

Star Trek: Lost prophets Part Two

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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Special Thanks to: Darrell Schielke for his time and patience in helping me edit.
Many thanks Draft.

BLACK:

FADE IN:

In orbit of the fifth planet of the Bajoran system, a sprawling shipyard stretches out around the planet. It's a chaotic ballet of carefully choreographed machinery amid a fleet of new and battered vessels from countless worlds.

Moving in towards one of the docks, is the broken and battered hull of the U.S.S. Spectre. The ship's hull is scarred with hull breaches that have yet to be sealed.

Across the yard, a team of work-bees swarm about the main structure to repair recent damage to a dry-dock.

A small fleet of Starfleet ships are in orbit. All show some sign of damage.

Many of the weapon platforms show damage as well.

In lower orbit, thick smoke shadows vast areas the size of continents.

Bajor is burning. Fires rage across the capital and much of the forested countryside that surrounds the city. Farther from the capital though, the fires have died out.

Passing the divide between day and night, the landscape switches from dense forest to wide open pastures.

Farmland extends as far as the eye can see; interrupted only by the occasional stand of trees.

Cresting a small hill, Kira walks up a long dirt path. She finally sees a small, run-down shack at the edge of a thick stand of Kava root. Resembling something like corn, the wide fields spread out to the left and right surrounding the small house.

As Kira approaches the front of the house, she smiles and waves.

A man who is getting on in years sits on the porch.

When Kira finally reaches the front porch, she quickly steps out of the sun and into the shade.

KIRA

I can't believe the former First Minister of Bajor lives in this shack. You could've had them build you a mansion.

Change point of view to see SHAKAAR EDON sitting in a roughly handmade rocking chair on the front porch. He's wearing an old pair of pants and a dirty shirt, that either hasn't been cleaned in ages or is just dirty from a long day's work.

SHAKAAR EDON
What would I do there?

KIRA
Anything you want, Edon.

Edon smiles at her answer. Kira realizes he is glad to see her and smiles back.

Edon stands up to greet her properly. He embraces her in a warm hug. He holds her for a moment longer than seems necessary, but soon lets go.

He motions for her to take a seat and sits down on a stool beside her.

EDON (CONT'D)
I take it you're here to tell me
about the attacks.

Kira is a bit surprised.

EDON (CONT'D)
I'm not totally cut off out here.

Edon points to an antique subspace radio, capable only of audio transmissions.

EDON (CONT'D)
This business with the attacks
against the Federation. These
terrorists...the people have to be
made to see that we're stronger
with them than without.

KIRA
Old habits die hard.

Edon is surprised by here statement.

EDON
When we fought the Cardassians, we
did it to free our home world; to
drive oppression from our
lives. The Federation is a lot of
things, but oppressors aren't one
of them.

(beat)

Blowing up a Cardassian transport full of troops is a whole other monster compared to taking the lives of innocent citizens.

Kira looks away, lost in thought, remembering the old days and why Shakaar picked that particular statement to make his point.

EDON (CONT'D)

Sure, some innocents were injured or killed along the way, but you remember the saying...

KIRA

(finishing his sentence)
...If your not fighting them, you're helping them.

KIRA

Things have changed since then.

EDON

Maybe, but in other ways they're exactly the same. We were fighting for our very survival. We had to protect our people, and we changed our way of life accordingly. Now we're fighting to find a place for Bajor in the galaxy.

(beat)

The only difference this time, is that people are scared to make the changes that need to be made.

Kira turns to look at him and grins.

KIRA

Been practicing that speech for a while?

EDON

I've had it ready.

Edon takes a drink from his glass.

EDON

It was only a matter of time before people started noticing the change that becoming a Federation member has brought. It's opened us up to new societies and new ideas. We're

(MORE)

EDON (cont'd)

bound to pick up our share of each,
and that isn't a bad thing.

KIRA

You're preaching to the choir. But
not everyone is as enlightened as
the two of us.

EDON

We can't be afraid of change,
Neryes.

KIRA

Even if we lose who we are?

EDON

We changed our way of life to fight
the Cardassian occupation, and we
changed our mistrusting ways to let
the Federation help us
rebuild. To keep from becoming
locked into our way of life, we're
going to have to change again.

Kira doesn't say anything. She puses for a moment, trying
to take in everything Shakaar has said and decide how much
she agrees with him.

EDON

How is the Emissary's son?

KIRA

Alive. Barely.

Kira pauses a moment as she looks away. A wave of guilt and
regret wash over her as she is reminded of Jake.

KIRA

I don't understand this. The
Federation's never been our enemy.

EDON

Well, there was that one time...

KIRA

You know what I mean.

Kira gets up and walks to the edge of the porch, leaning
over the railing to look at a vine that has wrapped around a
post.

KIRA

What could the Circle hope to accomplish by attacking the Federation? Surely they know they can't win.

EDON

I'm sure someone said the same thing about us regarding the Cardassians.

(beat)

No doubt, the Circle believes they can force the Federation into negotiating...or hurt them enough to give up the fight.

KIRA

Then they're going to be sorely mistaken.

EDON

And it may not even be about that. Tahna Los isn't stupid. He knows he can't drive the Federation away with violence. The Federation doesn't work that way.

(beat)

My guess is, he just wants to hurt them and anybody that gets caught in the way.

Kira sits back down, hunching forward.

Edon, bares a slight smile, upon seeing her, and knowing that some things never change. His smile fades though as he comes to his next topic.

EDON

Have you spoken to First Minister Akima?

KIRA

It's on my list. I'll be interested to hear which version of events she chooses to share.

EDON

Come again?

KIRA

Apparently she's telling Starfleet and Bajor two different things. We're getting the, "for

(MORE)

KIRA (cont'd)
 the good of Bajor" response, and
 Starfleet is getting the, "do
 whatever it takes to catch these
 people," response.

EDON
 Then she's going to prove she's the
 fool I thought she was.

Kira looks at him a moment, surprised he has let such an
 obvious attack slip his lips.

KIRA
 That begs the question of why you
 allowed her to succeed you.

EDON
 (aggravated)
 I didn't allow anything. The
 Council of Ministers endorsed her
 and even with my support behind her
 opponent, she still managed to win.

KIRA
 As much as I appreciate the talk, I
 still don't have the slightest idea
 how to solve this problem.

Edon places a steady hand on her shoulder.

EDON
 You've always done whats in the
 best interest of Bajor,
 Neryes. Follow the path. The
 Prophets have laid out for you. Do
 what you think is right, not what
 anyone else tells you is right.

After a long pause.

EDON
 I don't envy you, Nerys.

KIRA
 (sarcastically)
 Thanks.

EDON
 Isn't it about time you came home
 for good, Nerys?

Kira looks at him, trying to hold back a wry smile.

KIRA
What would I do here?

They sit for a long moment, at least a minute just watching the sunset, neither of them needing to say anything at that particular moment.

Finally, knowing that she has stayed far too long, Kira gets up to leave.

Edon follows her lead and walks her to the edge of the porch. Once there, they hug one last time. Edon purposely holds the embrace a moment longer than expected.

Kira looks at him for a moment as though there might be something more. Before she can do anything, Edon steps back.

EDON
Safe journey, Neryes.

They both smile.

Kira walks away. After a long moment, Edon calls after her, having to yell to get her attention:

EDON (CONT'D)
Kira!

Kira looks back and smiles again. She waves briefly at Edon, then turns and keeps on walking. In the radiating heat from the ground, her figure almost disappears.

EXT. SPACE - CARDASSIAN SHIP - RELKASH

An establishing shot of the Relkash, as it passes one of Bajor's moons.

INT. RELKASH - CORRIDOR

Garak is standing by a window, looking out at the planetoid beyond. Leaning heavily against the bulkhead, he stands there as though he has nothing in the world to cling to. He is lost, despondent, and in obvious need of a reason to exist.

After a moment, he hears someone approaching and cautiously steps back into one of the shadows cast by the fading light from the window. Garak steadies his breathing and disappears into the background. A few seconds pass, and someone comes walking down the corridor. Marez passes near him and

(CONTINUED)

continues walking, oblivious to his presence.

Waiting till he passes around the corner, Garak takes his first tentative step out of the darkness. Garak is puzzled and still unable to place the man.

Garak follows him through the ship, always a corner behind, pausing periodically to wait and see if Marez has doubled back.

Marez approaches a transporter pad, and as he turns his back, Garak moves to a shadow in the adjoining room.

Garak watches as Marez steps onto the transporter pad and beams away.

Garak steps out from the recess of the shadow, and walks over to the transporter console. He checks the logs, but is unable to find what he is looking for.

A few seconds pass, and he goes back to work. He has more luck this time. Pleased with his small accomplishment, his mood quickly changes to worry, as he finds what he is looking for.

He finishes working and takes a step back from the console. He turns on a heel and walks back through the ship. Within a minute he makes his way through the maze of corridors and back to his quarters.

He activates the communication panel.

GARAK

How long until we reach Bajor?

BRIDGE OFFICER (V.O.)

(filtered)

Approximately forty-seven minutes.

GARAK

Very well.

(beat)

Notify me as soon as we enter transporter range.

Garak settles back into his seat. He displays a look of contemplation as he attempts to put the pieces of this puzzle together.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - CARGO BAY

This cargo bay is massive, much bigger than any of the others on the station. It looks as though it's been refitted from several rooms, to form this one large open space. But now it is a somber, grief-stricken place.

Across the floor are row after row of covered bodies. Each one draped in a sheet that bares the flag of their respective home world. The scene serves to create a mosaic of multi-cultural carnage.

People walk between the rows, looking for friends, loved ones, colleagues. Every few minutes, someone finds the person they're looking for and breaks down.

Quark is here, kneeling beside the flag-draped form of someone he knew. The flag bares the insignia of Earth.

Quark slowly pulls back the drape to look at the person it hides, but their face remains obscured.

A wave of sadness washes over Quark as he bows his head in a moment of isolated sadness. He found who he was looking for.

He returns the sheet to its place, covering the woman's body. He stands up and looks around. Quark sees a series of sheets that bear the seal of Ferenginar.

He walks towards them.

EXT. FEDERATION EMBASSY

Crossing the divide between day and night, the Federation embassy comes into view. The fires are out, but the damage remains.

INT. FEDERATION EMBASSY - CIC

The room has been much repaired, but still shows signs of the attack. Several monitors are still burned out. The large holographic display system in the center of the room is smashed. Display screens and support braces that used to hang from the ceiling have fallen to the floor.

Burn and scorch marks still mark many of the walls.

First Minister Akima stands next to a makeshift command console. It's nothing more than a large monitor jerry-rigged to one of the main consoles. ODN cabling runs straight out of the wall, into the display, and down into the console.

(CONTINUED)

Colonel Roak is here commanding what is left of Starfleet's presence on Bajor.

ROAK

I would've thought this to be the time to embrace both sides.

(beat)

I implore you. give us time to fully investigate matter. Jumping to conclusions and acting on faulty evidence will only make this situation worse.

Akima pauses for a long moment. She looks away from the Colonel and towards a monitor that shows the damage on Bajor.

She turns back to Roak.

AKIMA

I can make no guarantees.

ROAK

I beg you...

AKIMA

My world is burning! We have a long history of retribution when assaulted in such a fashion.

ROAK

You also have a long history as being wise and compassionate. Now is the time for both. I urge you not to act in haste.

AKIMA

Let it be said that I'm nothing if not compassionate.

ROAK

Indeed.

AKIMA

May I use a communication station?

ROAK

Of course.

(to a nearby ensign)

Set up a secure comm station for the First Minister.

(CONTINUED)

ENSIGN

Yes, sir.

INT. BAJOR - CAPITAL

BRYN

Yes, First Minister. I'll begin
the search for Yarka right away.

Bryn closes the channel and steps away from the monitor.

BRYN

She suspects nothing.

MAREZ

Because she's entirely too
trusting.

BRYN

She will be here soon. We have
little time. Wait for my signal.

Marez bows as any obedient servant would.

MAREZ

I serve the Founders in all things.

EXT. BAJOR ORBIT - ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise is orbiting Bajor. A multitude of shuttles
and runabouts of all size and class are coming and going
from every shuttle-bay.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log:
supplemental. Humanitarian efforts
are well underway, though my
conversation with Admiral Nechayev
it is clear this is only the
beginning of a much larger
crisis...and a new mission that I
find fills me with dread.

INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR

Worf and Picard round a corridor walking with determination
as as though they have somewhere to be.

(CONTINUED)

WORF

It would've been beneficial to have been told the Changeling had escaped Federation custody.

(beat)

And I must go on record advising against any incursion into Dominion territory.

PICARD

Your objection is noted. For what it's worth, I made the same point to Admiral Nechayev. However, she was less than understanding.

They continue walking for a moment before Picard speaks again.

PICARD (CONT'D)

Seeing as you have more experience in this matter than I, Commander, any thoughts you might have about shoring up our security measures would be appreciated.

WORF

I suggest a standing security force on all decks backed with a standing red alert.

(beat)

Also, if you come across someone you don't know, shoot them.

Picard stops dead in his tracks.

Realizing his Captain is no longer by his side, Worf stops as well and turns back to face him.

PICARD

I hope you're kidding, Commander.

Worf considers his previous statement for a moment.

WORF

On second thought, the people you know could also be Changeling's. Shoot them as well.

After a moment, taking it upon himself to believe that Worf is indeed joking, Picard starts walking again. Worf waits till Picard has reached him before continuing.

(CONTINUED)

After a few more seconds, they come to a large set of double doors. They are nearly to the double doors when a pair of medics come running from around the corner on the opposite side of the corridor.

MEDIC

Make a hole!

Picard and Worf quickly move out of the way narrowly avoiding smacking right into them. Once they manage to recover, they both walk through the doors into the main shuttle-bay.

The single room is massive. Dozens of shuttles and several medical variations of the Danube-class runabout are parked all along the deck. Through the open doors at the end of the bay, Picard sees more shuttles are eagerly waiting to land.

On the deck, medics, doctors, and nurses run from shuttle to shuttle, evaluating the injured people being offloaded.

The one woman trying to coordinate this entire show happens to by chance see Picard and Worf and makes a line for them.

PICARD

Doctor.

The new CMO aboard the Enterprise, ALYSSA OGAWA, walks right up to Picard.

PICARD

Status.

OGAWA

We're reaching our limit, sir.

PICARD

They're going to call off the rescue portion of the search within the next few hours.

OGAWA

Good. I mean...I don't...it's not...we can't handle much more...

Picard raises his hand to stop her.

PICARD

Easy, doctor, we get your meaning. We're all bit on edge here.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (cont'd)
How are you doing?

OGAWA
We're handling the load alright I think.

PICARD
I meant how are you doing, Alyssa?

OGAWA
I've been better, sir.

PICARD
I think that's true for all of us.

NURSE
Doctor, we're losing his vitals.

Ogawa doesn't even look to Picard. Instead she just leaves to do what she can.

The scene follows Ogawa as she approaches the man on the gurney. It's Yarka.

Worf watches a band of medics unloading a runabout that is just setting down.

All of the people they're unloading, including the medics themselves are badly burned. The sheets that cover the wounded are all burned and no longer give closure to the dead. They lay open for all eyes to see.

MEDIC (V.O.)
Someone lobbed a homemade explosive into the back as we were about to lift off. We lost our doctor and nearly didn't make it out ourselves.

Picard has come to stand next to him. Worf has come back to his senses.

WORF
There is no honor in this.

PICARD
There rarely is, Commander.

WORF
When do we leave?

(CONTINUED)

PICARD

As soon as the last transport is
aboard.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Kira materializes on the transporter pad. She steps forward
off the pad, but stops when she sees Celeste.

KIRA

Whose your friend, Commander?

Celeste steps forward and extends her hand.

CELESTE

Commander Celeste Navarro.

Kira returns the gesture.

THORNE

Think good thoughts, Captain.

Kira eyes him for a moment, not understanding his
meaning. When he doesn't immediately go into further
detail, she lets the matter drop.

KIRA

(to Thorne)

Can I speak to you alone?

Celeste leaves the room, with a smug look on her face.

KIRA

Who's your friend, really?

THORNE

She works for Starfleet
security. She's the highest rated
telepath employed by the
Federation, and she is most
certainly *not* my friend.

KIRA

How much do I need to be worried?

THORNE

She doesn't need to be in the room
to know what we're talking about.

KIRA

Bring her back in here.

On the trail of her words, Celeste comes back into the room.

(CONTINUED)

Thorne looks to Kira as if to say I told you so.

CELESTE

So tell me what you've...

Thorne pulls his phaser and stuns Celeste. Her unconscious form falls to the floor.

THORNE

(snide)

I would've thought she'd have seen that coming.

Kira looks at him in puzzlement.

KIRA

Why did you do that? Not that I blame you really, but could I have used her?

THORNE

We. And it's a long story, about which you're just going to have to trust me.

Thorne taps his comm badge.

THORNE

Sickbay, get a pair of medics to the transporter room and be quick about it.

MEDICAL OFFICER (V.O.)

(filtered)

Aye, sir.

THORNE

Security team to Transporter room one.

KIRA

You had better start making sense.

(beat)

And what is this "we" stuff.

THORNE

Whatever you're planning, you're going to need help. She would've only gotten in the way.

(beat)

The good Doctor can keep her sedated until we return.

(CONTINUED)

Kira starts to say something, but stops when it occurs to her that Thorne is correct.

THORNE

I assume you have some kind of plan?

Kira gives him a sly grin.

KIRA

Some kind.

EXT. SPACE

A long moving shot, panning across the expanse of open space between DS9 and the wormhole.

A comet trails across the expanse, on its own course through the system.

A chunk of debris tumbles across the comet's path. It's the burned edge of a starship's saucer section.

A runabout tractors the chunk of debris out of the comet's path.

Deep Space Nine moves into view as the runabout turns to head in.

U.S.S. Venture orbits nearby.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - INFIRMARY

Doctor Julian Bashir is reading a PADD and standing next to a Bajoran nurse. He is haggard, unshaven, and pushing even his genetically engineered abilities to their limits. He has the worn-out look of a man who has not slept in days.

He checks off several things on the PADD, and hands it to the nurse.

Bashir turns his attention to the patient on the nearest bed.

BASHIR

You're cleared to return to duty, Major. And I think you owe a certain Ferengi your life.

Yndar, moves slowly off the bed and slips off the bed to test his legs. He wobbles a bit and grimaces as he puts his full weight on them.

(CONTINUED)

YNDAR
Don't remind me.

BASHIR
I can give you something for the
pain.

YNDAR
No...

Bashir scoffs at his refusal.

BAHSIR
So you're one of those.

YNDAR
Some things we're meant to endure,
doctor.

Yndar takes a couple of careful steps away from the bed.

YNDAR (CONT'D)
Otherwise we fail to learn the
lesson the Prophets are trying to
teach us.

Bashir starts to say something, but stops himself.

BASHIR
Take it easy for a day or so and
you should be fine.

Bashir continues speaking, even though he doesn't notice
that Yndar is nearly out the door.

YNDAR
Will do Doc.

Bashir crosses the main room, walking over to the one
replicator in the infirmary.

BASHIR
Raktajino.

O'BRIEN (O.S.)
Make mine double sweet.

Bashir turns away from the replicator to see Miles O'Brien
walking through the doorway of the infirmary.

BASHIR
Miles. When did you..?

(CONTINUED)

O'BRIEN

Not long. I wanted to come down earlier, but I've been up in ops with Nog and Commander LaForge.

BASHIR

This is some kind of mess.

Bashir becomes distracted by some stray thought and stares of into the distance.

O'BRIEN

Yeah.

(beat)

My hand.

BASHIR

Of course. Come over here.

(beat)

What happened?

O'BRIEN

Ruptured plasma conduit. Burned right through my EVA suit. Lucky Commander LaForge was there to pull me back.

Bashir pulls out a tricorder to begin scanning O'Brien's hand.

BASHIR

Should be no problem.

Bashir picks up a dermal regenerator and runs it over the damaged areas.

BASHIR

Did Keiko and the kids make it out?

O'BRIEN

They're coming out later this week; though I'm thinking of calling home and telling Keiko to stay on Earth. Nowhere feels safe right now.

BASHIR

I know the feeling.

O'BRIEN

Ezri?

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR

Since she's taken on the duties of first officer aboard the Defiant, I hardly see her. I worry...

His voice trails off as he loses his train of thought.

It's obvious by that last part that Bashir's relationship with Ezri has intensified quite a bit.

O'BRIEN

I always felt safe on the Defiant. We may have gotten the lion's share of dangerous missions, but with the Defiant, I never questioned whether or not we'd make it back.

BASHIR

Engineers and their ships.

O'BRIEN

I guess.

A long awkward silence grabs both men as neither knows exactly how to continue.

O'BRIEN

Have you tired out that new holoprogram yet?

BASHIR

The Battle of Artemisium? No, I haven't had the chance...

(beat)

Wait, how can you think of holoprograms at a time like this?

O'BRIEN

Life has to go on, Julian.

BASHIR

But don't we have to stop and take into account the things that have happened?

O'BRIEN

Of course, but when we let it begin to dictate our lives, then we've already lost.

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR

I suppose, but it just doesn't seem right to carry on as though nothing is wrong.

O'BRIEN

We're certainly not ignoring it, but we're not letting it run our lives either. There a fine line between the two. One makes us slaves to a situation that is beyond our control, and the other lets us carry on and move forward.

The Bajoran nurse from earlier reenters the room.

OFFICER

The Venture is standing by, Doctor.

Bashir stands up, getting ready to leave.

O'BRIEN

Where you off to?

BASHIR

I'm heading out to the Defiant.

(beat)

I can't leave her.

O'Brien gets up from the bed.

O'BRIEN

Yeah. I should really get back myself. This place isn't going to fix itself.

They look at each other for a moment, then almost as if they had openly discussed it, decide to hug it out...neither really sure if or when they will see the other.

BASHIR

Let's do something later ok?

O'BRIEN

Count on it.

O'Brien watches his friend disappears out the main door. He stays there for a minute.

O'BRIEN

Nog, what's your location.

(CONTINUED)

NOG (V.O.)
(filtered)
Junction twelve in the primary
core.

O'BRIEN
On my way.

O'Brien gets up to leave. He turns back a moment to see Julian disappear around a corner.

INT. BAJOR - CAPITAL BUILDING

Kira and Thorne materialize in the office of the First Minister.

Two lumbering brutes approach them. The lead GUARD holds up his hand to stop them.

GUARD
You can't be here.

The Guard sees that Kira and Thorne are armed. The guards instinctively go for their weapons.

Kira and Thorne stop in their track, but both put there hands to their phasers.

KIRA
We're not here for this.

GUARD
If you're trying to get to the
First Minister armed, then this is
what you get.

KIRA
You need to let us pass.

GUARD
I know you Kira...I was on
Shakaar's detail...but this isn't
going to happen.

THORNE
(to Kira)
We don't have time for this.

KIRA
Left.

(CONTINUED)

THORNE

Right.

KIRA

Go!

Kira takes off left. Thorne takes off right.

The guards open fire and try to move for cover. Kira and Thorne pull their phasers and return fire.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

The turbolift door opens and Picard walks onto the bridge.

PICARD

Commander, take us into the wormhole.

Worf relinquishes the center seat.

WORF

Aye, sir.

(beat)

Lieutenant Rager, takes us away from the station, one quarter impulse. Bring us about, and set a course for the wormhole.

RAGER

Aye, sir.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise, slowly pulls away from the station. The ship heads for the wormhole which opens to allow its passage.

In the Gamma Quadrant, the wormhole opens and the Enterprise exits to open space. Once clear, the Enterprise wastes no time sling shotting into warp.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Picard holds the center seat.

PICARD

It seems the Prophets are as good as their word.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PICARD (cont'd)
Begin transmitting the message on
all frequencies, and keep you eyes
open for the Dominion.

LEFLER
Aye sir, message transmitting.

A moment passes, until Picard notices that Worf is
fidgeting.

PICARD
Something wrong, Commander?

WORF
The last time I was in the Gamma
Quadrant I just escaped from a
Dominion prison camp, and war was
all but certain.

PICARD
Then let's hope Odo can do what
Admiral Nechayev hopes he can.

INT. BAJOR - CAPITAL BUILDING - FIRST MINISTER'S OFFICER

The sound of phaser fire echoes through the room.

Kira and Thorne burst into the door.

AIDE
(afraid)
What's going on?

KIRA
Where is she?

AIDE
I can't tell you what I don't know.

THORNE
We don't believe you.

KIRA
(to Thorne)
We sure could use a telepath right
about now.

THORNE
What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

AIDE

Bryn.

THORNE

Bryn, it's imperative we speak with the First Minister. We can do this with or without your help.

BRYN

She left over an hour ago. She didn't say where she was going.

Thorne stops, seeming to believe what he is being told.

Kira on the other hand is not so easily swayed.

KIRA

Beam up to the Defiant. I'll join you when I have something.

Thorne looks at her strangely.

KIRA

You asked me to trust you, so now I'm asking you to trust me.

Thorne nods an acknowledgment. He stands up and taps his comm badge.

THORNE

Defiant, one to transport. Energize.

Thorne vanishes in a transporter beam.

Kira turns her attention back to Bryn.

KIRA

We can do this any number of ways. The only difference is in the variety of unpleasantness and your level of endurance.

BRYN

I already told you everything I know.

Kira puts her phaser back in its holster. She reaches down and pulls up the pants leg of her uniform and pulls a small dagger from a concealed sheath.

She approaches Bryn methodically, making sure she can see the blade.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

I wish I could believe you, but
there is just too much at stake to
leave it to chance.

Kira takes a step forward.

KIRA

Let's begin.

EXT. BAJOR - KENDRA VALLEY - THE SISKO RESIDENCE - EARLY
MORNING

In the master bedroom, Kasidy Yates is asleep in a large,
wooden-framed bed. She begins to stir, and after a few
moments sits up in bed. Something...a smell...catches her
attention.

Rising from bed to investigate, she stops by Sarah's bedroom
to check on her. Sarah isn't there.

Leaving the room, she sprints past Jakes room.

KASIDY

(worried)

Jake, Sarah's gone!

As Kasidy takes off running to the kitchen, Jake climbs out
of bed as fast as his injuries will allow him. In a few
steps he is across the room and is in the hallway.

Kasidy rounds the corner to find a tall man holding Sarah.

Sarah looks to Kasidy and smiles.

SARAH

Mommy!

The man turns to reveal: Benjamin Sisko, standing at the
stove in his kitchen...fixing breakfast.

Kasidy can't believe what she is seeing.

SISKO

I thought you would sleep all day.

KASIDY

Ben!

Kasidy darts across the room and grabs hold of Ben, as if to
make sure he is really there.

Ben never lets go of Sarah.

(CONTINUED)

Jake finally makes his way into the kitchen, a smile spreading across his face from ear to ear.

JAKE

Dad!

Jake runs to his father's side, and hugs him just as tightly as Kasidy had.

SISKO

Jake-o.

Together, the four of them are complete.

INT. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Kira materializes on the pad.

She has a rag of some kind in her hands.

KIRA

Take care of that.

She tosses it to the transporter chief. A glimpse of blood can be seen on the cloth.

KIRA

He was less than forthcoming.

THORNE

We've just received word from the Cardassian ship Relkash. An old friend wants to speak with us.

(beat)

Chief, beam him aboard

Garak Steps off the pad. He looks down at the traces of blood that still remain on Kira's hands.

GARAK

It seems I've arrived just in time.

INT. BAJOR KENDRA VALLEY - THE SISKO RESIDENCE

The four have finished breakfast, but are still sitting at the table.

Ben is still holding Sarah. With his free arm, he holds Kasidy's hand.

(CONTINUED)

KASIDY

Tell me you're here to stay.

Ben holds up Sarah and looks into her eyes.

SISKO

I know this face.

(beat)

I was here when you had her.

JAKE

That's sort of creepy, Dad.

Ben looks at Jake and laughs.

SISKO

You picked SARAH.

KASIDY

It came to me in a dream.

Sisko gets a mischievous look on his face.

KASIDY

You didn't... Ben..?

INT. VISION

Sisko is still in his house, but obviously having a vision.

SARAH PROPHET

The Sisko is of Bajor, but his path
will take him elsewhere.

Sisko spins rapidly, looking for the familiar voice of his
mother. He sees her and

SISKO

Where must I go?

SARAH PROPHET

The Gateway to the Temple has been
burned.

SISKO

The Gateway. You mean DS9.

SARAH PROPHET

The Gateway will fall...and a
Prophet will be lost.

(CONTINUED)

Sisko looks away for a moment, hesitant to renew this portion of his life. A sense of dread washes over him as he makes his decision.

SISKO
What must I do?

SARAH PROPHET
Except the sacrifice.

INT. BAJOR KENDRA VALLEY - THE SISKO RESIDENCE

...suddenly back in reality. Kasidy is at his side.

KASIDY
(worried)
Ben. What is it?

SISKO
Somethings happened.

Sisko hands Sarah to Kasidy and walks over to a computer terminal, hidden behind a small tapestry.

He turns on the local news to see the reports about the attacks. He switches the channel to the Federation News Network and sees the reports about the attacks against Starfleet.

SISKO
I have to go to DS9.

JAKE
But you just got here.

Sisko looks back at his family that are still part strangers.

Jake and Kasidy know instantly that there will be no stopping him.

KASIDY
I'll go with you.

SISKO
It's not safe.

KASIDY
It may not be safe anywhere.

SISKO
It's not about me this time.

KASIDY
Then why do you have to go?

Sisko turns to focus on the one Bajoran religious symbol that she has allowed in her home.

SISKO
Because like it or not I'm still
their Emissary.

INT. BAJOR - CAPITAL BUILDING - FIRST MINISTER'S OFFICER

The main doors to the room fly open as Akima runs into the room. She immediately runs to Bryn, lying on the floor.

She jabs two fingers to Bryn's neck to check for a pulse.

AKIMA
Bryn, are you alright?

Bryn doesn't answer.

Akima turns away for a second to yell;

AKIMA
(frantic)
I need help help!

Bryn's eyes shoot open and she is instantly back in full control.

BRYN
More than you know.

With lightning quick reflexes, Bryn's arms shift into a liquid state and morph into meter long tentacles. Her arm tentacles lash out, grabbing Akima around the neck. As Bryn stands up, she forces Akima down to the floor.

With a quick jerk of her tentacles, Akima's head falls to the side and her body goes limp. Bryn lets go and Akima falls to the floor.

Pleased with her work, Bryn's entire form shifts into a liquid state. She shoots across the room, and slithers into a vent.

Seconds after Bryn escapes, a Bajoran Security enters the room to find Akima. He rushes to her side to check for any signs of life.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD
(mortified)
Prophets help us!

INT. U.S.S. VENTURE - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Sisko materializes on the transporter pad. He looks around for a moment, reacquainting himself with the Starfleet surroundings.

VOICE (O.S.)
I must say I was surprised to hear
from you, Ben.

An older man, ADMIRAL HASTUR, steps forward.

SISKO
You know how I like to keep you on
your toes, Ambrose.

Sisko steps down off the pad to greet him. Admiral Hastur extends his hand and Sisko graciously accepts the welcome.

HASTUR
Reports had you...

SISKO
Dead? I imagine that's to be
expected. And it's just "Ben" now.

HASTUR
You know as well as I that you
really never stop being the
Captain.

SISKO
Maybe so.

HASTUR
So what can I do for you, Captain?

SISKO
I need a ride to DS9.

HASTUR
We're currently engaged in
humanitarian...

SISKO
I wouldn't ask if it wasn't
important.

(CONTINUED)

Hastur doesn't really know what to say, caught off guard by the unlikelihood of the coincidence before him.

HASTUR
Welcome aboard, Captain.

Hastur taps his comm badge to close the channel.

SISKO
I need to make one stop first
before we get underway.

EXT. BAJOR - CAPITAL BUILDING

An establishing shot of the capital building.

INT. BAJOR - CAPITAL BUILDING

Colonel Roak is crouching before a sheet draped form, lying on the floor. He has the sheet pulled back, but is obstructing the view of the persons face.

COLONEL ROAK
She wouldn't.

BAJORAN GUARD
She would, if she thought she was
right.

COLONEL ROAK
Kira is a Starfleet
officer. Starfleet officers don't
kill indiscriminately.

BAJORAN GUARD
I doubt there was anything
indiscriminate about it. They came
here looking for the First
Minister...and they found her.

A SECOND GUARD
The transporter logs.

Colonel Roak looks over the logs.

BAJORAN GUARD
Sir, we need to act quickly.

Roak taps his communicator.

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL ROAK
CIC, Roak. Where's the Defiant?

A pause as he checks.

OFFICER (V.O.)
(filtered)
The Defiant appears to be on a
course towards Derna.

COLONEL ROAK
Is the Venture still in orbit?

OFFICER (V.O.)
Yes, sir.

COLONEL ROAK
Send Admiral Hastur the warrant
information and order him to
pursue.
(beat)
Stand by to beam me back to the
CIC, and hail the Defiant.

EXT. BAJOR - U.S.S. VENTURE - ORBIT

An establishing shot of U.S.S. Venture in orbit of Bajor.

INT. U.S.S. VENTURE - BRIDGE

The bridge is nearly identical to the Enterprise-D's
upgraded version seen in Generations.

The Admiral's XO stands off near one of the side stations.

XO
Captain Sisko and his guest are
aboard.

HASTUR
Helm, put us on course for DS9.

HELM OFFICER
Aye, sir.

XO
Admiral, you'd better take a look
at this.

Hastur rises from his seat and crosses the bridge. Looking
down at the display, he isn't sure what to say.

(CONTINUED)

HASTUR

Are you sure about this?

XO

I checked it twice, sir.

HASTUR

Get Sisko up here.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

First Minister Akima Sonya stands at one of the makeshift computer consoles, inputting a series of commands.

Tahna Los is holding a Bajoran PADD. He is disturbed by what he is reading with a look of disbelief on his face.

LOS

(amazed)

Martial law? Have you lost your mind?

A 'message sent' graphic flashes twice on the monitor then fades away.

Akima turns to him.

AKIMA

Watch your tone, lest you forget who affected your release from that prison.

Without missing a beat.

LOS

For which I am grateful, but this is too much! Starfleet will never allow you...

Akima turns back to Los, about to blow her top at his apparent lack of respect and faith in her plan. She quickly shoots back at him:

AKIMA

(angered)

I don't intend to ask permission.

Akima pauses for a moment, as though it's vitally important for her to retain her composure.

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA

The Federation can't interfere. It's an internal matter.

LOS

I doubt they'll see it that way given the number of Starfleeters that died this morning and the fact that Bajor is a Federation member.

(beat)

Starfleet's Prime Directive doesn't apply.

AKIMA

Then let them get involved. It hardly matters. They don't suspect me...and as for you...

Lost gets where she is going, and cuts her off.

LOS

I'm expendable.

AKIMA

Well yes, but what I was going to say is that their investigation which is only barely underway, is centered on Bajor. They're not even looking for you.

(beat)

To be honest, I don't think they're looking for you at all.

Akima turns to the one monitor that is still showing the news.

Focus in on a news report about the death of the First minister. Akima quickly switches the monitor off.

LOS

This is all well and good, but pissing off Starfleet isn't my idea of making a stand or proving a point.

(beat)

The Federation is incredibly stubborn and tend to arrest people for the sort of thing we did today. Trust me, I know from experience.

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA

Which makes you the perfect voice
for the new Circle.

(beat)

This is only the beginning. Our
next step will give return to both
of us everything we've lost.

Akima pulls the cloth of the covered object to reveal an Orb
Chest.

AKIMA

I believe you'll recognize this.

Los is amazed, if not a bit in awe.

LOS

How did you...

AKIMA

Does it matter?

Akima removes a PADD from the inner pocket of her clothes
and inputs an activation code. A force field snaps off and
she walks towards the chest.

LOS

What're you going to use it for?

AKIMA

Stage two.

She opens the chest to reveal the presence of an Orb, but
something is different.

It doesn't shine as brightly as the others we have
seen. This one has been fractured, and several pieces seem
to be missing. Along the lines where the pieces have been
broken off, the orb has gone dark and veins of red run into
the blue/white from those fracture points.

LOS

It's broken...it must be...

A brilliant white light erupts from the Orb and absorbs Los.

INT. WHITE LIMBO - VISION - ORB EXPERIENCE

Los is instantly transported, at least in mind, if not body
to the familiar yet unknown limbo of a vision. He's
surrounded by people he knows from his most recent memories.

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA PROPHET
He is another of the lost.

Los spins around in a moment of confusion, trying to find some aspect of familiarity to cling to.

LOS
Where am I?
(beat)
What is this place?

TELLA PROPHET
Inquisitive.

AKIMA PROPHET
Adversarial.

LOS
You're Prophets.

TELLA PROPHET
He is the one.

UNKNOWN PROPHET
Los!

Los turns to see who has called his name.

LOS
(to someone off screen)
You!

From Los' point of view, BENJAMIN SISKO walks out of the familiar white fog.

SISKO
What are you doing here?

LOS
Don't you know? Aren't you a Prophet?

SISKO
(to the other prophets)
Send him back. Now.

AKIMA PROPHET
He will bring about the Isolation.

TELLA PROPHET
He and the other...

(CONTINUED)

SISKO
What Isolation?

ALL PROPHETS IN UNISON (MINUS SISKO)
We must rest.

Los disappears.

A DISENCHANTED VOICE
You're time with us is nearly over,
my son.

SISKO
Mother?

Sisko turns to look for his mother, and as SARAH appears before him...

CUT TO:

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Akima and Los are standing in their exact same spots as though nothing has happened.

AKIMA
Are you ill?

Realizing he is back on Derna, and wondering if he ever really left, Los looks as though he's about to lose his lunch.

LOS
I'm fine.

Los swallows hard and takes a deep breath.

AKIMA
You seemed somewhere else for a moment.

LOS
I'm here now.

LOS
As I was saying...the only broken orb is the Orb of Souls...the Will of the Prophets.

Akima acts as though she has no idea what he is talking about.

(CONTINUED)

LOS

Every orb is directly related to the Prophets in some way. The Orb of Prophecy and Change is the Hand of the Prophets, Wisdom is their Eye, Unity is their Desire and so on...

AKIMA SONYA

I had no idea.

Los looks at her, with a confused look of worry on his face that she doesn't know something so obvious.

LOS

How is it that you don't know all this already?

AKIMA

Because I can think for myself and can usually make it through life without having to ask for help from alien life forms I've never even met.

Los tries to hide his scorn for a non-believer, a fellow Bajoran no less, but fails miserably.

AKIMA

I'm more interested in how the Cardassians managed to damage it.

LOS

You'll have to ask them, though one is left to wonder why you would seek such information.

AKIMA

It's no concern of yours.

Akima reactivates the forcefield.

Los steps away from her, for a moment of solitude.

LOS

(whisper)

They mentioned a time of isolation.

Akima turns back to him...

AKIMA

Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)

LOS
Nothing...

INT. U.S.S. VENTURE - BRIDGE

Sisko is on the bridge standing next to Admiral Hastur at one of the side stations. Hastur is showing him the message they received earlier.

Sisko, is shocked but doesn't believe it what he's reading.

SISKO
You do realize how crazy this is?

Hastur looks surprised his question.

HASTUR
I do, but Colonel Roak has overriding authority in such matters.

SISKO
How did that happen?

Hastur walks across the bridge to take the center seat.

HASTUR
A lot's changed since you left, Ben.

Sisko crosses the bridge to take the seat on Hastur's left.

Both men turn to the view screen. It shows a magnified image of the Defiant moving at sublight.

HASTUR
Status?

XO
They're still not slowing, Sir. Three minutes till they reach Derna.

SISKO
Who's in command?

XO
Lieutenant Commander Dax is holding the conn.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO
Let me speak to her.

Sisko shares an uneasy look with Hastur.

HASTUR
Do it.

A moment passes before the view screen changes. The Defiant's bridge appears on screen. Dax holds the center seat.

DAX
(amazed)
Ben...what...how...

SISKO
There's no time for that, Old Man. I need you to come to a full stop.

DAX
Ben, I...

SISKO
Where is Kira?

DAX
She didn't do it, Ben.

SISKO
Of course not, but running like this isn't going to help her.

DAX
You should know better than most, Kira doesn't run from anything. We have a lead.

SISKO
From where?

DAX
Garak.
(beat)
It's complicated, but it's led us here. We have to follow it.

SISKO
Then we can do it together.

(CONTINUED)

DAX

I'm sorry, Ben, but you're not my
Captain any more.

(beat)

While I'm sure you have Kira's best
intentions in mind, I can't speak
for anyone else.

(beat)

Someone's setting her up.

Admiral Hastur stands up and takes a step past Sisko.

HASTUR

Obviously, but we all have our
duties, Commander.

(beat)

So while Ben, may not be able to
give you a direct order, I sure as
hell can. Stop the Defiant now,
Commander.

Dax is silent as she considers her options.

HASTUR

This isn't something that's open
for debate. I'm prepared to use
force to stop you if it comes to
that.

Dax doesn't answer.

Hastur turns his head slightly, back to his tactical
officer.

HASTUR

Get me a firing solution of the
Defiant. Weapons and engines.

TACTICAL OFFICER

Aye, sir.

DAX

Red alert. Raise shield and ready
weapons.

The lighting on the Defiant's bridge darkens and the glowing
red lights of the flashing klaxon cast the room in an eerie
red glow.

Sisko takes a step forward, placing a hand on the Admirals
arm.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO

Admiral.

Hastur looks down at Sisko's hand, then looks up to face him.

DAX

The First Minister's Aide was still alive when Kira beamed back aboard. She's innocent and I'm not giving her up that easy. So if you want a fight, you're welcome to try.

Sisko and Hastur share a look, as they realize that Dax doesn't know the full extent of what's going on.

SISKO

Old Man, the First Minister is dead. Her Aide wasn't even there.

DAX

That can't...I don't understand.

SISKO

Kira is wanted for the murder of First Minister Akima.

Dax is suddenly at a loss for words.

DAX

That's not what she told me.

HASTUR

Then you now have to question everything she's told you, Commander.

(beat)

Come to a full stop. Surrender your ship, stand by to receive our boarding party, and I might just forget that you were about to open fire on another Starfleet vessel.

Dax is quiet for a long moment before answering.

DAX

No.

HASTUR

This isn't open for debate, Commander.

(CONTINUED)

DAX
I have a better idea.

INT. U.S.S DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Kira, Thorne, and Garak are gearing up in the Transporter room.

THORNE
Why didn't you take this to someone
as soon as you found out?

GARAK
Would you trust me?

THORNE
About this...maybe not. But I sure
as hell would've looked into it.

Kira steps between them to hand them both tricorders.

KIRA
What should've been done doesn't
matter any more. What's important
is what we do right now.

THORNE
If we're wrong, they'll court
martial us for this.

Garak looks directly at Throne.

GARAK
Oh, were far past worrying about
little things like a Court Martial.

The door to the transporter room opens and the three of them turn to see who is walking in on them.

DAX
You have no idea.

Dax is standing in the doorway with a security team.

THORNE
(confused)
Commander, what's going on?

DAX
I've been ordered to take Kira into
custody for the murder of Bajor's
First Minister.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

What?

DAX

They found her in her office. Her neck had been broken.

KIRA

Akima wasn't there.

(beat)

And before anyone asks, her aide was very much alive when I left.

GARAK

It would seem then you're being set up.

KIRA

By who?

No one answers.

KIRA

(to Dax)

What are your intentions, Commander?

DAX

I have to detain you Neryes.

Throne takes a step forward, inching his hand toward his holstered phaser.

THORNE

It's Kira. If she says she didn't kill her, then you can be sure she didn't kill her.

(beat)

I was there. I can vouch for her.

DAX

You're not exactly in the clear either, Commander.

GARAK

What happened to you, Ezri?

DAX

People change, Garak.

KIRA

And I never thought I'd see this from you.

(CONTINUED)

DAX
I'm following orders, Captain.
(to Garak & Throne)
Stand aside.

KIRA
And some things trump orders.

Thorne steps in front of Kira, and places his hand on his holster.

THORNE
You're going to have to take all
three of us.

Garak follows his lead and steps in front of Kira.

DAX
At the moment, this doesn't concern
either of you.

GARAK
If it involves Kira, then it very
much involves us.

Kira is visibly touched by their sentiment.

KIRA
Gentlemen, I appreciate the display
of loyalty but Dax is correct.
(beat)
She's only doing her job. Besides,
there no reason for all three of us
to go down when one will do.

Throne turns to her, not sure what she means.

Taking a step forward, Kira grabs Throne by the arm and wraps him close to her as she steps into a spin. Throwing her whole weight into the momentum, she continues the spin and lets go as Throne comes around. Kira quickly ducks so she can avoid what comes next.

Throne spins out of control across the room and slams into Ezri and the three closest security guards standing next to her. The whole group crash to the floor.

Garak pulls his weapon, and in one quick motion stuns the Throne, Dax, and much of the rest of the group.

KIRA
Is there going to be a problem?

(CONTINUED)

JENDA

No, sir.

KIRA

Get back up to the bridge and put us back on a course for Derna. Keep a channel open to us.

JENDA

What about the Commander?

Kira points to a SECURITY GUARD.

KIRA

You, stay with them. If they're not up in ten minutes, bring them around.

SECURITY GUARD

Yes, sir.

Jenda leaves the transporter room.

GARAK

What of Commander Thorne? He seems like one to hold a grudge.

KIRA

He shouldn't have to go where we're going.

GARAK

But I do?

KIRA

You've already been there.

GARAK

Where is that exactly?

KIRA

The only part of the Link left in the Alpha Quadrant.

Kira throws him a mocking grin.

KIRA

This time though, try not to gain control of the ship and lay waste to everything on the surface.

Garak suddenly picks up on her meaning.

GARAK

I can make no promises, Captain.

Kira takes a hand phaser and a Phaser rifle from the weapons locker.

Together the two of them step up onto the pad.

KIRA

(to the guard)

Lieutenant, when Dax wakes up, tell her I was just doing my job.

EXT. SPACE

The Defiant begins to move again. The Venture is still closing.

INT. U.S.S. VENTURE - BRIDGE

Hastur stares intently at the view screen.

HASTUR

(angered)

What do you mean they got away?

JENDA

They somehow managed to incapacitate Commander Dax and escape.

Sisko forces a smile off his face. It's all Sisko can do to keep from laughing out loud.

HASTUR

(to the XO)

Are we within transporter range?

XO

Not yet, sir.

Hastur slams his fist on the arm of his chair.

Sisko looks on with approving amusement.

SISKO

Stand by, I'm coming aboard.

JENDA

Aye, sir.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Los looks uneasy as though he knows something is wrong.

LOS

I should go to Bajor to personally
oversee the next step.

AKIMA

Why?

Akima isn't looking at him, and is less than interested.

LOS

Because we need to hit them again.

(beat)

We can't just strike targets of
importance when we only have the
element of surprise. That isn't
terrorism. Random violence is far
more effective at swaying an
occupying force that they're on the
losing side.

(beat)

Just ask the Cardassians.

AKIMA

The Cardassians don't have what we
need. They're entire race is dead
as far as I'm concerned.

Akima moves to the orb and starts packing it up.

LOS

What are you doing?

AKIMA

Taking you suggestion.

(beat)

We need to hit them again. But in
the case of the Federation,
violence only goes so far. Some
societies, like the Cardassians are
pompous and more concerned with
image than stability. Such a force
and will fold under constant,
sustained onslaught. As you
pointed out, the Cardassians are a
prime example.

(beat)

The Federation though...they're an
entirely different beast. When
they face such a threat, it only

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AKIMA (cont'd)
strengthens their resolve. So we
have to use that against them.

Los looks worried. He doesn't like what she is suggesting.

AKIMA
We have to use the Federation's own
polices against them. We make the
Bajorans themselves want the
Federation to leave...beg to leave.

LOS
I'm not prepared to target innocent
Bajorans.

AKIMA
What was that saying the resistance
was so fond of? If you're not part
of the solution...

LOS
You're part of the problem.
(beat)
That doesn't make it any easier.

AKIMA
No. It's never easy having to kill
one of your own.

Akima looks off into the distance for a moment. She shakes
her head slightly as she snaps out of it.

AKIMA
You'll wait here while I take the
Orb to the wormhole.

LOS
That wasn't part of the deal.

AKIMA
I'm changing the deal. Lest you
forget that it is your name that
claimed responsibility for the
attacks against Starfleet and the
Federation. When they arrive, I
imagine they will be quite upset.

LOS
Among other things.

AKIMA

Ah, here they are now.

Akima points to Los.

AKIMA

Stop him, he's crazy.

Akima takes off running.

KIRA

Take Los. I'm going after Akima.

Kira takes off after Akima and disappears around a corner.

Los and Garak stand each other down.

Garak pulls a small dagger from his belt.

Los snickers.

LOS

Only a Cardassian would bring a
knife to a phaser fight.

Los pulls his phaser pistol and fires...but nothing happens.

Garak holds up a small device, showing it to Los.

GARAK

EM dampener: courtesy of the
Federation.

He tossed the device in between the two of them, then
charges Los.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE - ANOTHER SECTION

Kira runs through another section of the cavern with only
the chin lamp from her phaser rifle lighting the way. Water
splashes as she tramples through puddles.

She nearly runs into the end of the cavern, but stops just a
meter short of smacking into the wall. Scanning the
surrounding area, she can find no evidence of anyone or
anything present.

Kira looks around checking for another way out, but turns
back, knowing where she is.

As Kira is beginning to turn back, two long spindly tendrils
form from the rock face of the cavern and extend out towards
Kira.

They grab her around the neck and begin to strangle her. Kira swings her phaser rifle around her like a club, trying to hit anything behind her.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Garak stands behind Los with his arm around his neck. Garak's other arm has one of Los' arms pinned behind his back.

GARAK

I remember you. It wasn't enough you tried this once before...

LOS

You don't know anything about me.

GARAK

I know more than you think. Like the fact you're being used to kill innocent people.

LOS

The last thing I need, is a lecture from a spoonhead about killing innocent people.

Los slams his elbow into Garak's mid section, which forces him to release Los.

Garak backs up and Los springs into action. He grabs Garak's hand, and with a quick twist of his wrist disarms him.

Los spins around and lands a swift kick to the chest. Garak flies back against the wall, and falls to the floor.

Los picks up the knife.

Trying to get up, he feels something beneath him, and realizes it's the EM dampener from earlier. He picks it and looks down at the small device with its single blinking light.

Garak turns his attention back to Los.

GARAK

It seems I'm at a disadvantage.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE - ANOTHER SECTION

Kira has now dropped her phaser rifle. The light from the weapon casts enough glow to make out Akima's face, but it's distorted somehow, losing it's shape.

Kira reaches up to try and pull the tendrils off her, but her efforts are of no use. Akima pushes her down, forcing her the ground, continuing to squeeze the life from her.

As she struggles, a more humanoid form takes shape. Out of the changing mass, the changeling forms the face of Akima.

Kira gives up her struggles, and draws her phaser. She fires a quick blast on a wide setting that forces the changeling back, but doesn't stop her. Momentarily stunned, she moves in to finish what she started, this time reverting back to her original form.

For the first time, the face of the Female Shape-Shifter emerges from the morphagenic mass of the changeling.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Garak is back up and grappling with Los. Los pushes him back again.

Los lunges for Garak and finds his target, shoving the blade into Garak's chest.

Garak falls to the floor.

LOS

That's what you Cardassian's never understood...

A phaser beam lashes out and strikes Los in the back. He doubles over and lands on Garak.

Garak looks past Los to see a pair of familiar faces.

Sisko rushes to his side.

SISKO

Where's Kira?

GARAK

(puzzled)

Sisko?

(CONTINUED)

SISKO
(desperate)
Where is she, Garak?

Garak coughs and spits up a bit of blood.

GARAK
Down the cavern.

SISKO
You're going to be ok, Garak.
(to Thorne)
Get him back to the Defiant.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE - ANOTHER SECTION

Kira tries to fire her phaser again, but the Changeling throws out her arms and smacks it out of her hands.

Kira takes several careful steps back, only to find that she is up against the cavern wall.

FEMALE CHANGELING
I should have killed you when I had
the chance.

KIRA
If you kill me, you'll lose Odo for
ever.

FEMALE CHANGELING
You underestimate the power of the
Link.

The Changeling reaches up to the ceiling, morphing her hands into sharpened picks. As she uses her new appendages to grab a hold of the rock face and pull loose the ceiling.

The roof collapses and buries Kira in a pile of debris.

The Changeling digs through the debris to find Kira. When she finally clears the pile of rocks off her, the Changeling reaches out and takes hold of Kira's neck. She again wraps her hands around Kira's neck, contracting her grip to strangle her prey.

FEMALE CHANGELING
You're not getting away that
easy. I want you alive when I
destroy your Gods.

A phaser blast hits the changeling in the back of her shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

She lets go of Kira. She falls to the ground.

Sisko comes running.

The Female Changeling activates a device and beams away.

Seeing Kira's lifeless body, Sisko rushes to her side. He checks for a pulse before slapping his comm badge.

SISKO

Defiant!

EXT. DERNA - ORBIT

An establishing shot of the Defiant and the Venture in orbit.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Dax is in command, holding the center seat. She is distracted, waiting for word from the surface and doesn't like being left in the dark.

KIRBY

Commander, we're picking up a Bajoran transport leaving the surface of Derna.

Dax's attention immediately focuses.

DAX

Life signs?

Kirby looks back from her console.

KIRBY

Only one...it's a Changeling.

Dax turns to her right.

DAX

Anything from Thorne or Sisko?

JENDA

No, sir.

A tense second passes as Dax makes her decision to act

DAX

Move to intercept. Red alert. Raise shields and ready weapons. stand by tractor beam.

(CONTINUED)

JENDA

We're getting a message from the surface.

INT. DEFIANT - MEDICAL BAY

Many of the beds are occupied and everyone that isn't a patient is working. Bashir checks on Garak, observing while a nurse takes care of him.

BASHIR

You'll be fine, Garak.

(beat)

Where are they?

Lying unconscious on one of the beds in the back, Celeste has been restrained.

A focus shot on Celeste, moving on close to her face. Her eyes twitch for a moment as though they might open, but they don't.

Bashir passes by her, checking her vitals before moving on to the next patient. A nurse follows a few steps behind him taking notes on a PADD as he rattles off things he wants done.

He stops for a moment as something catches his attention.

BASHIR

(to the nurse)

Do you smell that?

NURSE

It smells like...

BASHIR

Smoke.

Bashir turns to see a raging fire burning at the end of the room. He raises his arm to shield his face as heat from the flames bombards him.

BASHIR

Get everyone out!

The medical staff quickly divide into groups and move from one patient to the next. Those that are well enough to leave on their own are shown the way. Those that are more serious, are carried out.

(CONTINUED)

A medic releases the restraints on that hold Celeste in place. He grabs Celeste, picking her up and carrying her out into the corridor.

He lays her on the deck and runs back inside to help someone else.

When he is gone, Celeste immediately comes to. She carefully stands up and amid the confusion of the moment slips away from the group.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Thorne jabs two fingers to her neck. A wave of distress and hopelessness washes over his face at what he finds.

He slaps his comm badge harder than is required.

SISKO

Two for emergency transport.

DAX (V.O)

(filtered)

We've got a transport leaving Derna. Sensors show a changeling on board.

SISKO

Kira is injured. Do it now!

DAX (V.O)

(filtered)

Understood. Stand By

A transporter begins to dematerialize them...

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - MEDICAL BAY

A pair of DC teams, two people to each team, enter the medical bay. Bashir follows close behind them.

There are no flames, no smoke damage, or any other signs that anything is out of the ordinary.

The DC TEAM LEADER, looks to Bashir in confusion.

DC TEAM LEADER

Doc?

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR

There was a fire. I saw the flames...I choked on the smoke. My arm...

Bashir shows them his arm. Several blisters have risen and most of the hair has been singed.

DC TEAM LEADER

Bridge...must have been a false...

DAX

You have incoming wounded. It's Kira.

On the trail of her words, a transporter beam materializes in the middle of the medical bay.

Tight shot on a woman's hand. A drop of blood that had already fallen of her hand, and was caught mid air by the beam, continues its path and splatters on the floor.

The shot pulls back to reveal Thorne materializing. He is carrying Kira. Her skin is pale, her arms drape down from her body and move with no control from her body.

Forgetting the mystery that remains, Bashir moves into action.

BASHIR

What happened?

Thorne moves across the small space and lays Kira on a bio-bed.

Bashir is right behind him, with a tricoder in hand.

SISKO

We found her with the Female Changeling.

Bashir looks at him, stunned for a moment.

BASHIR

It looks as though she has been strangled.

Thorne is lost as people blow past him to help Bashir try to save Kira.

Thorne looks around the medical bay. Thorne looks at the bed where Celeste should have been laying.

(CONTINUED)

THORNE
Doctor, where's Celeste?

Bashir doesn't stop working on Kira.

BASHIR
I don't know.

Thorne suddenly finds something to focus on.

THORNE
Bridge, security alert level
one. Lock down the transporters
and the shuttle bays.

DAX
Understood.

BASHIR
If you to don't mind, I need the
room.

Sisko and Thorne leave the surgical area.

SISKO
What was that all about?

THORNE
It's a long story.

BASHIR
Captain.

Both Sisko and Los turn to look.

BASHIR
I need to get her back to DS9.

SISKO
We might just be in luck.

Sisko taps his com badge.

SISKO
Sisko to Venture. We have
Kira. She's badly injured and
Doctor Bashir needs to transfer her
to DS9. Stand by to transport.

HASTUR (V.O.)
(filtered)
Understood. Stand by.

THORNE

Captain Sisko, I formally
relinquished command of the
Defiant. She's yours if you want
her.

SISKO

This is your ship, Commander. Go
get the Changeling.

Thorne heads for the door, but Sisko grabs his arm.

SISKO

Do whatever it takes, Commander.

THORNE

Aye, sir.

Sisko walks over to where Bashir is standing next to the
biobed.

BASHIR

Venture, we're ready.

Los makes his way towards the door as Sisko, Bashir and Kira
beam away.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Celeste enters the room and approaches the TRANSPORTER
CHIEF. He's an older man, with a look that more time and
experience are behind him than ahead.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

Can I help you, Commander?

CELESTE

Relinquish your station.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

I can't do that, Commander.

Celeste turns her attention towards the Chief.

CELESTE

Fear...

The chief grabs his head as he is overcome with...

INT. A HOME

The CHIEF is suddenly somewhere else.

The home is somewhere else away from the technology of the a starship

A woman, his wife MARIE, is laying on the floor at the end

CHIEF

Marie, what's going on...

He runs to her side, turning her over

CHIEF

Marie...

When he roles her over, the shock of the site throws him back. Marie is badly burned, holding a child.

CHIEF

No!

Flames erupt all around him. The chief throws up to

CHIEF

Agh!!!

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - TRANSPORTER ROOM

Moving to the now vacant station, Celeste inputs a serious of commands into the console.

Close in on the transporter console as Celeste moves away. When she has finished, the panel reads AUTHORIZATION ACCEPTED.

Celeste moves away from the console and walks over to the pad. The transporter activates and she beams away.

When she is finally gone, the transporter chief is still cowering on the floor. He can't stand and the floor is wet where he was laying.

A pair of security guards enter the transporter room. They run to his side.

GUARD ONE

Chief?

(beat)

Check the transporter.

The second guard brings up the transporter activity log. When the screen is finally brought up, the log is empty.

EXT. BAJORAN TRANSPORT

An establishing shot of the Bajoran Transport moving through space.

In the distance, the Defiant is closing in.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Thorne storms onto the bridge, knowing the path through the darkened lights of red alert.

THORNE
Report.

Dax quickly relinquishes command and moves to a side station.

DAX
Transporters and shuttle bays are secured, but...

THORNE
What?

Dax is hesitant to answer.

DAX
There was an outbound transport underway. We couldn't stop it.

THORNE
Can you track it's materialization point?

After a few frustrating seconds, Dax turns from her console.

DAX
No, sir. She's gone.

Thorne slams his fist into the left console next to the center seat. The plastic cracks and a few pieces of it fall to the floor.

THORNE
Time to intercept the Bajoran Transport?

(CONTINUED)

KIRBY

Three minutes and seventeen seconds.

Thorne is irritated. He tries to hide it but fails as the look of annoyance washes over him.

THORNE

Increase speed.

(beat)

Lock weapons and open a channel.

JENDA

Weapons ready. Channel open.

THORNE

This is Captain Lucius Thorne of the U.S.S. Defiant. Cut your engines and prepare to be boarded. You will receive no further warnings.

After a minute waiting, Jenda reports:

JENDA

No response, sir.

THORNE

Are they receiving?

JENDA

Yes sir, they can hear us.

KIRBY

They're entering the zone four. One minute until they reach the wormhole terminus.

JENDA

I'm getting a strange energy reading.

Thorne stands up and moves off the raised command deck.

THORNE

Stand by to fire.

JENDA

The energy signature is increasing,
(beat)
They're firing.

(CONTINUED)

THORNE

Evasive.

EXT. SPACE - DEFIANT

The Defiant pulls left hard and into a spiral. The transport counters the move and pulls into a firing position.

The transport fires and a streaming ball of white energy that passes the Defiant.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

The bridge crew struggle to recover from the sharp turn.

Thorne turns to Jenda.

THORNE

Return fire.

EXT. SPACE

The Defiant unleashes a full barrage of fire against the transport. The transports shield easily absorb the blow.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Thorne watches the view screen as the transport ships shrugs off the Defiant's weapons fire.

THORNE

Well, that's unexpected.

JENDA

They're firing again.

The crew twist in their seats as Kirby throws the Defiant into another series hard turns.

Thorne struggles to pull himself back up.

THORNE

Quantum torpedoes, max
yield. Ready phasers.

(beat)

Get her this time, Jenda.

(CONTINUED)

JENDA

Angie, bearing one seven three,
slow to one quarter, then be ready
to go to full impulse.

EXT. SPACE

The Defiant pulls into a series of maneuvers that puts both ships head to head.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Jenda watches her console as they rapidly close the distance.

THORNE

Punch it!

EXT. SPACE

The Defiant unleashes on the transport.

At the same time, the transport fires on the Defiant again. Both ships maneuver rapidly, but the Defiant is hit. The glowing surge of energy impacts the Defiant and courses across the ships hull.

INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

The red alert klaxon echoes through the bridge. The only light is being cast from the screens and consoles that are quickly fading.

The deck suddenly pitches violently to starboard. Everyone loses their balance and is thrown to the floor.

COMPUTER (V.O.)

Primary stabilizers are off-line.

Thorne climbs back to his seat.

The deck suddenly pitches back in the opposite direction and everyone is thrown back to the floor.

THORNE

Report!

(CONTINUED)

KIRBY

She won't answer her helm.

DAX

The warp core is off-line. We're losing impulse engines and primary computer control is down.

Thorne climbs back to his seat.

THORNE

(to Dax)

What the hell was that?

Dax knows all too well what has happened. Her hands are clamped to the console in front of her. She turns to the helm console with a look of fear on her face.

DAX

(urgent)

Angie, get back from the helm.

When Kirby doesn't jump to, Dax stands up to force the issue.

DAX

Now!

(beat)

Everyone get back from your station.

Thorne, suddenly by her side, grabs her arm and spins her around.

THRONE

Ezri, what's going on?

Dax looks up at him.

DAX

I've been through this before. We nearly lost Kira...and we did lose the Defiant.

Thorne pauses a second before he gets her meaning.

THORNE

You think it was a Breen energy dampener?

Dax doesn't answer.

(CONTINUED)

JENDA
I concur, sir.

THORNE
We're protected against those.

JENDA
It's obviously been modified.

Thorne nods that he understands.

THORNE
Everyone secure your station!

Thorne looks around to see if any of the bridge stations are even still working. The damage is bad, but it's not total. A few of the aft bridge stations are still online although in a severely reduced status.

The bridge crew begin to secure their stations, but most don't even work and end up just leaving them.

THORNE
Sensors?

JENDA
Our last reading had the transport approaching the wormhole's terminus. If they held true, then they made it inside.

THORNE
Comms?

JENDA
Off-line.

KIRBY
Impulse engines are down and we've lost the RCS. We're adrift.

A moment of silence hangs over the bridge.

THORNE
Jenda, get a portable geni up to the short range transceiver. Tell whichever ship is closest that we're going to need a tow.

JENDA
Aye, sir.

Jenda walks over to the door, which doesn't open as she approaches. She pops open a small panel next to the door and uses the emergency release handle to force the door open.

Thorne takes a palm beacon out of an emergency kit. As he beings to shine the light around the darkened bridge.

THORNE

Damn it!

Dax is still standing near the helm console. Her arms are folded awkwardly across her chest and she is visibly shaken, but trying to hold it all together.

INT. DERNA - CAVERN BASE

Celeste walks through a cavern. She looks around trying to see in the darkened enclosure.

She stops suddenly and smiles, knowing that she has gone as far as she needs to.

CELESTE

You Cardassians are so clever...and so foolish. I could sense your presence before I even beamed in.

Marez steps out of a shadow.

MAREZ

That trick usually works on most people.

CELESTE

If you would've learned anything by now, it's that I'm not most people.

Marez scoffs at her arrogance.

MAREZ

Everything is going according to plan.

CELESTE

Excellent. You've done well.

MAREZ

Starfleet will be here soon.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

Then it would be best we make sure
they find what we need them to.

Celeste quickly draws her phaser and shoots Marez.

He falls to the floor, close to death and struggling to hang on. A large open wound bares his opened chest. He is bleeding profusely from the wound. He coughs several times, briefly choking on his own blood.

Celeste looks down at him. She is completely unphased by the site before her.

She ramps up the setting on her phaser.

CELESTE

I would have thought you
Cardassians would have learned to
just die already.

(beat)

That is what you do best.

Marez tries to speak, spitting up more blood. Before he can say anything though, she fires again. Marez is vaporized.

She pulls a small communicator out of her pocket and activates it.

CELESTE

Energize.

Celeste beams away.

EXT. WORMHOLE INTERIOR - BAJORAN TRANSPORT

Inside the wormhole, there is a noticeable lack of the glowing white and blue energy that is normally present. The flowing steams of energy seem violent, as if a storm is brewing. The small Bajoran transport is in the center of a swirling mass of energy like clouds.

INT. BAJORAN TRANSPORT - MAIN CABIN

The transport is empty. The glowing Orb sparkles with life as some sort of glowing energy field surrounds it and interacts with it directly.

After a moment, the field of energy moves away from the Orb and begins to coalesce. The field of energy takes the form of a humanoid until...

(CONTINUED)

...the female Changeling fully forms.

FEMALE CHANGELING
You can't be rid of me that easy.

FLASH TO:

INT. WORMHOLE

Reality gives way to the milky fog of a Prophet induced vision. The Female Changeling looks around and at first is confused that she is still in the transport.

As she looks around and to see several figures materializing out of the fog, she realizes that where she was, is not where she is.

TAHNA LOS (PROPHET)
A corporeal life form...

AKIMA (PROPHET)
It's unlike the others...

KIRA (PROPHET)
A morphagenic entity...

JAKE (PROPHET)
It's a Founder...

FEMALE CHANGELING
I see my reputation precedes me.
(beat)
I assume you're the ones the
Bajorans refer to as 'Prophets.'

KIRA (PROPHET)
We are known by that name...and
others.

FEMALE CHANGELING
Not for long.

The Female Changeling suddenly dissolves into a fine mist of glowing energy and darts across the distance between her and the Kira Prophet.

The energy field strikes the Kira-Prophet and it cries out in pain and anger.

It vanishes.

EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE

The Galaxy-class U.S.S. Venture arrives with the Defiant in tow.

In the distance, the wormhole is opening and closing violently.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - PROMENADE - UPPER LEVEL

On the upper level of the promenade, a crowd has gathered to watch the wormhole.

EXT. SPACE - WORMHOLE

A swirling mass of blue energy is released from the wormhole and streams out into space. The mass of energy tries to hold a cohesive form, but the farther from the wormhole it travels, the more it breaks up.

Finally, as the blue form of energy approaches the station, the swirling mass dissipates.

As the wormhole closes this times, it sends out a massive shock wave.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - PROMENADE

People try and ride out the turbulence as the shock waves continue to beat against the station.

INT. U.S.S. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

The bridge crew grab onto the nearest solid object as the shock waver rocks the Defiant.

THORNE

What the hell was that?

JENDA

Sensors are still down.

INT. U.S.S. VENTURE - SICKBAY

Standing around a surgical suite, Bashir and the medical staff are all donned in scrubs. The medical staff all grab a hold of the nearest solid object as the deck pitches then levels out.

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR

What the devil is going on up there?

EXT. SPACE - WORMHOLE

The wormhole bursts opens again, then closes just as quickly.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE PROMENADE - AIRLOCK

The large, gear-shaped wheel of the airlock roles open.

Thorne walks out onto the Promenade. Dax follows close behind him.

A team of medics carry Kira on a stretcher through the airlock. Bashir follows close behind them.

Several people are waiting for them. Nog is the first to run up to them.

As sisko steps out of the airlock, Nog stops dead in his tracks.

NOG

(surprised)

Captain!

Not far behind him.

O'BRIEN

(relieved)

Captain.

SISKO

It's good to see you.

NOG

How is she?

SISKO

It's been touch and go. She stabilized but Julian thinks it could go either way.

O'BRIEN

What happened?

(CONTINUED)

THORNE

We ran into the Female Changeling.

No one responds.

The three of them begin making their way towards the infirmary when...

A loud CRY is echoes across the Promenade.

The group takes of running towards the noise...

Which is then suddenly followed by more deafening cries of shock and awe.

The group, with Sisko in the lead push their way through the crowd of people that has formed around a teenage Bajoran girl.

Strands of electricity shoot off her and strikes randomly all around her.

As Sisko gets closer, a strong breeze picks up, which come from the girl herself.

Bursts of energy shoot out from her form and absorb into her surroundings.

Her eyes, glow an intense blue.

Sisko holds up his arms to signal for the crowd to keep their distance.

SISKO

Everyone stay back.

(beat)

It's a Prophet.

The crowd turns to see Sisko. The Bajorans in the crowd immediately flock to him, all of them trying to push forward just to touch him.

A moment passes as Sisko makes his way a bit closer to where the Sahgi is standing.

Sahgi cocks her head and looks at Sisko. The flow of energy stops as she recognizes him.

SAHGI (PROPHET)

(hollow)

The Sisko.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO
Why have you taken this vessel?

SAHGI (PROPHET)
She was willing.

SISKO
Why take her at all?

SAHGI (PROPHET)
We are weak. We need her to heal.

Bashir is moving through the crowd and comes to stand next to Sisko.

SISKO
Doctor.

Bashir scans Sahgi with his tricorder.

BASHIR
The girl's life signs are very faint and continuing to fall.

SISKO
They won't let her die, Doctor.

BASHIR
Can you be sure of that?

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - INFIRMARY - MEDICAL SUITE # ONE

Sahgi has been moved into the infirmary. Bashir, several med techs, and a few other officers from the science department surround her. They all carry tricorders and a few have PADD's. One will occasionally make a scan then make a note on their PADD.

Sahgi's parents RYU and ANOLA rush into the room. Sisko follows them.

With the help of Bashir, Sisko manages to hold them back.

ANOLA
Sahgi!

BASHIR
(to Ryu and Anola)
We can save her.

Ryu is confused.

(CONTINUED)

RYU
Save her?

BASHIR
There is a way to remove the
Prophet from her...

Anola cuts off Bashir.

ANOLA
...Would it injure the Prophet?

Bashir is disgusted with the fact that are more interested
in the Prophet than their daughter.

SISKO
It could...

BASHIR
(cutting him off)
...The Prophet is killing your
daughter.

SISKO
(scolding)
Doctor!

BASHIR
Excuse me, Captain, but we can't
just sit here and let this happen.

SISKO
It's not up to us, Julian.

Ryu cuts in between them.

RYU
We have to trust in the will of the
Prophets.

Bashir flips his tricoder into the air, and walks away.

BASHIR
I can't believe this.

SISKO
Doctor.

Bashir turns back to them.

BASHIR
Forgive me for wanting to save her
life.

(CONTINUED)

Bashir looks over the girl one last time.

BASHIR

I have patients to attend to.

ANOLA

Emissary...are we making the right choice?

SISKO

I can't make that decision for you.

Sisko pauses for a long moment, before deciding to add:

SISKO

The Prophets told me to accept her sacrifice.

ANOLA

If it's their will to use her...

SISKO

She is your daughter.

RYU

Her faith is strong. She would give her life for the Prophets. I have no doubt.

Anola looks at her husband, not as convinced as he is.

SISKO

She should have the chance to make the choice for herself.

RYU

The Prophets will do what is best.

Ryu leads his wife away from the Prophet.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - INFIRMARY - MEDICAL SUITE # TWO

Sisko enters the room.

Bashir stands next to Kira's bed, checking her vitals.

Sisko is hesitant to approach Julian, but pushes forward despite the rift growing between them.

SISKO

How is she?

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR
Stable for now.

Bashir turns back to Sisko.

BASHIR.
Captain...

SISKO
Not now, Julian.

BASHIR
Sahgi will die.

SISKO
It's not our place to
interfere. No matter what we
believe is right.

BASHIR
(forceful)
Damn it sir, she's going to die and
we can save her!

Sisko grabs his arm and pulls Bashir away from Kira's bed.

SISKO
Don't you think I know that?
(beat)
This isn't easy for me,
Julian. Everything I know,
everything the Federation has
taught me is screaming that some
alien life form has possessed this
girl and it's our job to save her.

BASHIR
Then let me do my job...let me save
her.

SISKO
They may only be wormhole aliens to
you, Julian, but to the Bajorans
they're Prophets...they're
Gods. On that level, we have no
choice but to respect her parents'
wishes.

Julian takes a step away.

Sisko watches him as he does something at a nearby console.

SISKO
I don't want to have to ask...

BASHIR
Then don't.

SISKO
I want your word you're not going
to act against her parents' wishes.
(beat)
Julian...

BASHIR
You have my word, Captain.

Sisko pauses a moment, looking to Julian to gauge the strength of his assertion.

SISKO
Do you need anything?

Before Bashir can answer, the intercom cuts in.

THRONE (V.0.)
(filtered)
Captain Sisko, Admiral Nechayev is
here to see you.

Sisko takes Kira's hand for a moment.

SISKO
Notify me when there's any change
is Kira's status.

BASHIR
Aye, sir.

Sisko leaves the room.

Once he is gone, Bashir looks back at his patient.

BASHIR
We need a miracle...

Bashir leaves the room.

Moving closer to Kira, her eyes begin to flutter and she is suddenly conscious. She sits up and pulls back the sheet covering her. She's wearing a light gray gown.

KIRA
(weak)
Computer, where is the patient
Sahgi?

(CONTINUED)

She throws her legs over the side of the bed.

COMPUTER
Medical Suite One.

Kira slides off the bed and nearly collapses when her feet hit the ground. With some effort, she manages to recover and steadies herself by holding onto the bed.

KIRA
(weak)
Is anyone with her currently?

COMPUTER
Three life forms are present.

KIRA
That's a problem.

Kira walks over to a nearby computer console, and brings up a display of the environmental controls. She scrolls through the system until she comes to a screen that displays the layout of the ventilation system.

Next she brings up a screen that displays the system to release anesthizine gas. Kira activates the two systems, but gets a prompt for an authorization code.

KIRA
Authorization, Kira-one-seven-three
seven. Initiate rapid release.

COMPUTER
Authorization accepted.

Kira makes her way to the back corridor that links all the medical suites.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - INFIRMARY - MEDICAL SUITE # ONE

Kira walks into the suite. Everyone in the room is unconscious.

Kira walks across the room to the bio-bed. She looks at the monitor above the bed. The girl's life signs are still fading.

KIRA
Prophet.

There's no response.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA (CONT'D)

Prophet.

Sahgi opens her eyes and looks up at Kira. Her look is blank.

SAHGI (PROPHET)

We know you.

KIRA

I was a host once. I could be again.

Sahgi sits up and looks her over.

SAHGI (PROPHET)

You are damaged.

Kira takes a deep breath though and tries to hold a straight face as shards of pain course through her.

KIRA

I'll serve as your vessel, whatever is left, if you let the child go.

Sahgi turns to her.

SAHGI (PROPHET)

You would die.

KIRA

Sahgi's life is just starting. Everything I've been through, she's been spared...everything I fought for is hers now...it's up to her generation to carry on...

SAHGI (PROPHET)

You would give yourself to us...for her?

KIRA

For her...and for you.

The Prophet is quiet as it considers her offer.

SAHGI (PROPHET)

We accept you proposal.

Kira falls to her knees and starts praying.

Sahgi slides off the bed and moves to stand behind Kira.

(CONTINUED)

A blueish white field of energy leaves Sahgi. When the Prophet has finally completely left her, Sahgi falls to the floor.

The energy field moves towards Kira. Kira's eyes flutter open with sadness as the energy field envelopes her.

KIRA
(whispering)
Odo, I love you.

The Prophet, pure energy moves to Kira and joins with her. Kira thrashes around a bit before finally calming down. She looks up, momentarily rejuvenated. Her eyes glow blue.

EXT. - SPACE - U.S.S ENTERPRISE

An establishing shot of the Enterprise traveling at warp.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Picard paces nervously across the bridge.

A sensor alarm sounds.

LEFLER
I think we've found them.

PICARD
Take us out of warp.

WORF
Yellow alert. Ready shields and weapons, but do not acquire target locks.

Picard gives Worf a scorning look, but Worf simply holds his place.

EXT. SPACE - GAMMA QUADRANT

The Enterprise is holding position as a squad of Jem'Hadar fighters swarm around the ship.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Picard is standing in front of the center seat.

PICARD

It's imperative that we speak with
Odo.

Change focus to the main viewer to see WEYOUN:

WEYOUN

I'm afraid I can't allow that. The
Founder is, quite busy at the
moment and it would be
impossible...

Picard cuts him off:

PICARD

Do you want to be the one that has
to explain to Odo why hostilities
have renewed between the Federation
and the Dominion?

Weyoun pauses for a moment while he considers that thought.

WEYOUN

I'm beginning to see your point.

PICARD

I thought you might.

WEYOUN

I'll arrange for an escort to bring
Odo...

PICARD

Time is of the essence, Weyoun.

WEYOUN

I'm un able to take you to the
Founder home world.

PICARD

Then don't take us there. Surely
you can call ahead and arrange for
a meeting at another location.

WEYOUN

We'll proceed at once.

INT. DEEP SPACE NINE - PROMENADE - OUTSIDE THE INFIRMARY

Sisko is standing outside the infirmary. Dax approaches him from behind.

DAX
(apologetic)
Ben, I...

SISKO
Now's not the time, Old Man.

Sahgi's parents' and most of the senior staff are still standing outside the infirmary when...

...Sahgi comes walking out. Her mother gasps running up to hug her.

Doctor Bashir rushes to her side, scanning her with his tricorder.

BASHIR
There's no sign of the Prophet.

Sisko takes off, running past both of them.

SISKO
Doctor.

They both run into the infirmary to find Kira passed out on the floor.

When they reach her, Sisko and Bashir carefully turn her over, to see the familiar blue glow from her eyes.

SISKO
Why?

KIRA (PROPHET)
(weakened)
This vessel was willing.

FADE OUT:

TO BE CONTINUED...