Thorne is still getting used to the Defiant.

Yndar stops by a console to check something, though he only seems half interested. Giving up his lack of usefulness in Ops, he declares

YNDAR (cont'd)

I'm heading down to the Promenade.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise has dropped out of warp and is holding position near the Relkash when...

...three Romulan ships decloak as they slow from warp. The lead ship, a Valdore-class is flanked by two D'deridex-class warbirds.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Our POV is on the main viewer where we see a Romulan Admiral, TEBOK, is speaking.

ADMIRAL TEBOK

Captain Picard, of the U.S.S. Enterprise. I thought more of you captain, then mere trespassing.

Picard smiles at the Admiral.

PICARD

Trespassing?

ADMIRAL TEBOK

You are clearly in Romulan controlled territory, Captain. Or had you not noticed?

Picard sits comfortably in his chair, not at all concerned.

(CONTINUED)

PICARD

We have ever right to traverse your protectorate as stated in the treaty.

ADMIRAL TEBOK

And we have every right to enforce Romulan law as we see fit. Including the authority to apprehend those elements we deem...criminal.

PICARD

Call it whatever you like, but I doubt the danger is much.

ADMIRAL TEBOK

I thought more of you than idle threats, Picard. Nor did I consider you such a fool.

EXT. SPACE

The Defiant and the Malinche drop out of warp behind the two flanking warbirds.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Picard Stands up to address the Admiral.

PICARD

As you can see, my threat is quite real. So the question becomes,...are your prepared to die, today, Tebok?

The Admiral smiles. Obviously Picard's reputation is well known among most all Romulan Commanders.

ADMIRAL TEBOK

(in Romulan)

Well played, Captain.

Picard nods slightly that he understands.

ADMIRAL TEBOK

Someone wishes to address a member of your crew.

Admiral Tebok steps aside to allow a Romulan Sub-Commander to take his place at the center of the viewscreen.

(CONTINUED)

At first no one on the bridge recognizes him, until LaForge steps forward.

GEORDIE LAFORGE
(teasing)
Commodore.

BOCHRA
Human.

Picard seems worried at first, despite the peace treaty that his chief engineer is on a first name basis with a Romulan officer.

PICARD
You know this man Geordie?

LAFORGE
I should say I do. We spent some rather pleasant time together on Galorndon Core.

Picard seems to recall the incident in question, stepping aside to let LaForge have center stage.

LAFORGE
What brings you to this neck of the woods?

BOCHRA
I must speak to you and your Captain. Time is of the essence.
(beat)
May I come aboard?

Picard looks to Geordie for some sign that he can be trusted.

LAFORGE
(to Picard)
If it's important enough to track us down, I think we should hear him out.

Picard turns back to the view screen to look at Bochra.

PICARD
Stand by to beam aboard.
(to Laforge)
See to our guest, Commander.

LaForge leaves the bridge.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

A WIDE ANGLE SHOT - of the Enterprise, the Cardassian ship, the Defiant, the Malinche, and the three Romulan ships. This small armada of ships are all traveling at warp.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CONFERENCE LOUNGE

Picard, Laforge and Bochra sit around the head of the table.

Through the window, we can see the familiar passing streaks of light. The Romulan Valdore class ship can be seen flanking the Enterprise, close enough that you can make out the detail on its hull.

BOCHRA

I recently spent time at the Field Hospital on the Bajoran moon of Derna.

(beat)

The Tal Shiar have been using the hospital as a base of operations for the Bajoran sector for some time now. Through means I would rather not discuss openly, I acquired this surveillance video from a contact I made there.

Bochra hands Picard a PADD. Picard watches it, however we don't see what's on it. Watching the video, Picard looks terribly worried.

BOCHRA (cont'd)

I trust the individual that originally captured the video. I can assure you it is authentic, and it was captured on Bajor.

PICARD

I believe you, if for no other reason then my chief engineer trusts you.

Picard pauses a long moment as he watches the video again. His brow tenses and a further look of dread washes over his face.

PICARD

We need to get to Bajor.

(CONTINUED)

LAFORGE

If we go any faster, we're going to lose our Cardassian friends.

PICARD

(tapping his comm badge)
Picard to bridge. Contact the Defiant, and tell Thorne to make his best speed to Bajor. I'll brief him shortly.

WORF (V.O.)

(filtered)
Aye, sir.

PICARD

Commander Bochra, I thank you for this.

Picard stands up to signal the meeting is over.

PICARD (cont'd)

Let us hope that we can make use of it in time.

Picard stands to signal the meeting is over.

BOCHRA

I will return to my ship. With your permission, Captain, we will accompany you on the remainder of your trip. I feel...obliged to see this through to the end.

Picard doesn't answer, only nodding his head that he approves. As LaForge and Bochra leave the lounge, we hear:

LAFORGE

(pleased)
Good work, *Commodore*.

As Picard looks at the PADD, we finally get a look at the video. It's a short clip showing a Bajoran woman walking into the frame of view, but we never see her face.

Suddenly something on the wall shimmers to life and we see a tentacle form from nothing. It reaches out and snaps the woman's neck. As the woman falls to the floor, the tentacle stretches out and strikes the surveillance camera.

As the screen turns to static, we refocus on Picard who has a worried look on his face.

INT. BAJOR'S FOURTH MOON - DERNA

A cavern, much like the cage in which Los was first found but somewhat more furnished. Rock walls are covered with equipment stacked across the space and other pieces attached directly to the rock walls.

It's dark, dank, and it's obvious that everyone there wishes they were somewhere else.

AKIMA

I'm glad You could make it.

Akima extends her arm, offering Los a seat.

He reluctantly sits down.

LOS

Not that I'm ungrateful for being rescued from prison, but what do you want from me?

AKIMA

The Circle needs you.

LOS

The Circle....It's been a long time since I've heard from anything from them.

AKIMA

Obviously I can't publicly endorse the Circle's activities let alone lead them. We need someone that...

LOS

(cutting her off)
...is expendable.

AKIMA

Hardly. We need someone to step up and give the Circle a voice. Someone the people will recognize as a man who can stand up to the Federation, and do what needs to be done. Someone who has stood up to them before.

LOS

I've done my share of sacrifice for Bajor. I'm not interested.

Los turns his back on Akima, as a wave of regret washes over him.

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA

That's too bad. You see, we've already used your name as the figurehead of our little group, and in approximately ...

(she looks at her watch)
...four hours; you're going to be very famous. Or infamous. It could go either way.

Los turns back to her, and from the look of careless abandon, he knows that she is absolutely serious.

AKIMA (cont'd)

So you see, we can't allow you to leave just yet.

Three guards suddenly train their weapons on Los.

AKIMA

Take a seat and think about your future.

EXT. BAJOR - ORBIT - U.S.S. SPECTER

An establishing shot of the Specter in orbit of Bajor.

As the ship passes, it reveals one of the new orbital defense platforms.

Closing in on it, the platform is bristling with a small arsenal of weapons.

INT. U.S.S. SPECTER - BRIG

Lieutenant Commander Kendrick is walking in front of the Bajoran male he retrieved from the Embassy. The man, JALON is restrained to a metal chair in the center of the room. Behind him, is a confinement cell much like the one on the U.S.S. Voyager.

Kendrick moves quickly on Jalon, hitting him hard across the face.

Jalon's head snaps back, and as he raises up, we see that Kendrick has finally drawn blood.

KENDRICK

Just tell me what you were doing at the Embassy today, and this can all end.

(CONTINUED)

Jalon doesn't answer. Instead he spits some of the blood from his mouth onto the floor.

Kendrick knows that he's going to have to take things to the next level.

KENDRICKS
(tapping his comm badge)
Lieutenant. Come in here.

A security officer comes into the brig. The young LIEUTENANT He can't be over twenty-five years old.

LIEUTENANT
Sir?

KENDRICK
(never looking away from Jalon)
Go down to Bajor, and arrest the first Bajoran national you come across. I don't care who it is.

LIEUTENANT
Sir, I don't think...

Kendrick snaps back at him:

KENDRICK
That's an order, Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT
Aye, sir.

The Lieutenant snaps to attention as he accepts his order. He turns on a heel and leaves to room to get it done.

JALON
What are you doing?

KENDRICK
Evening the odds.

EXT. SPACE - RELKASH

The Relkash is still traveling at warp. The Enterprise is ahead of her with the three Romulan ships bringing up the rear.

INT. RELKASH - CORRIDOR

Inside the Cardassian warship are a series of twisting corridors. No single one lasts long before it branches off in multiple directions, creating a maze-like effect for the uninitiated observer.

The ship is even more utilitarian than the standard Cardassian design style. Metal grating covers the deck and most of the ceiling. Dark colors dominate every surface, some only barely visible through shadows that seem to crop up for no reason. The lighting falls and brightens as though it has been adjusted just to effect such a look.

Near the end of the corridor, two guards stand in front of a door that looks just the same as any other. They stand rigid like statues, with rifles held at the ready.

The door opens and Garak walks out. He nods to the guards, who pay him no attention.

GARAK

In an ever changing universe, it's reassuring to know that some things remain constant.

The guards don't make a move even to acknowledge his insulting gaze at them.

Garak turns to leave, and the guards never give him a second glance.

Walking through the ship, Garak passes by several other people. Some he recognizes, others are complete strangers. To each he makes a nodding acknowledgment that he is merely a guest on their ship.

Garak passes by another person: MAREZ.

After a moment, it strikes Garak he knows the man from somewhere. He can't immediately place him though. Peeking his curiosity, Garak turns slightly as though he might look over his shoulder, but catches himself beforehand.

Garak continues to walk.

EXT. BAJOR - CAPITAL

In the sprawling city that surrounds the capital building, hundreds of thousands have gathered for the day's festivities. They pack the streets and sidewalks. They crowd the parks and festival seating that consumes every free square meter of land.

(CONTINUED)

The hover car slowly winds through this throng of people. The crowd parts to make room for them to pass. Much like the case around the Embassy, the closer to the capital, the more it seems the crowd is made of on protesters.

The hover car comes to a stop and Jake and Kira get out.

Kira takes a good look around at the size of the crowd.

KIRA

A nice turnout.

HADDAD

And it's still early. The real excitement won't get started for a few days.

(beat)

Are you and your guest planning on staying for the entire event, Captain?

Kira turns to face him.

KIRA

Prophets willing.

Kira and Jake head into the crowd. They are stopped every couple feet by people wanting to say hello. Kira makes a point to speak with everyone of them.

Pulling up and over into quick panning shot to...

...Yarka standing on a slight embankment. He sees Kira arrive and instantly begins pushing through the crowd, yelling for her. His voice is drown out by the noise of the crowd.

Panning back to Yarka, moving faster now, yelling louder.

YARKA

Major!

Someone grabs Kira. She instantly whirls around to face the person. She is startled but ready to defend herself.

KIRA

It's Captain now, actually.

Kira shakes loose of his grip, and in a swift motion gabs his arm to hold him back away from Jake.

She begins to let her guard down as she recognizes Yarka, but she still doesn't let go of his arm.

YARKA
My apologies.

Yarka takes a step back away from both of them.

KIRA
What can I do for you?

Kira lets go of him as a sign of good faith.

YARKA
We are all in danger here.

KIRA
From what?

Before he can answer, he is interrupted:

AKIMA(O.S)
I see you wouldn't take no for an
answer.

Kira turns away from Yarka to see Akima standing across from her.

KIRA
First Minster.

Kira nods, including a slight bow in her greeting. She smiles politely the entire time, putting forward as pleasant a demander's as possible.

Akima doesn't return the gesture. She steps past Kira to get closer to Yarka.

AKIMA
(resentful)
Captain.

Kira watches Akima as she gloats at the divide she is causing between Kira and Yarka.

YARKA
I was hoping that someone more open
minded would take Trakor's
prophecies seriously.
(beat as he looks directly at
Kira)
Particularly someone who has been
touched by the Prophets, as you
have Captain.

AKIMA

One doesn't require an open mind to
see unadulterated ridiculousness
for what it truly is.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE QUARKS BAR & GRILL

Inside Quarks Bar and Grill, a Bajoran officer sits playing Dabo. He watches the wheel spin freely as some win and others lose. One of the DABO GIRLS, M'PELLA, shouts out Dabo as the Bajoran officer wins another round.

In the background, near the bar, we can see QUARK talking to MORN, but as M'Pella again shouts Dabo, Quark abruptly ends the conversation and heads for the Bajoran officer.

At the Dabo wheel, people are gathered around the table to watch the game. Before Quark can reach the table to see how much he has lost, M'Pella shouts Dabo again.

The Bajoran is an elderly man with skin aged by the sun and hard labor, His hair has been thinned and whitened by the passage of time. In all this though, he holds himself up rather respectfully, even while playing the game.

Quark stands next to M'Pella. Whether or not the Major knows he is there is not clear, but it's obvious the he doesn't care either way. M'Pella spins the wheel again.

M'PELLA

Dabo! You seem to be on a role,
Major. Ever think of giving up that
life of law enforcement for one of
life's more simple pleasures?

BAJORAN

My dear, in a game such as this,
where the house carries such a
substantial favor, no one's run of
luck can last forever.

As he talks, MAJOR YNDAR RANNON has made several more carefully placed bets. He sits back to let M'Pella spin the wheel again.

As she spins the wheel:

M'PELLA

You could've fooled me.

Everyone watches as the wheel spins, waiting for the outcome.

(CONTINUED)

M'PELLA (cont'd)

Dabo!

Quark leans forward so that only Yndar can hear him.

QUARK

Are you going to clean me out again, Major? Or are you just here to torment me?

YNDAR

What do you think, Quark?

QUARK

I think you enjoy your work far too much.

YNDAR

I'm just doing a friend a favor.

Quark scoffs but is not really surprised by his answer.

QUARK

That no good shape shifter. I tell you, even when ODO's gone it's like he's still here, haunting me from beyond the Link.

Something catches Yndar's eye. Through the front entrance of the Bar, Yndar watches a Bajoran male leaving the temple.

Yndar gets up leaving his winnings, walks through the bar, and casually taps his comm badge.

YNDAR

Security station. Verify and scan. Bajoran male, pale skin, red hair, wearing a gray cloak.

SECURITY STATION (V.O.)

(filtered)

We see him.

Quark moves away from the Dabo table to get closer to Yndar.

YNDAR

Take a visual ID...discreetly, and keep an eye on him.

Quark takes a step closer.

(CONTINUED)

QUARK
Something wrong Major?

YNDAR
Probably nothing.

Yndar exits the Bar and walks down the promenade.

Quark calls after him.

QUARK
If you leave, I can't be held
responsible for the loss of your
winnings.

INT. PROMENADE - SECURITY STATION

Yndar walks into the security office. He goes to the closest wall, and opens a weapons locker taking a Bajoran phaser pistol.

He leaves the security office, and walks back to the bar. Quark is still standing in the doorway of the front entrance.

QUARK
ODO never had to carry a phaser.

Yndar acts very casual as if there is nothing wrong.

YNDAR
You can never be too careful.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - QUARKS BAR

QUARK walks back to the bar to address the crowd gathered there.

QUARK
Bets will start at three strips of
latinum.

As Quark speaks, the crowd begins to pay more attention to him. They abandon whatever they happened to be doing and focus on Quark.

QUARK (cont'd)
The wager? How long will it take
the Major to apprehend an innocent
man.

(CONTINUED)

Beyond Quark, Yndar is standing outside the entrance to the bar. Yndar touches his comm badge and begins to speak, but because of the distance, his words are unclear.

Yndar touches his comm badge again, ending the conversation. He turns and makes a direct line for Quark.

YNDAR

Quark.

Quark walks back over to him, only jokingly interested in what he has to say.

YNDAR (cont'd)

Close your bar, and seal the doors.
Keep your customers inside.

QUARK

That's what I've been trying to do
from day one.

Yndar makes direct eye contact with Quark, conveying with a look that he is not joking.

YNDAR

Close your bar, Quark.

As Quark walks back into the bar to settle down his customers, Yndar taps his com badge.

YNDAR (cont'd)

OPS.

EXT. SPACE - DEFIANT

An establishing shot of the Defiant traveling at warp.

INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

There is a tense calm on the bridge. People are half focusing on their work while the ship almost seems to be shaking herself apart around them.

In the center seat, Captain Thorne sits uneasy as his ship is pushed beyond her limits. A very noticeable vibration courses through the deck and everyone is a bit on edge.

THORNE

Come on.
(beat)
How Long?

(CONTINUED)

KIRBY
Forty-five minutes.

Dax turns in her seat to face Thorne.

DAX
Sir, perhaps another set of
hands...

THORNE
Nog doesn't need us getting in his
way. He'll give us everything he
can manage.

Thorne looks around the bridge, visibly disturbed, wondering
if the Defiant will hold.

THORNE (cont'd)
Has there been any word from Deep
Space Nine?

JENDA
All comms in and out of the Bajor
system are still being jammed.

Thorne turns to look at Dax, who obviously shares his
worries.

INT. U.S.S. SPECTER - BRIG

Kendrick and Jalon are still waiting for the lieutenant to
return with his prisoner.

Kendrick is pacing back and forth across the brig.

Jalon is praying silently, simply mouthing the words.

KENDRICK
Let's assume that whatever is going
to happen does in fact
happen. Answer one question...

JALON
(cutting him off)
Why?

Kendrick nods his head to affirm that that was indeed his
question.

JALON
When your embassy has been burnt to
the ground...when that Cardassian
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JALON (cont'd)
monstrosity orbiting our temple has
been torn apart...and when every
last shred of the Federation has
been driven off our world...you
will know why.

Kendrick takes a single breath. He can see the mix of determination and desperation on Jalon's face. He turns away from Jalon, not wanting the Bajoran to see the frustration on his face. Nor can he let him see the realization that he may very well be fighting a hopeless battle.

Kendrick snaps back to face Jalon.

KENDRICK
(desperate)
I'm going to kill whoever he brings
up here. That blood, will be on
you.

JALON
The Prophets demand we make
sacrifices.

KENDRICK
Of the innocent?

JALON
There are no innocent in war.

Kendrick can take no more of his calm demeanor.

KENDRICK
(enraged)
We're not at war!

JALON
You're wrong. We are at war. A war
to preserve our way of life. A war
to preserve what it means to be
Bajoran.

KENDRICK
You already have that.

Jalon changes right before Kendrick, from the young man you doesn't have a care in the world, to a man feel with hate and anger.

JALON

As long as your Federation is here, corrupting our youth and influencing our culture, we will never have that...anymore then we had such freedom during the Occupation.

Kendrick is furious. He lunges towards Jalon; knocking him and the chair over. Once on the floor, Kendrick draws back and hits Jalon twice. He grabs him by the collar, lifting him up several inches off the ground and slamming him back down onto the floor. He repeats this move several times.

He doesn't see the small splatter of blood that's formed at the back of his head. Jalon is still conscious, but fading fast.

KENDRICK

Tell me what you're planning!

The door opens and the lieutenant enters. He's holding the arm of a Bajoran girl, about sixteen years old. She has been crying.

Kendrick gets up, climbs off Jalon, and walks over to the girl. He takes her by the arm roughly, and walks her across the room.

BAJORAN GIRL

You're hurting me!

KENDRICK

Then ask him to tell me what I want to know.

Kendrick pulls his phaser and points it at her head.

She begins to cry again.

KENDRICK (cont'd)

Ask him!

The girl is still crying, sobbing, trying to do as she is told.

BAJORAN GIRL

(between sobs)

Tell him what he wants to know! Please...!

On the floor, Jalon has nearly lost consciousness. His eyes are fluttering, but when he sees the girl, he pulls himself together.

(CONTINUED)

JALON

Do you believe in the Prophets?

The girl only nods her head, still crying.

JALON

Then have faith. You'll be with them soon enough.

Kendrick lets go of the girl and she runs off to the corner.

Kendrick turns to Jalon, suddenly full of fear and doubt.

KENDRICK

What is that supposed to mean?

JALON

(weak)

It means that you're too late.

A strange smile creeps across Jalon's face and as Kendrick moves closer to him, he sees the blood for the first time.

As Kendrick checks for pulse, he suddenly switches modes.

KENDRICK

Bridge. Priority one. Raise shields and get me a line to General Quin.

Kendrick moves towards the door, motioning back towards the girl.

KENDRICK

(to the lieutenant)

Get her off this ship.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - OPERATIONS

There are fewer people in Ops than before. S'Rass is still present though, and still running the show.

Though now he's so caught up in his work that he doesn't even notice the redhead that's arrived and walking over to him.

S'Rass nearly jumps out of his skin as she runs a hand though a thick crop of fur on the back of his neck.

Looking to see who it is, he's a bit embarrassed when he finds that everyone in Ops is watching them.

(CONTINUED)

S'RASS
(whispering)
Layna, what are you doing here?

LAYNA
I just wanted to see my favorite
Caitian.

S'RASS
How many Caitians have you actually
met?

LAYNA
Ok, so you're the only one.

S'RASS
That's what I...

S'Rass' eyes seem to roll back in his head as Layna's hand disappears beneath the console.

The comm suddenly crackles to life.

YNDAR (V.O.)
(off screen)
Ops!

Yndars yell echoes through the speakers.

YNDAR (V.O.) (cont'd)
(off screen)
Is anyone even up there?

S'Rass jumps back to life, pushing Layna's hand away and trying to recover his senses.

S'RASS
Here, Major.

YNDAR (V.O.)
(off screen)
Lock down the promenade. Security
alert level one.

S'Rass isn't paying attention to Yndar.

LAYNA
I can't let you do that.

YNDAR
(off screen)
Did you hear me?

S'Rass, aghast at what is happening, falls back away from Layna.

LAYNA

I'm sorry. Now!

Three of the Bajoran officers on duty suddenly jump up with phasers and begin stunning the crew.

S'Rass begins to get up, but before he can stand, Layna pulls a phaser and stuns him.

As the shocked personnel try to react, she makes quick work of them with her phaser.

She moves to one of the stations and activates a series of commands. The transporter activates and beams in a small package. One of the three Bajoran officers quickly moves to retrieve it.

Layna moves to the center console in Ops. The Bajoran officer brings her the package while another brings her a tool kit.

She uses a tool kit to remove a panel from the center console.

As she is doing this, the Bajoran officer removes the device (a highly sophisticated piece of technology) from its back pack.

Layna takes the device and begins to hook it up, using one of the consoles power couplings. When she is finished her work, she punches in a few controls and moves away. A timer on the device starts counting down from three minutes.

LAYNA (cont'd)

Let's go.

They all begin heading towards the transporter, but Layna stops at the fallen form of S'Rass. She kneels down, and gently runs her hand across his face.

LAYNA (cont'd)

(concerned)

Such a pity.

She gets up and walks to the transporter. It activates, and they beam away.

As her team fades away within the transporter beam:

(CONTINUED)

LAYNA (cont'd)
For the Prophets!

EXT. BAJOR - CAPITAL

A LONG SHOT of the crowds that has gathered to take part in the days celebration services.

Kira is talking to a group of Starfleet officers, but can't hear what they are talking about because of the noise from the crowd.

Standing off by himself, trying his best to ignore everyone around him, Jake doesn't notice the leader of Bajor walking up to him.

AKIMA
Mr. Sisko?

He's startled for a moment, but when he realizes who it is, he begins to settle down.

Jake bows slightly.

JAKE
First Minister. It's just Jake.

AKIMA
Jake then. I hope you're enjoying yourself.

JAKE
No.

AKIMA
You still miss your father.

JAKE
Is it that obvious?

AKIMA
It's obvious an off-lander shouldn't have put his misled belief in the Prophets ahead of his own flesh and blood.

JAKE
I have to admit I'm surprised to hear you say that.

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA

Some things require...

A trio of deafening sonic booms pierce the sky, cutting off Akima's last words.

Everyone turns to look as two type nine shuttles, flanking a larger runabout (Insurrection scout) scream across the sky at better than the speed of sound.

Jake turns to look for Kira. She's already on the move heading towards him.

When Jake turns back to look for Akima, she's already gone.

EXT. BAJOR - PROPHET SQUADRON

The Starfleet shuttles and the Runabout (the scout from Insurrection), are flying in a near perfect formation and still flying low.

They have moved beyond the capital however, and are flying over open country.

INT. RUNABOUT

The single seat cockpit looks somewhat different than it did in Insurrection. A few additional controls have been added closer to the pilot, making it appear more like the confined space of a fighter craft rather than a Starfleet Runabout.

The pilot is also wearing a more rugged flight suit with a helmet and an independent breathing mask.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER (V.O.)

(filtered)

Come right to heading
one-three-five.

PILOT

Copy that. I see them. We are
moving to intercept. Prophet three
and four, move wide to the
flanks. I'm going straight in.

SHUTTLE PILOTS (V.O.)

(filtered)

Acknowledged.

EXT. BAJOR - PROPHET SQUADRON

The two shuttles and the runabout break formation and head towards their target.

EXT. BAJOR - ORBIT

The Spectre continues to orbit Bajor, only now in a higher orbit. The rest of Starfleet's presence around Bajor has done the same.

In a lower orbit, something is beginning to move. It's one of the Federation weapons platform. A shield grid snaps into place and it's turning it's main weapons towards the ships in orbit.

A belt of torpedoes burst forth from one of its launchers. This is quickly followed by a rapid fire barrage of pulse phaser cannon blasts. The torpedoes sail unhindered into space and before anyone can respond, slam unmercifully into the Spectre's shields.

Following directly behind the torpedoes, the pulse phaser fire from the platform rips across open space and tears into the Spectre's shields.

Another belt of torpedoes, this time twice as many, explode from the platforms launchers. This third bast of fire punches a whole through the ships shields.

Precision phaser fire from the platforms phaser arrays begin to systematically target key systems. All the while, the platform is following up it's strikes with bursts of torpedoes and pulse phaser cannon fire.

As weapons fire begins impacting bare hull, the Spectre begins taking more and more critical damage. A lucky shots strikes the weapons pod. The resulting explosion incinerates the pod and causes a chain reaction that jumps through both catamaran hulls down to the saucer and engineering section.

The ship erupts in massive explosion as the warp core goes critical. The resulting shock wave of fire and debris carries pieces of the ship into Bajor's orbit that streak across the atmosphere like shooting stars.

In the background, the U.S.S Venture and the U.S.S. Intrepid are moving in on an attack run towards the weapons platform.

EXT. BAJOR - PROPHET SQUADRON

Lower in the atmosphere, the first barrage of weapons fire finds the two type nine shuttle craft. The torpedoes hit the shuttles and erupt across their shields. both shuttles begin to careen out of control and vector off towards the ground in uncontrolled spirals.

The runabout is badly damaged but not destroyed.

Unable to continue, the runabout turns to head back home as the unidentified craft they were to intercept, soars past him.

Their target,

EXT. BAJOR ORBIT

The weapons platform turns back towards the surface and opens fire. It opens fire, launching continuous torpedo and phaser barrages.

However in the distance, something else is moving.

Two ships are moving on an attack run. The U.S.S. Venture and the U.S.S. Intrepid sweep in, weapons blazing. they've targeted the weapons platform and are unleashing their full arsenal against it.

EXT. BAJOR - ATMOSPHERE

The first barrage of torpedoes break through the cloud cover and speed towards the surface.

The side of a mountain, the same mountain the Federation embassy is located.

INT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY - CIC

The CIC is in chaos as massive amounts of data and multiple overlapping reports are sifted through to the proper places.

COLONEL ROAK

The target has gotten past are fighters.

A warning suddenly sounds.

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL ROAK
We have incoming.

Roak walks over across the CIC and takes his seat.

General Quin activates the comm panel:

GENERAL QUIN
All hands, get ready for some chop.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - PROMENADE

Yndar moves past the bar. Quark peers though the glass of the closed door.

YNDAR
S'Rass, did you hear me?

Another voice cuts into the comm channel.

SECURITY GUARD(V.O.)
(filtered)
We have a situation here,
Major. The suspect is heading
towards your position.

As Yndar moves to the middle of the path, he sees the person in question. Their suspect is a boy, maybe twelve years old.

As the security officers close in behind the boy, Yndar holds up his hand to wave them back.

YNDAR
(to the boy)
Just take it easy.

BAJORAN BOY
I don't want to hurt anyone.

YNDAR
Then why don't you come talk with me?

BAJORAN BOY
Get everyone out of here.

YNDAR
Why should we do that?

The boy opens his robe to reveal a rather large bomb strapped to his chest.

(CONTINUED)

BAJORAN BOY
Because if you don't, they'll all
die.

Yndar taps his comm badge twice in rapid succession, opening a direct line to all his security personnel.

YNDAR
Fall back. Clear the Promenade
past the infirmary.

SECURITY GUARD(V.O.)
(filtered)
Acknowledged.

YNDAR
You win, now let's talk.

BAJORAN BOY
There can be no more talk.

Yndar sees that he is holding something, and before he can even think of it, his instincts take over.

BAJORAN BOY (cont'd)
My life for the Prophets...my life
for you!

Time begins to slow down as Yndar realizes that there is nothing he can do. He turns to run trying to move as fast as he can, but it is too late.

The boy stands perfectly still with his hands raised in the air, still shouting prayers to the Prophets. A split second later, he is consumed in a massive explosion that tears across the Promenade.

The force nearly throws Yndar to the ground. As he begins to stumble, still trying to run, he sees the open window beside the door to Quarks.

Suddenly Quark is standing there at the open window next to the main entrance to the bar. He's flailing his arms chaotically, motioning for Yndar to run towards him.

Turning towards the bar, the explosion is nearly on him, but he is still too far away. With no choice he leaps towards the window, hoping he can make it.

Quark reaches out, grabs Yndar as he begins to fall short, and as it seems as if they might make it, the speed of the scene finally returns to normal and the explosion rips past the window.

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Close in on the Promenade, looking through the large windows on the upper levels. The explosion rips through the windows. Flames, debris, and several people are fired out into space as the atmosphere within the station is sucked out into space. A force field snaps into lace over each breach.

Pulling back slowly past the docking ring, our view of the station is suddenly obstructed by the falling mass of a starships saucer section.

The ship is an Miranda class, one of the few remaining in service. The ship is broken and battered from it's own acts of sabotage. Complete sections of her hull are missing. The starboard nacelle has been torn off it's pylon and only a missing section of hull remains across the roll bar where the weapons pod used to be.

Out of control and falling towards the station, the ship eventually succumbs to it's wounds as it impacts the docking ring. The collision finishes off the Miranda class as it erupts in a shower of debris across the inner station. The docking ring breaks at the strike point and rains a second shower of debris across the inner core of the station.

Popping out to see the entire station and the traffic that surrounds it, three separate starships are adrift. Each one in a various stage of destruction.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - OPERATIONS

S'Rass begins to stir. He gets up and looks around, Ops is badly damaged from the previous explosions.

S'Rass moves to check on the others, he sees the device sitting on the the center console.

S'Rass rushes to the console, and quickly looks over the device to try and find out how to disarm it. The first thing he sees, however, is the countdown.

Fifteen seconds remain.

He sees a status report. The fusion core is about to go critical.

Twelve seconds.

(CONTINUED)

S'RASS
Computer initiate an emergency
fusion core
separation. Authorization,
Lieutenant Commander S'Rass,
Alpha-three-one-nine-execute.

Seven seconds.

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Authorization accepted. Initiating
separation sequence.

Four seconds. There is nothing left to do but...

Three.

Two.

One.

S'RASS
Great Maker.

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The bomb explodes, ripping through almost all of the windows in ops and blowing out into space. It's so violent that it nearly rips the upper levels right off of the station.

Several of the ships around the station are adrift. Other are just damaged, but all are hurt.

Finlay, lower on the station, the lower level begins to disconnect. Explosive bolts fire and gas powered jets thrust to push it away from the station.

The lower core passes by a Excelsior-class starship. The ship maneuverers rapidly to evade being hit by the huge mass of the core.

Not nearly far enough away, the fusion core begins to cascade and finally overloads.

The shock wave from the explosion catches the Excelsior-class ship and tears it apart, destroying it completely.

The shock wave continues on and catches the station.

EXT. BAJOR - CAPITAL

The crowd is growing uncontrollable with worried noise and hectic motion.

KIRA
(to Jake)
Stay close to me.

Jake nods his acknowledgment. A wave of worry washes of him and even though he has been in such high stress situations before, he can't help but nervously fidget.

Kira makes her way through the crowd towards the platform where a large group of Starfleet officers have gathered.

She periodically looks back to make sure Jake is still close by.

KIRA
(shouting)
Everyone just try to remain calm!

Her attempts to try and calm the crowd go totally unheard.

Kira taps her comm badge.

KIRA
This is Captain Kira to any
Federation ship in orbit. Please
respond.

There is no response.

KIRA
Kira to global connect? Kira to
anyone that can...

The sound of her voice is drowned out as sonic boom echoes from the east. The crowd instinctively ducks down.

Kira looks to the eastward sky. A small craft approaching.

A Starfleet officer standing near Kira yells:

STARFLEET OFFICER
Is that one of ours?

As it continues to approach, Kira recognizes the craft as Bajoran, not Starfleet. She looks back, seeing directly behind her, the capital building, and all around her, the crowd that has gathered for the day's celebration.

(CONTINUED)

She is suddenly overwhelmed by fear and puzzlement. As she puts the possibilities together, she realizes that she has no time to be worried and springs into action.

KIRA
(shouting)
Get these people out of here now!

Gesturing for Jake to move with her, Kira pushes through the crowd.

KIRA (cont'd)
Jake, go.

Jake seems stunned, unmoving, transfixed on the approaching craft.

Kira grabs him, turns him towards her, and looks directly up to meet his eyes.

KIRA
Run now!

The transport begins to dive towards the ground. Looking up at the craft, Kira knows that they're not going to make it. As she paralyzingly looks around for a place where they might find shelter, a wave of fear consumes consumes her.

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - OPEN SPACE

A single streaking object begins to decelerate and drop out of warp.

It's the Defiant. Now at impulse, she heads for the station.

INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

The air is tense as the bridge crew secure their appropriate stations from warp.

Thorne stands up.

THORNE
Put it on screen, Angie.

Thorne looks at the screen and nearly loses his footing when he sees the devastation the station has suffered.

The entire upper and lower sections of Pylon One are gone. As are the adjoining sections of the docking ring, up to the closest docking ports on each side.

(CONTINUED)

The upper core is badly damaged. Multiple windows are blown out of the Promenade and Ops. The entire inner core and habitat ring are scarred from debris impacts and singed from various explosions. The entire lower core is missing and the station has been pushed off it's axis.

In orbit around the station, a dozen ships have taken positions to lend help.

Thorne turns to look at Dax, who is equally shocked.

DAX

Hail them.

A few seconds pass as Jenda tries to reach someone aboard the station.

JENDA

No response.

Dax reads something on her sensor display.

DAX

Ops has taken heavy damage.

DAX (cont'd)

I'm amazed any part of it is still intact.

An avalanche of emotion overcomes everyone as they look out at their home, still burning in space.

Julian comes up behind Ezri. He hugs her tenderly as a tear rolls down her cheek.

THORNE

Send a general hail. We stand by to render assistance. Captain Thorne, U.S.S. Defiant.

EXT. BAJOR - FOREST

This part of the surface is miraculous, perhaps one of the only places that stands as a testament to the beauty of preoccupation Bajor.

Now it's a restricted nature preserve, which makes what lies beneath the surface an even more closely guarded secret.

INT. SECURE FACILITY - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Akima, her aide, and the two security guards materialize on a transporter pad.

Although the technology might have been gathered from other sources, the design is distinctly Bajoran, with little other design influences.

A Bajoran woman stands in front of the pad; waiting as the four people materialize.

Akima is a bit dazed.

AKIMA

I'm not doing that any more. Tell Starfleet I want something else. Being transferred through twenty different buffers can't be any more safe than being out in the open.

BRYN

Are you ok? We should get the doctor.

Bryn rushes to her side to offer a helping hand, but Akima blows past her without even acknowledging her offer.

AKIMA

(hollowed and empty)
No. I don't think I'll be alright ever again.
(beat)
I'm not injured, Bryn.

Akima heads for the door. They leave the the transporter room and continue speaking as the walk down a long corridor. As they reach the main room, a command center type place, Bryn is handed a new report.

AKIMA (cont'd)

Do we know how many are dead back there?

Bryn doesn't answer. Instead she focuses on the report.

AKIMA (cont'd)

What is it?

Bryn turns back to Akima.

(CONTINUED)

BRYN

(turning to Akima)

It wasn't an isolated incident. We're getting reports of at least seven other attacks here on Bajor and an additional twelve throughout the system. Any place where Starfleet personnel were stationed.

Akima turns away in disgust as if she can't bear to even hear the news let alone, deal with it.

After a moment, she finally comes back to her senses.

AKIMA

Bajoran casualties?

BRYN

We don't know. However given how integrated Starfleet has become...

AKIMA

Don't assume anything yet.

AKIMA

I want these people found.

BRYN

We don't yet know who...

AKIMA

Find them! Not tomorrow, not when Starfleet and the Federation get around to cluing us in. Find them now, today, before evening meal.

(beat)

Whatever it takes.

BRYN

Yes, First Minister.

Bryn leaves to begin her investigation.

Another officer brings Akima new report. She begins reading it and loses her temper, throwing the PADD across the table.

AKIMA

(to no one)

This isn't over. Not by any means.

INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

The Defiant has finally made contact with someone. Fleet Admiral ALYNNA NECHAYEV is currently in command of the sector.

THORNE

Are you sure?

Admiral Nechayev is on the view screen. We see behind her, the familiar bridge of a Prometheus-class starship.

NECHAYEV

He's telling everyone how he saved Major Yndar's life.

Thorne seems pleased by this news, though we can't tell whether it's because Quark is alive or Yndar is alive.

NECHAYEV

Ordinarily I wouldn't place such importance on the word of a Ferengi bartender, but we have little else to go on.

THORNE

Where do you want us?

NECHAYEV

You have engineers and doctors. We need them. Once they're aboard the station, I have a mission for you and the rest of your crew.

EXT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY

Smoke and flames rises from a dozen places. Part of the main tower has now collapsed onto another section of the building. Several other structures have also collapsed.

On the adjoining shuttle port, there are no shuttle craft left intact. They have all been damaged or destroyed to some degree or another. Everyone of the charred hulks have been left to burn while damage control teams are focused on more critical areas.

INT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY - INFIRMARY

The infirmary is in chaos as medical techs and emergency response teams bring in more and more wounded. There isn't enough room for people as nurses and doctors try to direct the flow of wounded to where they can get the best care.

INT. FEDERATION EMBASSY - CARGO BAY

In the ensuing overflow of wounded, all of the Embassy's cargo bays have been converted to triage wards. Beds are lined end to end with just enough room for a person to walk between.

But it still isn't enough.

INT. FEDERATION EMBASSY - INFIRMARY

The Embassy's Chief Medical Officer moves hurriedly into the waiting area from one of the surgical suite. He's a human, late 50's with enough time in to have seen war and death, but even now he looks shaken and disturbed.

Walking out to get the next one, the doctor is still going strong, blood dripping up to his elbows, his uniform stained with it, and sweat pouring down his face. He stops for a minute, dazed by the continued supply of work, though as he is briefed about another patient he recovers his wits and presses on.

A Bajoran NURSE moves from patient to patient, marking on their forehead where they need to go. A small team of med techs and nurses follow her, hanging on her every life or death decision.

Moving to the next patient, she quickly scans him with her tricorder

NURSE

He has third degree burns to the majority of his body, massive hemorrhaging in his brain and...

She stops as the tricorder finds one critical injury after another.

She marks a G on his forehead for GONE. As she presses the marker to his charred skin, the young man screams out in pain.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE (cont'd)
Dope him.

The nurse moves to the next person while a medic presses a hypospray into the man's neck. He begins to quiet down. He slips into unconsciousness, and his head goes slack.

Moving to the next person, they repeat the procedure.

NURSE (cont'd)
Internal bleeding, a punctured lung, and first degree burns.

She marks an S on his forehead.

NURSE
Get him to surgery.

She turns as the sound of a transporter begins to fill the room. Several people back up to make room.

A woman in a Starfleet uniform appears carrying a body.

NURSE (cont'd)
(pissed off)
Who didn't get the message...?

She stops mid sentence as she sees Kira turning to face her. She's carrying Jake in her arms, blood dripping down his arm.

NURSE
Corpsmen!

Two med-techs come running to her side.

The nurse points to a man on one of the bio-beds.

NURSE (cont'd)
Move that man off the bed.

They look at her strangely...

NURSE (cont'd)
Now!

The techs quickly move to follow her orders.

NURSE (cont'd)
What happened?

Kira moves Jake over to the bed, laying him down gently.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

We were at the capital when the transport crashed.

The nurse catches her obvious questionable look.

NURSE

We've been sort of busy.

KIRA

A Bajoran commercial transport crashed near the capital. We were caught on the outskirts of the explosion.

A doctor, one of several on duty at the embassy, comes to the side of the bed.

DOCTOR

What have we got?

NURSE

Human male. Caught in an explosive shock wave. Numerous broken bones and internal...

The sound of the nurses voice and everything in the room begins to fade as Kira's head begins to ring...

Kira is pulled back into the moment as the doctor grabs her arm.

NURSE

You need to wait outside, Captain.

Kira looks down at the bed where Jake is lying. They've already opened him up to start operating.

This looks much more like a modern surgery then the careful bloodless 24th century variety. Jake's chest has actually been opened up, the doctor has his hands wrist deep in his chest, and blood is spilling onto the floor.

The voice of the doctor as he shouts out orders, fades to the background.

KIRA

I'm not leaving him.

NURSE

You have to let us work.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

He is my responsibility...

The nurse and three orderlies have to drag her out of the surgical suit. She kicks and fights with them all the way.

Once outside, Kira begins to calm down a bit.

KIRA (cont'd)

How bad is it?

NURSE

It's bad.

KIRA

If he dies, you're telling his father yourself.

NURSE

Then we best get back to it.

Kira slowly backs away, not noticing that another doctor has approached her.

UNNAMED NURSE

Captain, you're injured.

KIRA

I've had worse.

The nurse tries to take a closer look at Kira's wound, but she just pushes her away.

Realizing she won't get anywhere, and there are more critical patients to attend to, the nurse leaves.

KIRA

Prophets, watch over him.

Then something in her switches and Kira makes the decision to leave.

INT. DEFIANT - CORRIDOR

Thorne, Dax, Bashir, and Nog appear from around a corner.

BASHIR

Has there been any word on Kira or Jake?

(CONTINUED)

DAX

None.

They both look to Nog to offer some remark of optimistic hope, but he doesn't answer.

INT. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

The the dematerialization of the transporter beam finishes as Thorne, Dax, Bashir, and Nog enter. Someone has just beamed off the Defiant.

THORNE

We can't help our friends right now. So let's not forget the matter at hand.

(beat-to Nog)

Who else is going to get Deep Space Nine back on her feet?

NOG

Understood, sir.

THORNE

You had best be on your way then.

Nog joins Bashir on the transporter pad.

Bashir and Dax give each other a look of shared intimacy.

THORNE

Energize.

Nog and Bashir disappear within the transporter beam.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

Sir, the Epimethius is signaling. the specialist is ready to beam over.

THORNE

Hold.

Thorne turns to Dax:

THORNE

Return to the bridge, Commander.

DAX

Sir?

(CONTINUED)

THORNE

I know the specialist that's coming aboard and I don't want her near any more of the crew than is absolutely necessary. Is that understood?

DAX

Yes sir.

Ezri turns and leaves. Once she is out the door, Thorne nods for the Transporter Chief to begin.

The transporter activates, and a tall slender woman materializes on the pad. She's wearing a Starfleet uniform. She has a unique rank signature on her collar. Three pips underlined with a single golden bar.

SPECIALIST

Commander Thorne, what a pleasure it is to see you again.

THORNE

The pleasure is all yours, I'm sure Celeste.

Thorne turns to leave:

CELESTE

You're still upset with me after all these years?

THORNE

Still. But isn't it lucky you just happened to be here.

CELESTE

Yes, it is quite fortunate. And if you can put aside your obvious deep seeded mistrust of telepaths for a moment, we might actually get some work done.

THORNE

Then let's get one thing straight. Stay out of my head, or all your mental powers won't mean a damn thing.

Thorne and Celeste step onto a turbo lift.

(CONTINUED)

THORNE (cont'd)
Bridge.

They ride in silence for a moment before Celeste asks:

CELESTE
Vulcans?

THORNE
Excuse me?

CELESTE
I was wondering about your training. I can't read your mind, which is to say that you've had some substantial training since last time. Whoever taught you the mental discipline to block a scan was quite good.

THORNE
Then I suppose you'll never know.

THORNE (cont'd)
We've assigned you quarters on...

CELESTE
Deck two, section three, room 19.

Celeste inputs a new destination manually into the panel of the turbolift. The lift slows, and then changes directions.

CELESTE (cont'd)
Don't worry I didn't get it from you. Your crew doesn't have your obvious training.

The turbo lift stops. The doors open and Celeste walks out into a corridor.

THORNE
(shaking his head with scorn)
Telepaths.
(beat)
Bridge.

Thorne leans up against the wall in the turbolift.

FADE TO:

INT. BAJOR - FEDERATION EMBASSY - CIC

The Command & Information Center of the Embassy is barely operational. All of the fires have been put out, but smoke and charred debris still linger in most places. Only a few of the consoles remain online and those that are, are being manned. Everyone else is working on repairs.

In the midst of all this, Colonel Roak is leading the effort. General Quin is no where in sight.

LIEUTENANT

The Spectre is gone sir.

Colonel Roak lowers his head for a moment to offer the dead a silent prayer. He looks up as Kira enters the CIC. He makes one final remark as she crosses the room.

COLONEL ROAK

Right now we have more pressing matters. Lock down the system. No one enters or leaves the Bajoran system without authorization.

Roak turns as Kira approaches.

COLONEL ROAK

I'm glad to see your made it out of the capital.

KIRA

I almost didn't. Where's Quin?

COLONEL ROAK

The General is dead. I'm on command.

Kira pauses a moment to absorb the news.

KIRA

Jake Sisko is down in your infirmary.

COLONEL ROAK

Captain Sisko's son.

KIRA

He was almost killed.

COLONEL ROAK

Why bring him here? There are certainly closer facilities.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

The ship that hit the capital was
Bajoran.

(long beat)

I didn't want to take any chances.

LIEUTENANT

Colonel.

KIRA

What is it?

COLONEL ROAK

First Minister Akima has declared
martial law. The militia is acting
security, and they've begun
rounding up suspected members of
the Circle.

KIRA

The Circle?

COLONEL ROAK

Sorry, I've gotten ahead of myself.

(beat)

Lieutenant, can you bring up the
message from the Circle?

LIEUTENANT

Yes, sir.

THE VIDEO (V.O.)

(filtered)

The Circle claims responsibility...

KIRA

Tahna.

COLONEL ROAK

I take it you recognize him.

KIRA

Tahna Los. He tried to destroy the
wormhole not long after Starfleet
took over Deep Space Nine. The
last I heard, he was still in
prison.

COLONEL ROAK

It would appear as though he's been
paroled.

Kira goes back to watching the video as the sound of their
statement comes back up.

(CONTINUED)

THE VIDEO (V.O.)
...it's time for everyone to know
that the rebirth is at hand.

EXT. SPACE

The Enterprise, her Romulan escorts, and the lone Cardassian ship finally arrive at Deep Space Nine.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Captain Picard is standing in the space between his chair and the Ops and Helm stations.

PICARD
We got here as soon as possible,
Admiral.

NECHAYEV (V.O.)
(filtered)
I have no doubt if you could have
been here sooner, you would have.

PICARD
What can we do to help?

Nechayev looks physically and mentally exhausted. Only a few officers and crew can be seen on the bridge of her ship.

NECHAYEV
We're still running short on
doctors, engineers, and damage
control teams. We can use whoever
you can spare.

PICARD
Consider it done. What about our
Cardassian friends?

NECHAYEV
Send them on to Bajor. They should
know the way. We can keep an eye
on them from here.

PICARD
There is another matter that I feel
we should speak about privately.

Picard glances down at the PADD that he has not let go of since the first viewing.

(CONTINUED)

NECHAYEV

Give me ten minutes to wrap up a few things here and I'll be there.

PICARD

Very well. We're at your disposal, Admiral.

NECHAYEV

I'm glad you're here
Jean-Luc. Nechayev out.

Worf and Picard share a look, in response to Nechayev's uncharacteristically friendly attitude.

WORF

Might the Admiral have been replaced by a changeling?

PICARD

I assume that anything is possible.
(activating a the com)
Now here this. All hands to report to your emergency response stations.

(to Lefler)

Robin, work with flight ops to straighten out a flight schedule.
(turning to the bridge staff)

Everyone else should report to a shuttle bay.

(Picard motions to Worf)

You to Commander. The Enterprise can run itself for the time being.

Picard nods to Worf, who instantly rises to rally the troops.

WORF

All bridge personnel, secure your stations and report to your assigned emergency area.

Worf hits a button on the panel beside him.

WORF (cont'd)

All S.A.R. teams, report to you assigned response area.

The bridge crew begin to move into action.

CUT TO:

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

In another section of the base, Taha Los sits in an old rickety desk chair in front of several monitors of varying sizes.

The computer setup, looks very much like a system that has been scrounged together from whatever available parts could be found.

Each monitor is set to a different news feed, ranging from the local and global Bajoran news, to the official Federation News Service. Several monitors also show a variety of alien new services that are present for the celebration.

In the background the familiar sound of a Cardassian transporter beam echoes through the caves.

Marez walks into frame, approaching the position where Los is watching news of the attacks. He carries an ere about his as though he is in charge and above anyone that might appose his will, even more noticeable then with any common Cardassian.

LOS
Did you get it?

Los turns to Marez after the fact, waiting for his answer.

MAREZ
(annoyed)
I wouldn't have returned had I not.

LOS
(uneasy)
Good.

Los goes back to watching the news.

MAREZ
Is she here?

LOS
No. People would have noticed her absence. She should report in soon though.

Marez takes a step closer to Los so that he can see the monitors more clearly.

(CONTINUED)

MAREZ

How go the festivities?

Los chuckles at his choice of words, though stops when he begins to consider what has been done in his name.

LOS

It seems as though Starfleet was caught completely off guard. All of the faithful managed to leave their mark...so to speak.

Marez looks at the view screen as it switches to a report about the capital.

REPORTER V.O.

We repeat, a Bajoran commercial transport...

Switch to amateur style footage of the actual crash.

REPORTER V.O.

(emotional)

...has just crashed into the assembly area near the Capital Building. Just passing the crowd assembled for today's celebration, the explosion...

The reporter pauses as she tries to compose herself.

REPORTER V.O. (cont'd)

(emotional)

...the explosion engulfed much of the crowd and spread as far as the capital building itself. No word yet has been released on the safety of First Minister Akima...

Having seen enough, Los switches off all the monitors. He turns to Marez who is now holding a glass of something...probably Kanar.

Marez holds up his glass to Los.

MAREZ

(amused)

Cheers.

Los is obviously put off by his enjoyment of Bajorans being killed.

Marez smiles and Los turns away. A wave of worry washes over his face.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - EVA PREP ROOM

EVA suits line the wall. LaForge and Nog are putting on their suits. Numerous other engineers surround them.

NOG

I don't care if it takes a life time. I still think we can get those auxiliary fusion reactors online.

LaForge stops as he's pulling on his gloves.

LAFORGE

That's impossible.

NOG

They said the same thing about me going to the Academy.

LAFORGE

Well obviously they were wrong about you, but I'm pretty sure I'm right about this. Our auxiliary reactors aren't designed to interface with Cardassian technology.

Nog stands up and takes his helmet off the rack.

NOG

From what I've seen Commander, Cardassian technology isn't designed to interface with anything.

LaForge begins to stop Nog right there, but Nog cuts him off.

NOG (cont'd)

I don't mean to step on your seniority sir, but everything I learned about engineering, I learned right here on this station. I can get her back up and running.

LaForge isn't so sure but doesn't question him further.

NOG (cont'd)

If you can take care of the structural integrity issues and get those power couplings on the promenade back up and running, I can handle the rest.

(CONTINUED)

LAFORGE

I still think it's crazy.

NOG

Two strips of latinum says we get her back into fighting shape.

LAFORGE

You're on.

Both men stop as the door to the room opens and they see someone that neither had expected.

O'BRIEN (O.S.)

What did you do to my station, Nog?

Nog and LaForge both stop dead what they're doing. They turn towards the voice to see MILES O'BRIEN standing in the doorway.

NOG

(in disbelief)

Chief. It was like this when I found it.

They both break out laughing, though given recent events, it's not quite as jovial as we would expect.

O'BRIEN

And it's not "Chief" anymore.

LAFORGE

You're always going to be the Chief.

Nog only smiles, signaling that he agrees.

NOG

I had no idea you where here.

O'BRIEN

I came in for the anniversary celebration. Wanted to make it a surprise, but it turned out...well.

O'Brien walks over to the two engineers, taking Geordie's hand to shake.

O'BRIEN (cont'd)

Lending a hand, Commander?

(CONTINUED)

LAFORGE

It seems I've been drafted.

O'BRIEN

(smiling to Nog)

Don't sound so pessimistic,
Sir. We'll have her back in the
game with time to spare.

NOG

Now I think the first thing we need
to do is see about getting that
auxiliary fusion reactor online.

Both men turn to look at each other and then answer:

O'BRIEN & LAFORGE

Yes, sir.

LaForge just looks at the two of them and shakes his head in disbelief.

O'Brien gives LaForge a friendly hit on the arm, before grabbing his helmet and setting it into place.

They leave the prep room and make their way out onto the station.

EXT. BAJOR - KENDRA VALLEY - DUSK

The shining light of three of Bajor's moons illuminate the valley. In the distance there is a house that looks as though it has been there for years.

A winding dirt path weaves down the hill and across a flat expanse to end at the house's front porch.

From far off, three columns materialize, and a fourth horizontal form that is illuminated enough from the transporter to be seen as an occupied stretcher.

The three people walking towards the house.

A figure exits the front door, jumps across the porch, and runs to the newcomers. The newcomers stop as the figure approaches.

INT. BAJOR - KENDRA VALLEY - SISKO RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

The house is rustic but modern. Dark, yet inviting. A variety of earth and Bajoran decorations are abundant. A large fireplace centers the room, around which the rest of the room's furniture is situated. Though there is no need for a fire on such a warm night.

On the mantle are several pictures. Of interest are the pictures of: Sisko, Kasidy and Jake; Jake, Ben, and Joseph, the DS9 cast in their Vic Fontaine holosuite attire, and a picture of Ben and Jadzia.

Kira is sitting in a large armchair near the fireplace. She's worried about what KASIDY SISKO will say or do.

Kasidy Sisko enters the room, walking slowly. It's evident she has been crying.

KIRA

...it all happened so fast.

Kasidy puts up a hand, for her to stop. She walks over to her friend and wraps her arms around Kira.

A moment later she breaks the hug, and takes a step back.

KASIDY

This isn't your fault, Neryes.

KIRA

He never should have been there. He didn't even want to go. I insisted...

KASIDY

Neryes, stop it right now. This was the act of madmen, nothing more. Jake is going to be fine and that's all that matters. Besides, It takes much more than that to kill a Sisko.

Kira smiles at that, though she is still crying.

KIRA

I suppose you're right about that.

Kira spots something, rather someone out of the corner of her eye and begins to smile. She holds up a finger and signals for the person to come to her.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH SISKO, the daughter of Ben and Kasidy, now five years old, giggles and comes running out from around the corner.

It's a moment before Kasidy sees what's going on.

SARAH
Aunt Neryes!

Kasidy jumps at the sound of her daughter's voice.

KASIDY
Sarah.

Kasidy reaches out to catch her before she gets to Kira, but Sarah is too fast.

Kira grabs her instead, pulling her to her in a giant hug.

Kira eases up, letting her down a bit so she can look up at her. Sarah takes this opportunity to run a finger of the ridges on Kira's nose.

KIRA
(grinning from ear to ear)
How's my favorite Goddaughter?

SARAH
I'm you're only Goddaughter.

KASIDY
And she's too smart for her own good.

KIRA
Nonsense.

INT. WHITE LIMBO - VISION

Kira is suddenly transported to the familiar surroundings of Kasidy's home, but it's not the same. An eerie whiteness casts off everything, making it seem false, even though it feels very real.

KASIDY PROPHET
The chosen one.

KIRA
(falling to her knees)
Prophet.

The Kasidy Prophet looks off screen, as though she is confused and doesn't understand what Kira is doing.

(CONTINUED)

A voice suddenly sounds from somewhere off screen.

UNKNOWN VOICE(O.S.)
You can't very well save Bajor down
there, Neryes.

Looking up from Kira's perspective, we see the tall, dark figure of Benjamin Sisko. He's still dressed in his Starfleet uniform. And it still shows the signs of stress from his fight with Dukat in the Fire Caves.

KIRA
Emissary.

Sisko extends his hand, and after Kira takes it, helps her to her feet.

SISKO
Can't you ever just call me Ben?

Kira stumbles for a moment, not knowing what to do or say.

Sensing her unease, Sisko makes the first move and reaches out to hug her.

After a moment he breaks the embrace.

KIRA
I have so many questions.

SISKO
I wish I had time to answer them
all, but you have work to do.

KIRA
(puzzled)
What work?

SISKO
She didn't just call you the chosen
one for nothing.

KIRA
What does that...

The trailing voice of Sarah begins to fade in.

SARAH
...Neryes

INT. BAJOR - KENDRA VALLEY - SISKO RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

Kira finally snaps out of it and realizes she is back in the real world. Sarah is still sitting in Kira's lap, pulling on her sleeve.

SARAH
Aunt Neryes?

KASIDY
Are you alright, Neryes? You
seemed somewhere else for a minute.

Kira looks down at Sarah and smiles.

KIRA
(to Sarah)
I saw your father.

As Kira continues to smile, Kasidy is overwhelmed by fear, anger, sadness, hope, and joy all at once.

FADE OUT:

TO BE CONTINUED...