

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

12x19 - "We Are Not Ready."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and on the *Star Trek* tie-in novels
by Pocket Books

incorporating elements from

Star Trek: Destiny
Book 2: Mere Mortals

by David Mack

TNG 17x19 - "MERE MORTALS"

As the blockade fleet gathers at the Azure Nebula and *Voyager* takes command, *Aventine* and *Enterprise* go through the next subspace tunnel together. In Picard's head, the Borg Queen's voice echoes - "You should not have come looking for me, Locutus. We'll be together again soon enough." The two ships find themselves in the Delta Quadrant, where they emerge into a punishing plasma stream between two binary stars and then immediately come under attack by Hirogen. It is a brutal and bloody battle, costing numerous lives and destroying Picard's ready room, the Queen laughing in Picard's head the whole time. Crusher and Tarses are overwhelmed with wounded. *Enterprise* and *Aventine* finally manage to repel the Hirogen, disrupt the plasma stream using a transphasic torpedo, and escape back into the subspace tunnel. But when they reappear in the Azure Nebula, they find the entire blockade fleet destroyed. The Borg have arrived. *All* the Borg.

TTN 1x19 - "ALL DRESSED UP AND NOWHERE TO GO"

Vale launches her escape attempt with Keru and Torvig's help, but it fails. Troi complains that Hernandez has gone native, siding with the Caeliar over the humans. Huilan wonders why Ra-Havreii designed the holo-presence suit for Pazlar - could he be projecting his own emotional isolation? Huilan advises dismantling the suit. Troi's condition is becoming critical, but she still refuses treatment. Furious, Ree sinks his fangs into Troi and injects her with venom. Ra-Havreii and Pazlar make a breakthrough on using the subspace tunnels to get a signal back to the Azure Nebula. When they do, they see the Borg launching their mass attack, obliterating the blockade fleet. Suddenly Hernandez appears on *Titan's* bridge. She can get them away from *Axion*, but it has to be right now, because the Caeliar are closing all the tunnels. Though it means leaving his crew and pregnant wife behind, Riker lets Hernandez take *Titan* home.

VOY 10x19 - "APERTURE 27-C"

At the Azure Nebula, the combined blockade fleet which President Bacco negotiated gathers. While *Enterprise* and

Aventine explore the subspace tunnels, Picard leaves Chakotay in command. More and more ships arrive, and *Voyager* must keep the peace. Chakotay is single-minded, focusing on tactical issues and leaving diplomacy to Paris and Cambridge. They have to wrangle all these different nations here for the same purpose, and get them to work together on calculating more access frequencies for the subspace tunnels. Kaz and Cambridge discuss their worries over Chakotay's state of mind, but this is not the time to question the chain of command. As aperture 27-C opens, Chakotay is ready and eager to face whatever comes through, and get his revenge at last. But at the sight of thousands of Borg ships bearing down on him, plowing through the blockade fleet like it isn't even there, Chakotay's mind simply snaps. His last words: "I'm sorry, Kathryn."

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - AZURE NEBULA

The blue swirls of gas and particulate matter that make up the Azure Nebula. Flickers of lightning flash between the clouds. After a moment, space RIPS OPEN...

...and the USS *Aventine* shoots out of the tear in space, which quickly seals itself up behind the ship. As the huge Vesta-class Starfleet vessel cruises to a stop...

PULL BACK

...to reveal that the Sovereign-class *Enterprise-E* awaits.

PICARD (comm, v.o.)
Enterprise to *Aventine*. Welcome
back, Captain. Any luck?

DAX (comm, v.o.)
Negative. Passage twenty-one only
leads to the intergalactic void.
Again. I see you've made a few new
friends since we left...

PAN AROUND in space to reveal...

A FLEET of varied ships all holding position inside the nebula. Many are recognisable Starfleet configurations, but there are also KLINGON warships, ROMULAN warbirds, and...

[FERENGI marauders](#) (TNG "The Last Outpost")
[BREEN destroyers](#) (DS9 "The Changing Face of Evil")
[TALARIAN cruisers](#) (TNG "Suddenly Human")
[GORN Balaur-class warships](#) (DS9 "Where the Heart Is")
And even [ORION interceptors](#) (ENT "Borderland")

2 INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE

This image is also displayed on the giant viewscreen of the *Aventine*. Captain EZRI DAX and first officer SAM BOWERS observe it with cautious optimism. The Ops manager, OLIANA MIRREN (human female), turns to Dax.

MIRREN
Captain Picard is requesting a
holo-conference, sir.

DAX
Go ahead.

As Mirren works her console, Dax stands, straightens her uniform, and approaches the circular platform in the middle of the bridge "pit", between her command chair and the helm console. After a moment...

...a hologram of Captain JEAN-LUC PICARD materialises on this platform. (This is a more advanced version of the [holo-communicator](#) first seen in DS9 5x13 "For the Uniform".)

DAX
Captain Picard.

PICARD
Captain Dax. So the *Aventine's*
tenth journey in forty-eight hours
was once again fruitless.

DAX
Sadly, yes. But by my estimates,
we are less than half a day from
identifying the tunnel the Borg
are using to enter the Alpha
Quadrant. Then we can finally
launch our counter-attack.

PICARD
Indeed.
(re screen)
Unfortunately, this group of
vessels represents the last of
Starfleet's forces in this sector.
Everything else is being held back
to defend the core systems.

DAX
It'll have to do. How long until
the Cardassian fleet arrives?

PICARD

Twelve hours. But as you can see, we already have support from the Klingons, both Romulan empires, the Talarians... even the Ferengi.

DAX

Then we have time to run a few more sorties?

PICARD

Perhaps more than a few. Now that the reinforcements have arrived, we are free to explore the other tunnels together. Using both our computers, we can reduce the time to calculate the return frequency.

DAX

Sounds like a plan, sir. Who'll be in charge while we're both gone?

PICARD

Actually, *USS Voyager* joined the fleet while you were away.

(looks to side)

Commander Kadhata, please hail *Voyager* and patch them in.

Dax nods to Mirren to do likewise. After a moment, a second hologram materialises on the platform next to Picard - Captain CHAKOTAY. He is looking stern, terse and intense.

PICARD

Captain Chakotay.

CHAKOTAY

Captains. What can I do for you?

PICARD

From this point on, Captain Dax and I are going to explore the subspace tunnels together. I'm leaving you in command of the allied fleet until we get back.

CHAKOTAY

Understood, sir.

PICARD

I've already asked the lead ship from each nation to cooperate with us on calculating more aperture frequencies - it'll be your task to coordinate those efforts. We're also sharing all our data on the subspace tunnels and what we find through them with the fleet.

DAX

Everyone, sir? Even the Breen?

PICARD

President Bacco's orders, Captain, and a condition of the alliance.

DAX

Alright. Mister Bowers, please transmit all our logs to *Voyager* for distribution to the fleet.

BOWERS

Aye, sir.

CHAKOTAY

(looks to side)

Received.

PICARD

Excellent. Captain Chakotay, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my sincerest condolences on the loss of Admiral Janeway. It must have been a great blow. Are you certain you're up to this?

CHAKOTAY

(stony)

Voyager and her crew survived several years in Borg space with

no reinforcements at all, Captain.
We can handle ourselves.

PICARD

Very well. We've already unlocked
aperture twenty-two - *Enterprise*
is standing by to proceed on your
signal, Captain Dax.

DAX

Then good luck, Captains - to us
all. *Aventine* out.

Dax nods to Mirren again, and both holograms dissolve. Dax
moves to return to her command chair, but...

The TURBOLIFT door opens, and out steps the young Bolian
helm officer THARP. Doctor Tarses follows a half-step
behind. Dax meets them both warmly at her chair.

DAX

Mister Tharp. Welcome back to the
bridge. I dare say things have
changed while you've been away.

THARP

Don't worry, Captain. I've had
nothing to do in sickbay but read
ships' reports -
 (wry glance
 at Tarses)
- so I believe I'm up to speed.
I'm eager to put the theory into
practise, sir.

DAX

Take your station, Lieutenant.

Tharp moves to relieve the EXTRA at helm. Dax turns to
Tarses, speaks softly.

DAX

Are you sure he's fit to return to
duty, Simon?

TARSES

He's young and strong. And I was running out of reasons to say no.

DAX

What about Mavroidis?

TARSES

Sadly she's not the first telepath in Starfleet to be possessed by an alien intelligence. There are even standard protocols in place to deal with instances like these. But she'll be fine, I promise.

Reluctantly nodding her agreement, Dax takes her seat and notices Commander Bowers' rather daunted expression. Tarses takes the seat on the opposite side of Dax from Bowers.

DAX

Something wrong, Sam?

BOWERS

Just... twenty-one passages down, six to go. It reminds me of an old Earth game.

DAX

Hide and seek?

BOWERS

No - Russian roulette.

Off that ominous note...

BLACK OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

3 EXT. SPACE - STARBASE 7

The classic mushroom-shaped Starfleet [space station](#) in orbit of ANDOR, as seen in DS9 "Trial and Error". Ships move back and forth between the station and the planet, entering and leaving through its giant hangar bay doors.

4 INT. STARBASE 7 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE

Captain SISKO is on his feet, trying his best to remain calm and professional. It is not entirely working.

SISKO

Admiral - I'm begging you. Send
the *New York* to Bajor, or Earth.

Captain VAUGHN stands back, watching Sisko dispassionately. Rear-Admiral ZENKAR ([Saurian](#) male) is the target of Sisko's pleading - he stands with his back to the picture window out onto the starship hangar in the core of the station.

ZENKAR

I cannot do that, Captain. Fleet movements come from higher up the chain of command even than me, and I have no authority to alter them - nor do I see any need to.

SISKO

But sir -

ZENKAR

I realise you have family on both worlds, Captain -

SISKO

Exactly! Wouldn't you rather be at home defending Sauria right now?

VAUGHN

Ben...

ZENKAR

I'll thank you not to speculate on my personal life, Captain. We all have our homeworlds and families. Putting that out of mind to follow orders is a requirement of wearing that uniform. If you're incapable of that, perhaps it was mistake for you to put it back on.

This is only making Sisko angrier. Vaughn steps in, hoping to defuse tensions.

VAUGHN

What are our orders, Admiral?

ZENKAR

For now, the *Kirk* will join the *New York* and the *Cutlass* to patrol the Andorian sector. All three ships are being restocked as we speak and should be ready within the hour. The *Venture* and the *Malinche* should be with us soon.

VAUGHN

And if we do detect a cube?

ZENKAR

(isn't it obvious?)

Do what is necessary to destroy it, Captain.

VAUGHN

Understood, sir. Come on, Ben.

Vaughn takes the still-roiling Sisko by the arm and begins to lead him out. But Zenkar calls after him...

ZENKAR

Captain Sisko, Bajor is one of the furthest Federation worlds from the Azure Nebula. I'm confident we'll stop any progress the Borg make into the Alpha Quadrant long before they reach that system.

It's not much of a silver lining, but at least Zenkar is trying. Sisko nods awkward acknowledgement, and leaves.

5 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Bringing us back home to the station, where the Sabre-class [Da Vinci](#) (from the SCE series) is just docking.

6 **INT. DS9 - COMMANDER'S OFFICE**

Commander RO shakes the hand of Captain [SONYA GOMEZ](#). Though she is of captain rank, the human woman still wears a gold engineer's collar - the only captain in the fleet to do so.

RO

Welcome back to DS-Nine, Captain - and congrats on the promotion.

GOMEZ

Thanks, Commander. I got bumped up when Captain Gold finally decided to retire after Sector 108.

Well, that immediately puts a damper on things. Ro leads them both over to the couches, where they sit.

RO

I was surprised to hear you got this assignment. *Defiant* was built for battle, after all. But it's not exactly *Da Vinci's* specialty.

GOMEZ

Specialties go out the window at a time like this, Commander.

RO

Yeah, but... no offence, it's just when I got the orders, my first thought was "Is that it?" I'm responsible for protecting this planet, this entire sector. Two tiny starships and an immobile space station? It's not enough.

GOMEZ

Reading between the lines of those orders, I do have a theory. But you're not gonna like it.

RO

I'll take my chances.

GOMEZ

Well, the heavier capital ships, your Galaxies and Sovereigns and Akiras, they're getting assigned to the core worlds. For right now, Bajor's just a lower priority.

RO

So we just... struggle through.

GOMEZ

Sorry. But I'm an engineer. You're a fighter. And you've got Prynne Tenmei, who I know is one of the best pilots in the fleet. So you know what? I think we're not doing too bad, all things considered.

Ro nods, taking the encouragement in the spirit.

RO

So how's everyone else - Corsi, Stevens...?

GOMEZ

Corsi's my XO now. The *Da Vinci's* SCE team is still officially mine, but I leave most of the day-to-day grind with a charming Tellarite fellow named Tev. And Stevens... well, he and Corsi got married, believe it or not.

RO

A lot of that going around at the moment. We just had a wedding two days ago.

GOMEZ

...and then Stevens transferred to the *Musgrave*. They both thought it was probably safer that way.

RO

Yeah... romance in the workplace is always a minefield.

They silently commiserate - they have both had their own troubles in that area.

7 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

The dabo table is deserted. No customers, no Treir, and no Hetik. CANDLEWOOD sits at a table with TENMEI and NOG, staring forlornly across the quiet bar at this sight. All three have drinks, but not much enthusiasm for drinking.

TENMEI

John... stop torturing yourself.

CANDLEWOOD

(quiet, withdrawn)

Two days. He hasn't spoken to me in two days. And why would he? I wouldn't speak to me.

NOG

So then you speak to him. I'm sure if you explain -

CANDLEWOOD

Do you not know me at all? Me no good with the talking, *fershtay*?

TENMEI

So you're just going to give up? Let one drunken misunderstanding ruin your entire relationship?

CANDLEWOOD

Why not? I ruin everything else.

Nog and Tenmei exchange a look of silent exasperation. He's wallowing. Then their attention is caught...

...by RO and GOMEZ entering the bar together. Tenmei and Nog both recognise Gomez, and get up to greet her, leaving Candlewood annoyed at being left alone at the table.

TENMEI

Sonya! Oh, excuse me - Captain.
Look at you and your four pips.

GOMEZ

Hey, Prynn. We were just talking
about you.

NOG

Is the *Da Vinci* here?

RO

Just arrived. Starfleet sent them
to help us defend Bajor.

NOG

Well okay! Now I feel better.

Buoyed at Nog and Tenmei's enthusiasm, Ro starts to let herself feel a bit more confident as well. While Gomez takes another table with Nog and Tenmei, Ro heads to the bar to catch up with QUARK.

QUARK

Reinforcements?

RO

For what it's worth. How's Treir?

QUARK

Keep your voice down! How do you
even know about that?

RO

She asked me for an appointment
with Counsellor Matthias.

QUARK

Oh. Okay. That's good, then. I
offered her some time off, but she
insisted on coming back to work.

Good thing too, because I haven't seen lobe nor ledger of that dabo boy she hired for two days.

Ro glances over towards Candlewood, sitting alone. He feels her eyes on him. Unwilling to be pitied, he knocks back the last of his drink and gets up from the table. He leaves the room without another word. Ro turns back to Quark.

RO

Give them both some time, Quark.
It's bad for everyone right now.

Quark already knows that well enough.

On the upper level, RICHTER and ETANA exit a holosuite together, both dressed in elegant evening wear. They stroll slowly down the short corridor, arm in arm.

RICHTER

Not much of a honeymoon, was it?

ETANA

Depends what you're looking for.
I think a couple of hours with you and nothing to do but lay on the grass and count the stars is just about perfect.

They head down the spiral staircase to the main floor, where Ro, Gomez, Nog and Tenmei sit. Ro beckons them over.

RO

Kol, come and say hi.
(introductions)
Ladies, this is Captain Sonya Gomez. We served on the *Enterprise* together for all of two weeks. Now she's in charge of the *Da Vinci*.
Sonya, this is Kol and Kristen - the ones who just got married.

GOMEZ

(shakes hands)
Congratulations.

TENMEI

And I served with Sonya on the *Sentinel* during the war.

NOG

And I worked with her on Empok Nor - which you'll be happy to hear we blew up last year, by the way.

GOMEZ

Ha! Well aren't we just all one big happy family?

Off Ro, who remains less than fully convinced...

8 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Candlewood heads down the corridor - decision made, and nothing's going to get in his way. Bullishness is the only way to push past his nerves. He reaches a door, stops, and after a moment's hesitation, presses the DOOR CHIME.

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik, it's me. Can I come in?

No response.

CANDLEWOOD

Please. I just want to try and explain.

No response.

CANDLEWOOD

Okay. I'll just stay out here and explain to the door then. Everyone will hear me begging like a dog, but that's okay, I have no shame.

That does the trick. The door opens. Steeling himself for what may come, Candlewood steps through and into...

9 INT. DS9 - HETIK'S QUARTERS

HETIK himself stands in front of his PRAYER MANDALA. Before the interruption, he was praying as we have seen Kira do. Candlewood enters, sees this, and backs up a step or two.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh. I'm sorry. I didn't realise you were praying. I'll go.

He turns to leave again. Hetik almost lets him go, but eventually gives in to his own best instincts.

HETIK

John... wait.

CANDLEWOOD

...Really?

HETIK

Yeah... Come in.

Candlewood does, not sure he warrants such largesse. They both stand apart, neither certain how to start.

HETIK

How've you been?

CANDLEWOOD

Pretty terrible. You?

HETIK

Same. Been trying to meditate. It's not coming easy.

CANDLEWOOD

I wasn't lying. I've only stayed away for two days because I didn't want to seem creepy - but I'm over it. I'll beg. I'll do anything you want, if you'll just talk to me.

HETIK

You embarrassed me, John. I showed you my heart... and you laughed at it. Why would you do that? Is the idea of being with me so absurd?

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik... Do you have any idea how much I brag about you? About what an amazing boyfriend I have and how I can't believe you're with me? Nog and Prynn are fed up of hearing about it, believe me.

HETIK

Then why?

Candlewood pauses, tries to plan ahead here. It's not his strong suit, but he has to get this right.

CANDLEWOOD

We both know I'm not good with words, right? Which, considering how many of them I get through, is quite an achievement. So can I show you something instead?

HETIK

(wary)

What is it?

CANDLEWOOD

There's this thing I've been thinking about for the past few weeks, something I need to do. And I want you to do it with me.
(holds hand out)
Will you trust me? This once?

A moment's pause, and then Hetik places his hand in John's. Grateful, John leads them both back out of the room.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

10 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS

Candlewood leads Hetik in, only letting go of his hand to TOUCH the *mezuzah* by the side of the door. Hetik notices...

HETIK

I've seen you do that before. What even is that thing?

CANDLEWOOD

A *mezuzah*. It contains a small piece of our holy book, so by touching it, we reaffirm that this is a Jewish house. It's supposed to go on the outside, really, but if I was being really orthodox it would have to go really outside, like on an airlock, and that ain't gonna happen, so -

HETIK

John... you're babbling.

CANDLEWOOD

Sorry - nerves.

Candlewood goes over to the replicator, but opens a cabinet next to it, much the same as where Ro kept her rarely used placemats in DS9 12x08 "Dinner at Eight". From this space, John pulls out a shaped bowl - a Passover Seder plate.

CANDLEWOOD

We have this spring festival, holiday, whatever you want to call it. Passover. It's about the right time on Earth. It commemorates the Jewish race's escape from slavery, after we were saved by God.

Hetik smiles - he can relate to such stories from his own Bajoran faith and history, plus it's nice to learn more about this strange human's culture.

CANDLEWOOD

Most festivals take place in the Temple, but this one is always in the home. Wherever there are Jewish people, on Earth or all across the galaxy, they go home for Passover if they can. There's various prayers and rituals and stories, but it all starts with a big meal. It's a time for family to get together and reconnect.

(beat)

The thing is... I haven't been home for Passover in three years. I've sent messages to my mom, made sure she knew I was thinking of her, but being out here on my own, it didn't seem worth the effort.

With a gulp of nerves, Candlewood steps closer to Hetik, holding out the Seder plate like an offering.

CANDLEWOOD

Hetik... would you celebrate Passover with me?

It's clear this means a lot to John, and Hetik slowly realises why - John is saying that Hetik is family. The Bajoran man steps forward, takes hold of the Seder plate. Candlewood smiles with blessed relief.

11 EST. SSKO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Establishing the familiar front of the famous restaurant.

12 INT. SSKO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

JOSEPH SSKO hands a pile of clean plates to his granddaughter-in-law RENA, in the kitchen of his restaurant.

JOSEPH

Listen, you just worry about putting food on these plates and wine in those glasses. The rest of

it's all gonna go on anyway, way
over your and my heads.

RENA

That's easier said than done. The
news reports are just horror and
death - serving up the lunch
specials like nothing's wrong
seems... disrespectful somehow.

JOSEPH

What else are we supposed to do?
We're not soldiers or politicians.
We're just people, and our right
to enjoy a good crawfish étouffée
is exactly what the soldiers and
the politicians are fighting for.
I'd say it's disrespectful not to.

RENA

But... your own son's out there.
How can you be so calm?

JOSEPH

This is who he is, how he relates
to the world - he straps on his
boots and he goes out to protect
it. I relate to the world by
feeding it crawfish étouffée. Now,
you gonna put those plates out, or
are you gonna keep worryin' 'bout
something you got no control over?

He's probably right. She takes the plates and heads out to
the main room of the restaurant, which is open but not yet
busy. As she lays out the plates on some empty tables...

JAKE SISKO enters, descending the stairs. He joins his wife
at the table, close enough that Joseph can still overhear
them through the kitchen hatch.

RENA

What did Chief O'Brien say?

JAKE

Kasidy's message was right - he has gone back to Starfleet. He's in command of the *New York*.

RENA

Is he at Bajor?

JAKE

No - the *New York* and the *Kirk* are both assigned to Andor.

RENA

Shar's homeworld... Is Starfleet expecting an attack there?

JAKE

They're expecting an attack every where. Ships are being assigned to every world in the Federation, every outpost. They're mobilising everyone - even the cadets. Chief O'Brien couldn't talk for long.

RENA

Aren't they stretching themselves too thin?

JAKE

What else can they do? They have no idea where the Borg are going to strike next, so they have to be everywhere, just in case.

RENA

I just... I hate everything about this. It all feels wrong. The Emissary isn't even at Bajor.

JAKE

(pulls her in)

Hey - my dad has done this for years. He's survived everything the universe has thrown at him. He'll survive this too.

Rena nods reluctantly, and settles into the hug with Jake. Jake looks over her shoulder at Joseph - and they share a look that says neither of them is so certain.

13 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

KASIDY and KIRA sit at the small round kitchen table, each with a mug of tea before them. Out of the window onto the back garden, we can see that winter is slowly approaching.

KIRA

He'll be fine, Kas. The Prophets have always kept him safe before, you know they will again.

KASIDY

It's not the Prophets I'm worried about. Nerys, he lost his first wife to the Borg. He's got to be completely messed up.

KIRA

The Federation is filled with people who've lost loved ones to the Borg. Unfortunately it doesn't change the fact that they've got a job to do. Ben understands that.

KASIDY

Oh, I know. And I appreciate the support, Nerys. But nothing you say will stop me worrying about my daughter's father.

KIRA

How is Rebecca? She's started school now, hasn't she?

KASIDY

(brightening)

She loves it. Comes home every day filled with more facts and figures to recite. And of course everyone wants to be her best friend.

KIRA

(reaches out, takes
Kasidy's hand)
You should send a message to Ben.
Let him know. He'd like that.

KASIDY
Oh, I don't want to distract him.

She looks down at her tea. She desperately wants to call him, but she'll deny herself for his sake. Kira looks on with concern for her friend.

14 EXT. SPACE - STARBASE 7

Bringing us back to the giant starbase in orbit of Andor.

15 INT. STARBASE 7 - HANGAR

The docking facility inside the head of the starbase. We slowly push past half a dozen starships of various classes being restocked and repaired by small armies of engineers.

Eventually we come upon the Nebula-class *New York*, Sisko's command... and on past it to the Akira-class *James T Kirk*.

16 INT. KIRK - CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

As seen in DS9 12x10 "Where the Heart Is". Vaughn half-sits against his desk while Sisko continues to pace before him. The window shows the continuing activity in the hangar.

VAUGHN
Were you like this during the war?

SISKO
Like what?

VAUGHN
Pacing. Worrying. Sorry to be blunt, Ben, but it's not going to inspire much confidence in your crew to see you so... panicked.

The word brings Sisko up short - is that really how he seems? He makes an effort to bring himself under control.

SISKO

I should be at Bajor, Elias.

VAUGHN

(points to door)

So do you want to go out there and tell Lieutenant ch'Thane that his homeworld is less deserving of our protection than yours, or shall I?

SISKO

That's not -

VAUGHN

Ben, what's really wrong here? You knew Admiral Zenkar wasn't going to indulge your transfer request before we even went in the room. It's wartime - we go where we're sent. Besides, don't you believe the Prophets will protect Bajor?

SISKO

(quiet, dark)

You need to stop saying things like that, Elias.

VAUGHN

Forgive me, Ben. I'm not making fun of you. It's just that I don't understand. When we were preparing to fight the Ascendants, you were utterly convinced you were doing the right thing. Honestly, it was a little scary to me how sure of yourself you were.

(beat)

Where did that Ben Sisko go?

SISKO

(turns away)

You don't understand.

VAUGHN

(gently)

How can I when you won't tell me?

Sisko looks back at his friend. Perhaps he should open up.

SISKO

They're not there anymore.

VAUGHN

Who, Kasidy and Rebecca? Of course
they're not, they're safe on -

Then he notices the look on Sisko's face. He's not talking
about his family.

VAUGHN

The Prophets. What do you mean,
they're not there? Are you saying
the Prophets have abandoned Bajor?

SISKO

Not Bajor... me.

VAUGHN

I don't understand.

SISKO

I don't... feel them. In my head.
During the war, even when I was
light years away from Bajor... I
always knew they were there. When
I came back from the wormhole, it
only got stronger. The connection.
But then, since the Ascendants,
since you knocked me out and took
my place in the plan...

VAUGHN

I was saving your life.

SISKO

I'm not blaming you, Elias. But
it's like... they're punishing me
for not doing what they wanted me
to do. They killed Prylar Eivos,
they put Rebecca through hell...
and now here I am on the other

side of the galaxy and they won't even talk to me.

VAUGHN

Ben... you're ascribing credit to inscrutable aliens for things they had nothing to do with. Do you really believe the wormhole aliens arranged for your assignment to Andor out of some kind of grudge?

SISKO

I said you wouldn't understand.

VAUGHN

That's because you're not making sense. Look, I know I'm coming at this from a different perspective to you, but -

SISKO

They're powerful, Elias. Whether you believe they're gods or not, they're real. And I used to be able to feel them, in here.

(taps head)

It gave me a bedrock to work from. A certainty that everything would work out for the best.

(beat)

And I don't have that anymore. Not for Bajor, not for Andor... not for any of us.

Off Sisko's anguish, and Vaughn's worry for his friend...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

17 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS

The room is dimmed for dinner. Candlewood and Hetik both wear black velvet *yarmulkes* and sit at the dining table, which has been laid with a white tablecloth.

The seder plate sits in the centre, laid out with the traditional foods, plus a plate of matzo, several wine glasses, and a prayer book for each man. The main meal is in front of them, as yet untouched.

HETIK

(pointing)

So what's this one called again?

CANDLEWOOD

That's an orange - an Earth fruit. Unlike before, when we ate the herbs to symbolise the bitterness of slavery, with this we spit out the seeds to symbolise getting rid of that bitterness, so that we're just left with the sweet fruit of happiness when we all live freely together at our full potential. Like the segments of the orange, which together form one fruit.

HETIK

That's lovely. Sorry if I'm asking too many questions.

CANDLEWOOD

No no, that's great, that's what you're supposed to do. Part of the point of this is to pass down the traditions, remember the history, which we do by asking questions.

HETIK

Okay then. What's this one?

CANDLEWOOD

That is the shank bone. The story goes that God commanded the Jews to sacrifice a lamb - that's a small herd animal, like a baby *pylchyk* - and use its blood to paint your doorway, so that when the angel of death came to kill the firstborn of all Egyptians, it would know to leave us alone.

HETIK

That's a bit gruesome, isn't it?

CANDLEWOOD

Well, we don't do that anymore - we make do with the shank bone and the *mezuzah* at the door. But from the Jewish perspective, it was a good thing - it's how God forced the Egyptians to let us go free. Plus it's replicated anyway. Nobody is ever going to agree if replicated food is *kosher* or not, but it's not like I'm gonna get a real-life lamb bone out here, so -

HETIK

Okay. So when do we actually get to eat the meal?

CANDLEWOOD

Hah! You sound like every Jewish child who has ever existed. Sorry, I know it's kind of dragged out. It's just that every single thing on this table means something. Like the actual seder plate - my mom gave me that when I left for Starfleet. It's important to me.

HETIK

You talk about your mom a lot.

Candlewood pauses, takes a sip of wine. Hetik can tell that he has inadvertently hit upon something.

CANDLEWOOD

Have you noticed how I only talk about my mom? Never my dad?

HETIK

(gently)

I kind of assumed he was dead.

CANDLEWOOD

He's not dead. It's just that I didn't really grow up with him - I only had my mom. And even as I say these words I realise I'm talking to an orphan...

HETIK

Which is what makes family so important to me, too. That's why I asked you to marry me, John... to make you my family.

CANDLEWOOD

And this is why I said no. My parents divorced young - because they got married even younger, before either of them were ready. Marriage for me is not something to rush into. It's not something you do with someone you've only really known properly for a year.

HETIK

You don't think we'll last?

CANDLEWOOD

I definitely think we'll last. And when we do, getting married will be the proof we've lasted. When we know everything about each other, when we've fought every fight and come out the other side, when no-one we know even thinks of us as separate people anymore... that's when I'll marry you, Hetik. And I can't wait.

Hetik smiles - John finally said the right thing. Then he has to keep talking and ruin it...

CANDLEWOOD

Of course my mom would probably prefer me to marry a nice Jewish boy -

HETIK

Mothers love me. You'll see.

Candlewood smiles - that's a promise. They've made up. As John surges with relief, Hetik picks up his cutlery...

HETIK

Okay, so we've dipped the herbs. We've recited the blessings. Can we eat now?

CANDLEWOOD

And I thought I was the glutton. Oy. Yes, we can eat.

Both happy, they dig in to the meal.

18 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Ro and Gomez sit together at a quiet table under the stairs. The bar around them is dim, in evening shift, but still quiet. People don't feel much like partying. Both women are similarly downcast, staring into their drinks.

RO

I can't even imagine how Picard must be feeling. I was on the *Enterprise* when he met one Borg, and he... did not handle it well.

GOMEZ

I was there at the beginning. I remember talking with Geordi, saying I couldn't concentrate on my work for thinking about the eighteen people the Borg had snatched up, just like that.

RO
Eighteen dead... we'll be lucky if
there are eighteen of us left.

GOMEZ
You can't think like that, Laren.
That's what I learned from Geordi
that day - we can grieve later, if
we have to. But right now, we've
got a job to do. Besides, Picard's
a professional, you know that as
well as anyone. And Dax is kind of
a legend too. They're exploring
those subspace tunnels right now,
and whatever they find, you know
they can handle it.

Ro nods uncertainly...

19 **INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE**

A BURST OF SPARKS showers the room from a light in the
roof. Dax clings to her armrests as the ship SHAKES around
her, the result of repeated WEAPONS SHOTS from outside. RED
ALERT lights flash, and all crew are at BATTLE STATIONS.

Dax turns to Bowers, who stands and works at the auxiliary
tactical console that Dax herself occupied at Acamar.

DAX
Sam! Return fire!

BOWERS
Aft torpedos, full spread! Helm,
roll forty degrees to port!
Phasers, sweep starboard!

Kedair at primary tactical, and Tharp at helm, execute
their orders. Dax grips tighter as the ship rolls...

20 **EXT. SPACE**

Aventine ROLLS to port, and TORPEDOES fire from the rear
launchers. FOLLOW one of them until it hits its target...

A HIROGEN WARSHIP. It explodes in a big fireball...

...but three more soar in to replace it. PHASERS streak out from *Aventine's* starboard side at the closing warships...

21 **INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE**

Kedair at the primary tactical console...

KEDAIR
One enemy ship destroyed.
Acquiring new targets.

BOWERS
Plenty to choose from, Lieutenant.

On the VIEWSCREEN, we see one of the Hirogen warships fly into view and strafe the *Aventine* with weapons fire...

An EXPLODING console along the side wall of the bridge sends an ENSIGN flying backwards in a scorched heap and tumbling down into the pit. He lands right in front of Dax.

Vulcan paramedic T'PARAS rushes to check on the fallen man with a tricorder, as the ship continues to shake around them. T'Paras looks up to Dax, and shakes her head.

KEDAIR
Port shields failing. Incoming!

BOWERS
Roll one-eighty to port! All power
to starboard shields!

Too late - a THUNDEROUS barrage of fire hits the *Aventine*, and the Ops console EXPLODES, engulfing Mirren in a shower of shrapnel. As it snuffs out, she hangs limp in her seat.

BOWERS
Reset science two for Ops!

RIORDAN
Aye, sir.

The shaken computer specialist RIORDAN scrambles to do so. Kedair works her tactical console hard...

22 EXT. SPACE

Phasers and torpedoes shriek out from *Aventine*...

...a Hirogen ship flies into their path...

...more phasers and torpedoes HIT the same ship from another direction...

...and the Hirogen ship VAPORISES. Followed by the *Enterprise* swooping through the cloud of debris.

23 INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE

Dax hisses with satisfaction to see this. She isn't going to argue with that.

KEDAIR

Eight Hirogen ships left. They're splitting up - four on us and four on the *Enterprise*.

BOWERS

Tharp - hard about. Let *Enterprise* cover our flank.

On screen, we see *Aventine* and *Enterprise's* phasers combine to SHRED two more Hirogen warships. But the remaining two are still coming...

KEDAIR

Collision alarm!

BOOM. One Hirogen ship physically impacts on *Aventine's* hull, sending a violent JOLT throughout the ship.

DAX

Report!

RIORDAN

Hull breach, decks seventeen and eighteen, sections five through nine. Forcefields are up, damage control teams responding.

KEDAIR

Intruder alert! Four Hirogen,
moving in pairs on deck seventeen.
They're heading for crew quarters.

Dax turns to look at her tactical officer in shock. But
there is no time for shock. She needs to make a decision.

DAX

Evacuate that deck! And tell your
people to shoot to kill. Hirogen
don't take prisoners... so neither
do we.

Off Dax's determination...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

24 EXT. SPACE

The *Aventine* and the *Enterprise* are still being harried by half a dozen Hirogen warships. Both Starfleet ships twist and turn, trying to shake off their attackers. But each has one Hirogen vessel literally jammed into their hulls.

CLOSING IN on the *Aventine*... we see four FIGURES stomping along the outside of the hull, along the spinal hump from the shuttle bay forwards.

25 INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE

Bowers rushes past clouds of smoke to Kedair's station.

BOWERS

They're where?

KEDAIR

Heading aft on the outside of the dorsal hull. One of them has a pretty serious-looking piece of shoulder-mounted artillery. Power failures are following them every step of the way.

DAX

They're heading for engineering. Sam, get Leishman and her people out. Riordan, isolate all command systems on the bridge and lock down the engineering computer core. Kedair, get your people down there, and dead or alive, get those bastards off my ship.

Nodding her understanding, Kedair beckons an EXTRA to take over her tactical console and heads towards the turbolift.

BOWERS

Lieutenant! Where are you going?

KEDAIR
Main engineering, sir.

BOWERS
(folds arms)
I don't recall giving permission
to leave your post, Lieutenant.

KEDAIR
(snaps to attention)
Sir. Request permission to lead
the counter-attack and make our
boarders sorry they ever set foot
on Captain Dax's ship.

Bowers steps aside, letting Kedair enter the turbolift.

BOWERS
Permission granted, Lieutenant.
Give 'em hell.

KEDAIR
That's the plan, sir.

The turbolift doors close on her.

26 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS

Candlewood stands at the open door.

CANDLEWOOD
Computer, hold the door open.

The computer BEEPS affirmatively, and John turns back to
the room, where the main part of the dinner is now eaten.
Hetik sits back from the table, leaning to his left.

HETIK
So tell me about these plagues.

CANDLEWOOD
Ten of them, various horrible
things, all aimed at the Egyptians
as God's attempt to convince them
to do the right thing. The last
was the death of the firstborn.

HETIK
But not for you.

CANDLEWOOD
That's why it's called Passover -
because the plagues "passed over"
the Jews without affecting us.

Not joining Hetik back at the table, John instead goes to
stare out of the window at the stars.

CANDLEWOOD
I know the rabbis would cast me
out, but I'm really sympathising
with the Egyptians right now.

HETIK
How come?

CANDLEWOOD
An unstoppable plague of death...
nothing you can do to run or
escape it. It will consume you.

HETIK
But you're Jewish. The plague will
pass you over.

Candlewood comes back to Hetik, crouches down by his chair,
takes his hands and looks deeply into his eyes.

CANDLEWOOD
It'll pass us both over... if we
have faith.

Hetik holds his boyfriend's hands...

27 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S QUARTERS

Wearing his colourful Ferengi pyjamas, Quark presses the
control to open the door - and there stands Ro.

QUARK
Laren... it's late. Are you okay?

RO

Can I come in? Just to talk.

She seems troubled, so Quark steps out of the way, letting her in. She heads to the couch and slumps into it. Quark follows, sitting beside her. They turn to face each other.

RO

I feel useless, Quark. I'm not used to sitting these things out. I'm used to being in the thick of it, fighting alongside everyone.

QUARK

You're in command now. It's not always an easy place to be.

RO

But the fight's out there, and I'm not doing anything. And if the fight does come here... there's nothing I can do about it anyway.

QUARK

Laren... there's always something you can do. You just need a good night's sleep, and it'll all look better in the morning. I promise.

Quark CHUCKLES. Ro looks at him askance.

RO

What?

QUARK

I was just thinking... it's come to something when I have more faith in Starfleet than you do.

She chuckles along with him.

28 **INT. AVENTINE - CORRIDOR**

The huge, heavily armoured forms of two **HIROGEN** stomp along the corridor, the entire section losing power as they move. The Beta, KEZAL, reports to the Alpha, ORMOCH.

KEZAL

Scramblers are in place.

ORMOCH

That should keep our prey busy until we bypass their computer lock-outs. Then we can finally test their skills in combat.

SIMMERITH (o.s.)

Why wait?

Ormoch and Kezal turn in anger, and see a [CHELON](#) security officer, SIMMERITH, brandishing a curved-blade axe. The hefty Chelon's turtle-like beak and reptilian scales look tough and threatening. Ormoch draws his own blade.

ORMOCH

This looks like worthy prey indeed. Stay clear, Kezal - this one is mine.

SIMMERITH

Don't be greedy, friend. I'm willing to kill you both at the same time. Bring it on.

ORMOCH

Mind your place, Kezal!

Ormoch launches into hand-to-hand combat against Simmerith. The Hirogen LUNGES. The Chelon DODGES and SLASHES back. The Hirogen DUCKS and CHOPS a piece of flesh off the Chelon's leg. The Chelon seems unaffected. The Hirogen is impressed.

Ormoch decides not to play with his food any longer. He FEINTS and SWITCHES back, SLASHING Simmerith across the throat. As the Chelon lurches, his throat SPURTING green blood, Ormoch STABS up into Simmerith's gut, impaling him.

As Simmerith JUDDERS in his death throes, he tries to bring his axe down. Ormoch uses his free hand to BAT the axe out of the way, where it CLATTERS harmlessly to the deck. With the last of his energy, Simmerith SLASHES his sharp claws across Ormoch's face, drawing blood... then expires.

Ormoch drops Simmerith to the deck. Looking over to Kezal, he wipes the blood from his face with a grin.

ORMOCH

Not the best I've ever fought. But not bad. Look at that beak and those claws - they'll make fine trophies.

KEDAIR (o.s.)

Don't forget this.

Again both Hirogen turn in surprise - and see that KEDAIR is standing there, casually holding Simmerith's axe. She looks over at them calmly - she knows they're going down.

29 INT. SISKO'S RESTAURANT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jake and Rena lie in bed together, an open window allowing a slight breeze to ruffle the light curtains. They hold each other, relaxed and comforted in each other's embrace.

30 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kasidy lies in bed alone, and not asleep. After a moment, the bedroom door creaks open, and a small figure is dimly silhouetted in the doorway - REBECCA.

KASIDY

What is it, Rebecca honey?

REBECCA

Can I sleep with you tonight, mommy? It's cold.

KASIDY

Okay, sweetheart. But close the door behind you. Gently.

Rebecca closes the door, and then climbs into bed with her mother. After a moment...

REBECCA

I miss daddy.

KASIDY

I know, sweetheart. Me too.

Kasidy hugs her little girl tight in the darkness.

31 INT. NEW YORK - SISKO'S QUARTERS

Sisko lies in his own bed, staring at the ceiling. He sits up and looks behind him - at the sight of the preparation still ongoing inside the Starbase's hangar.

SISKO

Computer... obscure the windows.

The computer BEEPS affirmatively, and the windows quickly fade to black, blocking the view from outside the ship, leaving only tiny Starfleet nightlights. Sisko lays back down again... but still can't sleep.

32 INT. AVENTINE - CORRIDOR

The Hirogen Alpha Ormoch weighs up this oddly confident Takaran woman, bouncing her dead colleague's axe in her hand. But it is the young and cocky Kezal who speaks up...

KEZAL

You think you know how to handle that axe?

KEDAIR

It's not an axe, it's a Rigellian *voulge*. And I wield it better than most.

ORMOCH

I'm sure you think yourself capable. But you're hardly what I'd call worthy prey.

KEDAIR

Are you sure?

Kedair tosses two pieces of metal at the Alpha's feet - Hirogen face masks.

KEDAIR

Maybe you should ask Dorrok and Saransk. Oh right, you can't - because I killed them already, up at the engineering computer core, where you sent them... Ormoch.

The Alpha is thrown off his game - she knows their names.

ORMOCH

And now you've come to fight me?

KEDAIR

No - I've come to kill him.

She nods towards Kezal. Ormoch is utterly incensed.

ORMOCH

I am the Alpha! He is only the Beta. Your life is *mine* to take!

KEDAIR

Nope. In a few seconds, he'll be the Alpha, because you'll be dead.

ORMOCH

You think you can kill me? You're welcome to try!

KEDAIR

You still have a few seconds left, so allow me to educate you.

(nod to Simmerith)

My colleague here is a Rigellian Chelon. In times of stress, their skin secretes a deadly poison. And you just got a faceful of it.

Perfect timing - the Alpha's knees crumble beneath him, and he tumbles to the deck, losing all control of his body.

Kezal immediately LEAPS into action, jumping over Ormoch's uncoordinated form and drawing his own blade. Kezal and Kedair launch into hand-to-hand battle, his blade CLANGING against her axe, while Ormoch can only watch...

33 INT. DS9 - CANDLEWOOD'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Candlewood and Hetik lie in bed, the little-spoon human relaxed and protected in the big-spoon Bajoran's powerful brawny arms. He dozes off, safe with the man he loves.

34 INT. DS9 - ETANA & RICHTER'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The recently married women also lie in bed together, safely warm and cuddled up under the covers, semi-conscious. Whatever comes, they can face it together.

35 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Ro and Quark lie in bed, she the big spoon cradling and protecting him. He is snoring lightly, while she is still awake. But she is smiling, content, relaxed. She snuggles in closer, enjoying the comfort, and closes her eyes.

36 INT. AVENTINE - CORRIDOR

The Alpha Hirogen lies on the deck, unable to control his limbs or do anything. He can only watch his Beta take on the Starfleet officer, their blades CLANGING in battle.

Kedair overextends herself... and Kezal takes advantage, STABBING his blade right through her chest. She CHOKES and GURGLES, spitting blood in horror, dropping her axe.

Ormoch GRINS in victory. Kezal raises his blade up high, letting Kedair SLIDE down it gruesomely until she is right at his hand. He SNIFFS her, taking the scent of his prey.

Then her eyes SNAP open, she quickly GRABS the two shorter blades holstered at the Hirogen's hips and uses them to lop off the surprised hunter's head. It tumbles to the deck with a THUD, while Kedair gracefully lands on her feet.

She turns to the Alpha, on the deck. She slowly PULLS Kezal's sword out of her chest and tosses it aside.

KEDAIR

Biology lesson number two. My species is called Takaran. We don't have vital organs, just a distributed physiology. And, as

you may have noticed, we're really
good with healing.

As she crouches down to the Alpha, he croaks out...

ORMOCH

Your kind are worthy prey.

KEDAIR

Funny... I was just thinking the
same thing about you.

And she SNAPS his neck.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN

37 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The *Defiant* and the *Da Vinci* are both on patrol, circling the station.

38 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Ro stands at the central table with Major CENN. She looks up to the engineering station, where Nog and Captain Gomez are working hard. Candlewood is at sciences, EXTRAS as needed. Turning back to Cenn, she taps her combadge.

RO

DS-Nine to *Defiant*.

TENMEI (comm)

Nearly there, sir. Transceivers boosted to thirty above maximum, triaxilated with the station and the *Da Vinci*, and tied in to the relay on the edge of the sector.

NOG

Confirmed. Ready to connect.

GOMEZ

Da Vinci confirms as well.

RO

Alright, then. Captain - you want to give the order?

GOMEZ

This is your station, Commander. I'm just the tech support.

RO

In that case - Mister Candlewood, fire it up.

CANDLEWOOD

Aye, sir.

Candlewood works his panels, and all apart from him turn to the main viewscreen in anticipation.

And wait. And wait.

Nog is about to say something, but before he gets a chance, Candlewood POINTS right to him without even looking...

CANDLEWOOD

You zip it. I'm focusing the signal through about two-hundred relays across more than a hundred light years and through a class-eleven nebula that's packed with argon, sirillium and hexafluorine. So I will take no nonsense.

RO

Understood, Lieutenant.

Ro tamps down a smirk. A few more moments of working...

CANDLEWOOD

Here we go. Establishing contact.

RO

On screen.

The main viewscreen shows a hash of STATIC. With another wry glance at Candlewood, Ro tries to make the most of it.

RO

This is Commander Ro on Deep Space Nine. Do you read? Please respond.

The STATIC chops and stutters with the hints of a signal, getting slowly stronger and clearer, until...

PARIS (comm)

This is Commander Tom Paris on Voyager. Good to hear your voice.

Finally the image on the screen clears up enough to see the image of TOM PARIS, first officer of Voyager. The bridge behind him looks dark and intense, packed with activity.

PARIS (screen)

(continuing)

This is an impressive trick, you know, Commander. Real time comms across this distance is something that took us years to crack.

RO

(gestures to Gomez)

Thanks go to the crew of the *Da Vinci*. It may have been my idea, but they made it work. What's the status of the fleet?

PARIS (screen)

There are currently three-hundred forty-two ships here. It's been a job getting them to work together, but we'll muddle through.

RO

And the *Enterprise* and *Aventine*?

Paris checks a reading to his side, not entirely happily.

PARIS (screen)

A little behind schedule, but not enough to worry about.

RO

Where's Captain Chakotay?

An awkward pause - Paris doesn't want to reveal too much.

PARIS (screen)

Occupied with tactical matters, Commander. We're still working on accessing more of the tunnels, and a Borg cube could emerge from one of them at any moment.

RO

Well, from one Maquis to another, please tell him... "Good hunting."

PARIS (screen)

Will do. I'm gonna sign off now
but we'll keep the comm line open.

RO

I'd appreciate that, Commander,
considering that was the whole
point.

With a warm smile, Paris steps away from the other end of
the comm line, allowing us an unfettered view of *Voyager's*
bridge from the perspective of that ship's main viewscreen.

RO

John, keep on top of it.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh, I am doing, Commander.

RO

(turns to Cenn;
quieter)

Any news from the Militia?

CENN

General Lenaris has every last
ship on constant rotation. Can't
imagine it'd even make a dent on a
Borg cube, if one got through...

RO

You heard Paris. More than three-
hundred ships out there, standing
in between the Borg and the Alpha
Quadrant. And *Voyager* handled the
Borg all alone for years. Don't
worry, Major - they've got this.

No more convinced than Ro was yesterday, Cenn just nods. Ro
heads up the stairs to check on Candlewood, Nog and Gomez.
Meanwhile the SOUNDS of *Voyager's* bridge continue in the
background, via the viewscreen.

RO

Thanks for your help with this,
Captain.

GOMEZ

Hey, I was just glad we could do something constructive. Like you said, it's good to feel like we're still part of the fleet, even all the way out here.

From the viewscreen come the SOUNDS of agitation and action. Ro turns to look at the viewscreen, and sees...

39 DS9 VIEWSCREEN

...a view of *Voyager's* bridge in a panic. Chakotay sits in his command chair, staring back at his own viewscreen in total amazement, unable to grasp what he is seeing. Around him, urgent orders are called and desperate reports made.

PARIS (screen)

Voyager to the fleet! Open fire!
All weapons!

The sounds of WEAPONS FIRE can be heard, both given and received. *Voyager* SHUDDERS with the impact.

40 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

All the crew of DS9 gape in horror at the viewscreen. They can't see what is coming at *Voyager* - only their reaction.

RO

Prophets...

41 VIEWSCREEN

...where Paris grips the arms of his seat, Chakotay still dumbfounded and unblinking next to him.

PARIS (screen)

Brace for impact!

Something heavy, enormous and immovable SLAMS into *Voyager*, THROWING Paris and Chakotay both out of their seats..

...and then STATIC.

42 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

Ro immediately turns to Candlewood, working his panels.

RO
Try and get it back!

CANDLEWOOD
I'm trying. It's not my fault, the signal's dropped at their end.

RO
Okay. Okay. Keep working on it.

Candlewood keeps working. Ro is clearly worried about *Voyager* but trying to stay calm for the sake of her crew.

GOMEZ
Gomez to *Da Vinci*. Are you getting any response from *Voyager*?

TEV (comm)
Negative, Captain. I am prepared to come aboard the station to take over the operation at once. The lieutenant clearly has neither the necessary experience nor skill -

GOMEZ
A simple 'no' would have sufficed, Tev. Gomez out.
(to Ro)
Sorry. He's a Tellarite.

Ro doesn't care about politeness right now - she just wants answers. Exactly how bad is it?

43 **INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE**

Dax clings to the arms of her seat as the *Aventine* SHOOTS through a subspace tunnel. The ship SHAKES, the journey much rougher than previous times, a ROAR of turbulence requiring Dax to SHOUT to make herself heard.

DAX
Riordan! Report!

RIORDAN

Shields are holding. Hyperphasic radiation leaks on decks seventeen and eighteen, as expected.

DAX

Helkara - what's going on out there?

HELKARA

The subspace tunnel's collapsing around us. Someone's bombarding it with high-energy soliton pulses.

DAX

Helm - full speed ahead!

THARP

Almost there. Clearing the passage in five...

Dax clings on for dear life, riding the rapids...

44 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Ro looks again to Candlewood, still ensconced...

RO

John - anything?

CANDLEWOOD

Sorry, Commander. There's... insane amounts of subspace interference all of a sudden.

RO

From the tunnels at the nebula?

CANDLEWOOD

Maybe if about seven-thousand of them opened up all at once...

(off panels)

Wait! I'm getting something!

RO

You've got *Voyager* back?

CANDLEWOOD

No, it's not *Voyager*.

(w/ amazement)

It's *Aventine*! They must have just come back through the tunnels. I'm tying us into their visual feed. We'll see what they see.

RO

Good work, John. On screen.

They all turn again to the main viewscreen...

45 DS9 VIEWSCREEN

...which shows a SHIP GRAVEYARD.

The gigantic fleet of three-hundred ships from races all over the Alpha Quadrant... is now nothing but rubble.

46 RO

...gazing at this from DS9 Ops, dumbstruck.

47 DAX

...on her feet in front of her command chair on *Aventine*, also gazing with horror at this sight. Looking around her, she sees that all her officers are doing the same.

48 EXT. SPACE - AZURE NEBULA

Sparkling husks of starships tumble in the eddies of the Azure Nebula. Smoke and air escaping into space from red hot gashes in their metal corpses. Clumps of debris and bodies drifting freely by... but no signs of life.

Voyager is recognisable among the wreckage. *Aventine* and *Enterprise* both drift into view, observing this.

49 INT. AVENTINE - BRIDGE

Kedair drags her attention back to her security console, which is duly offering her information.

KEDAIR

Detecting Borg weapons signatures everywhere. Literally everywhere.

BOWERS

Enterprise confirms. Also detecting a massive fleet of Borg vessels spreading out across Federation, Klingon and Romulan space from this point.

DAX

How many Borg vessels?
(no response)
How many, Sam?

BOWERS

Current count has it at... minimum seven thousand.

Seven thousand Borg ships. Dax has no response to that.

50 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

The DS9 crew has heard this, and sees the utter destruction on the screen. Candlewood stands from his station, eyes on the screen, and calmly begins to recite a PRAYER...

CANDLEWOOD

Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations that know Thee not, and upon kingdoms that did not call upon Thy name.

The others look at him in confusion. Cenn smiles sadly - he may not know the words, but he knows a prayer when he hears one. Candlewood is continuing...

CANDLEWOOD

(continuing)

For they would devour Jacob... they would devour him completely and destroy his homeland.

Even Ro and Nog understand what this is. John is praying for them all.

CANDLEWOOD

(continuing)

Pour out Thy rage upon them, and
let Thy fury overtake them.

They all turn back to gaze at the graveyard of starships on the screen, all silently joining the prayer.

CANDLEWOOD

(continuing)

Pursue them in anger and destroy
them... from under the heavens of
the Lord.

BLACK OUT

END OF SHOW