

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

REVISED

12/21/93 be
12/22/93 pk
12/22/93 yw
01/03/94 gn
01/04/94 gd
01/05/94 gt
01/07/94 bf
01/12/94 sn
*01/12/94 cy

"Playing God"

#40512-437

Story by

Jim Trombetta

Teleplay by

Jim Trombetta
and
Michael Piller

Directed by

David Livingston

FINAL DRAFT

December 17, 1993

FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY

STAR TREK: DS9 - "Playing God" 12/17/93 - CAST

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Playing God"

CAST

SISKO

ARJIN

KIRA

TRAJOK

ODO

KLINGON HOST

QUARK

CARDASSIAN OFFICER

BASHIR

FERENGIS

DAX

O'BRIEN

JAKE

COMPUTER VOICE

Non-Speaking

Non-Speaking

N.D. SUPERNUMERARIES

STAR TREK: DS9 - "Playing God" - 12/17/93 - SETS

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Playing God"

SETS

INTERIORS

DEEP SPACE NINE
AIRLOCK
COMMANDER'S OFFICE
CORRIDOR
DAX'S QUARTERS
OPS
PROMENADE/SECOND LEVEL
QUARK'S
RUNABOUT
SCIENCE LAB
SISKI'S QUARTERS
TURBOLIFT

EXTERIORS

DEEP SPACE NINE
GAMMA QUADRANT
RUNABOUT
WORMHOLE

STAR TREK: DS9 - "Playing God" - 12/17/93 - PRONUNCIATION

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Playing God"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

ARJIN	AHR-jihn
BAJOR	BAY-jor
CALONDIA	kahl-AHN-dee-uh
CARDASSIAN	car-DASS-ee-en
FRENCHOTTE	FRENSH-aht
GALEO-MANADA	gah-LAY-oh mah-NAH-dah
GEDANA	geh-DAY-nuh
INITIATE	in-IHSH-ee-uht
LELA	LEE-luh
MARDAH	MAHR-duh
RACHT	RAHKT
TRAJOK	TRAY-jahk
VERTIRON	VUHR-tih-rahnn
VOLE	VÖL

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Playing God"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

1

A personnel transport arriving.

2 INT. AIRLOCK

2

As the door opens and several passengers disembark... among the group arriving is BASHIR and a young Trill man in his early twenties, ARJIN. Both have shoulder bags. Moving with them into the corridor toward the Turbolift...

BASHIR

If there's anything I can do for you while you're here...

ARJIN

(overlapping)

Oh, you've already been helpful. Just hearing about Dax makes me feel a little less nervous about the whole thing...

BASHIR

Really, there's no reason to be nervous... Jadzia will be a wonderful host... well, that is, she is a wonderful host in a Trill manner of speaking... and I'm sure you'll learn a great deal from her...

ARJIN

She sounds very different from the other Dax's I've heard about...

BASHIR

In what fashion?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

ARJIN

(tight laugh)

Let me put it this way -- when I was told that Jadzia Dax had been designated my field docent, I asked for reassignment...

BASHIR

You're joking... why?

ARJIN

Because Dax is known for breaking initiates...

BASHIR

Breaking them?

ARJIN

(acknowledges)

I've looked up the records... over the past two hundred years, Dax has personally eliminated forty-seven host candidates from the program...

Bashir reacts as the Turbolift doors open and they go in...

3 INT. TURBOLIFT - CONTINUOUS

3

As they ENTER...

ARJIN

I suppose it's too late to introduce myself to her...

BASHIR

Too late? I doubt it. Jadzia's a night Owl... Computer, locate Lieutenant Dax.

COMPUTER VOICE

Lieutenant Dax is on level seven, section five...

BASHIR

(smiles to himself)

Ah. Of course! Then take us to level seven, section five...

(the doors close)

That's the computer's way of saying she's in Quark's.

*

OFF Arjin's curious reaction...

4 INT. PROMENADE

It's late. All shops closed. Very little traffic. As the Turbolift doors open and they exit... Moving with them toward Quark's... mid-conversation...

ARJIN

...Over five thousand candidates qualify for the training program each year... only three hundred symbionts are available on the average. It doesn't take much for one of us to get knocked out of consideration. The administrators only want hosts who are...

From inside Quark's, they hear and react to whoops and hollers.

5 INT. QUARK'S AFTERHOURS - CONTINUOUS

5

as they ENTER... on Arjin's face as he reacts to the sight of --

6 ANGLE - DAX

6

leaping up from her chair at the Tongo table with victory, collecting her winnings...

ARJIN

(continuing)

...the best and the brightest...

QUARK and the other Ferengi around the table yell at one another for errors they accuse each other of making... all over-lapping --

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

FERENGI
(ad lib to Quark)
You should have Evaded...
the play was clearly
to Evade... you're the
worst Tongo player in
the quadrant... to lose
to a female no less...
how could you risk so
much...

(continues)

DAX
It's the ears... everytime
he's going to Acquire, he
scratches his left ear...
right here, look...
(she tickles his
left ear with a
finger, he swats
her playfully away,
a good sport)

QUARK
Don't play with my ears unless
you're serious about it...

She laughs and slaps him lightly in mock indignation
and as they all laugh...

7 ANGLE - ARJIN AND BASHIR

7

watching, not impressed with this first image of Dax...

BASHIR
Jadzia, you have a guest...

She looks over at the sound of Bashir's voice, reacts,
puzzled for an instant, then seeing the Trill spots...
she's not at all embarrassed... smiles, as they come
over...

DAX
Oh. You're not supposed to be
here until tomorrow.

ARJIN
Yes, Ma'am... I... caught a
transport from Starbase Forty-One
a day early...

BASHIR
We found ourselves sitting next to
each other on the way... I've told
Arjin all about you...
(re: the game)
Well, not quite all about you...

He smiles at her, nods goodbye to Arjin and EXITS.

QUARK
Do you play Tongo, Arjin?

ARJIN
Ton--tongo? Nossir.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

QUARK

Then, you'll have to leave, Arjin.
The risk's to you, Lieutenant...

DAX

(overlapping)

Shame on you, Quark. Where are
your manners... this is a Trill
initiate you're speaking to. Of
course, he doesn't play Tongo.

QUARK

(exaggerated)

I beg your pardon.

DAX

(brightly)

So, we'll have to teach him.

QUARK

(sensing profits)

Actually, it is very easy to
learn... how much money did you
bring with you... give the young
fellow a seat.

(to a Ferengi)

You... out!

ARJIN

It was a very long trip... I think
perhaps...

DAX

Of course, you're tired... I'll
take you to your quarters. Roll
me away, fellas...

FERENGIS AD LIB

You can't roll away now! You just
won! You're way ahead of us!
This isn't fair!

DAX

(calling back)

Sore losers.

As they EXIT, on Arjin's rather overwhelmed
expression...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

DEEP SPACE: "Playing God" - 12/17/93 - ACT ONE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

(NOTE: Episode credits fall over opening scenes.)

8 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL) 8

9 INT. CORRIDOR 9

The next morning. Arjin moves cautiously down, looking for Dax's quarters... finds it and hits the chime... after a beat, the door opens to reveal a very alien man (TRAJOK) with an athletic build... Arjin reacts, startled...

TRAJOK
(gruff)
Yes?

ARJIN
Oh. I'm sorry. I thought... this was Lieutenant Dax's quarters...

TRAJOK
She's in the shower.

ARJIN
(embarrassed)
Oh. Well. In that case...

TRAJOK
Is she expecting you?

ARJIN
Yes. My name is Arjin. She told me to be here at...

DAX (O.C.)
Is that Arjin?

She looks out from the back room, dressed only in a towel... Arjin is uncomfortable...

DAX
You're early again, Arjin. We'll have to work on that...

ARJIN
I can come back...

9A INT. DAX'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

9A *

DAX
Don't be silly. Come in. Sit
down. I'll only be a minute. It
always takes me a little longer to
get ready as a female...

He ENTERS...

TRAJOK
I have to go. I've got to be at
Calondia Four by tomorrow...

DAX
When's my rematch?

TRAJOK
I'll be back next week.

DAX
It was fun. Brutal but fun.

She slaps him on the butt affectionately. Arjin works
hard to not be any part of this.

DAX
Safe trip.

The Alien EXITS... she moves behind the wall... most of
her dialogue is from O.C... and it's important to note
that to someone like Arjin, everything in this
relationship is a test... every response is a
pitfall... and yet at the same time, he rather
disapproves of her at this point... so it's a real
tightrope he's walking...

DAX
The replicator makes a decent
citrus blend...

ARJIN
Thanks, I already had something to
eat.

DAX
Would you get me a Black Hole?

ARJIN
A what?

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED:

9A

DAX

Black Hole. It's a Ferengi drink.
A bartender I've known for a
hundred years introduced it to
Curzon... or was it Lela... well,
it was ages ago...

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED: (2)

9A

Arjin has moved to the replicator...

ARJIN
Black Hole.

The replicator gives him the drink... and he takes it toward the other room, uncertain if he should walk around the corner to her... during the action --

DAX
(beat)
Am I sore. Did you ever wrestle Galeo-Manada style, Arjin?

ARJIN
(slowly realizing)
Wrestle...?

DAX
You should. It's a great way to start a day. I'll set you up with Trajok next week. He's a great coach.

He decides not to turn the corner... awkwardly --

ARJIN
(I'm ready with the drink)
O-kay.

She looks out curiously... has made some progress... is in a robe now... her hair is almost done... she comes out and takes the drink... takes a deep sip... sighs...

DAX
Better.

She sits down, casually crossing her legs at the ankles and putting them on a coffee table...

DAX
So, you don't play Tongo and you don't wrestle... what are we going to do while you're here...

Just a little attitude with this -- he actually tries to put it in the form of a joke:

ARJIN
I was under the impression that field training consisted of...

Cordial, but stopping him in his tracks --

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED: (3)

9A

DAX
I know all about field training.
Jadzia just went through it a few
years ago...

ARJIN
Yes, Ma'am.

DAX
Arjin, if you truly want to become
a Trill host someday, you'll never
call me Ma'am again...

ARJIN
Yes -- Lieutenant.

DAX
Why don't you just try 'Jadzia'...

ARJIN
(uncomfortable)
If you think that's appropriate.

Dax finishes her Black Hole.

DAX
Oh, I'm sure it isn't appropriate
at all. But then, I hate to be
'appropriate'.

She smiles thinly, jumps up and goes back to finish
getting ready... we stay a beat on Arjin's lost
expression...

10 INT. OPS - CLOSE ON O'BRIEN

10

as he crawls into an open circuitry panel holding a
palm beacon in one hand, a phaser in the other. He
bumps his head in the darkness and grunts in pain. He
squints for a moment, then, frustrated:

*
*
*

O'BRIEN
Nothing!

11 WIDER

11

to reveal KIRA scanning the panel with a tricorder...
Her readings lead her to an adjacent panel.

KIRA
Over here, Chief.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

O'Brien quickly crawls over to the other panel and deftly removes the access door. (Note: some systems in Ops should be down.)

O'BRIEN
(entering the panel)
All right, come to papa.

12 ON SISKO

12

as he emerges from his office and notices O'Brien's behind disappearing into the open panel. Curious, he descends the steps and approaches Kira, who is intently monitoring her tricorder.

SISKO
Major?

KIRA
Voles, sir --

SISKO
Voles?

*

KIRA
A Cardassian legacy.

O'BRIEN
They weren't bothering us until we started moving into areas of the station they've been using as hiding places... now they're spreading out everywhere...

O'Brien hands Sisko a segment of cable conduit. Sisko examines the conduit, gnawed half-through by rodent-like teeth.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

O'BRIEN
Apparently they're attracted to
electromagnetic fields.

As O'Brien crawls back under the console:

O'BRIEN
Give me a hand, will you, Major?

*

13 ANGLE TO INCLUDE

13

Dax and Arjin stepping off the Turbolift.

SISKO
(with humor)
Phasers on stun, Mister O'Brien.
I want those voles taken alive.

DAX
Benjamin, I'd like you to meet
Arjin, the host-candidate I told
you about.
(to Arjin)
Commander Benjamin Sisko.

As they shake hands...

14 ANGLE - KIRA AND O'BRIEN

14

All that's visible of them is their rear ends, side by
side, as they rummage beneath the console...

DAX
(pointing, continuing
'introductions')
And that's our first officer Major
Kira... Chief Engineer O'Brien...
conducting...
(to Sisko)
Repairs?

SISKO
Chasing Cardassian voles.

DAX
(mostly to herself)
Really? I've never seen a
Cardassian Vole.

KIRA
(handing her the phaser)
Be my guest.

She goes on her knees and joins the hunt...

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

SISKO
(enjoying this)
So you're the one who picked the
black marble...

ARJIN
Sir?

SISKO
Field training with Dax used to be
the nightmare of the initiate
corps...

DAX
(O.C.)
That was Curzon...

The react as they hear a zap!

DAX
(rising)
Gotcha!

Kira, O'Brien emerge as does Dax from an open panel and stand up, proudly dangling by its corkscrew tail a stunned Cardassian vole: the Alpha Quadrant's nominee for ugliest creature in the galaxy. Off Arjin's expression...

HARD CUT TO:

15 EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)
zooms into the wormhole.

15

16 INT. RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

16

looking through the front window at the light show...
Dax and Arjin are at the front controls...

17 ON DAX AND ARJIN

17

And it may be worth noting that throughout all this Dax is just Dax... she's not putting on any tutorial poses or doing anything with the purpose of seeing how he'll react... she's just casual and charming...

DAX
Spectacular, isn't it...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

ARJIN
Amazing.

17A EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

17A

They exit the wormhole.

17B INT. RUNABOUT

17B

DAX
Computer, play something by
Frenchotte.

A Ravel sort of piano music begins...

ARJIN
(never heard of him)
Frenchotte?

DAX
Self-exiled Romulan. I collect
forgotten composers. Feel like
taking the controls?

ARJIN
I've never flown a Federation
runabout before.

DAX
These things practically fly
themselves. You have third level
flight experience, don't you...

ARJIN
Actually, I just finished fifth
level last month...

He takes the controls... taps in some instructions...

DAX
Fifth! I didn't finish the third
level until...
(trying to remember)

ARJIN
Your last year of training...

(CONTINUED)

17B CONTINUED:

17B

DAX

(dry, amused)

You've been studying up on me,
Arjin. I guess I can't blame
you... I did the same thing when
I found who my field docent was
going to be.

(CONTINUED)

17B CONTINUED: (2)

17B

ARJIN

(beat)

How'd you feel when you heard it
was going to be Curzon Dax?

DAX

(beat)

Nauseous might be the best
description.

ARJIN

I suppose it wouldn't be fair to
give me a few tips...

DAX

Tips?

ARJIN

(a tight joke)

On how you managed to impress him.

DAX

(sighs)

Let's get one thing straight. I'm
not Curzon or Lela or any of the
others. I'm Jadzia Dax. Jadzia
is only three years older than you
are. You're her first initiate.
To be honest, in a lot of ways, I
still feel like an initiate
myself. I can remember the
pressure of the competition when
Jadzia was going through it and
I'm not going to make it difficult
for you. You don't have to
impress me. Okay?

*

ARJIN

(not entirely convinced)

Okay.

DAX

Okay.

ARJIN

(beat)

So how did you.

(off her look)

Impress him.

(CONTINUED)

17B CONTINUED: (3)

17B

DAX
(evenly)
I didn't. Curzon recommended that
my initiate period be terminated.

Arjin gives a surprised reaction... a moment later,
there's a huge shock wave and the ship goes out of
control...

DAX
I've got it! Engaging manual
stabilizers.

The ship stabilizes...

DAX
Shutting down all engines.
Computer, analyze stability loss.

COMPUTER VOICE
Stability loss was due to an
impact by a subspace interphase
pocket...

Arjin stands, begins to check readouts on rear
panels...

DAX
Nature of interphase pocket...

COMPUTER VOICE
Unknown.

DAX
Damage report...

COMPUTER VOICE
Starboard nacelle non-
functional... maximum available
power fifty percent...

ARJIN
(checking readouts)
Jadzia... you'd better take a look
at this...

*

As she moves over to take a look --

18 ANGLE (OPTICAL)

18

to see the nacelle on the monitor... and a glowing softball-sized mass of protoplasm has become caught in the nacelle...

DAX

Looks like we snagged something
from that subspace pocket.
Computer, identify mass on the
starboard nacelle...

COMPUTER VOICE

Unknown.

On their reactions...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

19 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL) 19
Re-establishing.

20 INT. OPS 20

Kira stands before a monitor, viewing a series of station schematics one after another. O'Brien stands next to her, pressing panels on a console. Various N.D.'s as needed.

O'BRIEN
Maybe we could create some kind of
E-M pathway along the inner hull
that would lure them into a
trap...

KIRA
How can you do that without
shutting down all the other power
systems...

O'BRIEN
(sighs)
I can't... and it would take days
to round them all up... we'd have
to evacuate the station...
(beat)
The only other thing I've come up
with is a directional sonic
generator...

O'Brien picks up a device like a shotgun mic ... shakes
his head, unhappy at the option...

O'BRIEN
I can adjust it to a frequency
that'll be uncomfortable to their
ears and drive them out of hiding
one at a time... but at that rate,
I'll be doing it for the rest of
my tour of duty...

Quark has arrived on the Turbolift... he tosses a dead
vole in a plastic bag on top of the console...

QUARK
It ran right across a Dabo table.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

KIRA
How'd it die? Get into your food?

QUARK
(gives Kira a look)
As landlords, you're responsible
for this... I expect vermin
control or I'm going to...

KIRA
Leave? Please say 'leave.' I'd
trade you for a Cardassian vole
any day.

She moves away, had enough of him...

QUARK
(to O'Brien)
The girl insists on fighting her
latent attraction to me.
(beat)
What are you going to do about
these pests, O'Brien...

O'Brien already has his tricorder out and is tracking
down more vole movements... he has the sonic generator
in the other hand... pointing it away from Quark for
the moment...

O'BRIEN
Relax, Quark... we're trying
something new that ought to make
the voles beg for mercy...

QUARK
What is it?

As he swings around toward Quark...

O'BRIEN
A sonic...

Now the generator is pointing at Quark who immediately
covers up his ears and doubles over, squealing in
agony...

QUARK
Stop! Stop!

O'Brien quickly complies and sets down the device.

O'BRIEN
Are you all right?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

Quark looks blankly at O'Brien.

QUARK

...What?

KIRA

(off panels, urgent)
Chief, the Mekong just came back
through the wormhole... they're
showing damage...

O'Brien moves quickly to his station... Sisko ENTERS
from his office having already seen the same
readings... Quark puts his fingers in his ears and rubs
as he EXITS...

SISKO

Open a channel, Major... put them
on the screen...

*
*

21 ANGLE - INCLUDE THE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

21

Dax and Arjin appear on the screen.

SISKO

(continuing)

Are you all right, Dax?

DAX

Our power reserves are gone... we
could use a tow.

Sisko looks to O'Brien who nods he's already on it...

SISKO

What happened?

DAX

Not exactly sure. But we picked
up some kind of subspace seaweed
on our starboard nacelle... we
couldn't get rid of it without
causing further damage...

O'BRIEN

You can cut your engines,
Lieutenant. We'll bring you in to
pad 'D'...

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Dax presses some panels... cutting her engines...

DAX

Set up a containment chamber in the Science Lab for me, would you Chief? When we get this thing untangled, I'd like to study it under controlled conditions...

O'BRIEN

(acknowledges)

Give us a couple of hours...

DAX

Morning'll be fine. That'll give Arjin and me a little time to recoup...

*

O'BRIEN

Acknowledged.

SISKI

Stop by and fill me in later.

22 INT. RUNABOUT - CONTINUOUS

22

DAX

(acknowledges)

Mekong out.

She hits a panel and the monitors go blank... we sense the movement of the ship moving into docking position... she rises to exit...

DAX

Come on... I'll take you to dinner...

As he rises to follow her, off his curious expression...

23 INT. PROMENADE

23

At the Klingon sushi kiosk... the KLINGON HOST is touring with his instrument singing a Klingon song that is joyful by Klingon standards... the kind of song Nelson Eddy would have sung to Jeanette MacDonald if they had been Klingons...

KLINGON HOST

Ak'la bel-la doo-oo-oo-oo...

Bel-la ak'la doo-oo-oo-oo...

La suhm... La suhm...

L'kahtra... La suhm...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

He pauses by Dax and Arjin's table, encouraging with his eyes for Dax to join him for the last line in harmony...

KLINGON HOST & DAX
Ak'la bel-la doo-oo-oo-oo!

They finish with a laugh and scattered applause...
Arjin is rather embarrassed by it all... it isn't helped when the Klingon slaps Arjin on the back with glee...

KLINGON HOST
(to Arjin)
She taught that to me... can you believe it... a Klingon song I'd never heard...

ARJIN
(suffering the indignity with a trace of attitude)
She... collects lost composers.

KLINGON HOST
(A new boyfriend?)
Ak un lach'tel?

DAX
(no, no, my student)
Doko... doko... un Koliay Trill...

KLINGON HOST
(to Arjin)
Don't get any ideas. She's mine!

He laughs, walking away...

DAX
You haven't touched your racht.

ARJIN
No, I have. It's... interesting...

DAX
You've been moving it around your plate to make it look like you've touched it.

ARJIN
I didn't have to move it... it moved itself.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

DAX
Arjin, if this didn't appeal to
you, why didn't you say something?

ARJIN
(smiles, uncomfortably,
shrugs)
It's all right. I wasn't very
hungry anyway.

DAX
Speak up for yourself while you're
here, okay?

ARJIN
(earnest, but a false
ring)
I'll make a concerted effort.

Dax studies him a beat. At this point is not particularly impressed with Arjin... she has nothing against him but she doesn't like that vague superior attitude he occasionally lets slip through... he hasn't offered any distinctive qualities to her... he's playing it safe... she decides to casually probe a little deeper... she eats as the scene continues.

DAX
Who sponsored you for the program?

ARJIN
My father.

DAX
Was he Joined?

ARJIN
No, but he always had great
ambitions for his children. He
was a pilot instructor at the
Gedana post for forty years. He
died last year.

DAX
(sympathy noted)
I see where you got your flight
skills...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

ARJIN

(acknowledges)

My sister was always his choice for Joining... but after she was accepted into the program, she ran off and got married. My father never spoke to her again. On the day he died, he turned to me and said -- 'I'm counting on you'...

(sad laugh)

His last words to me.

DAX

Did he want you to enter Starfleet after Joining? Put your flight training to good use?

ARJIN

Honestly, he couldn't care less what I did afterwards as long as I became Joined. That was his only goal.

DAX

And what about your goals?

ARJIN

(smiles)

There are so many possibilities when you're Joined. I'm not sure what I'd do yet... I figure I'd get a lot of guidance from the symbiont... wouldn't you say?

Dax studies him, vaguely disturbed... she nods thoughtfully...

DAX

The symbiont's influence is very strong, Arjin... but you're the host... you've got to be strong enough to balance that influence with your own instincts.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (4)

23

DAX (Cont'd)
If you can't, the symbiont will
overwhelm your personality.

Arjin reacts, wondering if he misplayed that
exchange...

*
*

24 INT. OPS

24

O'Brien's talking to a CARDASSIAN OFFICER on the
Viewscreen... Sisko is working at his desk in his
office...

CARDASSIAN OFFICER
(with veiled pleasure)
Oh, they are a nuisance, aren't
they...

O'BRIEN
(who hates to be asking
a Cardassian for
anything)
I was just hoping you'd found some
way to deal with them...

Dax ENTERS, carrying a long gift-wrapped box... her
mind is deep in thought...

CARDASSIAN OFFICER
Federation technology isn't up to
the task, eh...?

O'BRIEN
(I don't need this)
Look, I just thought in the
interests of good relations, you
might...

CARDASSIAN OFFICER
You've got the station. You've
got the Voles. By the way, their
mating season begins in about six
weeks...

O'BRIEN
(barely controlled,
sarcastic)
Thanks for your help.

CARDASSIAN OFFICER
The Federation could always
withdraw from Bajor...

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

O'Brien cuts the transmission... Dax hands him the long, gift-wrapped box...

O'BRIEN
What's this?

DAX
Got me. It's from Julian. He called it the solution you've been looking for.

She moves toward Sisko's office. O'Brien quickly opens the box and pulls out a flute a la piper... reading the card...

O'BRIEN
'It worked in Hamlin'. Very funny.

She smiles, moves into Sisko's office.

25 INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE

25

As she ENTERS, he is studying a 24th century chessboard with a game in progress.

*
*

SISKO
Your move.
(she sits)
Your 'seaweed's been safely transported to the Science Lab...

DAX
Did you take a look at it?

SISKO
(nods)
What do you think?
(implied: of it)

DAX
We did as much analysis on the Runabout as we could... none of the matter would scan... we'll do more tests tomorrow...

SISKO
(nods, a beat)
How'd your initiate come through the experience?

DAX
(with reservations attached)
Fine. He's a good pilot...

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

SISKO

Uh oh.

DAX

What.

SISKO

I know that look.

DAX

What look.

SISKO

That look, old man. The one that says 'this one isn't going to make it'.

DAX

(defensive)

Not because of me.

SISKO

But you have your doubts.

DAX

I... have my doubts.

SISKO

What's his problem?

DAX

(picking up steam as she goes along)

I'm not sure what he brings as a host... how he'll advance the symbiont to the next level... frankly, Benjamin, he's more than a little arrogant -- okay, for a Trill, that's to be expected -- but he's riding his father's ambitions and doesn't have any idea what he'd do with a symbiont if he got one.

SISKO

Have you confronted him?

DAX

(defensive)

It's not my job to confront him.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

2:

SISKO
(Come on, Dax)
Isn't it?

DAX
(too earnest)
My job is to show him what it's
like to function as a Joined
Trill. And that's all. I can
show you the guidelines. They're
very clear.

Beat. A long stare from Sisko challenges her.

DAX
Who am I to confront him?

SISKO
(simply)
You're Dax.

DAX
Yes. But I'm not Curzon Dax. And
I won't do to him what Curzon did
to me...

SISKO
(softly)
So, what are you going to do?
(beat)
This kid has to measure up soon or
he'll never be chosen. True?

She nods silently.

SISKO
So, you're not doing him any
favors by avoiding a
confrontation, are you?
(a long beat)
Curzon was tough. Maybe even
abusive in his own charming way.
But he always demanded the highest
standards of excellence from these
host candidates...

DAX
You don't know what he did to me.

SISKO
I know that you made it through
the program.

(CONTINUED)

DEEP SPACE: "Playing God" - 12/17/93 - ACT TWO

25 CONTINUED: (3)

25

DAX
No thanks to him.

SISKI
Are you sure?

Off her look...

26 INT. SCIENCE LAB

26

Looking at the containment area... we can see the
glowing protoplasm hovering in a constant forcefield...
we can hear critters scurrying around...

26A ANGLE - COUNTER - INSIDE THE CONTAINED AREA
(OPTICAL)

26A

See a glimpse of a vole scurrying in front of the
forcefield... hear a fritz... the forcefield fails...
the protoplasm drops to the counter and BREACHES appear
in the protoplasm with bright light pouring out... the
BREACHES tear open wider and the light spills out
consuming the protoplasm...

26B ANGLE - OUTSIDE THE CONTAINED AREA

26B

Suddenly fills with Spielberg light and on that ominous
note --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

27 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL) 27

28 INT. SCIENCE LAB (VPB) 28

O'Brien comes out of a wall panel... Sisko is with Dax
and Arjin looking into the bright light...

*

O'BRIEN
Voices ate through the security
field energy lines...

*

*

SISKO
(angry)
So, nothing is secure on this
station any more...

O'Brien feels personally responsible, shrugs an
embarrassed acknowledgement...

SISKO
(to Dax)
Any reason to believe there's an
imminent threat from this?

DAX
Not as far as I can tell. But I
can't tell you a lot yet.

SISKO
(nods)
I want to know what we're dealing
with as soon as possible. I'll
schedule a briefing for fourteen
hundred hours...

(Dax acknowledges,
continuing to O'Brien
as they EXIT)
And take those phasers off stun,
Chief. No more Mister Nice Guy.

*

They're out.

DAX
How's your astrophysics profile,
Arjin....

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

ARJIN

It's one of my better subjects.
Maybe that's why they sent me to
work with you...

DAX

Set up a gravimetric microprobe
for me... I need to calibrate the
energy profile...

She moves to the side as he works on setting up the
gravimetric microprobe by the window to the contained
area... (NOTE: I feel the need for this physical action
because the scene is so long.) He hesitates before
continuing to speak...

ARJIN

Jadzia... I felt that... last
night... maybe I didn't express
myself well... about my own
goals...

DAX

I think you expressed yourself
very clearly.

ARJIN

I just didn't want you to think I
hadn't set any goals for post-
Joining... I have thought about
Starfleet... with my flight
training... it would be a
perfect...

DAX

(low key interruption,
as she works)

Starfleet is a career... a pilot
is a job... what does that have to
do with being Joined...

*

ARJIN

(confused)

I'm not sure I understand.

DAX

(not harsh, always
working)

No, I don't think you do.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

ARJIN

(beat, suddenly on the
defensive: what's that
supposed to mean?)

I'm sorry?

DAX

(casual)

I think you're telling me what I
want to hear.

ARJIN

(smiles, incredulous,
she's changing the
rules on me)

That's not true.

DAX

I think you went to your quarters
last night... tossed and turned in
bed because you knew some of the
things you'd said concerned me...
and now you're trying to fix it.

ARJIN

I'm... I'm just trying to... to
clarify...

DAX

(low key)

I know what it's like. I've
tossed and turned myself. Please
don't insult me by denying it.

*

He's clearly shaken by this exchange... finishes what
he's doing... with a dry mouth --

ARJIN

I'm finished.

DAX

Let's run a phase variant
analysis...

She rises... and they move to a set of consoles... on
the way --

DAX

I'm worried about you, Arjin.

ARJIN

Worried?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (3)

28

DAX
(tough for her, said
calmly, in measured
phrases)
I'm worried you're not preparing
yourself to be joined.

*

Arjin can't believe he's hearing this... and he's
getting angry because he sees his whole life slipping
away from him... he's trying desperately to stay
controlled...

ARJIN
(still incredulous)
That's it? A day and a half and
you've made up your mind...

Shutting himself up before he goes too far.

DAX
(calmly)
I didn't say that.

Dax begins to set panels...

DAX
(continuing)
Look, you've gotten this far by
anticipating every demand of the
program and performing beyond
everyone's expectations, am I
right?

ARJIN
I'd like to think that's true.

DAX
And I'm telling you that from this
point on -- that's not going to be
good enough.

*

Arjin reacts, asking himself if that's not good, what
is? The computer bleeps... results appear on the
monitors... Dax studies them.

DAX
(continuing, curious)
Highly structured but it doesn't
seem to conform to any of our
physical laws... computer, run a
spectral line profile analysis...

*

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4)

28

COMPUTER VOICE
Spectral analysis will take
approximately seven minutes.

Arjin is still desperately into himself... and the
nature of the fierce competition just pushes him over
the line -- but still low key --

ARJIN
Just to... 'speak up for
myself'... I have to say I'm
feeling... a little betrayed...
here... I mean, after your
impassioned 'I-am-Jadzia, fellow
initiate' speech in the
Runabout...

DAX
I understand why you feel that
way. But this isn't about me.
This is about the standards for
Trill hosts. The opportunity is
too rare and too important to
waste on the wrong candidate.

The term lingers in the air a long beat and it is
crushing him.

ARJIN
(controlled)
And in your mind, I'm a wrong
candidate.

DAX
(sighs, a beat)
I don't know that yet. But I felt
it only... fair... to tell you
that I am... worried about you. *

ARJIN
(quietly)
I see.

And he can't restrain himself any longer.

ARJIN
I should have known this... I
should have realized this...
you're Dax.
(beat)
Standards for Trill hosts?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (5)

28

ARJIN (Cont'd)
(chuckles mournfully)
That's really incredible coming
from you. Because I've never seen
any host in my life who is as far
below those standards as you
are... Ma'am. No wonder Curzon
Dax tried to terminate your
training.

And he EXITS. OFF her reaction...

29 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

29

Time passage.

30 INT. OPS

30

At the table. Sisko, O'Brien, Dax, Kira, Bashir.

*

DAX
I was finally able to read the EM
flux... there are high plasma
concentrations... and a rapidly
expanding mass...

Reactions.

SISKO
How rapidly...

*

DAX
(anticipating the
security implications)
The energy build-up is already
straining the containment chamber.
But here's the kicker: the mass
periodically undergoes phased
expansion and grows in spurts...
it's a very specific growth
pattern that the computer
recognized...

KIRA
Recognized as what?

DAX
The expansion patterns of a
universe.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

KIRA

What?

O'BRIEN

A universe?

DAX

(acknowledges)

What we have here, Benjamin, is a proto-universe in its earliest stages of formation. Unfortunately, as it grows, it's displacing our own universe.

The ramifications of her report weigh on Sisko...

SISKO

Can we get it back where it came from?

DAX

This is not the subspace 'seaweed' we started with. This is an energy mass with properties that don't conform to our own laws of nature. I have no idea what might happen if we tried to move it, let alone take it back into the wormhole. Even if we get there, the wormhole's vertiron nodes could interact with the energy fluctuations of the proto-universe and cause a devastating reaction. It could threaten this whole system.

BASHIR

(realizing)

And if we don't do anything, it'll eventually obliterate this system and beyond...

*

Dax acknowledges...

O'BRIEN

Can't we contain it somehow...

DAX

Not without destroying it.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

30

KIRA

Under these circumstances, that sounds like a pretty good option to me.

DAX

We can create a forcefield that will contain it... if we suppress it long enough, the feedback pressure should create an implosive wave. It would self-destruct.

*
*
*

SISKO

How long before the next phase of expansion?

DAX

About three hours. The collateral shock waves will probably destroy the Lab...

*

SISKO

Can we get this containment field ready by then?

O'BRIEN

Yessir.

Sisko makes the tough decision with a nod. O'Brien and Dax move into action immediately...

SISKO

(to Kira)

Have Odo evacuate section fourteen.

*
*
*

Kira acknowledges... lingering a beat on Sisko...

*

31 INT. QUARK'S

31

As men have done for ages, Arjin has taken his sorrows to the nearest bartender... he drinks long and hard from a glass and lets the liquid burn his throat on the way down... our bartender studies him a short distance away, and as bartenders have done for ages, moves with a bottle to the rescue...

QUARK

Another?

ARJIN

Keep pouring until I drown.

QUARK

Sounds pretty serious.

ARJIN

Serious? No. I just threw my
whole life out a porthole.
Nothing serious.

QUARK

There isn't a problem in the world
that can't be fixed by the right
holosuite program.

ARJIN

(ignoring that, into his
own thing)
Never trust a Trill, Quark.

QUARK

Why not?

ARJIN

They're... two-faced.

QUARK

Does that go for all Trills or
just for the ones with the worm?

ARJIN

Any worm named Dax.

QUARK

(understanding now)
She break your heart, son?

ARJIN

What?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

QUARK

Mine too. And Bashir's in here every other day crying in his synthale over her. The Promenade is littered with the bodies of the men she's...

ARJIN

(overlapping)

It wasn't my heart she broke. It was me. My career. My life.

QUARK

Wait a minute -- is this about all that 'initiate' stuff?

ARJIN

(acknowledges)

She told me I 'wasn't preparing myself to Join.'

QUARK

With the worm? So, that's her opinion. What's that worth, anyhow?

ARJIN

A bad recommendation from your field docent and you can forget it.

Quark pours. Wanting to help --

QUARK

Listen, son. When I was a young man, no older than you, I had an apprentice position with the District Sub-Nagus. I licked his boots like you couldn't believe. He loved me. I was his golden boy... I was on a fast track to the top of the Ferengi business world... and then it all fell apart...

ARJIN

How?

QUARK

Rule of Acquisition One-twelve.
(MORE)

*

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

1

QUARK (Cont'd)
"Never have sex with the boss'
sister." I was fired, broke. It
was quite a setback to my
ambitions.

ARJIN
How'd you recover?

QUARK
Never did. Look at me -- tending
bar out here in Wormhole Junction
while the big boys fly past me at
warp speed. You only get one shot
at the latinum stairway and if you
miss it, you miss it. Welcome to
the club, son.

ARJIN
Thanks.

QUARK
Glad I could help.

He moves to another customer as Arjin feels even worse
than before...

31A INT. SCIENCE LAB (OPTICAL)

31A

Close on the throbbing energy mass inside the
chamber... pulling back to find a couple of Starfleet
engineers putting equipment into place (or perhaps
simply setting small blinkies along the ceiling or
floor) in preparation for establishing the
forcefield... moving again to find Dax still studying
the read-outs on a monitor...

31B CLOSE ON THE MONITOR (OPTICAL)

31B

as a bewildering series of numbers and scientific
symbols flash by...

31C DAX

31C

reacts curiously to something she sees... presses some
panels, her face even more curious...

DAX
Computer, confirm the localized
entropy decrease in the energy
mass.

*

(CONTINUED)

31C CONTINUED:

31

COMPUTER VOICE
Confirmed.

DAX
How much have the readings
decreased in the last hour?

COMPUTER VOICE
Localized entropy readings have
decreased twelve percent during
the last fifty-eight minutes...

Dax leans back, dumbfounded by these results...

DAX
(to herself)
This can't be right. The whole
thermodynamic structure would have
to be changing.

A beat. She leans forward again. Presses some panels.

DAX
Activate a quantometer probe.

*

A bleep tells us it has.

DAX
Verify filter calibration.

COMPUTER VOICE
Filter calibration verified.

DAX
Set energy flux resolution to
point one microdyne.

Another bleep confirms it.

DAX
Begin high resolution energy
scans.

31D THE MONITOR (OPTICAL)

31D

shows an Okudagram we don't have to understand.

31E DAX - EXTREME CLOSEUP

31E

studies it... shakes her head, disbelieving...

(CONTINUED)

31E CONTINUED:

31E

DAX

There could be a malfunction in
the sensors... computer, run a
self-diagnostic and check
quantometer calibration.

*
*

COMPUTER VOICE

Calibration is locked and normal.
Diagnostic underway.

*

DAX

Are there any feedback anomalies
in the dynametric array?

COMPUTER VOICE

Negative.

DAX

(hard to believe)
What's the feedback reading?

*
*

COMPUTER VOICE

Feedback reading is zero.
(beat, several computer
bleeps)
Diagnostic complete. Sensors are
functioning normally.

*
*

Dax is stunned by what she sees on the monitor. Takes
a deep breath.

32 INT. OPS

32

O'Brien is in the pit making preparations... Sisko and
Kira are looking at monitor reports...

ODO'S COM VOICE

Odo to Sisko...

SISKO

Yes, Odo...

ODO'S COM VOICE

Section fourteen has been
evacuated.

SISKO

Acknowledged. Mister O'Brien...?

O'BRIEN

Just finishing up, Commander...

He moves from the pit back to his station...

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

SISKO

Sisko to Dax. We're preparing to
establish the containment field...
I'd like you out of the Lab during
this...

But Dax is arriving on the Turbolift... carrying a
PADD...

DAX

I'm already out, Benjamin... but
I'm not sure you're going to want
to do this now...

SISKO

Why not?

DAX

I've found indications of life in
the proto-universe.

*

Off reactions...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

33 INT. OPS (VPB)

33

Minutes later... Bashir and ODO have joined the scene...

*

DAX
...non-random thermodynamics...
(new graphic)
...irregular power consumption.
The computer's confirmed it, these
are lifesigns...

KIRA
Wait a minute... single cell
microbes are lifeforms too... but
Doctor Bashir has a hypospray that
will kill them... to say nothing
of the Voles...

DAX
Kira, we could very well be
dealing with intelligent life.

KIRA
How is that possible... you told
us this proto-universe was just
formed...

BASHIR
Oh, it's quite possible. We may
have only experienced hours since
this universe was formed... but we
have no way of knowing how fast
time is moving for them.
Theoretically, billions of years
might have passed...

ODO
(remarkable)
An entire evolution of a species
might have taken place in the last
few hours.

BASHIR
It's possible.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE
O'Brien to Sisko

*

*

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: 33

SISKO
Go ahead, Chief.

INTERCUT:

33A INT. SCIENCE LAB 33A

O'Brien and a couple of N.D. Supernumeraries are preparing to implement the forcefield.

O'BRIEN
(urgent)
Commander, if we're going to
implement that containment field,
we've got to do it now. In two
minutes, this thing is going to
expand... *

Sisko takes a long beat... no, not this fast...

SISKO'S COM VOICE
Get your people out of there,
Chief. We're not going to put up
the containment field... *

O'BRIEN
Aye, sir.

They move to EXIT the Lab...

33B INT. OPS 33B

Reactions. Kira disagrees with the decision.

KIRA
Commander, this is only going to
delay the inevitable...

SISKO
(overlapping)
Take us to yellow alert, Major.
Move repair crews into position...

34 INT. SCIENCE LAB (OPTICAL) 34

Pushing in on the even brighter light coming out of the
containment chamber... HEARING the creaking of metal,
then BLAM -- whiteout...

35 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

35

The hull outside the Science Lab is breached by the explosion -- shining bright light into the surrounding space...

36 INT. OPS

36

As before... red alert lights come on as:

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Hull Breach. Level
twenty-two, section fourteen.

*

SISKO

(to com)

Sisko to O'Brien. Seal off
section fourteen, move your repair
crews in...

*

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Aye, Sir...

*
*

SISKO

How long before the next
expansion...

DAX

Roughly five hours...

SISKO

How much will it expand?

DAX

About three hundred percent. We'd
lose a whole section of the
station. By tomorrow, the station
will be gone.

BASHIR

We could beam it into space, give
us some more time to come up with
a solution.

KIRA

We already have a solution and the
longer we wait the harder it will
be to implement it. I'm sorry but
this is us or them. We have to
destroy it.

ODO

You can't just wipe out a
civilization... we would be
committing mass murder.

KIRA

(can't anyone see this
but me?)

It's like stepping on ants, Odo.

ODO

I don't step on ants, Major.
(beat)Just because we don't understand
a lifeform doesn't mean we can
destroy it.

KIRA

Do you have a better idea? Does
anyone?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

No one does. Sisko takes it all in. It weighs heavily on him.

SISKO
I'll give you my decision in an hour.

A beat as they look at each other. He EXITS, thoughtfully, to the Turbolift.

37 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

37

The breach still in place.

SISKO (V.O.)
Personal log. Supplemental. One hour. One hour to make a decision that could mean the life or death of a civilization. Or the end to our own.

*

38 INT. PROMENADE - SECOND LEVEL

38

As Sisko looks out to space thoughtfully... moves to the rail and watches the people go by...

SISKO (V.O.)
My mind keeps going back to the Borg... how I despised their... indifference as they tried to exterminate us. And I have to ask myself... would I be any different if I destroyed another univers to preserve my own?

Deep in thought, he walks on...

39 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

39

Sisko ENTERS... JAKE is sitting at the computer, playing a computer game...

SISKO
Hey.

JAKE
Hi, Dad. What're you doing back so early?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

SISKO
Just wanted to see you.

Jake looks at him curiously... looks back at the screen, a guilty look on his face...

JAKE
He told you, didn't he.

SISKO
Told me what.

JAKE
Chief O'Brien. Darn it, he promised.

SISKO
If you have something you want to tell me, let's hear it.

Jake turns off the monitor.

JAKE
I love her, Dad.

Covering his stunned reaction --

SISKO
Okay.

JAKE
She's everything I ever wanted in a woman.

SISKO
I'm sure she's a wonderful girl...

JAKE
She's not a girl... she's a woman... she doesn't like to be called a girl... everybody calls her that and she hates it... she wants to be something better than that...

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

SISKO
(lost)
Than what...?

JAKE
Than a Dabo girl.

SISKO
You're in love with a Dabo girl?

JAKE
Wait a minute, you said Chief
O'Brien told you...

SISKO
No, I didn't. Who is she... how
old is she, Jake...

JAKE
Oh, jeez...
(sighs)
I wanted to tell you, but I was
sure you'd never understand...

SISKO
So now you're hiding things from
me...

JAKE
You would have understood?

SISKO
Of course not!

Jake looks at him, see?, what was I supposed to do?

SISKO
It's Mardah, isn't it... the one
you've been tutoring in
entomology.

*

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

JAKE

I really want you to meet her,
Dad.

SISKO

I really want to meet her.

JAKE

Can I invite her to dinner
tonight?

SISKO

(beat, as the real
problems he's facing
are reawakened)

Not tonight. But soon.

JAKE

Thanks, Dad. You'll love her.

He runs out to tell her the 'good' news... on Sisko's
reaction as he forces his mind back to the reality of
the decision that confronts him... and how that
decision may affect all the lives of the people he
loves and the people they shouldn't love but do...

*

40 INT. QUARK'S

40

Arjin is still where we last saw him, studying the
bubbles in his ale... with the intense stare of a
medium reading a crystal ball...

DAX (O.C.)

What's so interesting in there?

As he looks up, moving to reveal Dax sitting next to
him...

ARJIN

(a dour smile)

I can see my future.

DAX

I wouldn't trust a bottle of
synthale to tell you the future.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

ARJIN

Let's get this over with, okay?
Just use a sharp blade so I won't
feel it.

DAX

You don't know me as well as you
think you do. I'm sure you looked
at all the training profiles...
but that doesn't tell you who
Jadzia really was before she was
joined. Let me tell you about
her. Jadzia was the quietest,
shyest, most withdrawn young woman
you've ever known. Brilliant, top
grades... and not a clue to what
life was about. She hadn't lived
outside the program. And it
didn't matter because she was
sailing through... until she met
Curzon Dax. Curzon sized her up
in twenty seconds... and made the
next two weeks the most miserable
of her life. She cried herself to
sleep every night. She hated him
for it. But after the field
training was over and she learned
about his recommendation to
terminate her from the program...
she went back a different woman.
She found her voice and reapplied.
She tore through the program with
a passion, a vengeance. And in
the end, the administrators chose
her for Joining.

ARJIN

How did you wind up with the Dax
symbiont?

DAX

(personally triumphant)
When I learned Curzon was dying,
I requested the Dax symbiont.

ARJIN

And Curzon didn't object?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

DAX

No. And I've never been sure why... except as I've come to know Curzon's dark sense of humor... I have a feeling the irony might have appealed to him.

Arjin smiles for the first time in a long time.

DAX

Jadzia Dax is not Curzon Dax... but I am Dax... and I'm slowly coming to terms with what that means. Sometimes it means gambling or wrestling. Sometimes it means waking up an initiate before he slides into the middle of the pack and gets overlooked.

ARJIN

You're giving me another chance?

DAX

You're the only one who can give yourself another chance. You can't simply do this anymore to meet other people's expectations... not your father's, not your teachers', not mine. You've got to discover what Arjin wants... out of life and out of Joining.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Sisko ENTERS... moves to Dax... with the decision...

SISKO

We'll try to take it back through the wormhole... How soon can you be ready?

DAX

(reacts)

I'd want to be sure we have a containment field that would block out the vertiron node radiation as we pass through it... maybe two hours...

SISKO

Better get started.

She acknowledges. Sisko EXITS... she turns to Arjin...

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3)

40

DAX
Wouldn't hurt to have a level five
pilot along.

Arjin is filled with renewed confidence. Smiles as
they EXIT together.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

A41 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

A41

Shuttle waiting off the outer ring.

*

41 INT. OPS

41

Kira, O'Brien... Sisko ENTERS from his office...

SISKO

Chief...?

O'BRIEN

The containment field is in place
and holding, sir... but I'd like
to run a practical test on the
vertiron integrity...

SISKO

'Like to' or 'need to'... that
thing expands again in a little
over an hour...

O'BRIEN

(sighs)

This is the strongest forcefield
I know how to construct, sir...
but a test would at least tell us
our odds of getting it through the
wormhole intact...

SISKO

I'm not playing the odds today.
Sisko to Rio Grande... your
status...

*

INTERCUT:

42 INT. RUNABOUT

42

Dax and Arjin at the controls...

DAX

Systems check complete...
auxiliary power to shields... I'd
say we're packed and ready,
Benjamin...

MUCH INTERCUTTING:

43 INT. OPS/RUNABOUT

43

SISKO
(to O'Brien)
Ready Transporter.

O'BRIEN
(acknowledges)
Locking on to the containment
field...

SISKO
Energize...

43A ANGLE - THE RUNABOUT TRANSPORTER PAD (OPTICAL)

43A

The containment field with the bright energy mass
inside phases in and out...

DAX
Chief... we're getting a phase
variation here...

O'BRIEN
Stand by. The energy fluctuations
are driving the Transporter crazy.

The Transporter finally locks in...

DAX
We've got it now.

(CONTINUED)

43A CONTINUED:

43A

O'BRIEN
(checking panels)
Switching your Transporter to
secure mode. Readings are stable.

SISKO
When you're ready, Dax.

DAX
Take us out gently, Arjin.

ARJIN
Firing thrusters.

*

44 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

44

As the Runabout begins to move slowly away from the
station...

45 INT. OPS

45

O'BRIEN
Energy readings from the
containment field are holding...

INTERCUTTING:

46 INT. RUNABOUT

46

DAX
Take us to fifty KPH...

*

ARJIN
Confirmed... Seventeen seconds to
the wormhole...

*

DAX
Hold at fifty KPH...

*

47 INT. OPS (OPTICAL)

47

O'BRIEN
Ten seconds to the wormhole.

KIRA
Reading higher levels of neutrino
activity...

*

O'BRIEN
Five...

The wormhole explodes onto the Viewscreen as the
Runabout reaches it...

48 INT. RUNABOUT

48

DAX
A short cross to the other side
and we're home free. Rio Grande
to Ops... com links will terminate
in five seconds. See you later.

49 INT. OPS (OPTICAL)

49

As the ship goes into the wormhole and it closes.

KIRA
Acknowledged, Rio Grande.
(as transmission ends,
to herself)
May the prophets guide you.

50 EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

50

going through...

51 INT. RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

51

There's an immediate reaction from the containment field... it's fritzing, fluttering... Dax sees it, reacts, gets up, goes to a rear panel to take readings...

DAX
(urgent)
Containment field stability is
down to eighty-five percent...
every time we pass through a
vertiron node, there's resonance
leakage from the energy mass...

*

ARJIN
In twenty seconds, we'll be out of
here...

DAX
We'll never make it. Field
stability is down to sixty-five
percent and falling. We've got to
kill our forward acceleration.
Now!

*

ARJIN
All engines stop.

Blue light pours through the windows as they slow
down... the field continues to crackle...

DAX
Thirty-eight percent stability...
still falling... twenty-six
percent...

ARJIN
Computer, thrusters on reverse...
two second burst...

The thrusters pop on for two seconds... ending all
forward motion...

ARJIN
All stop.

DAX
It's stabilizing... The
containment field is at twenty-
seven percent... twenty-six...
holding.

*

She breathes a sigh of relief.

52 EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL) 52

virtually still inside the wormhole... without motion, we can see hundreds of light yellow nodes surrounding them: these are vertiron nodes... and they create for the Runabout an incredible minefield to traverse...

53 INT. RUNABOUT 53

Blue light pouring in.

ARJIN

Now what.

Dax moves back to her seat... taking readings...

DAX

Well, we can't stay here. In forty-two minutes, that energy mass expands... and once it intersects with one of those vertiron nodes, they'll feel the result on the Cardassian home world...

ARJIN

But the containment field is so weak now, it'll fail as soon as we start to move again...

*
*
*

DAX

(beat, a plan emerging)
I guess we'll just have to let it fail.

*

ARJIN

(reacts)
Let it fail? But you said it yourself -- if we pass through even one of those vertiron nodes without the containment field, the energy mass will explode...

DAX

Then, we'll have to avoid them...

*

ARJIN

(reacts)
You're talking about precision flying through a wormhole... it's never been done...

Sitting down.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

DAX

Until now.

ARJIN

Jadzia...

DAX

I'm a level three pilot. You're level five. I'll do it if I have to. But I don't have time to argue...

Arjin looks at her... shakes his head with acceptance...

ARJIN

Watch the conn read-outs... I'll try to keep at least fifty meters away from any node...

DAX

(pressing panels)

Understood. Computer, calibrate internal scanners to detect vertiron radiation in the cabin... activate sonic indicators.

A slow, repeating pulse TONE begins (24th century sonar)...

*

DAX

(reading)

Vertiron levels are well within safe limits...

ARJIN

We'll start with one short thruster blast and coast through... that'll protect the containment field a few extra seconds...

DAX

Thrusters ready.

ARJIN

I'm taking the inertial dampers off line... it'll be a rougher ride but I'll have a little more response time...

(beat, deep breath)

Fire thrusters.

54 EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL) 54

thrusters fire for an instant and then shut off -- the ship inches forward...

55 INT. RUNABOUT 55

Very, very bumpy without the dampeners in effect... the pulse tone gets slightly more rapid...

*

*

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

DAX
Velocity is forty meters per
second.

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Containment field at ten
percent.

DAX
Sixty seconds to Gamma...

56 ANGLE (OPTICAL)

56

Past their heads to see the intimidating field of
vertiron nodes. The pulse tone get more rapid...

DAX
Node to starboard... bearing oh-
three-seven mark seven.

ARJIN
Firing starboard thruster...

57 EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

57

As the starboard thruster fires and the ship gently
adjusts course... moving by a large node...

58 INT. RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

58

*

The pulse tone slows down notably...

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Containment field has
collapsed.

ARJIN
No more margin for error...

DAX
Forty-five seconds to Gamma.
(seeing)
Node to port, bearing zero-three-
zero mark three-five-one...

ARJIN
I've got it...

The pulse tone quickens significantly...

59 EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

59

The port thruster fires... and the ship barely passes
the node safely...

60 INT. RUNABOUT

60

Massive shaking now... the pulse tones return to the previous level...

DAX
(looking at sensors)
Thirty-five seconds to Gamma.
Vertiron levels are still okay...

*
*

ARJIN
(reacts to what he sees ahead)
Jadzia... look at this...

She looks up through the window reacts as she sees --

60A OVER THEIR SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

60A

to see an intimidating, seemingly impenetrable stretch of vertiron nodes facing them... like icebergs blocking the Titanic...

ARJIN
We'll never get through it...

60B RESUME

60B

Dax feverishly pressing panels, checking scanners...

DAX
Reading a passage... adjust
heading to one three one mark four-
seven...

*

ARJIN
Confirmed.

*

DAX
The sensors say it's directly
ahead...

ARJIN
I don't see it...

The pulse gets steadily faster and faster...

60C OVER THEIR SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

60C

On a collision course with the vertiron nodes...

DAX
Hold your course.

(CONTINUED)

60C CONTINUED:

60C

ARJIN
I don't see it.

Suddenly, a slight break in the blockade... a hole...

ARJIN
(continuing)
I see it!

*
*
*

60D RESUME

60D

ARJIN
It's less than seventeen meters
across...

*
*

DAX
The ship is only fourteen meters
wide... you've got over two meters
to work with...

*
*

The pulses come faster than ever...

60E EXT. WORMHOLE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

60E

goes into the small passage...

60F INT. RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

60F

And the pulses are going crazy now...

DAX
(checking)
Vertiron levels are red-lining...

The energy mass flares behind them, she looks quickly
back, then back to the job...

DAX
Five seconds to Gamma...

61 EXT. SPACE - GAMMA QUADRANT (OPTICAL)

61

As the wormhole opens and spits out the Runabout...

62 INT. RUNABOUT

62

As it calms down... and they relax...

DAX

This is going to look very good on
your initiate record, Arjin.

Arjin smiles weakly...

DAX

(continuing)

Now, lets get this thing back
where it belongs.

*
*

63 EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT (OPTICAL)

63

as it engages engines and zooms into space...

64 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE (OPTICAL)

64

65 INT. PROMENADE

65

Arjin and Dax walk to the airlock gateway, Arjin's
leaving, he has his shoulder bag, pausing...

ARJIN

There's one thing I want to do
before I go... and that's to
apologize for the things I said to
you in the Lab.

*

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

DAX
(forgiving)
That was the first time you were
really being honest with me.

*

ARJIN
Somehow, I always expected that
Joining would make any Trill...
(struggling)
...complete, serene, wise beyond
her years...

DAX
(dry)
And I'm none of those things...

*

ARJIN
What I mean is...
(beat, struggling)
...you're nothing like I
expected...

DAX
I'm nothing like I expected
either...
(beat)
Life after life, with each new
personality stampeding around in
your head... you get desires that
scare you, dreams that used to
belong to someone else.
(beat)
I wouldn't recommend it for
everyone... but in time I might
recommend it for you. When you're
ready.

*

ARJIN
I know what I have to do.

She nods, smiles... he reaches out to shake her hand...
but she kisses him on the cheek.

DAX
Good luck.

*

He EXITS into the gate... and she turns and smiles to
herself...

DAX
(affirmed)
I am not Curzon.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

She smiles to herself and as she goes into Quarks --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END