

STAR TREK

RENAISSANCE

"Collateral Damage"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The Enterprise, the Dominion ships, and many others -- Cardassian, Bolian -- are in orbit. We hold on this shot in absolute silence, and then slowly, fade to...

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

The Promenade, bustling as always. Crowds of people move to and fro, in absolute silence. CROSS and TALORA come into view, talking, but we cannot hear them. We follow them as they stroll down the Promenade.

Text appears:

STARDATE 80267.4

We hang for a moment, and it disappears.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

It does not matter what the Ideal is. Be it for government or religion, personal gain or universal. It inspires the same emotions, attracts to it the same followers, and delivers the same response.

(beat)

To these people, it is the ideal that is absolute. Their universe is striving to attain the Ideal. Striving to achieve the ideal. At any cost -- it must be victorious.

(beat)

Why something is in the way does not matter as much as how to get rid of it. And if they can, they will. It does not matter who or what it is, why it is there. The Purpose must be achieved.

(beat)

To the Idealistic, all choices are seen in accordance with their aims. They cannot be wrong, and they do not look back. Unwary is their step.

We have reached one of the docking bays, and we hold as Cross and Talora walk off-camera. There is a flood of people arriving coming in those doors, people from all shades and all forms of life. We pan in on one, a human, with a bristly beard and a long hat that is pulled over one eye. He wears a large overcoat. He had blended quite well with the crowd, and we would not have noticed him had the camera not moved in.

WOMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

For what they step on means nothing.

Finally, we get a good look at his face. Despite his change,
he is still recognizable -- he is KARL SCHANN.

On his visage, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- HOLODECK -- GORN AUDITORIUM

Row after row of chairs, larger, stronger and bulkier so as to accommodate a Gorn's physique. Impressive architecture, a blend of a swamp-like tribalism, and futuristic technology. The audience is almost entirely Gorn. The exception is ERIK GREY, who is sitting beside NARV OZRAN. Bright colors -- green, yellow -- play across the audience, but we cannot see what they are watching.

GORN VOICE

(deeply, sung
erratically and
exotically)

Gak rockasa ai k'dolyk kush, Ayh na
Nayh ai Kavkoe hush!

We hear then the throbbing and undulating of a series of sounds that sound nothing short of mayhem to our ears but which are, apparently, music. They seem to have an originally natural origin -- splashing, squishing, croaking, scratching, cooing, accompanied by a bellowing bass-type sound. Grey looks expectantly at Ozran.

OZRAN

(translating)

And now, to demonstrate warrior-love,
I call upon the Clan Elders That
Have Passed and Are Present to bless
my sacred dance.

(beat)

It loses a little in the translation.

GREY

That's what...

(beat, shocked)

Oh my...

Ozran relaxes.

OZRAN

Beautiful, isn't it?

GREY

I'd say gravity defying.

OZRAN

Delicate, yes, but not impossible...

We hear a hurl. Something hits something, and the Gorn audience grunts deeply -- the equivalent of a clap.

GREY

That's definitely impossible.

The music changes tempo, becoming faster and even more exotic sounding. It builds and ascends. As it reaches its climax:

GORN VOICES

Hardyh kaso! Hardyh kaso! Kalai
kaso Kavkoe!

OZRAN

(translating)

It is done, it is done, the blessing
is obtained.

It explodes triumphantly and fades away. The Gorn audience makes riotous sounds.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

Computer, end program.

The room fades to...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- HOLODECK

Grey and Ozran have remained in their positions -- as have the chairs -- but they are now in the Enterprise's sparse holodeck, quite alone.

OZRAN

Is Gorn ballet really that hard to
believe?

GREY

Quite. And did it have to be in
Gorn?

(beat)

No, wait, don't tell me -- it loses
a little in the translation.

OZRAN

A bit.

(beat)

What did you think?

Grey shrugs.

GREY

Well...

(beat)

Let's leave it as interesting, shall
we? But next time, I'm choosing the
holoprogram.

Ozran sighs.

OZRAN

Sousa again?

GREY

You bet.

Ozran shakes his head.

OZRAN

I don't like his music. Not enough squishy sounds.

GREY

Would you prefer Whagosh operetta?

Beat. Ozran looks at Grey with an aghast expression.

OZRAN

Sousa it is.

Grey stands up, as if to leave, but he doesn't. Something that has been somewhat repressed is bubbling to the surface.

GREY

(more seriously)

It's great, isn't it? Out there, just across a void of space, the future of the Federation is being decided. Decisions are being made that'll no doubt reverberate for decades, many centuries to come -- and we get to waste our time watching ballet.

Ozran's brow furrows in concern.

OZRAN

You don't trust your diplomats to do their assignment to the best of their ability?

GREY

It's not that. Not entirely.

(beat)

In the Sheliak War, I meant something. I was a soldier on the front line tackling Sheliak aggression head on. Here, I'm powerless... I contribute nothing to the fight against the Dominion.

OZRAN

(skeptically)

The "fight"? The war is over, Erik.

Grey sits down.

GREY

There was a human who once said war is a continuation of politics. Diplomacy isn't a group of people sitting down to honestly discuss their differences and come to an equitable conclusion, it's different powers wrangling and threatening and bluffing their way into a settlement that pleases themselves as much as possible. Force and the potential threat of force is everything. The Dominion certainly have that in abundance -- look at them, sending their blasted Jem'Hadar across DS9.

(beat)

I don't want the Federation to undersell itself, Ozran, and even if our ambassadors are doing their best, I wish I was doing something too.

(beat)

They could come out with an agreement that is thoroughly disadvantageous to the Federation and there's nothing I could do.

Ozran pauses, taking this in. Finally:

OZRAN

I have to live every day with a lie or not live at all.

(beat)

Officially my symbiont had to be severely genetically engineered to even exist inside my body. That story is the only reason the Trill Symbiosis Commission isn't pursuing me with fuller vigor, though I know they'd much prefer me dead.

(beat)

Trill radicals and nationalists are gaining more power and influence back there... back home. And it is my home, I have five lifetimes worth of memories of Trill. I don't look it, but I feel it...

(beat)

I can't do anything to prevent it, and still less to change it. The man who most determinedly wanted me dead is now one of the most powerful men on the planet.

GREY

(remembering, coldly)

Narlan Rex.

OZРАН

Narlan Rex.

(beat)

And the way things are going, he'll become more powerful still. I cannot change that. It has been a social current that has been running for some time now. Yes, I still remember, long ago, when I first began to hear of joined Trills talking down to other races: Inferiors due to shorter life-span. Why should we tolerate them? Why shouldn't we rule a power as great, no, greater than them?

(beat)

To some, long life, multiple lives, has brought great arrogance. And when arrogance for your race comes, jingoism is not far behind...

(beat)

My homeland and my people are in the grips of the delusion of Empire... not too unlike the Gorn who I left. This second war against the G'gek, the conquest of the T'lai... the Gorn Kingdom wants power and the resources to go with it. The Clans are competing ever more strongly to divide the conquests, and I fear that will have grave results. I am ostracized from both, and both are following courses I do not concur with, and I fear for. I can change neither.

GREY

You can. And I can.

(beat)

We're not all powerful, and we can't always change everything to the way we'd like it to be. But we're part of this universe, not merely spectators, molders of the current that we are also carried along. We can make differences, of varying importance and consequence, but what matters isn't just Great Events: All events happen in the same universe, and the linking of events is what makes the universe whole.

(beat)

We can change things, we can make things, we can break things. We are all part of the jigsaw that life is.

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

We should never forget that power,
and we should never let it slide
not if we hope to change the universe,
not if we're still revolted by aspects
of it. Seize our chances, where
they come.

Ozran looks at him, solemnly.

OZRAN

Yes, we can change things. But I
ask: What are we changing?

GREY

What we want to change. What needs
to be changed. Our actions will
make the universe a better place,
even if only a little.

Ozran reflects on Grey's words, but does not respond.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANDSCAPE

An empty, dusty plain. Almost desert, yet not quite. Up
ahead there is a temple-like building, Bajoran in design,
and very old fashioned. A dirt track -- nothing less --
curls through the terrain to reach that destination.

Text:

BAJOR, TILAR PROVINCE

We can see a tiny figure struggling against the inhospitable
environment.

EXT. TEMPLE

Same temple, but a close up shot of the exterior. An elderly
and paternal Bajoran VEDEK is awaiting the younger Bajoran
at the portico. The younger Bajoran has reached the steps
just below the portico and clambers up them. He has a
backpack and a thoroughly weather-beaten appearance.

BAJORAN

I have made the pilgrimage.

The old Vedek smiles.

VEDEK

Few still do so. They merely
transport themselves to here, were,
lost to our people, the Prophets
told their will to Trakor.

(MORE)

VEDEK (CONT'D)

They do not understand that the journey here is as important as the arrival: To separate oneself from our people as he had done so, trusting in the guidance of the Prophets.

BAJORAN

I trust.

VEDEK

Yes. Such have your actions spoken, the one truth in faith. Come inside.

INT. TEMPLE

It is an old, dusty building. Loads of traditional Bajoran art, and the entire building, interior as well as exterior, is built in traditional Bajoran design. There are stairs leading up to a higher level, and another set that lead beneath the room into a basement. On the mantelpiece there is a photo of a BAJORAN MALE in a uniform, who looks familiar. Looks more or less unchanged in centuries, and concessions to the 25th century exist only in the form of a modern commlink system. The VEDEK and the BAJORAN enter. The VEDEK points out the commlink.

VEDEK

So that I can attend meetings, if I cannot reach them in time. And also to keep up with affairs on our world no longer will heralds come.

The Bajoran looks around.

VEDEK (CONT'D)

We have changed the building little since it was built by Trakor's followers after his death.

(indicating way into
basement)

Down there you will find his body, preserved since he died.

BAJORAN

It is as I have been told.

VEDEK

For six generations my family have been the guardians of his tomb, and the Vedeks to represent this province...

(quietly)

I shall be the last.

The Bajoran notes the photo on the mantelpiece. He turns to the Vedek.

BAJORAN

Your son?

The Vedek nods, sadly.

VEDEK

He did not want to follow the family practice. He was too interested in technology. He entered the civilian space service. I told him it was too dangerous, and he should follow the family tradition, but he would not listen. He was an impetuous son.

(beat)

He was onboard a starship called the Manila when it was destroyed.

The Vedek pauses.

BAJORAN

I'm sorry.

VEDEK

Do not be sorry. It was not your fault. But there is not a day that does not go by that I do not remember him...

The Bajoran gazes at the Vedek with compassion, but the Vedek is a constrained man. Only faintly does he make a show of emotion. Then, suddenly realising something, he turns to the Bajoran.

VEDEK (CONT'D)

Come, have the customary feast. Your rations cannot have been good on the winding roads.

The Bajoran nods, and together they EXIT the room. We close in on the photo of the BAJORAN MALE, which we recognize as one Grey was looking at in "A Friend."

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- REC LOUNGE

GRIL DOJAR and Y'LAN are sitting at a table. Dojar is fondling a drink of kanar as Y'lan watches him in his usual impassive way. Dojar is brooding and contemplative, somewhat sad.

DOJAR (V.O.)

I don't think you'd understand.

Y'LAN (V.O.)

I would.

Dojar looks up at him, skeptically.

DOJAR (V.O.)
You've never had a family.

Y'LAN (V.O.)
I understand the concept.

DOJAR (V.O.)
That's not the same.

Y'LAN (V.O.)
I do not see why not.

A beat.

DOJAR (V.O.)
You're so cold about it, that's all...

Y'LAN (V.O.)
It is a series of emotional responses
so that a family unit can survive,
and therefore the species as a whole.
Procreation and extension of life is
essential for a species.

Y'lan's detachment is beginning to get on Dojar's nerves.

DOJAR (V.O.)
(icily)
I loved my father.

Y'LAN (V.O.)
(indifferent)
Of course you did. You were supposed
to.

DOJAR
(outburst)
Supposed to? Supposed to?
(beat)
Is that all love is to you, Y'lan?
A series of emotional responses so
that a species can continue to produce
more units of itself and thus further
the cycle of its existence? Hmm?

Y'LAN
(flatly)
Yes.

Dojar looks away.

DOJAR
And yet you claim you understand.

Y'LAN

I do.

OZRAN (O.S.)

You're not listening.

They both turn around. NARV OZRAN is standing behind them.

Y'LAN (V.O.)

(to Dojar)

You need not have turned. I can see for both of us.

DOJAR (V.O.)

I like to use my own eyes, thank you.

Ozran indicates the chair next to them.

OZRAN

Do you mind?

DOJAR

Not at all.

Ozran sits down. HAL walks over to him.

HAL

Can I get you anything?

OZRAN

No thanks.

Hal nods and walks off. Ozran pauses, thoughtfully.

DOJAR

(pressing)

Not listening?

OZRAN

Look at you. Both of you. You're so adamant about maintaining your integrity of self-identity you refuse to listen to each other lest the lines start to get blurred. And all that ends up is you go around in circles.

DOJAR

Then what do you think I should do? Let the lines be blurred, and I become more like Y'lan...

Y'LAN

(interrupting)

I will not allow myself to be...

(MORE)

Y'LAN (CONT'D)

(beat)
Degraded.

If we didn't know Q'tami better, we might think Y'lan is insulted by the very suggestion. Ozran smiles, but it fades.

OZRAN

You already have. You're two personalities, two bodies, but one mind. Believe me, I know how that's like. The lines will blur, and you can either fight that, or embrace it. You have to learn to live with yourselves...

Ozran pauses for a beat. Something of profound significance, to him, has just occurred to him, and he looks at them with a new light in his eyes.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

Yourself... and you'll learn. The question is how big a price you'll have to pay.

(beat, more quietly)
There's some food for thought. Take it from someone who could not live with himself for a long, long time, and does not want to see that happen again.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

It's "nighttime" now -- that is, lights are dimmed, only a handful of people out. We see SCHANN, still in his disguise, and follow him as he reaches a shop. Above the shop we can see a shabby title written in Romulan, Bajoran and English (and in Romulan, Bajoran and Latin characters respectively):

NIHIL'S SPARE PARTS

Schann looks up at it with his solitary visible eye, and then enters. As he passes the open doorway, a red light on the door bleeps.

INT. DS9 -- NIHIL'S SPARE PARTS

The shop is more like a junkyard than a shop. Several futuristic pieces of technology are strewn all over the place, not all of it in spic'n'span shape. Behind the counter a door opens and a somewhat tired looking ROMULAN, mid-thirties and a little shady looking, enters. He's dressed in shabby clothes that make him look like a futuristic mechanic.

ROMULAN
(with a polite smile)
What can I do for you?

SCHANN
You're Nihil?

ROMULAN (NIHIL)
(still smiling)
That's what it says at the entrance.

Schann eyes him with his solitary eye suspiciously.

NIHIL
(smirking)
Perhaps I could do something about
that eye of yours? I have some first
rate eyes from Bynar...

SCHANN
(interrupting)
I'm Janson.
(beat)
*It has come to my attention that you
conduct deals in illicit material,
usually at this hour.*

Nihil's smile has been wiped right off his face.

NIHIL
Your sources tell false. I am a fully
respectable and lawful businessman --

From beneath his large overcoat Schann takes out a FEDERATION PHASER RIFLE. We cut to behind the counter, where Nihil's hands are unobtrusively reaching for a ROMULAN DISRUPTOR.

But Schann puts the Federation Phaser Rifle on the table. Nihil looks at him suspiciously.

SCHANN
What can I get for this?

NIHIL
Starfleet material is the highest
contraband. There's no way you could
have got this --

SCHANN
(overlapping)
It's there, isn't it?

NIHIL
(overlapping)
-- unless you were in the service.

Schann remains silent.

SCHANN

What can I get for this?

Nihil glances down at the phaser.

NIHIL

Is it charged?

SCHANN

(coldly)

And coded to my voice. I say the word, and it detonates, vaporizing this entire little shop of yours. I have very good reflexes. I would recommend you don't do anything hasty.

NIHIL

It's no good to me in that kind of state.

SCHANN

When the transaction is complete, I'll deactivate that setting.

NIHIL

How will I know?

SCHANN

You're the mechanic, can't you check?

NIHIL

(cagily)

Yes...

SCHANN

Then what can I get?

NIHIL

That depends. What do you want?

SCHANN

A Romulan explosive, the Perdox model, and a Romulan disruptor, the Dolor VII.

NIHIL

Oh no. A Federation phaser isn't worth a Dolor VII alone.

SCHANN

The Perdox, then.

NIHIL

For a phaser?

SCHANN
(forcefully)
You will accept the exchange.

Nihil sees there's no arguing on that one.

NIHIL
Okay, okay.

SCHANN
And a Dolor VI.

NIHIL
(adamant)
A Dolor II. Along with the Perdox
that's more then this blasted phaser
is worth.

SCHANN
IV. I won't go lower than IV.

NIHIL
III.

A long beat.

SCHANN
III.

Nihil LEAVES the room the way he came in. A beat. Schann's eye flickers about, examining the room. He notices a camera in the corner, and he smiles at it. Then Nihil RE-EMERGES, carrying two things we cannot see.

He places a PERDOX explosive, a small green octagon, on the table. He also places a DOLOR III -- a very old make of Romulan disruptor, from the early 22nd century. It is handheld, but bulky looking.

We close in on this disruptor, and on it, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- OZRAN'S QUARTERS

The first time we have seen Ozran's quarters. They are decorated with a variety of Trill and Gorn art, most of it reasonably solemn. There are few luxuries -- Ozran's bed is a wood block -- but this appears to be more of choice than anything else. OZRAN is in front of an oddly shaped table, made of something like gold and with a large amount of seemingly random-line engravings in it. Ozran is kneeling down at the table, pouring some kind of incense into it.

OZRAN (V.O.)

Ozran's Personal Log. Date, according to the Hadl Calendar: The third Moon Merging of the Thirty Eight Rotations. Date, according to the Trill Calendar: 15827 solar years since the Symbiosis.

(beat)

Stardate 80269.1.

(beat)

It has been eight years now since I combined. Eight years since hundreds have become my own. Eight years since my life was shredded, reformed, combined, united, lost and was given purpose. Eight years.

(beat)

Can it be that I have finally found peace? That I have finally learned to live with my disparate selves?

(beat)

No, not selves: Self. Different parts of the one whole. I am whole again. Yes, I have found peace. Finally, it ceases to torment me inside. Finally I can accept myself, finally I have accepted myself. I am what I am: Gorn, and Trill. Both, and also neither. I am Narv Ozran.

He has finished pouring the kind of incense into all the engravings.

OZRAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Narv Ozran. Not two names, one name:
Two parts of one whole.

The voiceover fades out, and the sounds of Ozran's room deathly silent -- emerge into the foreground.

OZLAN (CONT'D)

(lowly)

Elders of my Clan, the Hadl, and the elders of Ozran if they too can be venerated. Today I bear my soul to you, and reflect. You have guided me to completion. When I was cast out, you found me new life. When I was combined, and all was a maelstrom, you raised me above my trouble. Today, what I am, I owe to you.

(beat)

Continue to guide me as you have guided me. Today, no matter the calendar, is the Lokradyh, and even this far from my ancestral homes both of them -- let me feel your presence.

His hand reaches down.

OZLAN (CONT'D)

I ask no more than any Gorn could ask: To not disgrace the Clan, but to enrich. To not dishonor, but to ennoble.

It emerges again, holding a HEMISPHERE. Its coloring and design is similar to the table. It is also hollow and full to the brim of the same incense on the table. The difference is this incense is burning. Ozran carefully tilts the sphere towards the table, allowing some of the incense to catch fire. Instantly, the fire spreads to all the incense on the table and they are ablaze.

OZLAN (CONT'D)

To be a worthy member of the Hadl Clan...

(beat)

And the lives of Ozran.

He takes a deep breath, breathing in the sweet aroma the incense emits.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE -- LUNA

A close shot of our moon, Luna, now terraformed to some extent and with many domed cities dotting its surface. In the distance we can see the Earth, and further still, the sun.

Text:

LUNA, SOL SYSTEM, SECTOR 001

EXT. LUNA -- GARDEN

We're just outside the futuristic equivalent of a suburban residence, underneath a large transparent dome. It's a large garden somewhat outside it, and standing there, looking into the stars, is SCHANN'S FATHER. The elderly man is gazing into the empty blackness of space, with its billions of stars.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

It's late, Jörg.

SCHANN'S FATHER (JÖRG)

I know, Marla.

Behind him a transparent slider-door from the house opens, an elderly lady -- MARLA -- emerges from the house. She walks over to the old man.

JÖRG

Why'd he have to go up there, into space?

MARLA

He was curious, you know.

JÖRG

I always told him curiosity was a bad thing.

MARLA

And he never listened.

She smiles, but we can see she's fighting back the tears. There is a long pause as, together, they look up into space. They don't need to say anything.

JÖRG

I wish he'd come back.

MARLA

I know.

A long beat. Jörg looks decidedly troubled. He glances over at Marla.

JÖRG

You don't think we raised him wrong, did you?

(beat)

Maybe I should have been more stern on the boy.

MARLA

You never could be stern.

JÖRG

I know, but I...

He trails off.

MARLA

He made his choices. We couldn't
make them for him.

A long beat.

JÖRG

They never turn out how you expect.

MARLA

No. They never do.

(beat)

It's late. We should go inside.

JÖRG

We should...

(beat)

But I can never help but wonder where
he is now...

And if he ever thinks of his parents, who miss him dearly.

Marla nuzzles Jörg's shoulder with her head.

MARLA

It's late.

Jörg nods, also now appearing visibly tired.

JÖRG

Yes.

(tenderly)

It's late.

Together the old couple go back towards their house.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

Now we're in the bustling environment of DS9's "day." The area throngs with crowds, both the station's usual fare and the more extraordinary elements like the Jem'Hadar. We pan in and focus on GREY, who is walking down the Promenade with a DS9 TECHNICIAN.

TECHNICIAN

(animatedly)

You see, we've been meaning to update
the transporter systems to a longer
range for some time now, but interest
in DS9 isn't what it used to be --
until recently, that is.

Grey nods, distractedly.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

So I was wondering, as you no doubt have the parts onboard your vessel, if you could update our transporters to the latest specs...

Grey again nods.

GREY

Sure...

TECHNICIAN

Great! When can you and your transporter chief get started?

Grey thinks for a moment.

GREY

Today's a holy day of obligation for our chief -- tonight at the earliest.

We suddenly hear a scurry, and Grey steps to one side as a BUG scrambles across the deck-plating. Grey, jarred, looks after it.

GREY (CONT'D)

What the...?

The Technician laughs.

TECHNICIAN

You'd be surprised how common critters like that are here. I don't know how they do it... scurry off from atmospheric craft or something. Life has its ways of getting here.

The Technician pats him on the back.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

C'mon. I'll show you around.

He and Grey walk OFF-CAMERA as we hold our position. Then we sweep through the crowds, falling down to floor level and we see the bug again. It's scuttled away from the crowds and is outside a shop. It looks like a cross between a lobster without the claws and a cockroach. We pan in to its hairy mandibles...

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY -- FLASHBACK

And begin to pan out. Same kind of bug, but we're somewhere else now. Metal ground as far as the eye can see. Raising above us are what would be impressive, futuristic skyscrapers... had they not been blown to pieces.

These are the devastated ruins of a once enormously prosperous city, and these are not ancient ruins: One can almost smell the fresh blood on the walls. We pan around to see, in the distance, a lone figure: A Marine, silhouetted against the sun -- larger in the sky than Earth's -- which is blasting down on him. We move towards him.

TEXT:

ANTIOCHEIA, CRATERUS PROVINCE, IPSUS
STARDATE 72684.9

We can see the Marine clearly now. It's GREY, six years younger -- but in bearing he seems a decade older from the young Grey seen in the "A Friend" flashbacks: The war has not worn well.

Brooding, preoccupied by his own thoughts, he looks around him, at the empty, deserted city.

GRANGER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Erik!

Almost detachedly, Grey glances around as NICOLE GRANGER (as seen in "The Call of Duty") comes upon him.

GRANGER

Have you heard anything about
Leonnatus Province? Anything at
all?

GREY

(thinking)

Leonnatus...? That was one of the
targets for the poison attack, what
was it... how long ago?

He clicks his fingers.

GRANGER

(distraught)

Three years. They're still clearing
it up, it's only now safe to move
in. I've heard rumors. Some say
people have survived, living in
shelters for three years, living off
the replicator, never knowing if
they'd ever be rescued...

Grey nods, somberly. His expression says it all: He's heard more than one horror story -- and he can tell worse.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

John was there at the time of the
attack.

GREY

John?

GRANGER

John Granger. My husband.

(beat)

Maybe he sealed himself up in time,
and is living of the replicator...

GREY

(unenthusiastically)

Maybe.

GRANGER

You can't seriously suggest...

Grey turns around, sharply.

GREY

Maybe he's alive, and maybe he's
not. The Sheliak killed a lot of
people. What's one more to them?
Nothing, they've lost the war anyway.

(beat, more softly)

Look, I hope he's alive. Really, I
do. But you can't get your hopes up
like that. I've seen too many people
do that.

Granger calms down.

GRANGER

I understand. And still...

Tears brim in her eyes.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

(hurriedly)

I'm sorry.

She moves off. Grey watches her go, and then turns to examine
a ruptured structure.

SCHANN'S VOICE (O.S.)

There you are.

We pan around to see Karl Schann. He too has been changed
by eight years of war -- he seems more bitter.

SCHANN

(walking towards him)

Just standing around, admiring the
view?

Grey shrugs.

GREY

It is quite a view.

Schann glances up at all the ruined buildings.

SCHANN

Yes... it is. Society ripped asunder.

GREY

I haven't been formally discharged but Battenberg's already gone. They say they're demobilizing later today, but until then... I don't have much else to do but stand around and reflect.

SCHANN

You don't want to visit our old haunt, Doston Barracks?

GREY

(grimly)

There's not a shred of that left. You know that.

A beat. The two friends stand, side by side. They bear the demeanor of friends who know they may be meeting for the last time -- but ones who have often felt such.

SCHANN

(half-smile)

No long goodbyes this time?

GREY

We've said enough of those.

(beat)

Besides, we might see each other again.

SCHANN

We might.

(beat)

Where are you going, Grey? Do you know?

GREY

I do. You know how proud I am of my engineering skills...

SCHANN

(laughs)

Do I ever!

GREY

So I'm going to transfer.

SCHANN

Transfer?

GREY

To Starfleet.

SCHANN

Bah!

Schann begins to walk away.

GREY

What?

(beat)

I've been a full-time Marine engineer and combatant, but the war's over now.

SCHANN

And the Marines aren't attractive?

GREY

No...

(beat)

But overseeing a warp core is.

Schann looks skeptically at him.

SCHANN

They've offered you Chief Engineer of a Starship?

GREY

(reluctantly)

No...

SCHANN

Bah.

GREY

But that's the dream.

(beat)

Someday...

SCHANN

(impishly)

Don't stop there. Go for Captain.

(imitating him)

Someday...

GREY

Then where are you headed that's so great?

SCHANN

Somewhere still in the Marine force. That's better by default.

(MORE)

SCHANN (CONT'D)

(beat, more seriously)

I've applied for frontier work.
I've defended the Federation for
eight years. It's what I do best.

Beat. Grey takes another look over the broken buildings all around him. Each time he does so he seems to find something new, or a new meaning.

GREY

(to himself)

And so we separate, flow forth from
time...

(beat)

But the past remains.

SCHANN

Hmm?

GREY

Damn our fate.

SCHANN

Erik?

GREY

Don't you remember? We were
reassigned off this planet before
the second wave of the attack. One
week! If we had stayed one week
longer we wouldn't be standing here,
would we?

A long, reflective pause. Schann looks around him, almost reliving the horrors: A speck in the shadow of death.

SCHANN

No... we wouldn't.

GREY

So because of one bureaucratic fluke
that chose Company A of the 113th
and not Company B, we're still here.

SCHANN

Those things happen. Unintended
consequences.

GREY

Unimagined consequences.

(beat)

More than once I've looked into the
abyss of death and it passed me right
by. Always going for some other
unfortunate...

SCHANN

(somberly)

It'll come in the end. Death comes to all people... be it the first time they've seen him...

GREY

Or if he's like an old friend.

A long beat.

SCHANN

Just a few words on a treaty somewhere...

GREY

What?

SCHANN

You've pointed out luck. Well, I'll give you luck.

(beat)

Someone signed some dotted line which pertained to only God knows how many pages of that blasted treaty the Sheliak drew up. And that line included that little sector... the one fate chucked Tellar into a few centuries later.

Schann waves his arms around at the devastation.

SCHANN (CONT'D)

A couple of lines on paper started this. A couple of lines on paper has stopped it all again.

(beat)

Those are consequences.

GREY

The things we do...

SCHANN

And they're linked to so many other things.

(beat)

This! Words did this!

GREY

No, not words... The intent to obey them.

A long beat. Grey glances around him, and he sees not just the instant: He sees eight years. He begins to walk away. Schann follows him.

GREY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I hope I never have to see another war.

SCHANN

Not live to see one?

GREY

Not for there to be one.

SCHANN

Then you're too late. There's the Klingon Civil War, raging right now... the G'gek campaign of the Gorn...

Beat.

GREY

It never lets up.

SCHANN

And even its microcosm continues: The fight of people too small to wield governments.

GREY

Single souls in mortal combat...

(beat)

Institutions, societies, governments...

Grey looks up at Schann, tired, almost scared.

GREY (CONT'D)

When does it end?

SCHANN

When is not the question I'd ask.

We pan down to focus on both their feet, striding through the ruins of Antiocheia.

SCHANN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Where does it end?

The bug seen earlier scurries out, but Schann's foot is unintentionally too quick for it. It slams right down on the bug, squashing it. We pan up the to the men's faces again.

GREY

(curious)

What...

SCHANN

Damn.

Schann lifts his foot up, and we can now see the squashed remains of the bug, its yellow blood seeping around Schann's sole. Grey looks over his shoulder. We hold on the squashed bug...

FADE TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- OZRAN'S QUARTERS

Ozran kneels before what looks like a carpet, which is on the wall next to his bed, not seen in previous angles. It is colored with the stripes of a tiger-skin, but all the stripes follow a spiral pattern. At the center there is a circle with two circles touching each other -- looking kind of like an 8 -- within the circle. Throughout the following passage, Ozran holds his head to the ground, looking down at it.

OZRAN

(chanted lowly,
Gregorian-like)

To the Elders of the Clan,
Who are in the Graves.
Ever being, ever seeing,
Through cessation of life
Omniscience is achieved.
Guide your son
He will do your duty,
His debt to you, his sacred ancestors,
He shall pay.

(beat)

It is the duty of the living
To honor the dead,
And to heed their counsel:
The unheeding are left
In the Truthless Caverns --
Greatest gift of the Creating Spirit,
Truth in purest essence,
Denied to the sinners.

(beat)

Let things pass that I will ever
achieve
What you desire,
Be the tool of your all-seeing hands,
Let it pass so that one day I may
sit among you,
Let it pass that I may drink pure
Truth:
And if I stray, to injure my being,
Guide me back to you,
But if I fall, to betray my being,
Let me be damned.

(beat)

Let me boast now, of your
achievements,
When the Creating Spirit left,

(MORE)

OZRAN (CONT'D)

Praise your skill in raising us
To lofty heights
Unseen by our lowly selves.
Let me boast of the openings.

(beat)

You sent the first message,
Your instructions made live hands
fashion tools,
Your echoes gave thought meaning.
You delivered to us our first taste
Of forever bliss, ultimate truth:
Intelligence passed to us from you,
Your hands are in all things.
Continue to protect us and advise
us,
Advance us as you have always done,
You will be forever worthy of our
praise.

(beat)

In bounteous peace and knowledge,
Thus remain.

We close in on the circle with the "eight," and then on the
lower circle until we can see only it.

CUT TO:

EXT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

We pan out from an EYE -- SCHANN'S solitary visible eye.
We're on DS9 again, and the crowds are consistent with an
evening setting. Schann blends into the crowds, still dressed
as before, so innocuous, so innocent. We pan backwards,
away from Schann, above the widening crowds, until we finally
lose him in that faceless mass.

On that shot, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

BLACKNESS

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Where is it?

INT. TRILL BIRTHING CAVES

A group of solemnly dressed Trill stand deep within a cave. One of them is carrying an artificial light that is the only source of light in this scene. We see a large pond like environment before us -- swampy, marshy. A female TRILL is lying on a soft, white, silky mat on the ground, very near the swamp. She is wearing white, also silky garments. Her stomach is visible, and we can see an opening. An old Trill glances down at her, and smiles sagely. He has a staff, and is dressed in something of a priestly attire, so he will be called the PRIEST. Most of the other Trill hang around this man, but two Trill stand at the back, an OLD TRILL and an OLD TRILL WOMAN, their eyes fixated on the TRILL. They look intensely proud for her but also very sad -- they could be nobody but her parents.

TRILL

(with the "woman's
voice," to Trill)

I can't see it.

PRIEST

(affectionately)

They are afraid of the light.
Patience.

The Trill raises his gaze from the woman and looks back to the swamp.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

This is an experience of but a few
hosts.

The Trill Woman reflects on what he has said, and seems to withdraw in to herself. The sound fades out to:

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

You've scored the best in the entire
sector. We have a special symbiont
for you.

TRILL (V.O.)

Special? How?

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

You will be her first host...

It fades back into the present. There's a slight gurgling.

PRIEST

There!

He points with his staff. Something is emerging from the swampy depths -- it's a TRILL SYMBIONT, but smaller and more agile than any symbiont we've ever seen before.

She -- this being the gender of the symbiont -- rears slightly. The Trill Woman looks up at that creature, so different and so coveted, in calm contemplation.

TRILL

(whispering, to
Symbiont)

Come.

Behind the Priest a few of the others try to move towards her, but he holds them back.

PRIEST

(quietly)
None interfere.

TRILL

(softly, to Symbiont)
To me. Come to me.

The Symbiont inches closer. The Woman looks at the Symbiont, and she, with her very alien eyes, looks back. It stumbles uncertainly, quite new to land.

TRILL (CONT'D)

Come.

The Symbiont reaches partly upright, uncertain. Then she sees the opening in the Trill's stomach, and, almost instinctively -- but also with trust -- she moves forward. The Trill smiles, slowly, and then it passes. The Symbiont takes a gentle hold of her skin and then carefully opens wider the opening, until it can enter. In an instant, it enters. There is much moving in her stomach, and a large lump, but soon that disappears out of sight, as if it had found a hole where to sleep. At that point the Trill's eyes shoot wide, looking to the heavens...

PRIEST

(to himself, in
remembrance)
Two minds lock for the first time.
(beat)
Both so different, yet so alike.
One an animal, yet to be tamed, and
to live longer. To grow wise in
diversity.

She remains static on the floor, thinking, searching. Expressions flicker across her face, familiar and unfamiliar, human and animal, calm and emotional, surprised but pleasantly slow. Slowly, stability is restored. She glances up at the Priest, her attitude changed: In a word, younger.

TRILL

Now I know.

The Priest furrows his brow.

PRIEST

Know what?

TRILL

My name.

(beat)

My mother called me it to my mind,
but I could not understand. I could
not voice it, only feel the memory.

The Priest moves closer, delicately.

PRIEST

And what is your name?

The Trill is about to respond, and then seems to forget. She is lost in a moment's thought, but then looks back up at the Priest, invigorated:

TRILL

(purposefully)

Ozran.

We...

FADE TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The cold emptiness of space. The Enterprise and other ships hang around the ex-Cardassian space station.

INT. DS9 -- HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

This is one of the corridors where the crew's quarters would be. It's night-time now, as indicated by the low lighting. There isn't a soul out -- but a shape swiftly moves pass us. A shape with a large overcoat...

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

Also night. We see an elevator stop in the far corner, and both GREY and OZRAN come into view, off the elevator, looking quite tired and overworked.

They walk across the Promenade, on the higher level of it, during the following:

GREY

That technician would have had us work till morning...

Ozran attempts a smile.

OZRAN

Maybe it already is morning.

Grey chuckles, softly.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Same kind of corridor. We're on the sharp close up of a door. The PERDOX seen earlier is placed onto it by the flick of a hand, and it begins to beep.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

Grey clicks on his commbadge.

GREY

Grey to Transporter Room.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- ODO'S QUARTERS

It could only be Odo's, for a GELATINOUS MASS is going around a number of weirdly shaped objects. There is a sudden comm-chirping at the corner of the room. The mass lurches towards it...

INT. DS9 -- HABITAT RING CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

One of the doorways and the area around it completely EXPLODE.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

The lights suddenly turn to a bright red, and a red alert klaxon is heard. Both GREY and OZRAN, from long habit, reach right for their phasers, drawing them.

GREY

What the hell?

TRANSPORTER OFFICER (V.O.)

Sir?

GREY

Stand by Transporter...

Suddenly a figure with an overcoat and a long hat bursts into the room, running like mad. Both GREY and OZRAN fire simultaneously at him, but the phaser blasts are absorbed by a personal force-field.

The following happens very quickly. Grey looks down to his phaser to recalibrate it as Ozran lunges for Schann, as if to tackle him before he can get any further. Schann, seeing Ozran's lunge, fires his disruptor. We CLOSE UP for a moment on Schann's face, utterly impassive.

FLASH TO:

EXT. CITY -- FLASHBACK

As we had left it. We're on a tight-close up of Schann's reaction to the squished bug -- a look of disgust.

FLASH TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

The green beam hits Ozran, exploding his stomach.

FLASH TO:

INT. TRILL BIRTHING CAVES -- FLASHBACK

The same as before. A sharp focus on the TRILL, who seems worried by something...

FLASH TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

Ozran is thrown back by the blast over the railing, his stomach ruptured and coughing up yellow blood...

FLASH TO:

INT. FEDERATION SHUTTLE

Title says it all. An old-style shuttle. There's a TRILL WOMAN at the corner, who is very bloody and terribly mutilated large lacerations running right through her body. She's coughing, but her throat is becoming clogged by frothy blood. None of the body below her torso is visible, but under a part of the shuttle that has crashed down on them. Standing over her is a somewhat elderly TRILL MAN, and a somewhat younger NARV, a bit burlier and more blockheaded looking than the one we know. The Trill Man is looking at him.

TRILL MAN

She's dying, damn it. Even you can see that.

Narv casts him a dirty look.

TRILL MAN (CONT'D)

But the symbiont must survive.

NARV

(turning away)

You and your precious symbionts...

TRILL MAN

If it is done, it will be as if she'd never died! She lives on in the holder...

(beat)

I can do the operation. But I can't do it to myself...

Narv turns around, almost shocked by the suggestion.

NARV

You mean...

TRILL MAN

(insistent)

Only temporarily. Only until they find us.

Warily, Narv looks at him, and then his gaze flickers back to the Trill woman -- now definitely dead.

FLASH TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

...and he plummets off the side of the railing. He hits the ground with a bone-cracking CRUNCH.

SCHANN

(as if to self)

Chariot!

Grey shoots at Schann, not yet seeing what happened to Ozran his expression widening in recognition of Schann's voice. The beam passes harmlessly through the DEMATERIALIZING Schann. He smiles cockily at Grey, and then he is gone.

GREY

(angry)

Damn you, Schann!

Grey hears a deep groaning, a gurgling, gasping sigh. He suddenly glances around, looking for something.

GREY (CONT'D)
(worried)
Ozran?

Grey runs over to the edge of the railing, and peers over, to see Ozran lying on the ground. Yellow and green fluids are covered all over him. He is coughing and gurgling, vomiting up his bodily fluids. His stomach has been ripped and smashed, his intestines are tangled with a number of other, unrecognizable organs. They stick out of a gaping wound in his chest, and they and other lumps of flesh seem to be obstructing something. His neck and backbone appear to be broken. One eye is closed, and blood surrounds it.

GREY (CONT'D)
(a cry)
Ozran!
(into commbadge)
Transporter Room, beam Ozran directly
to Sickbay!

Ozran DISAPPEARS in a shimmer of transporter light. But Grey continues to look down, where he had been, where some of the fluids still remained. At this point six DS9 SECURITY GUARDS enter, charging into the room, phasers at the ready.

GUARD #1
Have you seen the intruder?

Grey snaps out of his reverie.

GREY
He's beamed off.

GUARD #2
That's impossible, we've detected no

GREY
The transporter beam was probably
masked. It's his style.

GUARD #1
You know the man?

FLASH TO:

EXT. CITY -- FLASHBACK

The shot we left it, on the squashed bug. Schann puts his foot down, looking away.

SCHANN
Yuck.

GREY
(slightly amused)
Yuck?

SCHANN

Yuck.

GREY

(playfully)

Oh, come on. I thought you've seen worse.

SCHANN

(defensively)

Yuck is yuck.

FLASH TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

GREY

(sadly)

All too well.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE

CROSS is in the Captain's Chair, TALORA in the First Officer's chair, JENNIFER QUINLAN at Tactical, NATHANIEL STOLT at the CONN and BRIAN CALE at Ops. The room is in Red Alert.

QUINLAN

Captain, one of the ships is starting up its systems.

Cross glances up at her.

CROSS

Type?

QUINLAN

It's a Bolian frigate. S.S. Loge.

CROSS

Open a channel.

(beat)

This is Captain Cross of the Enterprise. Loge, power down your engines or you will be fired upon.

(to Quinlan)

End transmission. Fire phasers and torpedoes on my mark.

Beat.

QUINLAN

No response. Continuing to power up.

CROSS

Mark.

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Deep Space Nine, that lonely station in space. We see a drab Bolian cruiser suddenly JUMP TO WARP as Deep Space Nine, the Enterprise and the other Starfleet vessels in the vicinity open fire on the spot it had been.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE

CROSS

(to Stolt)

Match the ship's course, maximum warp.

Stolt begins to work, and then turns back to look at the Captain.

STOLT

Captain, I'm not detecting any warp signature. It's as if they had never been there. I can't even calculate from trajectory as they sent misleading signals.

CROSS

Operations, scan all ranges of the spectrum. Look for any possible way to locate their present position and speed.

CALE

Aye Captain.

Cross turns back to look at the screen, holding his hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The same ships as before hang in orbit of the space station.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- SICKBAY

ELRIS LEA is working over the Gorn's body, which is comatose. It appears to be in much better condition -- except the stomach -- though it now has a number of futuristic casts. He also has a respirator. The doors part and GREY enters.

Slowly, he walks towards the Doctor. When he reaches her:

GREY

How is he?

Elris turns to him. She is visibly shaken.

ELRIS

He's lucky to have been beamed in on time. A few seconds more...

(beat)

I've been able to replace a number of organs he had lost with artificial components. They're working fine so he should be okay... physically.

The last word, in it's implied threat, startles Grey.

GREY

(angrily)

Physically? What do you mean, "okay physically"?

He almost seems ready to strangle her.

ELRIS

Erik!

Grey calms down, turning away.

GREY

I'm sorry, I didn't...

He looks back.

GREY (CONT'D)

Okay physically?

Elris composes herself slightly, and then turns to Grey.

ELRIS

I don't know how to say this...

(beat)

Erik, Narv's in a coma. He could wake up now, he could wake up next year, he could never wake up.

Grey falls to the wall.

GREY

(quietly)

My God...

ELRIS

(softly)

I wish that was all.

Grey's brow furrows.

GREY

What do you mean?

ELRIS

Narv is in a coma...

(MORE)

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

With very recent breakthroughs in
technology we can keep him alive,
even without...

The statement hangs in the air. Grey suddenly notices
something on the table next to Narv: A crushed, horribly
deformed and mutilated SYMBIONT, barely recognizable as such.
Green blood is spewed all over her.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(choking back tears)

She died the moment the blast hit.

We pan in on the remains of the symbiont OZRAN, and then...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

(The following scenes are all tinted with a sepia glow.)

INT. SHUTTLECRAFT -- SEQ: "UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES"

GREY and OZRAN are sitting in the shuttle.

GREY

I don't have a religion.

OZRAN

Then what do you think happens after death?

GREY

We die, and then cease to exist.

OZRAN

What a waste.

GREY

Maybe. But the Universe is a wasteful place.

FLASH TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TEN-FORWARD -- SEQ: "DAY IN, DAY OUT"

GREY and OZRAN sitting at a table.

GREY

I need your advice, Ozran. How do I tell her?

OZRAN

Make an appeal to the Elders of her clan. Tell them of the history of your clan, your fertility...

Ozran "becomes" another person.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

That's a stupid idea. Gorn tradition is so tedious and...

And does so again.

OZRAN (CONT'D)

Tedious?

FLASH TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS -- SEQ: "THE CALL OF DUTY"

GREY, DOJAR and OZRAN are present.

OZRAN

I had a similar situation with my brother, Nev Hadl. We were not just friends, we were family.

CUT TO:

OZRAN (CONT'D)

My father was the head of the Hadl clan. When he retired, I, as his oldest son, was set to succeed him. But it was not to be.

(beat)

Nev turned on me. Challenged me to the Harodyh, the ritual battle between two contenders for control of a clan.

CUT TO:

OZRAN (CONT'D)

He thought he was better suited to be a clan leader, but I knew all he wanted was the power and I was shocked he'd trample on me his own brother, no less, to get it.

FLASH TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TRANSPORTER ROOM -- SEQ: "HOME"

GREY and OZRAN are at the transporter, paused in their working.

OZRAN

What if someone close to you was murdered -- Boyle, maybe? Would you strike back?

Grey begins to answer, catches himself. He thinks for a moment.

GREY

(somber, quiet)

Not like that. I'd get those responsible, but god, not like that. Not with innocents.

OZRAN

What if it wasn't so clean cut? What if innocents were the killers' shield?

GREY

Yes, things would be less clear cut then. But at the very least I'd follow orders. I wouldn't let my emotions carry me forth on some vengeful massacre!

(beat, more quietly)

At least, I hope not.

FLASH TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING -- SEQ: "A MINORITY OF ONE"

GREY and OZRAN standing at the engineering controls.

OZRAN

I don't like decimating worlds, Grey. I saw one very nearly happen.

GREY

Tellar?

OZRAN

I was there for the second offensive.

(beat)

But that was war. This...

GREY

There won't be anyone on the planet. Not when we strike at it, anyway.

OZRAN

Even so... could you do it, if it was Earth?

GREY

(quietly)

No.

He turns away.

OZRAN

But you're doing it here.

GREY

If I don't, someone else will. The buck's got to stop somewhere.

Grey turns.

GREY (CONT'D)

You don't have to do this, though.

Ozran puts his hand on Grey's shoulder. It's a tight grip.

OZRAN

You'll need someone there.

FLASH TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- HOLODECK -- SEQ: "COLLATERAL DAMAGE"

Grey and Ozran sitting down in the holodeck, from earlier this episode.

OZRAN

Yes, we can change things. But I ask:

We begin to...

FADE TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- SICKBAY

The lights are dimmed -- "night-time." Alone, Grey stands over the comatose NARV HADL. The wounds that still existed on him in the previous shot are now gone -- his body seems as good as new, though he still wears a respirator. His hand is on Narv's arm, both of which are folded over his body Osiris-like.

OZRAN (V.O.)

What are we changing?

GREY

(to himself)

I thought I had an answer for you then. I don't now.

(beat)

I have lost many friends. I do not want to lose you... and I already have.

Grey turns from the Gorn, as if to hide something. We close on him and see he is crying. Bitter tears of regret, and pain. In absolute silence we...

FADE TO:

INT. DS9 -- PROMENADE

Now a flurry of activity. Many people are out, and a substantial portion are SECURITY GUARDS. The area where Ozran had fallen is now cordoned off and guarded by two guards. Walking through the crowds is Admiral ELIZABETH DELFUNE.

She stops at the cordoned area.

DELFUNE

(to Guard)

This is where the casualty landed?

GUARD #3

Yes sir.

DELFUNE

(dryly)

I see. Carry on, Lieutenant.

She continues to walk by.

CUT TO:

INT. DS9 -- WARDROOM

Delfune enters the room.

ODO (O.S.)

Admiral.

We pan around to see ODO, now in corporeal form.

DELFUNE

Ambassador. It is good to see you
are...

(beat)

Undamaged.

Delfune sits down opposite Odo.

DELFUNE (CONT'D)

We have collected some reliable
intelligence on your assailant.

ODO

Oh? I have also been given
information.

Delfune's brow furrows. She doesn't like the sound of that.

DELFUNE

Given?

ODO

By the Breen. They contacted me
moments before the explosion.
Apparently, they had been monitoring
the situation here with great
interest.

DELFUNE

(wryly)

I don't doubt it.

ODO

(pointedly)

Had I not moved to receive their
call, I would have been incinerated.

(MORE)

ODO (CONT'D)

They say that the attacker was one Ducas Skanderbeg, a right-wing Starfleet reactionary, who was travelling under the assumed name of Ben Janson.

(beat)

Would you care to explain this?

DELFUNE

Lies within lies, Ambassador. The assailant was a human, but one in Breen pay. We've identified him conclusively as Karl Schann, an ex-Marine who defected approximately seven years ago. He had a Janson passport and a false DNA register to claim he was Skanderbeg.

ODO

Why would the Breen want to assassinate me?

DELFUNE

We don't know for sure, but we do have a hypothesis. Another assassination attempt by a Starfleet officer with reactionary leanings could alienate you and the Dominion from Starfleet.

(beat)

The Breen want to recover territory they lost in the Dominion War, but they lack the manpower and resources to achieve this. If they were able to solicit you and bring you to their side, they could use you to help them win another war.

Odo leans back, sagely.

ODO

Odd you would say this. There is a Breen Ambassador who will be arriving here shortly. He wishes to discuss issues of great importance with me, and has already sent me that information over the commlink.

DELFUNE

(suspiciously)

We know of no Ambassador passing through our territory.

ODO

He's onboard one of their trade frigates, shortly to be here.

A beat.

DELFUNE

And will you receive him?

Odo leans back, poker-faced.

ODO

I will. And I'll see what he'll
have to say of your theory.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTERPRISE -- GREY'S QUARTERS

Grey is sitting down, in front of a meal. He is merely looking at the food, though, not touching it. A chime from the door.

GREY

Enter.

The doors part, and Quinlan enters.

QUINLAN

I knew you'd be here.

She takes a seat, and sits down.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Elris tells me you're in the Sickbay
every other night shift.

He turns to look at her, but says nothing.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Hey. Ozran was my friend too. Great
sense of humor, one half of the time,
obscure humor the other half.

She smiles slightly, but it appears to be forced.

GREY

He was the first friend I made here.
The first friend, actually, I'd made
in Starfleet. Somehow, he understood
me. And I him -- or I thought I
did. He was there when I needed him
most.

(beat)

And now he's gone. Now one more of
my friends is gone. And yet this
one isn't just gone -- he's still
there, I can go down to Sickbay and
there he is... as if he was just
asleep.

QUINLAN

He could wake up.

GREY

He could. But he'd still be gone...

QUINLAN

Ozran.

Grey nods.

GREY

Ozran.

(beat)

He never ceased telling me about how painful it was to be joined, about the agony he had to endure... but I knew it was that which made him what he was. And he did, too: A foot in two worlds. A new being and an old one. Narv Ozran was the sum of two very different parts, and now he is gone.

A long beat. Grey gazes into Quinlan's eyes, but it's not her he sees: He is looking into his memory.

GREY (CONT'D)

I miss him.

QUINLAN

I know.

Grey stands, and turns his back to Quinlan. He looks out the window into the cold infinitudes of space.

GREY

And who did this to him? Who destroyed him?

(bitterly)

My "friend," Schann. You should have seen the look on his face. He shot Ozran, sent him hurtling to his doom... and what did he do? He smiled at me. The bastard smiled at me!

(beat)

He doesn't care. He doesn't care about what he does... what he's done...

QUINLAN

(softly)

There are many like that.

Grey turns on her, slowly.

GREY
(sharply)
That one will be sorry.

Quinlan looks at Grey with an expression of concern.

QUINLAN
Revenge, Erik?

Grey shakes his head.

GREY
No, not revenge. Justice. One day
that terrorist will be brought to
justice.

QUINLAN
(quietly)
Ozran will still be dead.

GREY
But Schann will have stopped killing.
(beat)
That will make the universe a better
place, Jen.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

A big blue-green planet hangs in front of us. There are a few dangerous looking space-stations hanging around it, and a convoy of Liberty-class frigates, heavily modified, fly into view.

Text:

TRILL

EXT. TRILL -- BUILDING COMPLEX

A massive complex extending as far as the eye can see. The evening sun reflects against its mostly gold colored architecture: Several skyscrapers of similar height all connecting to one another, and us afforded the bird's eye view.

Text:

TRILL SYMBIOSIS COMISSION HEADQUARTERS

INT. TRILL SYMBIOSIS HEADQUARTERS -- REX'S OFFICE

A large palatial room. At the back end of the room, on a raised pedestal with a chair and semi-circular desk surrounding him is NARLAN REX (last seen in "Unusual Circumstances.")

He is dressed in almost Imperial regalia, looking through reports on a desk computer. At either side of him are menacingly armed Trill BODYGUARDS.

At the end of the room the door opens, and another TRILL MALE enters. Rex glances up.

REX

Loxral.

TRILL MALE (LOXRAL)

(reverently)

High Commissioner Rex.

He walks over to Rex and stands in front of him. Rex eyes him.

REX

It is not time for your standard report.

LOXRAL

A matter of special importance is to be brought to your attention, High Commissioner.

REX

And what would that be?

LOXRAL

The Ozran symbiont has died.

REX

Did she take the Gorn with herself?

LOXRAL

No, High Commissioner.

Rex sighs.

REX

Unfortunate.

(beat)

Still, the bond has been broken, and this is what is important. Loxral, I want you to immediately commission an article about this in the Commission Papers. They are to tie in the death to the incompatibility of the host -- have all the writers attempt and select the most convincing. Tell them that the winner will have a special reward from me.

LOXRAL

What is the reward, High Commissioner?

REX
(sharply)
That's not for them to know.

Loxral straightens.

REX (CONT'D)
Is there anything else?

LOXRAL
No, High Commissioner.

REX
Then I dismiss you.

LOXRAL
Yes, High Commissioner.

Loxral turns on his heel, and walks down the inordinate length that it takes to reach the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Approximately the same set up as before, ships moving around the station. The Enterprise is still present.

CROSS (V.O.)
Captain's Personal Log, Stardate 80273.4. Karl Schann has not been found, and his most likely location, the Loge, seems to have disappeared off the face of the universe. The frigate I have told was carrying the Breen Ambassador has left almost as soon as it came. Odo seems to know why, but he's not telling. Delfune is annoyed, but I think she thinks she's guessed the truth. In any case, I'm glad that confusing incident is over with...

(beat)

But it has pained me greatly to lose Ozran, who has served under me now for three years. The joined being of Narv Hadl and the Ozran symbiont had been a fine officer. The Trill Ministry has informed me that it is traditional for a symbiont to be buried on the home planet, in the ancestral swamp from whence they came... so we cannot hold her funeral. Instead...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- REC LOUNGE

The Lounge has been converted. All the chairs are facing one spot, where there is a table with a cloth covered over a small lump -- the OZRAN SYMBIONT. Standing in front of the symbiont is GREY, while many are sitting on the chairs. Most of the crew are present -- CROSS, TALORA, QUINLAN, ELRIS, DOJAR, Y'LAN, LEWIS CARTER, STOLT, TORAN NOA, SARAH BOYLE, HAL, and many others. They are all dressed formally, but not in uniform. There is absolute silence.

GREY

We are all here today to remember the Ozran symbiont. Most of us present knew her for only these last three years of her life, when she was united with the Gorn Narv Hadl. But in that time, she touched us all.

(beat)

Wise, generous, strong and compassionate. That's how I'll remember a being who was one side to a friend of mine, but also a being in her own right. Separate and yet one. The one no longer exists, and neither does she.

(beat)

Symbionts outlive many of their friends, as they pass from body to body. We are of the select few who have outlived the symbiont... and not due to old age. A life cut short in its prime.

Grey struggles to contain himself.

GREY (CONT'D)

Narv Hadl believed in a life after death, and so too did Ozran. Wherever you are, in that life or into nothing but oblivion... I have come to say goodbye.

Grey turns away, about to cry, and yet not. The audience is silent, and deeply moved. Grey looks down at the covered remains of Ozran, lying before him on the table.

GREY (CONT'D)

(whispering, to himself)

You were so small...

(beat)

So fragile, so tender...

(beat)

But so compassionate. For some little reason, a political stalling and a manoeuvre of powers...

(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

(beat)

You were taken away. What reasons
are found to take life, what excuses
to deprive... never looking back,
always forward.

His gaze raises, looking towards the window. We can now see
that he is crying.

GREY (CONT'D)

(softly)

Where does it end?

We hold on Grey, and then PAN OUT...

EXT. SPACE

...the window, pan out from the Enterprise, Deep Space Nine,
and keep on panning out until they are not even specks on
our horizon, and the stars are our only company. The cold
and empty fires of the stars... and then even they...

FADE OUT.

BLACKNESS

Into nothingness. We hear a voice FADE IN:

SEQ: "A Friend"

OZRAN (V.O.)

It is one of the greatest dangers of
living: Likeable, amicable people
who seem worthy of trust and
friendship can be infinitely cruel.
It is not a simple universe we live
in.

His voice FADES OUT, a whisper on the wind, a memory of broken
time.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END