

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

REVISED

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"In the Pale Moonlight"
(fka "Patriot")

#40510-543

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FINAL DRAFT

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STAR TREK: DS9 - "In the Pale Moonlight" - 01/26/98 - CAST

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"In the Pale Moonlight"

CAST

SISKO

GARAK

KIRA

DAMAR

ODO

WEYOUN

BASHIR

TOLAR

DAX

VREENAK

WORF

QUARK

COMPUTER VOICE

Non-Speaking

Non-Speaking

N.D. SUPERNUMERARIES

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"In the Pale Moonlight"

SETS

INTERIORS

DEEP SPACE NINE

SISKO'S QUARTERS/

BEDROOM

WARDROOM

CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

OPS

GARAK'S SHOP

QUARK'S

PROMENADE

TURBOLIFT

HOLOSUITE/DOMINION MEETING ROOM

CORRIDOR

AIRLOCK CORRIDOR

LANDING BAY

EXTERIORS

DEEP SPACE NINE

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"In the Pale Moonlight"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

BETAZED	BAY-tuh-zehd
BIO-MEMETIC	BIE-oe-muh-MEH-tik
BIOGENIC	BIE-oe-GEE-nic
CALANDRA	kuh-LON-druh
CENTAURI	SIN-tar-ree
GLINTARA	GLIN-tar-uh
GRATHON	GRAY-thun
KALI-FAL	KAL-eh-fall
M' PELLA	meh-PEL-uh
OPTOLYTHIC	op-TOE-li-thic
PROCONSOL NERAL	PRO-con-sol neh-RALL
SOUKARA	sue-KAR-uh
TAL SHIAR	TAL she-ARE
TATALIA	tah-TALL-ee-ah
TELLAR	TELL-ar
TOLAR	TOE-lar
VREENAK	VREE-neck
WHELAN	WE-lan

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"In the Pale Moonlight"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

1

SISKO is sitting on his couch, his finger on a control pad on a nearby table. The room is DARK and moody. The Captain has just gone through a long and trying ordeal and now wants to unburden himself. He faces camera and addresses us directly as he begins to dictate his private log.

SISKO

Captain's Personal Log: Stardate
Five-one-seven...
(unsure)
Five-one-seven... four?

He trails off, suddenly aware of the fact that he doesn't even know what day this is.

SISKO

(annoyed)
Computer -- what day is it?

COMPUTER VOICE

Thursday. Stardate 51721.3.

SISKO

(to himself)
It's only been two weeks...

He loses himself for a beat, then remembers that he's recording a log. He looks up at us again.

SISKO

I need to talk about this. I have to justify what's happened... what I've done... at least to myself. I can't talk to anyone else... not even Dax. Maybe if I just lay it all out in my log, it'll finally make sense... and I'll see where it all went wrong... where I went wrong.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

SISKO (Cont'd)

(beat)

I suppose it all started two weeks ago when I was posting the weekly casualty list in the Wardroom...

CUT TO:

2 INT. WARDROOM

2

Sisko is working the control pad next to the large wall monitor.

SISKO (V.O.)

... every Friday morning, for the past three months, I've posted the official list of Starfleet personnel killed, wounded, or missing in the war.

Sisko hits a final control and a large OKUDAGRAM APPEARS on the monitor: a long list of NAMES. They're grouped by ship or starbase and then alphabetized by last name. Each name has a brightly colored tag next to it: KIA, WIA, MIA. Sisko steps away from the monitor and we REVEAL that the room is FILLED with Starfleet Officers: BASHIR, WORF, and DAX are among the many N.D. Officers waiting to take a look at the list. They all move slowly toward the list and begin reading it over. The mood is grim -- everyone is here hoping against hope that they won't find the name of a loved one or friend on that list.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

FOLLOW Sisko as he moves across the room and watches the reactions as the Officers read the board. As the scene continues, there should be MORE N.D. Officers ENTERING the Wardroom, while others EXIT after checking the board.

SISKO (V.O.)
(continuing, over above
action)

It's become something of a grim
ritual around here. Not a week
goes by that someone doesn't find
the name of a loved one, a friend,
or an acquaintance on that damned
list.

(beat)
I've grown to hate Fridays.

Dax is running her finger down the list looking for anyone she knows. Worf and Bashir are relieved when they don't see anyone they recognize, but then Dax finds a name she knows and reacts. Worf puts an arm around her as they move aside to let others check the board. Sisko sees the look on her face and joins them just as Dax takes a seat in one of the lounge chairs.

SISKO
Someone you knew?

DAX
Leslie Wong.

SISKO
The skipper of the Cairo?

DAX
(nods)
She was an instructor at the
Academy when I was a sophomore.

BASHIR
Do you know what happened to the
Cairo?

SISKO
Just that they disappeared on
patrol near the Romulan Neutral
Zone. But I'll look into it.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

DAX

(bitter)

Don't bother. I'm sure it's the same old story -- the Jem'Hadar crossed over the Romulan border and caught them off-guard. It's only about the hundredth time it's happened.

BASHIR

I can't believe the Romulans are allowing them to violate their territory so brazenly. How do they get away with it?

SISKO

The Romulans have a treaty of non-aggression and friendship with the Dominion. In practical terms that means they're willing to turn a blind eye to almost anything in the name of "friendship."

WORF

(bitter)

It's an intolerable situation. We should cross the Neutral Zone and destroy the Dominion bases.

DAX

And risk war with the Romulans? No, thank you. We're losing enough good people as it is. The last thing we need is a war on two fronts.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3)

2

BASHIR

What we need is to bring the
Romulans into the war on our side.
With the combined forces of the
Federation, the Klingons and the
Romulans we could finally go on
the offensive.

We PUSH in on Sisko as he listens to this idea and to
Dax's response -- a thoughtful look comes over his face
and we can see that he's mulling over something.

DAX

That's the last thing the Romulans
want. Think about it -- they're
in the perfect position. They get
to sit back and watch as their
biggest rivals slug it out in a
long, bloody war. No one's
threatening their interests. Why
should they risk their necks?
There's simply no reason for them
to get involved in our war. No
reason at all...

HOLD on Sisko's thoughtful expression for a moment...

SISKO (V.O.)

That was the moment I made the
decision. It was like I had
stepped through a door and locked
it behind me. I was going to
bring the Romulans into the war.

CUT TO:

3 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

3

As before.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

SISKO

I was absolutely sure it was the
right decision -- that's the
frightening part -- how right it
seemed at the time. And now...
now all I can do is learn to live
with that decision.

(beat)

And I'll have to live with it for
the rest of my life...

Off the dark and brooding expression on Sisko's face...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

4

Sisko is pacing, thinking out loud and using Dax as a sounding board.

SISKO

It's in their own best interest to join the war -- that's the key, that's the reason the Romulans will finally take action. Not to do us any favors, but to protect themselves from the Dominion.

DAX

Okay. Let's say I'm the Romulan Proconsul. From where I'm sitting, the Dominion isn't a threat to me. I have a nonaggression pact with them. They're my allies.

SISKO

You're not going to put your faith in some piece of paper are you?

DAX

Not at all. I've been watching the Dominion very closely since the beginning of the war. And so far, they've kept their part of the bargain.

The tone here starts getting more heated -- they're both pushing their roles and their arguments as hard as they can.

SISKO

They're violating your territory almost every day -- what kind of an ally is that?

DAX

So they're crossing through my backyard to give the Federation a bloody nose. I can't say that makes me very sad.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

SISKO

You can't be naive enough to think the Dominion will stop with the Federation? When they're finished with us, they'll be coming after you.

DAX

(dismissive)

That's speculation.

SISKO

The Founders see it as their sacred duty to bring order to the galaxy. Their order. Do you think they'll sit idly by and let you keep your chaotic empire next to their perfect order? No. If you watch us go under, what you're really doing is writing your own death warrant.

DAX

You're asking me to start a war based on wild theories.

SISKO

They're not theories, they're facts!

DAX

Prove it!

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

SISKO

How?

DAX

That's your problem. But before I plunge my people into a conflict that'll kill millions of loyal Romulan citizens, I'll need something more concrete than the self-serving arguments of a Starfleet officer. I'll need proof of Dominion duplicity. Not more words, proof!

They glare at each other for a beat before Sisko breaks the moment and lets go of the emotion of the moment.

SISKO

Not bad, Old Man. You'd have made a decent Romulan.

DAX

(relaxing)

Thanks. But I prefer spots to pointed ears.

SISKO

Okay you convinced me. They're going to need evidence...

(beat)

But, if there is evidence of a Dominion plan to attack Romulus, it's probably buried deep in the bowels of their headquarters on Cardassia Prime.

DAX

Not exactly the most accessible place in the galaxy.

Beat.

SISKO

Not for us, maybe. But there is someone on this station who specializes in gaining access to places he's not welcome.

CUT TO:

5 INT. WARDROOM

5

GARAK is looking at Sisko with a surprised expression.

GARAK

I must say I'm flattered, Captain.
I had no idea you held such a
lofty opinion of me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

GARAK (Cont'd)

Your faith in my ability to retrieve classified information from my former homeland is most gratifying.

SISKO

I'm happy that you're happy. Now, can you do it?

Garak pauses for a moment, then shifts gears.

GARAK

You know, I had assumed this meeting was about the modifications I suggested for your new dress uniform -- you have had an opportunity to look over my design, haven't you? The new piping along the collar, the exaggerated cut of the jacket hemline emphasizing the--

SISKO

Mister Garak. Let's dispense with the usual repartee and concentrate on the issue at hand. Can you do the job or not?

Garak sits back and considers Sisko with a cold eye as something icy and unpleasant comes over his features.

GARAK

No one wants to see the Dominion destroyed more than I do. But asking me to go to Cardassia Prime, penetrate one of the most heavily guarded facilities in the quadrant, steal top secret war plans and then return them safely to you is not just another "job." It's more like a suicide mission and that is well outside my field of expertise.

SISKO

I didn't say you had to go there yourself. I have to believe that a man like you still has a few contacts back home. A colleague from the Obsidian Order...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

SISKO (Cont'd)
...an old friend... a reliable
informant... someone who might owe
you a favor.

GARAK
Perhaps...

SISKO
Well, then. I'd say it's time to
call in a favor.

Garak considers this for a long beat.

GARAK
It would mean calling in all my
favors, Captain. To do what
you're asking would use up every
resource I have left on Cardassia.
And it may be a very messy, very
bloody business. Are you prepared
for that?

SISKO
I posted my fourteenth casualty
list this morning. I'm already
involved in a very messy, very
bloody business. And the only way
I can see to end it is to bring
the Romulans into the war. I'm
prepared to do whatever it takes
to accomplish that goal, but I
can't do it alone. I need help.
Now, are you in or out?

Garak looks into his eyes for a long beat, takes the
measure of Sisko and his commitment, then stands and
puts out his hand.

GARAK
I'm in.

They shake hands.

SISKO (V.O.)
My father used to say that the
road to hell is paved with good
intentions.

CUT TO:

6 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

6

Sisko is pacing around the room.

SISKO

(continuing)

I laid the first stone right
there. I'd committed myself. I'd
pay any price, go to any lengths,
because my cause was righteous.

(beat)

My... intentions were good. In
the beginning, that seemed like
enough.

On this disquieting note...

FADE OUT.

7 OMITTED

7

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS - BEDROOM

8

Sisko is sleeping.

SISKO (V.O.)

If there's one thing I've learned
over the years, it's that bad news
invariably comes in the middle of
the night.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

Kira to Captain Sisko.

Sisko hits a control near his bed.

SISKO

(to com)

Go ahead, Major.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

We just received a priority-one
communication from Starfleet
Command.

(beat)

The Dominion has invaded Betazed.

As he flings off the covers...

CUT TO:

9 INT. OPS

9

Sisko, Kira, Worf, and Dax are gathered around the Ops
table, which has a MAP of the Federation and the
Dominion. A large ARROW is thrusting into the heart
of the Federation.

SISKO

From the initial reports, it seems
that the invasion force must have
come from somewhere in the
Calandra Sector.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

DAX

Did Starfleet Intelligence know anything about a build-up in that Sector?

WORF

No. They believed Calandra was too far from Dominion supply lines to be a threat.

SISKO

There's plenty of blame to go around. The Tenth Fleet was supposed to be protecting Betazed and its outlying colonies, but they were caught out of position on a training exercise. What's worse, Betazed's own defense systems are obsolete and undermanned.

(beat)

The planet was theirs in less than ten hours.

A grim, quiet beat.

KIRA

With Betazed in the hands of the Jem'Hadar, the Dominion's in a position to threaten Vulcan... Andor... Tellar... Alpha Centauri...

DAX

(pointed, to Sisko)

If we ever needed a new ally... it's right now.

Off the look of frustration on Sisko's face...

10 INT. GARAK'S SHOP

10

Sisko ENTERS to find Garak working on some clothes. Garak seems unusually subdued.

SISKO

It's been three days, Garak. Have you made any progress?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

GARAK

Well... I suppose that depends on how you look at it.

SISKO

(pushing)

How I look at it is that Betazed has just fallen to the Dominion and we need to get this operation underway.

GARAK

I share your desire for swift action, Captain. In fact, after our last conversation, I made a few discreet inquiries among my former associates still living on Cardassia. As I anticipated, they shared my loathing for the current government and were more than willing to take on an assignment aimed at its destruction.

SISKO

That sounds like progress to me.

GARAK

Doesn't it? Unfortunately... they're all dead now.

SISKO

What?

GARAK

(distant)

Yes. All killed within one day of speaking with me. I suppose that's a testament to the effectiveness of Dominion security. One should admire such... efficiency.

He goes back to working on the clothes.

SISKO

I'm sorry.

He turns to go, but Garak stops him.

GARAK

I hope you're not giving up that easily.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

GARAK (Cont'd)

(beat)

After all, the stakes are much higher than a few dead operatives. The fate of the entire quadrant hangs in the balance -- or at least that's the case you made to me.

SISKO

Do you have another plan?

GARAK

As a matter of fact, I do. But I suspect that you won't like it.

SISKO

Try me.

GARAK

If you want to guarantee that we obtain evidence of a Dominion plan to attack the Romulans... I suggest we manufacture that evidence ourselves.

Sisko looks at him in surprise.

CUT TO:

11 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

11

Sisko is rubbing his temples.

SISKO

Maybe I should have put a stop to it right there. Said, "Thank you, very much for your input, Mister Garak, I'll take your suggestion under advisement," and then gone back to my office and forgotten about the whole thing.

(beat)

But I didn't. Because in my heart, I knew what he was saying made sense.

CUT TO:

12 INT. GARAK'S SHOP 12
As before.

SISKO
I'm listening.

Garak holds his eyes for a beat, then picks up a PADD and hands it to Sisko.

13 ON PADD - INSERT 13
The PADD has a PHOTO of a Romulan Senator -- VREENAK.

GARAK'S VOICE
His name is Vreenak. He's been
a key member of the Romulan Senate
for the past fourteen years.

14 RESUME 14

GARAK
(continuing)
He's Secretary of the War Plans
Council, Vice-Chairman of the Tal
Shiar, and one of the most trusted
advisors to Proconsul Neral.

SISKO
He's also the man who negotiated
the nonaggression pact with the
Dominion.

GARAK
Since you're familiar with him,
I'll skip the rest of his
biography. What's important is
that he continues to be one of the
most ardently pro-Dominion voices
in the Senate. If we can convince
him that the Dominion is a threat,
the rest of the Senate will follow.

SISKO
Okay. How?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

GARAK

Ten days from now, Senator Vreenak will be making a trip to Soukara for a diplomatic meeting with Weyoun. I'm certain he could be persuaded to make a secret detour to D.S. Nine if he were invited by one Captain Benjamin Sisko.

SISKO

How do you know Vreenak's visiting Soukara?

GARAK

There are some things I'd rather not discuss. May I continue?

(off his nod)

When the Senator arrives, you will show him a holographic recording of a secret meeting held at the highest levels of the Dominion in which the planned invasion of Romulus is being discussed. You will tell the Senator that this information was obtained through various covert means at great cost to the Federation -- "at least ten good men lost their lives bringing it across the lines" -- that sort of thing. He will immediately suspect that it's a forgery, but you will assure him that such a thing would be impossible.

(beat)

"You see Senator, this is an official Cardassian transcript. It was recorded on a one-time optolythic data-rod used for official record-keeping. These rods are manufactured only as needed on Cardassia Prime. Information can only be transcribed on them once, and then cannot be altered."

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

SISKO

He'll want to examine it.

GARAK

Of course. And he'll discover to his amazement, that it's completely genuine. At least, so it will appear.

SISKO

And in reality...?

GARAK

You will have handed him a genuine optolythic data-rod, but it will contain one of the most perfect forgeries ever fashioned. I'm still working on obtaining the data-rod, but I have located the man who will create the holo-recording.

Garak pauses and looks at Sisko expectantly. Sisko takes a few steps around the room. It's a huge leap he's about to take.

SISKO

You realize, I can't authorize something like this on my own. I'll have to clear it with Starfleet Command.

GARAK

Of course. But I suspect that with the fall of Betazed they'll be ready to do whatever it takes to bring the Romulans into the war.

SISKO

I'll let you know.

Sisko heads for the door, but Garak stops him.

GARAK

One last thing, Captain. The man we need to forge the holo-program is currently sitting in a Klingon prison awaiting execution.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3)

14

GARAK (Cont'd)
To save time and incidentally his
life, I thought that perhaps you
could contact Chancellor Gowron
today and arrange a pardon.

SISKO
What's his name?

GARAK
Grathon Tolar.

CUT TO:

15 INT. WARDROOM

15

GRATHON TOLAR is sitting across from Sisko with a
relieved expression on his face. Tolar is a small,
weasel-faced ALIEN and does not look like someone who'd
last very long in a Klingon prison. His clothes are
clean and neatly worn, but there's a palpable oiliness
to him that makes you want to bath immediately after
any visit. He has a low, nervous laugh that only
serves to get under Sisko's skin.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

TOLAR

I can't tell you how grateful I am, Captain. The Klingons were going to execute me tomorrow. Of course, they say that every day -- one of the little games they like to play.

There's that laugh.

SISKO

You do understand the terms of your parole?

TOLAR

Oh, yes. I have to promise to stay away from the Klingon Empire.

(laugh)

That'll be tough.

(laugh)

And I have to create some kind of "special" holo-program for you.

(laugh)

I can't wait. I've never worked for Starfleet before.

SISKO

Let's be very clear about this -- you're not working for Starfleet. This entire matter is strictly off the record. As far as you're concerned, you're working for me.

TOLAR

Oh. Oh, I see. This is a personal matter.

(laugh, then leering)

Something "special." For your eyes only. Something with... perhaps, five or six Orion slave girls and--

SISKO

(stands)

I suggest you go wait in your quarters. Mister Garak will provide you with all the information you need.

The fun all disappears from Tolar's demeanor and he shrinks back in his chair.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

TOLAR
Garak's here?

SISKO
That's right.

TOLAR
Oh.
(half-laugh)
Well. That's different. I'll...
go wait in my quarters.

Tolar EXITS to the Corridor, with a somewhat subdued
and nervous attitude.

SISKO (V.O.)
Why I didn't listen to the voice
in the back of my mind telling me
not to believe a word he said,
I'll never know.

DISSOLVE TO:

16 INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

16

Sisko is working at his desk.

SISKO (V.O.)
(continuing)
But it didn't take long for me to
come face to face with the fact
that I'd made a mistake.

ODO'S COM VOICE
Odo to Captain Sisko.

SISKO
(to com)
Go ahead, Constable.

ODO'S COM VOICE
(awkward)
I'm sorry to disturb you, but do
you know a man named Grathon Tolar?

Sisko is immediately concerned.

SISKO
Why do you ask?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

ODO'S COM VOICE

Because he just tried to kill Quark.

Sisko reacts with disbelief -- this is the last thing
he needs.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

17 INT. QUARK'S

17

Sisko ENTERS to find Odo waiting for him by the door. Tolar is sitting at a table, his hands in restraints and a pair of Bajoran Deputies standing guard over him. QUARK, whose chest is covered with BLOOD, is being attended to by Bashir on the other side of the room. A Dabo girl with a torn dress sits near Quark, shooting Tolar daggers with her eyes. The bar has been emptied of all customers.

SISKO

What happened?

ODO

As I understand it, Mister Tolar over there came in about two hours ago and ordered a bottle of Whelan Bitters. Fifteen minutes later, he ordered a second bottle. Then a third. He was halfway through his fourth when he decided to dance with...

(re: Dabo girl)

... M'Pella. She was otherwise engaged running the Dabo wheel at the time and declined his invitation. He decided to force the issue and there was a brief struggle before Quark, in an uncharacteristic display of chivalry attempted to intervene. So Tolar stabbed him.

Sisko glares at Tolar, who gives him a half-smile and a shrug.

ODO

Normally, he'd be sitting in a holding cell, but he claimed that he was a friend of yours.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

SISKO

He's no friend of mine.

(beat, then sotto)

But... he is working for me. It's
an extremely sensitive matter
involving Federation security.
I can't afford to have any record
of him being on the station.

ODO

I see.

(beat)

I'm certainly aware of the need
for special security measures
during wartime... but as a matter
of law, if Quark chooses to press
charges against Tolar, I have no
choice but to make an arrest.

SISKO

Let me speak to Quark.

Sisko moves over to where Bashir is scanning Quark with
a tricorder. A medkit is sitting on a nearby table.

SISKO

(to Bashir)

How is he?

QUARK

(re: blood)

How do I look? I'm a man who just
had a brush with death.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

BASHIR

He'll be fine. His ribs deflected
the knife from his vital organs.
The bleeding was superficial.

QUARK

Superficial? Do you know how much
this shirt cost?

SISKO

Doctor, will you excuse us for a
moment?

BASHIR

(to Quark)

I'll check on you again tomorrow.

Bashir EXITS and Sisko sits down next to Quark.

SISKO

Do you intend to press charges?

QUARK

You bet I do.

SISKO

(awkward)

What would it take... to...
convince you... otherwise?

Quark stares at him in disbelief for a moment, then
leans across the table.

QUARK

Are you offering me... a bribe?

Sisko looks away, extremely uncomfortable with the
position he's being forced into. Quark is positively
gleeful.

QUARK

(smiles)

I knew it. I've always liked you,
Captain. I suspected that
somewhere deep down in your heart
of hearts there was a tiny bit of
Ferengi just waiting to get out.

SISKO

What's your price?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

QUARK

Well... let's start with replacing
my clothes... and M'Pella's
clothes.

SISKO

All right.

QUARK

I'm not finished. I think I
should also be compensated for the
loss of business I've suffered
today, which I would calculate as
no less than five bars of gold-
pressed latinum.

SISKO

(grudging)

Done.

QUARK

I'm also having a problem with
station security -- they're
holding some cargo containers I've
been waiting for because of some
kind of... missing import license
or something.

SISKO

I'll handle it. Anything else?

Quark looks at him with a satisfied grin.

QUARK

No. I think we can call it a
bribe. And thank you, Captain.
Thank you for restoring my faith
in the ninety-eighth Rule of
Acquisition: "Every man has his
price."

Sisko gets up and heads for Odo just as Garak ENTERS
the bar from the Promenade.

SISKO

(to Odo)

He's dropped the charges.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (4)

17

ODO

Hm.

(to Deputies)

Let him go.

(to Sisko)

If you'll excuse me...

Odo EXITS. The Deputies release Tolar from his restraints and then EXIT also. While this is going on, Sisko has a moment with Garak. Sisko keeps his voice low, but there's barely restrained fury behind his eyes.

SISKO

(quietly boiling)

Tolar is your responsibility.
Keep him out of sight and under control or the next man needing medical attention will be you.
Do you understand?

GARAK

Completely.

Garak approaches Tolar, who visibly shrinks back from Garak as the Cardassian leans over him at the table.

GARAK

Hello, Grathon.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (5)

17

Sisko turns and EXITS.

CUT TO:

18 INT. SISKI'S QUARTERS

18

Sisko has discarded his jacket and has opened his vest by now.

SISKI

Bribery and cover up -- those were new for me. That was my first moment of real doubt. I started to wonder if the whole thing was a mistake.

(beat)

Then I got back to my office and there was a new casualty list waiting for me.

(angry)

People are dying out there. Every day. Entire worlds are struggling for their freedom and here I am still worrying about the finer points of morality. I had to keep my eye on the ball. Winning the war, stopping the bloodshed -- those were the priorities.

CUT TO:

18A INT. PROMENADE

18A

Sisko is walking toward a Turbolift.

SISKI (V.O.)

So I pushed on. And every time another doubt appeared before me, I just found another way to shove it aside.

Sisko presses the control outside the lift and waits. Garak steps up next to him.

GARAK

Mind if I join you?

(CONTINUED)

18A CONTINUED:

18A

SISKO
Be my guest.

The doors OPEN and they both EXIT to...

18B INT. TURBOLIFT - CONTINUOUS

18B

As they ENTER.

SISKO
Ops.

The lift starts MOVING.

GARAK
Hold.

The lift STOPS.

GARAK
The less I'm seen parading through
Ops the better.

SISKO
I couldn't agree more.

GARAK
You seem angry.

SISKO
Who's watching Tolar?

GARAK
I've locked him in his quarters.
I've also left him with the
distinct impression that if he
attempts to force open the door,
it may... explode.

SISKO
I hope that's just an impression.

GARAK
It's best not to dwell on such
minutiae. In any case, we have
far more important matters to
discuss. I've located a gentleman
willing to sell us a genuine
optolythic data-rod.

(CONTINUED)

18B CONTINUED:

18B

SISKO

How do you know it's genuine?

GARAK

I trust the source, but rest assured I will confirm the rod's authenticity before I make payment -- which brings me to you.

SISKO

How much does he want?

GARAK

I'm afraid he's not interested in latinum. The gentleman in question has requested to be compensated with two hundred liters of bio-memetic gel.

SISKO

(surprised)

What?

GARAK

I don't know why, exactly. One would assume that it has something to do with genetic experimentation.

SISKO

Offer him something else.

GARAK

Believe me, I wouldn't be relaying this request if I thought he'd accept anything else.

SISKO

Bio-memetic gel is strictly controlled by the Federation and not for sale at any price. Find someone else willing to sell us a rod.

(CONTINUED)

18B CONTINUED: (2)

18B

GARAK

I was not exaggerating when I told you about the near-impossibility of obtaining a genuine Cardassian data-rod. It's something of a minor miracle that I've found one source, I'm virtually certain that I'll never find another. I'm afraid we either have to give him what he wants or forget the whole enterprise.

SISKO

Then let's forget it.
(to com)

Ops.

The Turbolift starts MOVING again. There's a quiet beat as Garak decides not to push the matter. But Sisko hasn't really let it go. He struggles for a moment...

SISKO

(to com)

Hold.

The lift STOPS.

SISKO

Two hundred liters is out of the question. There isn't that much gel in this entire sector.

GARAK

I believe... the quantity is open to negotiation.

Sisko thinks about that for another beat.

SISKO

(to com)

Ops.

The lift starts MOVING once more.

19 INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

19

Bashir is looking at Sisko with an incredulous expression.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

BASHIR

Captain... bio-memetic gel is an extremely dangerous compound. I can't release it without some idea of where it's going. In the wrong hands, it could be used to develop biogenic weapons, or for illegal replication experiments or organo-explosives or--

SISKO

Perhaps I didn't make myself clear, Doctor. This isn't a request, it's an order. You will package eighty-five liters of bio-memetic gel for interstellar transport and then deliver it to Cargo Bay Three, is that understood?

BASHIR

(stiffly)

Yes, sir. But I'd like that order in writing. Sir.

SISKO

(hands him a PADD)

I thought you might.

Bashir glances at the PADD.

BASHIR

You should know that I'll note this in my log and file a protest with Starfleet Medical.

SISKO

That's your right. But I want the gel by the end of the day. Dismissed.

Bashir is furious, but there's little he can do about it. He EXITS.

CUT TO:

20 INT. HOLOSUITE/DOMINION MEETING ROOM

20

WEYOUN, DAMAR, and two N.D. Cardassian Legates are sitting around a table in a conference room somewhere on Cardassia Prime.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

The room should have Dominion and Cardassian symbols prominently displayed.

WEYOUN

The Founders have decided to implement Stage Two ahead of schedule.

DAMAR

The invasion of Romulus? It's too soon. We're engaged in heavy fighting all along the border with the Federation. The Klingons are preparing to go on the offensive and--

WEYOUN

Fortunately, the Founders have better vision than you do. They can see the opportunities in front of us even when you cannot.

(beat)

Consider: the Romulans do not expect an attack from Cardassia. The bulk of the Romulan fleet is still deployed along the Neutral Zone with the Federation. The Founders estimate that we could be on Romulus itself in less than three weeks.

DAMAR

(skeptical)

Three weeks? I heard the same kind of estimates before we attacked the Federation.

WEYOUN

Those plans were ruined by the incompetency of your predecessor.

21 NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

21

Revealing Sisko, Garak and Tolar watching the simulation from a far corner of the room. Tolar is standing at a Holo-suite console and he taps a control or two as he watches the simulation play out with a practiced eye.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DAMAR

(fierce)

Gul Dukat is a great man.

WEYOUN

(getting hot)

Gul Dukat is a preening egotist and a fool. We offered him unchallenged control of the Alpha Quadrant and all he could think about was his daughter.

(pleasant)

Now... shall we get back to the business at hand?

GARAK

That's it. Freeze program.

The Holo-grams FREEZE.

GARAK

(to Sisko)

That's all the new material. The rest of the program plays out just as you saw before. What do you think?

SISKO

It's better. They seem more real.

GARAK

All I had to do was add a little petty bickering and mutual loathing.

TOLAR

So you're happy?

SISKO

It's satisfactory.

GARAK

You may record the program onto the data-rod now.

Tolar works a control and the entire Dominion room VANISHES, leaving them in the empty Holosuite. Tolar then opens a small case on the floor and carefully removes a unique-looking DATA-ROD. He places it into a slot on the console and begins to work.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

SISKO
(quiet)
I've received a message from
Senator Vreenak -- he's on his way.

GARAK
Excellent.

Tolar finishes his work and removes the rod from the console. He holds it up as if to toss it to one of them.

TOLAR
Done. Who gets it?

GARAK
(no humor)
Just put it in the case.

Tolar carefully replaces the rod.

TOLAR
Well. It's been a... a pleasure
doing business with you,
gentlemen. Call me again if you
ever need--

SISKO
You're not going anywhere.

TOLAR
(flustered, angry)
What do you mean?

SISKO
You're not leaving until your work
has been accepted by our...
"client."

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

TOLAR
(yelling)
That isn't fair! You can't keep
me here against my will! I
haven't done anything wrong! We
had an agreement!

Sisko grabs him and slams him against the wall.

SISKO
I'm making a new agreement. If
that program passes inspection,
you walk free -- but if there's
even the slightest flaw, I'll send
you back to that Klingon prison
and tell Gowron to take his time
when he executes you.

The ferocity of Sisko's anger takes all remaining
bravado out of Tolar. There's fear in those eyes.
Sisko lets him go and Tolar takes a few steps away
before regaining his composure.

TOLAR
(nervous)
Okay. It'll pass. You'll see.
It'll pass.

GARAK
I sincerely hope so. Why don't
you wait in your quarters. I'll
be along shortly to... say hello.

Tolar looks at the two of them with fear for a moment,
then EXITS.

GARAK
Felt good, didn't it?

Sisko looks at him, taken a little off-guard by the
question.

GARAK
(continuing)
To put your hands on a man and
say, "You will do this or else."
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (4)

21

GARAK (Cont'd)

(beat)

After all the intrigue and
deception you've had to engage in
over the past week, you must've
found that moment of pure brute
force to be a... refreshing change
of pace.

Garak smiles at him pleasantly. There may be an
element of truth in what he's saying, but what Sisko
can't believe is the way Garak keeps poking and
prodding at his psyche. Sisko begins to smile at the
absurdity of it all.

SISKO

Mister Garak... why is it that no
one has killed you, yet?

GARAK

My innate charm?

Sisko laughs and Garak smiles wider. Sisko laughs
louder -- it's a release of tension and anxiety that's
been building in him for over a week. As he laughs...

CUT TO:

22 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

22

Sisko is standing behind the couch, and while there's
a smile on his face at the memory, there's a bitter,
rueful quality to his expression.

SISKO

It wasn't that funny. But I
couldn't stop laughing.

(beat)

Maybe... I was under more pressure
than I realized. Maybe it really
was starting to get to me.

(beat)

At the time, I thought I was off
the hook. Starfleet Command had
given the plan their blessing and
I thought that would make things
easier.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

SISKO (Cont'd)

(beat)

But I was the one who had to make
it happen. I was the one who had
to look Senator Vreenak in the eye
and convince him that a lie... was
the truth.

23 OMITTED

23

24 OMITTED

24

24A INT. CORRIDOR

24A

Sisko and Garak are walking down the Corridor.

GARAK

While you're entertaining the
Senator in the Wardroom, I'll take
the opportunity to make a quick
search of his ship's database.

SISKO

For what?

GARAK

For any intelligence information
on the Dominion he may have picked
up on Soukara.

(CONTINUED)

24A CONTINUED:

24A

SISKO

What if you get caught?

GARAK

I think that's highly unlikely.
I doubt the Senator will be
travelling with more than four
bodyguards at the most -- two will
stand watch outside the Wardroom
and two will stay in the Landing
Bay. I assure you, they'll never
know I was anywhere near their
ship.

SISKO

Just make sure you don't get
caught.

24B INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR

24B

Sisko and Garak round a corner and are met by Worf and
a team of three armed N.D. Starfleet Security Guards.

SISKO

Report.

WORF

Sections fifty-two baker through
sixty-two baker have been secured.
I've posted armed guards at all
entry points and I have personally
scanned all compartments for signs
of surveillance equipment.

SISKO

Very good, Commander. Maintain
your security measures until
further notice. No one is to
enter this area except for Mister
Garak and myself.

(CONTINUED)

24B CONTINUED:

24B

WORF

Aye, sir.

Sisko passes by Worf and heads down the Corridor.
Garak pauses for just a moment.

GARAK

It's always a pleasure to see you,
Mister Worf.

He gives Worf that infuriating smile and then follows
Sisko down the hallway.

25 OMITTED

25

26 INT. AIRLOCK CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

26

As Sisko and Garak round the corner.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

Ops to Captain Sisko.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

SISKO
(to com)
Go ahead Major.

KIRA'S COM VOICE
We've just received the coded
subspace signal you were waiting
for. Should I reply?

SISKO
No reply, Major. Sisko out.

Sisko and Garak stop outside a doorway that has a MONITOR on the wall next to it. Sisko activates the monitor and it shows a high-angle view of the interior of a LANDING BAY. The space doors are closed and no one is inside. He works the controls for a moment and then FLASHING LIGHTS come on inside the bay.

27 INT. LANDING BAY (OPTICAL)

27

The lights continue to FLASH and then the giant space door begins to OPEN.

28 INT. CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

28

As before. Sisko and Garak watching the doors on the monitor.

29 INT. LANDING BAY (OPTICAL)

29

The doors STOP. Nothing stirs in the huge, silent bay.

30 INT. CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

30

As before. Sisko watches the image of the empty bay for a moment... then something BEEPS and Sisko works the controls again.

31 INT. LANDING BAY (OPTICAL)

31

The space doors begin to CLOSE.

32 INT. CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

32

The doors just finish closing on the monitor. The flashing lights go OFF inside the bay, and Sisko and Garak wait again.

33 INT. LANDING BAY (OPTICAL)

33

Suddenly a ROMULAN SHUTTLE DECLOAKS in the middle of the landing bay. Almost immediately, a GANTRY begins EXTENDING from the Landing Bay Airlock toward the hatch on the shuttle.

34 INT. AIRLOCK CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

34

The gantry can be seen moving toward the shuttle on the monitor.

GARAK

I'll take my leave of you now,
Captain.

(hesitates)

And one last thing -- Vreenak
thinks he's on the winning side.
Until you can prove otherwise, you
may have to put up with a
certain... acerbic attitude.

SISKO

After working with you for a week,
Mister Garak, I've developed a
very, very thick skin.

GARAK

(smiles)

Good luck.

Garak EXITS down the Corridor just before the Airlock hatch ROLLS OPEN and two armed N.D. Romulans ENTER. They look around for a moment, and then SENATOR VREENAK ENTERS.

SISKO

Welcome aboard, Senator. I'm
Captain Benjamin Sisko.

Vreenak is a little bemused by this whole adventure and we get the feeling it may be hard for him to take Sisko seriously.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

VREENAK

So you're the Commander of Deep
Space Nine. And the Emissary of
the Prophets. Decorated combat
officer, widower, father, mentor...
(as if he just
remembered)

Oh and yes, the man who started
the war with the Dominion.

(beat)

Somehow I thought you'd be taller.

SISKI

Sorry to disappoint you.

VREENAK

To be honest, my opinion of
Starfleet Officers is so low that
you'd have to work very hard
indeed to disappoint me.

SISKI

(unfazed)

If you'll come with me, I'll show
you to your quarters.

Vreenak doesn't move for a beat, enjoying making Sisko
wait for him.

VREENAK

I'm looking forward to seeing your
station -- while it's still here,
that is. With the way the war's
going for the Federation, it may
not be around much longer.

Vreenak smiles broadly, driving the point home. Sisko
politely smiles back and then leads the Senator toward
the EXIT.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

35 INT. WARDROOM (OPTICAL)

35

Sisko is sitting with Vreenak over in the "lounge" area of the Wardroom. They each have something to drink, but only Vreenak seems interested in his beverage.

VREENAK

(re: glass)

A fair approximation. But somewhat lacking in aroma. Real Kali-fal should forcibly open one's sinuses well before the first sip.

SISKO

We don't have much experience in replicating Romulan beverages. Of course, all that would change if we were allies instead of cold warriors.

VREENAK

You are persistent, I'll grant you that, Captain. But I'm afraid dogged determination isn't enough to change the reality of your situation. Time is definitely not on your side.

(beat)

The Dominion shipyards are working at one hundred percent capacity -- your facilities are still being rebuilt. The Dominion is breeding legions of Jem'Hadar soldiers every day -- you're experiencing a manpower shortage. But more important, the Dominion is resolved to win the war, no matter what the cost -- and we both know the Federation has already put out peace feelers.

(beat)

Now I ask you, Captain -- in all candor -- if you were in my position, which side would you choose?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

SISKO

I'd pick the side most likely to leave me in peace when the dust settles. Maybe you're right, maybe the Dominion will win in the end. Then the Founders will control what is now called Cardassia, the Klingon Empire and the Federation. So instead of facing three separate opponents with three separate agendas, you'll find yourselves facing the same opponent on every side. There's a word for that -- surrounded.

Vreenak takes another sip of his drink.

VREENAK

It really is a good replica. Even the aroma is starting to grow on me. For a moment there, I almost forgot that it wasn't the real thing. But only for a moment.
(beat)

You make some very good points, Captain, but it's still all speculation and theory. Nothing that would warrant abrogating our treaty and plunging the Empire into war.

SISKO

What if I told you that the Dominion is planning a sneak attack on the Romulan Empire at this very moment?

Vreenak stops his glass halfway to his mouth. His eyes narrow.

VREENAK

I'd want proof.

SISKO

And what if I showed it to you? What then? Would you join us in the war? Or would you wait until there were Jem'Hadar soldiers standing in your Senate Chamber before you decided that the Founders weren't your friends after all?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

Vreenak sets down the glass and takes a moment.

VREENAK

(quiet)

If what you say is true... that
would be... a different matter
entirely.

Sisko hits his combadge.

SISKO

Sisko to Worf.

WORF

Worf here.

SISKO

Have you secured the Holosuite?

WORF'S COM VOICE

Yes, sir.

SISKO

Very good, Commander. Sisko out.
Computer: stand-by to initiate
site to site Transport,
authorization Sisko Two Five Alpha.

COMPUTER VOICE

Standing-by.

Sisko stands.

SISKO

Senator...?

Vreenak hesitates for a beat, then stands up.

SISKO

Computer -- energize.

They DEMATERIALIZE.

CUT TO:

36 INT. HOLOSUITE/DOMINION MEETING ROOM (OPTICAL)

36

Sisko and Vreenak are watching the end of the same
Dominion planning session we saw earlier between
Weyoun, Damar and the N.D. Legates.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

(The free-standing console with the data-rod is in front of Sisko.) Weyoun is now at the large monitor, which has a schematic display of the Cardassian/Romulan border. Several clearly marked ARROWS are thrusting from Cardassia to points deep inside Romulan territory.

WEYOUN

...and with the Cardassian Fourth Order protecting their flank, the Twenty-third Jem'Hadar division can begin its thrust across the Glintara Sector. They should begin the invasion of Romulus itself on the following day. Once we've taken the homeworld, organized resistance will crumble when the outlying systems and colonies begin looking out for themselves. Consolidation of the entire Empire will take three months at most.

DAMAR

What if the Romulan fleet reacts faster than you're anticipating? What if they pull all their forces away from the Federation border at the first sign of our attack?

WEYOUN

(growing tired of this)
They've been staring across the Neutral Zone at the Federation for the better part of two centuries. It's become an obsession with their military leaders. There's not the slightest chance of them leaving the Neutral Zone undefended until they're sure the Federation isn't going to take advantage of the situation. And by then, it'll be too late.

DAMAR

You're placing a lot of faith in your ability to predict what the Romulans will or will not do. They could surprise us all -- they could even be anticipating this attack already. If that's the case, we could find ourselves fighting a war on two fronts without any--

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

WEYOUN

I place my faith in the Founders.
And they say that the Romulans are
not ready for war and that they
will not react fast enough once
it begins. Now, do you wish to
dispute their judgement?

Damar doesn't like it, but he knows where his bread is
battered.

DAMAR

No. Of course not. I serve the
Founders.

WEYOUN

As do we all. Meeting adjourned.

The simulation VANISHES and is momentarily replaced
with the FLOATING 3-D image of the CARDASSIAN LOGO,
then that too VANISHES. Sisko turns to look at
Vreenak, whose face carefully betrays no feelings.
Vreenak takes a few steps around the room as he mulls
over what he's just seen.

VREENAK

(quiet)

I'd like to examine that data-rod.

Sisko removes it from the console, and holds it out to
Vreenak. The Senator moves to him, but before he takes
it, he stares into Sisko's eyes, and seems to search
them for a long beat, as if looking for the truth
somewhere inside. Finally, Vreenak takes the data-rod
and looks at it.

CUT TO:

37 INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

37

Sisko is pacing in his office, lost in thought when Dax
ENTERS.

DAX

Got a minute?

SISKO

Sure. What can I do for you?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

Dax takes her time, this is a delicate subject and she doesn't want to rush into anything.

DAX
This may sound... crazy. But,
think about it before you say no.

SISKO
Just say it.

Beat.

DAX
What if we... tricked the Romulans
into believing that the Dominion
was about to attack them?

Sisko is thunderstruck for a moment and Dax takes it as a reaction to her crazy idea.

DAX
Hear me out.
(beat)
We find a way to manufacture
evidence of a planned Dominion
attack. I'm not sure what it
should be, uh... a series of coded
messages from their central
command, a Cardassian defector who
smuggles out secret war plans --
I don't know. Something. Then
we show it to the Romulans and try
to convince them that they're one
step away from disaster.

Sisko takes a moment, decides to become his own devil's advocate.

SISKO
You want to start a war based on
a lie?

DAX
I want to end a war, Benjamin.
And I want the good guys to win.
Besides, let's face it -- the
Dominion will attack the Romulans
eventually, it's just a matter of
time. So, in a way we'd be doing
them a favor by pulling them in
now.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

SISKO
(hard)
That's an easy way of
rationalizing something you know
is wrong.

Dax takes a beat, goes cold and hard.

DAX
More wrong than war?

Beat.

SISKO
I'll... think about it.

DAX
That's all I ask.

She heads for the door, then stops, smiles to herself.

DAX
I suppose it's one thing to come
up with an idea like this... and
another to put it into motion.

SISKO
(re: pips)
That's why they put these on my
collar, Old Man.

She smiles at him and then EXITS.

38 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

38

Sisko on the couch. He's got a bottle of something dark and amber now and he pours himself a drink.

SISKO

It was good to know that the Old Man was on my side, even if she didn't know what was really going on.

(beat)

In any case, I was way past the point of no return. There was nothing to do but wait and see how masterful Tolar's forgery really was.

He takes a drink.

SISKO

So I waited. Tried to catch up on my paperwork, but I couldn't really focus on criminal activity reports or cargo manifests... I went back to pacing and staring out the window.

(beat)

I don't think of myself as an impatient man. I don't agonize over decisions once they're made. I got that from my father. He always said that worry and doubt were the greatest enemies of a chef. "The souffle will rise or it won't," he used to say.

"There's not a damn thing you can do about it, so just sit back and see what happens."

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

SISKO (Cont'd)
(beat)
But this time, the cost of failure
was so high, that I found it hard
to follow his advice.

39 INT. CORRIDOR

39

Sisko is walking through the empty Corridor.

SISKO (V.O.)
If Vreenak discovered the data-rod
was a forgery, if he realized that
we were trying to trick them into
war, it could push the Romulans
even farther into the enemy camp.
They could start to openly help
the Dominion. If worse came to
worst, they could actually join
the war against us. I had the
distinct feeling that victory or
defeat would be decided in the
next few minutes.

Sisko pauses outside the door for a moment, takes a
deep breath, and then EXITS to...

40 INT. WARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

As Sisko ENTERS. Vreenak is already here, his face
carefully neutral, giving no hint as to what he's
found. He stares at Sisko for a long moment... then
finally he lets his true feelings show.

VREENAK
(furious)
It's a fake.

Off the stricken look on Sisko's face...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

41 INT. SISKO'S QUARTERS

41

Sisko is rubbing his temples. The bottle has been set aside.

SISKO

So it blew up in my face. The lies and the compromises, the inner doubts and the rationalizations -- all for nothing. Vreenak was furious. I can't say I blamed him. I'd have reacted the same way. After telling me in no uncertain terms that he intended to expose this "vile deception" to the entire Alpha Quadrant, he got back in his shuttle and headed home.

(beat)

There didn't seem to be anything more to do... so I went back to work.

(beat)

Two days later we got the news.

CUT TO:

42 INT. WARDROOM

42

Sisko posts another casualty list on the monitor and turns to face another room full of N.D. officers, along with Dax and Bashir. Sisko's mind is far away and he moves through the crowd of people without seeing most of them. He finds a quiet corner of the room and sits down heavily in a chair as the others crowd around the monitor, searching the list of names once again. Bashir and Dax emerge from the crowd and move toward him. Sisko looks at them expectantly.

BASHIR

(to Sisko)

No one for me today.

DAX

I had one -- Maria Tatalia -- wounded in action.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

BASHIR

Friend?

DAX

Friend of a friend. I met her once, but I doubt she'd remember me.

BASHIR

Only one friend of a friend between the two of us -- as strange as it sounds, I'd say today's off to a good start.

Worf ENTERS, looks around and goes directly to them. Worf is clearly excited.

WORF

Captain, we just received word from Starfleet Intelligence that a Romulan shuttle carrying a high-ranking Senator has been destroyed.

A chill goes down Sisko's back.

SISKO

Which Senator?

WORF

Senator Vreenak. He was returning to Romulus from a diplomatic mission to Soukara when his shuttle exploded.

(beat)

The Tal Shiar is investigating, but their preliminary report points to sabotage...

(grins)

...they believe the Dominion is responsible.

Dax and Bashir immediately realize what this means and they're ecstatic.

DAX

The Dominion assassinated a Romulan Senator...

BASHIR

On a diplomatic mission...

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

WORF

This changes everything. It could
even bring the Romulans into the
war.

Sisko is on his feet and heading for the door.

SISKO

(abrupt)

Excuse me.

43 INT. CORRIDOR

43

Sisko marching down the Corridor, fury on his face.

44 INT. PROMENADE

44

Sisko comes out of the Turbolift and stalks across the
Promenade, the anger still building on his features.
He storms into...

45 INT. GARAK'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

45

Where Garak is working on some clothes. He looks up
at Sisko dispassionately -- he was expecting a
confrontation, but he wasn't expecting Sisko to haul
off and DECK HIM. Garak hits the ground and looks up
at the furious Captain warily.

SISKO

Get up.

Garak gets up, and warily keeps his distance. Sisko
presses him and Garak backs away, but it's clear he
won't give much ground here.

SISKO

You killed him.

GARAK

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

SISKO

That's what you planned to do all along. You knew the data-rod wouldn't hold up to scrutiny, you just wanted to get him on the station so you could plant a bomb on his shuttle.

GARAK

It wasn't quite that simple. I did have hopes that the rod would somehow pass inspection. But I suspected that Tolar may not have been up to the task.

SISKO

What about Tolar? Did you kill him too?

GARAK

Think of them both as tragic victims of war.

Sisko throws a punch, Garak blocks, but Sisko follows up and lands another blow to Garak's face, rocking him back, but not flooring him.

GARAK

If you can allow your anger to subside for a moment, you'll see that they did not die in vain -- the Romulans will enter the war.

Sisko glares at him, his fury just barely restrained.

SISKO

There's no guarantee of that.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

GARAK

Oh, but I think there is. You see, when the Tal Shiar finishes examining the wreckage of Vreenak's shuttle, they'll find the burnt remnants of a Cardassian optolythic data-rod which miraculously survived the explosion. After painstaking forensic examination, they'll discover that the rod contains a recording of a high-level Dominion meeting at which the invasion of Romulus was being planned.

SISKO

And then they'll discover it's a fraud.

GARAK

I don't think so. Any imperfections in the forgery will appear to be a result of the explosion.

(building, forceful)

So, with a seemingly legitimate data-rod in one hand and a dead Senator in the other, I ask you Captain, what conclusion would you draw?

Sisko takes a beat, tries to let his temper subside.

SISKO

That Vreenak obtained the rod on Soukara and that the Dominion killed him to prevent him from returning to Romulus with it.

GARAK

Precisely. And the more the Dominion protests their innocence, the more the Romulans will believe they're guilty... because it's exactly what the Romulans would've done in their place!

Sisko glares at him, but it's clear that he sees the logic of what Garak's saying, as much as he doesn't like to hear it.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

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(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

SISKO (Cont'd)
And if I had to do it all over
again... I would. Garak was right
about one thing -- a guilty
conscience is a small price to pay
for the safety of the Alpha
Quadrant. So I'll learn to live
with it.

He almost takes a drink, then firmly sets it aside and
pushes it away.

SISKO
Because I can live with it.

He glares into the lens and we're not sure if he's
trying to convince us or himself.

SISKO
I can live with it.

Sisko stares into the camera for a long beat.

SISKO
Computer -- erase that entire
personal log.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END