

**STAR TREK: RENAISSANCE**

**"Homecoming"**

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. BAJORAN CITY

On the edge of a frozen lake sits a metropolis, B'Havral, the cultural, scientific, and political center of Bajor. The skies are almost completely white; snowflakes drift down towards the ground.

Most buildings are low, only a few stories, but in the center, there are some taller structures. One, about ten or fifteen stories high, bears the Starfleet logo.

INT. RESEARCH CENTER -- ELRIS'S QUARTERS

In bed lies ELRIS, asleep among the dark red sheets.

COMPUTER VOICE

The time is 0600 hours.

Elris starts. She rubs her eyes, pushes the sheets aside. Swinging her legs over the edge of the bed, she stops and looks around.

We get a sweeping view of her small quarters from her point of view. The unfamiliar room seems spacious, but perhaps that is because it is sparsely decorated. A long table graces one wall but it is completely empty. Both bedside tables are spartan, holding only a small clock. The walls have a little art, but it is the art that comes with the room -- flowers, wildlife.

Along one wall, Elris's suitcases. One lies completely open, holding a couple pieces of clothing. The others are almost completely closed, but it's clear that they are full. The only other objects are a mirror and a replicator.

Still groggy, she approaches the replicator first.

ELRIS

Hot choco--

She stops, shakes her head.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Coffee. Black.

The computer CHIRPS in affirmation, and the beverage materializes in a blue mug. She takes a grateful sip, but her face turns to disgust. She places the mug back in the replicator.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Recycle.

MOMENTS LATER, she is in uniform and before the full-length mirror. She examines her figure, the face in particular. Then she looks at her hair, tossing it around.

She goes to one of the full suitcases and opens it. It is full of personal effects -- books, padds, a few folded papers, hopefully a hair clip.

Instead of the hair clip, though, she finds a PHOTOGRAPH of her and CROSS. She holds it in her hands for a moment, touching the frame, remembering past times. But Elris straightens up, and defiantly sets the photograph in the replicator.

Her commbadge CHIRPS.

OFFICER'S COMM VOICE  
Watson to Elris.

ELRIS  
Elris here.

OFFICER'S COMM VOICE  
Doctor Kensington has released the  
last set of samples to you. I'm  
going to bring them over right away.

Elris remembers.

ELRIS  
All right, thank you.

She quickly returns to the suitcase, and finds a hair clip. Dashing into the hallway, she delivers a sideways glance at the waiting photograph in her replicator.

CUT TO:

INT. RESEARCH CENTER -- CORRIDOR

A young human in a gold Starfleet uniform carries a crate through the busy, modern halls of the facility, past a Bolian, a Bajoran, two Vulcans, a Human...

He stops at a door and walks through.

INT. RESEARCH CENTER -- LAB -- CONTINUOUS

A large lab, reminiscent of the sickbay from the Enterprise. Everything is done in light blues or tinted glass, and it's all Starfleet style. Various officers work at different stations with test tubes or charts.

The human officer -- we'll call him ROBERT -- meanders through the consoles and lab stations to one in the back, where Elris stands looking at some data. Robert sets the crate on a table next to her.

ROBERT  
Morning, Elris.

ELRIS  
Morning, Robert.

Robert opens the crate, which is filled with dozens of tiny silver cylinders. He proceeds to place them in various slots of a large locker built into the wall and surrounded with equipment.

ELRIS (CONT'D)  
That's all the samples?

ROBERT  
Prepped and ready for your tests.  
Doctor Kensington didn't want to  
part with them.

Elris is concentrated on her work.

ELRIS  
Well, he's the one who wanted someone  
with inter-species experience to  
work on this research. If he wants  
me to help him find a treatment for  
Banthar's Syndrome, he's going to  
have to learn to share.

ROBERT  
I'm sure he understands that.

ELRIS  
We'll see...

ROBERT  
By the way, you have a package.  
From someone called Quanlan.

ELRIS  
(offhandedly)  
Quinlan.

ROBERT  
Something like that. If you want,  
I'll bring it by at lunch. It smells  
like cookies.

ELRIS  
(absentmindedly)  
Cookies?  
(shrugging)  
Well, they'd better all be there, or  
you're going to be in trouble.

ROBERT

I'll try to save one or two for you.  
Gotta run.

He closes the crate and is on his way.

ELRIS

(puzzled)  
Cookies?

Elris puts down the PADD she's looking at, and thinks.

CUT TO:

INT. RESEARCH CENTER -- DINING HALL

At a table sit ROBERT, Elris, and a middle-aged BETAZOID. Robert is just winding up an elaborate joke, when he notices that Elris isn't paying any attention she's staring at a group of Bajorans at another table, chatting animatedly among themselves...

ROBERT

Elris?

Elris returns from her own little world.

ELRIS

Sorry. What were you saying?

But before ROBERT can begin, he's interrupted by an older man, a Bolian, who stops by.

BOLIAN

Doctor Elris, how are those tests coming? You know that we've had six more patients registered just this morning.

ELRIS

I only got the samples this afternoon. I haven't even had a chance to properly catalog them yet.

BOLIAN

How soon do you think you can be done?

ELRIS

I don't know... ten days, maybe twelve?

BOLIAN

Can you make it six?

Elris doesn't reply; she just stares at him with a "you've got to be kidding" expression.

BOLIAN (CONT'D)

I know, I know. But I need you to take over Dr. Kensington's work for a few days.

ELRIS

Why?

BOLIAN

We've gotten an opportunity. It's all the way on the other side of the planet. The conditions will be perfect in about a week for the environmental tests, so we're sending him to a village in Rakantha province. He'll only be gone for a few days...

ELRIS

Rakantha?

BOLIAN

That's what I said. If you can't take over his work, I can get somebody else, but you know the most, so...

ELRIS

Uh... I don't know. These things take a lot of time.

The Bolian puts a hand on her shoulder.

BOLIAN

I understand. I'll see if someone else can do it.

He walks away, leaving Elris at the table.

After a quick thought, she runs after him, maneuvering between various tables.

ELRIS

Wait. Sir...

The Bolian turns around.

BOLIAN

Yes?

ELRIS

I... I think I'm completely qualified for this assignment.

BOLIAN

Yes, you are, but so is Dr. Kensington. And he has seniority.

ELRIS

Yes. But I'm from Rakantha. I know the territory, the weather, everything. I'm very familiar with it all.

Her boss eyes her.

BOLIAN

All right. Well, at least Dr. Kensington will be happy to get his samples back.

ELRIS

No doubt. Thank you, Sir, I really appreciate this.

BOLIAN

Well, just make sure you do a good job.

He walks off.

ROBERT

What's going on? You've been working 26 hours a day on this project, and now you're going to drop it all to take environmental readings for a week out in the countryside?

ELRIS

(more to herself than to Robert)

I'm the most qualified.  
(turning her back on Robert and leaving the table)

I guess I'm going to have to send those samples back. I've got to go repackage them.

She leaves without a further word.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. ALIEN SHIP -- BRIDGE

Y'LAN is studying a sensor console. We can see a planet rotating slowly in one part of the display; as the display zooms in, we see that it's Bajor.

YLAN

Intervention may be required. Prepare to alter course to the following coordinates...

Y'lan taps at the console with several tentacles. The display zooms further in, until we're at street level in the capital city of B'Havral.

Y'lan calls out a complex string of coordinates, and as he does, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. TRANSPORTER DEPOT -- MORNING

A grand old building in the middle of an equally grand city. Built of light brown brick, much of the lower part is open-air, like a train station. Here and there, glass enclosures on the platform encase transporter pads.

Hundreds upon hundreds of people mill about, searching for the appropriate transport pad. The occasional Starfleet officer makes his or her way through the crowd, as well as uniformed Bajorans.

EXT. STREET LEVEL -- BELOW THE PLATFORM

Here, the tall, imposing brick wall meets the narrow sidewalk far below the hustle and bustle of the transporter platform.

Fewer denizens are about on the sidewalk. A man on a BICYCLE whizzes by; further down, small children play in the street.

ELRIS appears around a corner. She totes three mid-size suitcases Starfleet issue.

We follow her down the street as she weaves skillfully in between the other pedestrians. She arrives at the STREET-LEVEL ENTRANCE, a tunnel-like opening. Elris walks through and finds herself in

INT. ENTRANCE AREA -- CONTINUOUS

Now she looks confused. She looks around, reading different signs and straining to peer over some of the taller heads blocking her view.

She locates a sign saying RAKANTHA and makes a beeline for the appropriate stairway.

EXT. PLATFORM

An open-air platform that provides a panoramic view of the lower surrounding buildings of the city.

Transporter pads surrounded by glass partitions dot the massive floor, as well as booths, counters, checks, and all the other things one would expect from an intercontinental transporter hub.

At one counter, a tall, handsome Bajoran CLERK takes passes and directs the "passengers" in his line. A BOLIAN makes his way through the crowd to the desk.

BOLIAN  
Rakantha Province. Jamahn City.

He hands the clerk his ticket, which is promptly slid through a machine.

CLERK  
Right over there. The attendant  
will take you immediately.

The Bolian thanks him and is on his way. Elris has been right behind him.

ELRIS  
I'm going to Rakantha.

CLERK  
Where in Rakantha?

ELRIS  
(handing him her ticket)  
Krahan'bal.

CLERK  
(pointing)  
Over there. The attendant should  
take you immediately.

Elris steps away from the counter and makes her way to the appropriate glass enclosure. An ATTENDANT, a young Bajoran woman, stands ready.

ATTENDANT  
Krahan'bal?

ELRIS  
Yes, that's where I'm headed.

ATTENDANT  
Step right through here.

Elris enters the glass enclosure and stands on the pad. The attendant touches a few controls, and Elris disappears in a fizzle of energy.

Meanwhile, back at the counter, another MAN approaches. He's Bajoran. A long scar runs down his cheek.

CLERK

Where to?

MAN

Krahan'bal. For three.

CLERK

(cheerily)

What do you know, two in a row.

MAN

(handing him the ticket)

I suppose you don't get that every day, do you?

CLERK

It's not the most popular destination. Right over there.

MAN

Thanks.

He locates a couple COMPANIONS, tall, shadowy men, and signals for them to follow him.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH -- AFTERNOON

We are on the outskirts of a tiny village -- a collection of a few dozen houses and a few other buildings.

There are no paved roads, just ones covered in gravel, as well as a light frost that seems to cover just about everything.

The village is well-kept, with neatly tended gardens.

The main road meanders out through a last set of tentative huts straddling the edge of the village and between two hills off into the distance.

At one point, the road widens, and here, ELRIS materializes, bags in hand. She takes in a deep breath of the sweet air.

As she looks around, Elris notes a second road heading off into the hills towards another village, maybe 50 kilometers away.

She stares towards it for a long moment, sighs, and heads for the nearby village.

CUT TO:

INT. ELRIS'S HUT

Small, utilitarian. We are in the living area, and there are only a couple doorways that might lead to other rooms. The walls are a reddish-brown brick and are minimally decorated. There is a small kitchen area in one corner and a couple windows. Not to mention the mess that accompanies an unpacking. Any and all available surfaces have been appropriated for field equipment test tube holders, cylinders containing various chemicals, measuring equipment, microscopes.

ELRIS enters from the back room, humming. She approaches one pile of cylinders and proceeds to load them onto a tray, sorting them as she goes.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Elris puts down the cylinder in hand and rushes over to greet the visitor. It's a young, blonde Bajoran woman named EZINMA.

ELRIS

Yes?

EZINMA

Hi, I'm Ezinma Balu. I'm your neighbor.

ELRIS

(smiles)

Hi. Come in.

EZINMA

Thank you!

She comes in, and holds up a basket of succulent-looking fruit.

EZINMA (CONT'D)

I brought a Moranma.

Elris stumbles.

ELRIS

Oh! Thank you. I guess I'm a little rusty on Customary Bajoran.

EZINMA

It's the traditional welcome gift.

ELRIS

Oh yes. Thank you.

She takes the basket and sets it on the table.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I apologize for the mess, I...

She turns to Ezinma.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I wasn't expecting company. Please, make yourself comfortable.

She clears off a couch, and they sit.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

I'd offer you something to drink, but I'm afraid I don't have anything.

EZINMA

That's okay.

(beat)

Tell me, What brings you to our village?

ELRIS

I...

(beat)

I'm a scientist. In Starfleet.

EZINMA

I thought that uniform looked familiar. We don't get many Starfleet officers out here.

(smiles)

Are you here permanently?

ELRIS

I'm afraid it's only a temporary post. Just for a week or so.

EZINMA

Oh.

(beat)

It's probably just as well.

ELRIS

What do you mean by that?

EZINMA

There's been some unrest in the area. There's a lot of sentiment against Cardassians in some of the other villages in the province.

ELRIS

Oh yes, I had heard. It's a shame.

EZINMA

Yes, it is. But not here. In Krahan'bal, race doesn't matter. In fact, there's a Cardassian family living at the monastery down the road.

ELRIS

(surprised)

A monastery?

EZINMA

Yes... The Krahan order of monks is headed there. Surely you've heard of them?

Elris pauses.

ELRIS

It's been a while since I've lived on Bajor. I'm actually from the Enterprise, and we don't get to this area of space that often.

EZINMA

The Enterprise?

ELRIS

The flagship of the fleet.

Ezinma's face is blank.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Well, I guess we have a lot to learn from each other.

EZINMA

Tell me -- on this Enterprise, are there many Bajorans?

ELRIS

Uh... a few. Why do you ask?

EZINMA

Well, forgive me, but I noticed you're not wearing your earring. But I suppose that's a dress code, isn't it?

Elris is at a loss for words.

EZINMA (CONT'D)

(smiles)

It's OK. Don't be embarrassed.

She lays a hand over her heart.

EZINMA (CONT'D)

It's what's in here that matters.

ELRIS

Of course.

She smiles weakly.

EZINMA

Well, I must be going.

Ezinma stands and starts towards the door. Elris follows.

ELRIS

Thank you for the fruit. And your kindness.

EZINMA

You're my neighbor, at least temporarily.

ELRIS

I'm looking forward to it.

Ezinma smiles, and steps out of the hut.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- MORNING

Elris steps into the square and looks around. It is small but busy, surrounded by a circle of huts similar to her own, but some of these are storefronts. At either end, a road winds off through the outskirts and off into the distant hills. The villagers are dressed for the weather, with heavy coats, scarves, and so forth. Elris comes first to a vegetable stand, manned by an elderly and absent-minded FARMER.

FARMER

Hello...

He looks up, and sees her face.

FARMER (CONT'D)

You must be Doctor Elris from Starfleet. Everyone's talking about you.

ELRIS

I see word travels fast.

FARMER

So it does.

(MORE)

FARMER (CONT'D)

(smiles)

Since you're new here, you have your pick of vegetables. Whatever you put in this basket...

He takes a mid-sized basket down from the nail in a post where it hung.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Is on the house.

ELRIS

(smiles)

Well, thank you. The corn looks delicious. How do you grow it in the winter?

FARMER

It's from my brother's farm. He's up in Farthka Province. He supplies me in the winter, when we can't grow it, and in the summer, I send whatever he needs down there.

She takes two ears of corn and various other produce.

ELRIS

I can't thank you enough.

Elris moves to another stand.

VENDOR

Can I sell you some coffee grounds?

ELRIS

(beat)

Yes, please.

The vendor scoops some grounds into a clear baggie and hands it to Elris.

VENDOR

That'll be twenty carra.

Elris fishes in her pocket for the appropriate change, finds it, and hands it to the smiling vendor.

ELRIS

Thank you. Have a good day.

She's about to continue her shopping when she runs into EZINMA.

EZINMA

Elris! So good to see you again. Shopping?

ELRIS

This time I'll have something for  
you to drink.

Ezinma laughs.

EZINMA

When I met you yesterday, you looked  
a little flustered, but now you look  
like you're feeling much better.

ELRIS

I am, thank you. Everyone here is  
so... welcoming.

EZINMA

You're surprised.

ELRIS

It's not exactly what I expected.  
(beat)

At the research center where I work,  
there aren't many Bajorans. The few  
that are there are... well, they're  
not hostile. But they don't greet  
you with open arms.

EZINMA

Well, out here, we do. Whether you're  
here for a week or a decade, you're  
one of us.

CUT TO:

INT. ELRIS'S HUT

Elris is working on an experiment when a KNOCK comes at the  
door.

She quickly hits a button on a tiny console and rushes over  
to open the door.

It's a Bajoran Monk, KAMEER, dressed in flowing green robes.

ELRIS

Hello...

KAMEER

(friendly)

I'm from the Monastery.

ELRIS

Come in.

She lets him in.

KAMEER

I wanted to bring you greetings from the Vedek. He would be pleased to meet a Starfleet officer.

ELRIS

Well, I...

KAMEER

There are services daily, at 9 o'clock, in the monastery.

ELRIS

Actually, I have duties to attend to in the morning.

She gestures to the various scientific equipment.

KAMEER

I see. We also have mishin-kara services in the afternoons...

ELRIS

(interrupting)

No, I have to be honest.

(beat)

I'm not really the religious type.

Kameer is shocked.

KAMEER

(confused)

Nobody said anything...

ELRIS

I know.

Kameer thinks.

KAMEER

Might I ask why you have no faith?

ELRIS

It's... well, the Prophets have nothing to say to me, and I have nothing to say to them.

KAMEER

That is impossible.

ELRIS

(beat)

I'm sorry, I don't want to get into this.

KAMEER

You are in denial of your identity.

(MORE)

KAMEER (CONT'D)

(beat)

You cannot live this way.

Beat.

KAMEER (CONT'D)

Still. The doors to the Celestial Temple are not closed to anyone. You will see the truth, and when you do, you are welcome to come to any service, any time. Until then, I'll be on my way...

He shows himself out.

Elris stands, staring at the retreating monk, and we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. HILLS -- AFTERNOON

The trio of men from the train station have joined a larger group near a grove of trees.

LEADER

I've tracked them. They're harbored  
at the Krahan Monastery.

FAT MAN

How long have they been here?

LEADER

Two weeks.

SHORT WOMAN

When do we strike?

LEADER

This afternoon. Gebber!

A young boy -- presumably Gebber -- steps forth, carrying a suitcase. He opens it, to reveal a row of shiny PHASERS. The members of the group start passing them around.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- MORNING

Elris arrives in the marketplace again, basket in hand. She approaches the vegetable stand we saw before.

ELRIS

I'd like some green beans...

FARMER

(gruff)  
Right here.

ELRIS

Uh, thanks.

She scoops a handful into a bag, which she places in her basket.

FARMER

That'll be fifteen carra.

He holds out his hand, unsmiling. Elris hands him the change.

ELRIS

The corn was excellent, by the way.

FARMER

Good.

His attention turns to barrels of produce below the stand. Elris looks at him for a moment, then continues her rounds.

She stops in front of a small storefront.

The sign is written in Bajoran, but from the dresses hanging in the window, it's clear that this is a clothing shop. She enters.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP -- CONTINUOUS

A tiny shop, not more than a few meters wide and long. Along the walls are a few racks of clothing; in the middle, a small pedestal. In the back, there is a counter, and behind it, the TAILOR.

The squeaky door opens, and Elris steps over the threshold. The tailor flashes her a quick smile, then returns to the book he's reading.

She examines some dresses on one rack, and soon finds a flowing orange gown that catches her fancy.

Elris holds the gown up to her figure, but it's too small.

ELRIS

Excuse me, sir. I was admiring this gown, and was wondering if perhaps you had it in other sizes?

TAILOR

No.

He returns to his book.

ELRIS

Well, maybe you could... tailor one for me?

TAILOR

Uh, sorry.  
(beat)  
I just can't.

Elris puts the dress on the rack again.

ELRIS

Well...  
(sarcastic)  
Thank you.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- CONTINUOUS

Ezinma is making her own shopping rounds. She is at the baker's stand admiring the golden loaves of bread when her voice is called.

ELRIS

Ezinma!

Ezinma looks around, checking if anyone else is in earshot.

EZINMA

(uncomfortably)

Elris.

ELRIS

I'd like to talk to you.

Ezinma sighs, and turns to face Elris.

EZINMA

What is it?

ELRIS

What happened?

EZINMA

(purse-lipped)

Nothing.

ELRIS

No. Yesterday, everybody was eager to do business with me. And today, I can't coax a smile out of anybody.

EZINMA

Well, these things happen. I don't know. I'm not a psychologist.

Ezinma turns to go on her way, but Elris blocks her path.

ELRIS

(firm)

Yesterday, a monk visited me. He tried to get me to come to services. I declined. And all of a sudden, I'm like a leper.

Ezinma is becoming angry.

EZINMA

Well, this is a town for the faithful. For true Bajorans who have faith in the Prophets.

(MORE)

EZINMA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Even the Cardassian family in the monastery has come to share our faith. They are aliens, and yet they're part of our community in a way you won't ever be.

ELRIS

I thought this town was accepted people who are different. I see I was wrong.

She stalks off.

Ezinma runs after her.

EZINMA

Wait! Perhaps that was too harsh. You can... you could be a part of us. The Celestial Temple...

ELRIS

...is not closed to anyone. I've heard that before. But it is closed to me. One day you'll understand. You're young now. But someday you'll lose something... someone... important to you. And you'll beg the Prophets to help you, and they won't answer you. Just like they didn't answer me.

Elris turns away from Ezinma and heads for her hut.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD -- NEAR VINEYARD -- MORNING

Elris carries a Starfleet lab kit down the dirt road outside the village. Along the road runs a ditch, and beyond the ditch is a small VINEYARD.

Rows of grapevines cover the frozen soil, awaiting the growing season.

Elris admires the scene, but then kneels down to complete her work.

She takes a few instruments out of the kit, but then turns back to the vineyard when she hears an old man (KENNOR) speaking.

KENNOR

Morning.

The man is dressed in simple clothing, and his smile is warm. His skin has probably seen the sun every day of his life, and he wears a large straw hat with a wide brim. His speech is slow and leisurely.

ELRIS

(a little somber)

Morning.

She smiles weakly, and turns back to her work. She takes a vial of purple liquid out of the case, and sets it in a holder. Then, Elris carefully unscrews the cap, letting the country air seep in.

A few bubbles appear around the edges of the liquid.

KENNOR

You're not from around here.

Elris doesn't turn around.

ELRIS

I'm from B'Havral. What tipped you off?

She takes a device that looks like a meat thermometer out of her kit and sticks it into the liquid, looking at the dial.

KENNOR

Well, nobody around here makes their living sticking sticks into wine.

Elris records some numbers on a PADD.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

And your clothes speak volumes.

She looks down at her Starfleet garb.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

And your skin is fair.

Elris adjusts the thermometer device, then turns to face Kennor.

ELRIS

Anything else?

Kennor shakes his head. Elris smiles.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Well, if you're wondering, I'm a scientist.

KENNOR

I can see that.

ELRIS

I'm doing some field testing.

KENNOR

My name's Kennor.

ELRIS

I'm Elris.

Kennor coughs.

KENNOR

You done with that test of yours?

Elris looks back at the vial.

ELRIS

No, it'll take about thirty minutes before I have to take more measurements.

KENNOR

Good. I need help. Come on in.

He nods, and twenty feet down the fence, there is a gate.

Elris looks at him curiously, shrugs, and follows him through the gate. Kennor leads her to a row of vines.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

We had a heavy rainstorm last week. Whenever that happens, some of the leaves turn brown.

ELRIS

Yes, the water destroys the pigmentation, so...

KENNOR

Yes. And so the leaves have to go. I'd really appreciate it if you could help me weed out the leaves. You take that side, I'll take this side, and we'll make small talk.

Elris walks around to the next aisle, and soon the two are picking out brown leaves from the grapevine in between them.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

I see you came all the way out here to do your tests. It's a half a mile from the village.

ELRIS

Well, I guess I just enjoy solitude.

KENNOR

(laughs)

Sorry to ruin it for you.

(beat)

But I'm guessing it's something more than that.

Elris looks up in trepidation.

ELRIS

(beat)

Why do you say that?

KENNOR

You stopped here, didn't you?

ELRIS

(smiles)

Yes.

KENNOR

You could have done your work in the village.

ELRIS

Well, I like the country air.

Kennor backs down.

KENNOR

How long have you been stationed on Bajor?

ELRIS

Not long.

(smiles)

I actually work on a starship. The Enterprise.

She holds up a handful of brown leaves.

KENNOR

Just toss 'em on the ground. They're good fertilizer.

ELRIS

I was born in this province, though.

KENNOR

Why did you leave home?

ELRIS

Well, I wanted to see space, explore the stars. And I wanted to pursue a career in medicine.

(MORE)

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Starfleet has a great medical school,  
and I'm on the frontier of medicine.  
I've worked on Cardassians,  
Klingons... What?

Kennor is chuckling.

KENNOR

That's not what I meant.

ELRIS

Then what did you mean?

KENNOR

You say you work on a starship.

ELRIS

Well, not at the moment, but...

KENNOR

You speak as if your stint on Bajor  
is only a temporary assignment, as  
if you'll return to the Enterprise.

Elris is at a loss.

ELRIS

No, not to the Enterprise.

(beat)

There were too many things that didn't  
work out.

KENNOR

Too much frontier medicine?

Elris is silent as she strips the bad leaves from the vine.

ELRIS

Relationships gone bad. And it's an  
unstable environment at the moment.

KENNOR

Weekly thunderstorms?

ELRIS

Something like that.

Kennor smiles sadly.

KENNOR

I know what you mean.

Suddenly, we hear sounds of an EXPLOSION. Both turn to look  
towards the village.

Off in the distance, there is a clear view of a cluster of hills adjacent to the village.

A PHASER BLAST erupts. And then another. And another.

On the distant battle, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. HILLS -- OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE -- DAY

Elris and Kennor rush towards the sounds of battle. Several VILLAGERS, including the Tailor we met earlier, are behind cover, crouching behind rocks. All have phasers. A couple of hundred meters away, also behind cover, are the men from the train station, and their allies from the village.

Phaser blasts flash out, doing more damage to the local scenery than to any of the combatants -- for the most part, no one's aim is especially good.

One of the villagers, call him Marron, hears the approach of Kennor and Elris, turns to identify them, and visibly relaxes when he sees Kennor.

MARRON

They're friendly! Give them weapons!

Another of the villagers tosses phasers to a surprised Elris and Kennor.

MARRON (CONT'D)

Get down!

Elris and Kennor take cover as a phaser blast barely misses Elris.

From behind cover, Elris looks all around, surveying the scene. She's no soldier, but years in Starfleet have taught her a thing or two about tactics.

She shakes her head, noting that the attackers are in a much better position than the villagers. They're a bit higher up, and they've got a nice cross fire set up. After another moment, she notices a rocky path that starts behind her, and winds around. We follow her gaze as she sees that the path eventually wends its way behind the attackers.

As phaser blasts echo through the hills, Elris surveys the villagers again. She notes a pair of particularly athletic-looking young men. She whistles and gestures to them, and mouths: "Yes, you!"

The two men turn momentarily to Marron, who nods his assent, and then, staying under cover the whole time, make their way towards Elris.

Elris gestures to the rocky path, and then to its destination behind the attackers. The men nod; they understand.

ELRIS  
(whispering)  
On three...

The two men are ready, as Elris begins the count:

ELRIS (CONT'D)  
One... two...

On "two," Elris sticks her head above the rock she's hiding behind, lets out a wild SHOUT, and begins firing randomly in the direction of the attackers. The other villagers follow suit.

ELRIS (CONT'D)  
(still whispering)  
Three!

The two young men set off, and they're quickly out of view. The attackers, apparently, didn't notice them.

The battle continues, with shots blasting back and forth. We can see movement among the attackers one man, who might be the Leader from the train station (we can't tell for sure at this distance) is moving behind the rest of the attackers, heading around to another path that leads to the village. All of the villagers are too caught up in the phaser battle to notice him, though.

Finally, Elris sees that the two young men are in position; they're under cover behind and slightly above the attackers.

ELRIS (CONT'D)  
(to Marron, whispering)  
Any minute now...

And just as she says it, confusion erupts from the attacking position as the young men open fire from behind them!

Three attackers are felled immediately, and they break ranks. A few open fire on the young men, but the rest try to retreat. Most of them are hit by phaser shots from the villagers, but their wild return fire does hit one villager, who screams out in pain and collapses. Marron sees this, and cries out.

MARRON  
Karra!

He forgets about the battle and heads straight for her.

We see that only two of the attackers manage to escape, and they seem to be the other two men from the train station.

Elris rushes over to check on the wounded villager, Karra, a young woman who bears a strong resemblance to Marron -- she's his daughter.

Elris sets right to work; she's unconscious but definitely alive.

Some of the other villagers go out to see if their attackers are merely unconscious or dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- AFTERNOON

There is much hustle and bustle; the villagers are preparing a feast to celebrate their victory over the "bandits."

A group of monks are aiding in the preparations. There is joy in the air as they go about their work. The Tailor from the clothes shop approaches one of the Monks as he is setting up a makeshift altar.

TAILOR

Thank you for coming out to help us  
thank the Prophets.

MONK

It's our duty.. and our pleasure.  
The Prophets were most kind to the  
village today.

Similar conversations are taking place all around as the preparations go on.

CUT TO:

INT. ELRIS'S HUT

Everything is organized and set to rights now; the chaos we last saw in Elris's temporary home has been banished.

Elris herself is concentrating on her work, examining test tube after test tube, and carefully noting data from each one as she does.

Every so often, though, she steals a glance outside at the preparations for the feast, and we can clearly read the expression on her face: she's waiting for someone to come over and invite her.

As she continues to work, the desired invitation is not forthcoming.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- TWILIGHT

Bonfires are burning, meat is roasting, drinks are flowing. Seemingly the entire village is in the square celebrating. We hear singing, with most of the villagers joining in.

INT. ELRIS'S HUT

Elris has put down her work; she's watching the celebration with a look of resignation on her face.

After a moment or two, she comes to a decision. She turns her back to us, and begins to remove her uniform.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- TWILIGHT

Our focus is on Elris's hut, as she emerges wearing a simple, brightly colored dress -- very similar to what's being worn by nearly all the village women.

Elris heads straight for a table full of food, and villagers clear a path for her but none of them speak to her, or even look her in the eye.

As she looks over the food, the villagers turn their backs to her and resume their singing and celebrating. Elris, visibly deflated, doesn't take any food; she turns around and walks away.

She's headed out, towards Kennor's vineyard.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD -- NEAR VINEYARD -- NIGHT

Elris approaches the vineyard, and she sees Kennor loading up a cart with bottles.

When he spots her, Kennor stops what he's doing.

KENNOR

I was just planning to go to the celebration. They're waiting for my wine.

(he smiles)

But they can wait a little longer.

Kennor goes to Elris, takes her arm.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

Here, come on.

Kennor leads Elris towards a large hut a couple of hundred meters off the road.

CUT TO:

INT. KENNOR'S HOME

Kennor's home is very clearly the residence of a man who's lived alone for a very long time.

There is clutter everywhere: clothes, cooking utensils, and various implements of winemaking are scattered about.

KENNOR

I don't get many visitors.

ELRIS

No, it's fine. It's got a certain... charm?

Kennor sits at a small table, and gestures for Elris to join him. She does.

KENNOR

My wife would have called it "nicely lived in."

ELRIS

When did she die?

KENNOR

Fifteen years ago. It was Banthar's Syndrome. The doctors were all very surprised at the time.

ELRIS

Back then, they thought it only affected people with at least some Cardassian ancestry. It must have been quite a shock.

KENNOR

It was.

ELRIS

You know, that's exactly what I was working on before I came out here. It was good work, but the opportunity to come out here... I grew up in Krahan'Tak, did you know that?

Kennor smiles, pats Elris's hand.

KENNOR

I assumed it was something like that. You do have a bit of the Krahan'Tak look about you. I take it your family is still there?

ELRIS

My parents. I was hoping to visit them...

KENNOR

But?

ELRIS

They're just like the people here.

KENNOR

They can't accept that your faith is... uncertain?

ELRIS

I'm very certain about my faith. I don't have any.

KENNOR

I see.

Elris looks at Kennor suspiciously.

ELRIS

You can't accept it either, can you?

KENNOR

No, that's not it. It's just that... you're very definite about the matter. You're young yet, I expect that explains it. When you're young, things are so much more certain. I'm somewhat uncertain in my own faith.

Elris notes that Kennor's wearing the traditional earring. He follows her gaze.

KENNOR (*CONT'D*)

It's... tradition, I guess you could say. And it makes life easier in the village. I wear the earring, I attend services and I sit quietly in the back. The monks know, I think. Tamalan -- he's the head of the order -- he's out here once a month to talk to me. To educate me, I suppose. But the villagers, I don't advertise my doubts to them, and they don't ask.

ELRIS

But you're just lying to yourself!

Kennor stands, paces a bit.

KENNOR

Yes, I guess I am. But I've learned that sometimes a little lie makes life much simpler.

Elris starts to respond, but Kennor doesn't let her.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

I know... you can't bring yourself to do that yourself. I respect that... it marks you as a better person than me. Stronger, anyway. And there are moments when I can't look myself in the mirror, and you will never have one of those moments. But there really aren't so many of them.

ELRIS

You make it sound so simple.

KENNOR

It's not. But I've had a lifetime to get used to it. My wife... she was much more religious than I ever was. That's one reason we settled here. It was her choice. I could voice my doubts, and make enemies of everyone in the village, and lose my wife, or I could wear an earring and go to two services a week, and keep my doubts to myself, and have a happy life the rest of the time. After a while, it becomes a habit.

ELRIS

I can't do that.

KENNOR

I know.

Before Kennor can say anything more, there's a loud EXPLOSION outside. Kennor and Elris rush outside, and off in the distance, from the direction of the monastery, they and we can see an ominous cloud of smoke rising, and with that, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. HILLS -- OUTSIDE THE MONASTERY -- NIGHT

The Krahan monastery is set into and atop a little hill; it's reminiscent of a small castle as much as anything.

Seemingly the entire village of Krahan'Bal is just outside the grounds of the monastery, staring at the ugly, jagged hole torn in one wall, and the smoke still wafting out of it.

Some of the villagers are assisting the robed monks in putting out the last embers of the fire caused by the explosion.

Besides all the Bajorans, there are two Cardassians: a middle-aged man and a young girl, maybe five years old, standing right outside the main gates of the monastery, looking shell-shocked. One of the monks, an older, almost bald man, is with them.

Elris and Kennor arrive on the scene. Elris immediately heads for the gates of the monastery.

ELRIS

How many wounded are there?

The old, bald monk -- Tamalan, the head of the order, breaks away from the Cardassians to answer Elris.

TAMALAN

Just one. Olana...

(gestures to the  
Cardassian father  
and daughter)

His wife... her mother. Three of our brothers were killed. And several more of the monks were injured, but all of them have been treated. We don't know what to do for Olana... she requires more care than we can provide.

ELRIS

Let me see her.

Tamalan gestures for Elris to follow him, and heads into the monastery; some of the villagers glare at her, but Elris ignores them and follows the monk inside.

CUT TO:

INT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- DINING HALL -- NIGHT

The dining hall is a long room, maybe twenty meters in length. There's a gaping hole in one wall, through which snow is blowing inside. We see the remnants of the three long dining tables, as well as various other debris scattered throughout the hall, and more than a few bloodstains on the floor and walls.

Two monks are tending to the injured Cardassian, OLANA.

TAMALAN

We didn't think it was safe to move her. We thought she might have spinal injuries.

Elris makes her way towards Olana, gingerly stepping over debris as she does.

ELRIS

That was the right decision.

Elris leans over the Cardassian, assessing her condition.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

(to one of the monks  
attending Olana)

Do you have any B'Hata powder in your kitchens?

The monk nods.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Please bring me some. About...  
(gestures with her  
thumb and forefinger)  
...this much.

The monk leaves immediately.

TAMALAN

You're going to wake her up? Is that wise?

ELRIS

Not ideally. But this is not an ideal situation, and it's the best option I can think of.

The monk returns momentarily with a small jar full of brown powder. He hands it to Elris, who takes a pinch out and holds it up to Olana's nose.

The Cardassian stirs and her eyes flutter open.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

It's going to be all right. Just stay there.

Elris holds a hand on Olana's chest to keep her down.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Good. Flex your hands for me.

Olana does so.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

Now try and move your feet. Left foot first.

Olana again does so.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

And the right one...

This time Olana doesn't; she winces in pain.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

No spinal damage.

(to one of the monks)

Do you have anything we can use for a stretcher?

The monk nods and goes off. A second monk goes with him to help.

Meanwhile, Olana coughs violently, and she spits out blood as she does so.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

As soon as they get back here, we'll take you someplace nice and warm...

Olana meets Elris's gaze, tries to smile, and then falls unconscious.

CUT TO:

INT. KRAHAN MONASTERY --- TAMALAN'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Olana has been taken to Tamalan's personal room and is currently laying on his bed, unconscious. Tamalan and three of his monks are watching with great concern, as is Olana's husband, BARAL.

ELRIS

One of her lungs is damaged. I'm pretty certain there's a piece of shrapnel in there, and I'm going to have to take it out.

BARAL

Can it wait until she can be taken to a proper medical facility?

ELRIS

If she were Bajoran, probably. Her other lung would be able to handle the load. But the Cardassian respiratory system is different. You need both lungs working, or the first thing that happens is the oxygen doesn't get to the brain. We've got half an hour, maybe, before your wife will start to suffer irreversible brain damage.

BARAL

I see. In that case, her life is in your hands, Doctor.

ELRIS

Tamalan, I'll need your help. And I think someone should take Baral out. He won't want to watch this.

The monks do as Elris asks. One of them gently escorts Baral out of the room, while Tamalan goes to Elris's side.

We see Elris go through the surgery in a series of quick shots:

She starts to cut Olana's chest open...

Her gloved hands are inside Olana's chest cavity up to the wrist...

She holds a one or two inch sliver of metal up after pulling it from Olana's lung...

She sews up the incision...

CUT TO:

INT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Baral is waiting for news, a pained expression on his face.

A door opens up, and Elris and Tamalan emerge, drained but with the hint of a smile on both their faces.

BARAL

You were successful?

ELRIS

Yes. She should make a full recovery. It's not going to be quick, but she will be back to normal. There shouldn't be any permanent damage.

BARAL

Thank you, Doctor. Anything I can do to repay you...

ELRIS

It's my job. You don't need to repay anything.

TAMALAN

That was magnificent. The Prophets have truly blessed you with a gift.

Elris bites her tongue; she's too tired to have this argument again.

ELRIS

Thank you. That was very tiring. I need to go back and sleep.

TAMALAN

Of course. I'll have someone escort you home.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE KRAHAN MONASTERY -- NIGHT

Baral is already outside, telling his daughter the good news. Several of the villagers are clustered around him as well.

Elris emerges, with one of the monks leading her out. They head away from Baral and the villagers and back towards the village itself.

CUT TO:

INT. ELRIS'S HUT -- MORNING

Elris rises slowly from her bed. She's still wearing the same clothes she had on last night. She makes her way to the door, peeks out.

She sees that the villagers are already at work. Tools and blocks of stone are being assembled in a pile in the center of the village; they're wasting no time in repairing the monastery.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- MORNING

Elris emerges from her hut, dressed in local-style clothes again.

She approaches Marron, the villager from the phaser battle, who's loading a cart full of stone to take up to the monastery.

Marron notices Elris, and turns to her.

MARRON

Yes?

ELRIS

I'd like to help.

MARRON

We have everyone we need already.  
Your help isn't required.

ELRIS

Last night...

MARRON

Last night your help was required.  
Today it's not. Good day.

With that, Marron turns away from Elris, and on her sad and puzzled expression, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- MORNING

Work continues apace on the repairs to the monastery. Villagers and monks are mending the breached wall, clearing debris, and going about a myriad of other tasks.

We follow one young Bajoran... a boy we saw earlier: Gebber. He scurries away from the monastery, and after a moment or two, he comes to a thicket of trees, where, waiting for him is the terrorist Leader from Act Three.

LEADER

Tell me.

GEBBER

The Cardassians live.

LEADER

All of them?

GEBBER

Yes, sir. The doctor from Starfleet, she saved the Cardassian woman. The other two weren't hurt at all.

LEADER

Damn. We won't get another chance now.

(thinks)

Gebber, where is the phaser you were given?

GEBBER

I hid it, sir.

LEADER

Well, go find it. We still have a lesson to teach here.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE -- MORNING

A few villagers are here, preparing food to be brought out to the workers at the monastery. We recognize one of them: Ezinma.

Elris approaches her.

EZINMA

Yes?

ELRIS

What more do you want from me? I helped when you were attacked, and I saved the Cardassian in the monastery. What else do I have to do?

EZINMA

It's not what you do. It's what you are. You turn your back on the Prophets. How can we accept you when you don't accept the most important part of who you are?

ELRIS

I see.

EZINMA

I'm sorry. We are all grateful for your help. But it doesn't make you one of us. It doesn't make you a true Bajoran. That's why you can't help rebuild the monastery. It's a job for Bajorans.

Elris shakes her head and walks off. She heads for her hut.

CUT TO:

EXT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- AFTERNOON

The repairs continue.

There's a new group of villagers; they're dressed slightly differently, generally in darker colors, and as we see their faces, we can see that they more closely resemble Elris than they do the residents of Krahan'Bal.

We also see the Cardassian Baral, helping out in the repairs.

Elris walks into the scene, back in her Starfleet uniform.

Baral spots her.

BARAL

Doctor!

He puts his tools aside to approach Elris.

ELRIS

Baral.

BARAL

Doctor, I must thank you again. Olana is already regaining her strength.

ELRIS

I'm glad. That's what I came to see.

Baral takes her arm and leads her into the monastery. We follow them inside.

INT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- MAIN HALL -- AFTERNOON

BARAL

Did you see all the people from Krahan'Tak? They've come to help in the repairs.

ELRIS

I hadn't noticed.

BARAL

One of them asked about you. She wanted to know all about you...

ELRIS

What did she look like?

BARAL

She looked... very much like you. If I didn't know, I'd have guessed she was your mother.

ELRIS

She probably was. What did she want to know, specifically?

BARAL

How you looked. Were you attending services. What was the state of your Pagh. She was very concerned about you.

Elris isn't surprised, but she is disappointed at that.

At this point, they're approaching Tamalan's room. The door is open, and we can see Olana resting on the bed, half awake.

Elris and Baral enter.

ELRIS

I have to check on Olana.

She leaves Baral's side to examine Olana.

CUT TO:

EXT. KRAHAN MONASTERY -- AFTERNOON

The work of repairing the breached wall is nearly complete.

Among the villagers hard at work, we can see the boy Gebber scuttling about. He keeps one eye on the entrance to the monastery at all times.

His attention perks up as Elris emerges from the monastery.

He begins to head for her, one hand inside his heavy coat. As he gets within fifteen meters of Elris, he breaks into a run, and he pulls a phaser out of his coat.

Elris freezes; she is out in the open, nowhere to take cover and nothing to defend herself with.

Before the boy can fire, a large stone is hurled at him. It misses, but it breaks his stride for a moment, and that's all that's necessary for a pair of villagers to get to him and wrestle him to the ground.

All the villagers gather around, shocked. One of them is Marron, who approaches Gebber, who's still pinned on the ground.

MARRON

Why, boy?

GEBBER

She helped the Cardassian. She has to be punished. All of you do.

MARRON

You're the only one who will be punished.

(to the men holding  
Gebber)

Take him to Tamalan. We'll let him decide what's to be done.

The men do as Marron orders.

ELRIS

(catching her breath)

Thank you.

MARRON

We are not barbarians, Doctor. You are not one of us, but we will not stand by and let a stranger be harmed.

ELRIS

Of course not.

The villagers break up and get back to work. Elris doesn't say another word; she walks off away from the monastery.

CUT TO:

EXT. VINEYARD -- AFTERNOON

Elris walks towards Kennor's vineyard as a light snow falls around her.

Kennor is hard at work, but when he spots Elris he stops what he's doing.

KENNOR

Doctor Elris.

(beat)

I take it your help was no longer required at the monastery?

ELRIS

It's a job for true Bajorans.

KENNOR

I'm sorry.

Kennor rises, leads Elris towards his home.

KENNOR (CONT'D)

I was just about to prepare my dinner.  
Will you join me?

Elris doesn't answer, but she lets him guide her into his house.

INT. KENNOR'S HOME -- AFTERNOON

Kennor is cooking over a small fire.

ELRIS

Maybe they're right.

KENNOR

About what?

ELRIS

That I'm not a true Bajoran. Maybe without the Prophets, it's impossible to really be Bajoran.

KENNOR

That's foolishness, and you know it. The people here believe that, because their fathers taught it to them, and their fathers to them, and on and on. But that doesn't make it true.

As Kennor speaks, he puts out his fire and ladles out what looks like soup into two bowls. He brings them over to the table where Elris is sitting.

ELRIS

Maybe.

KENNOR

Not maybe. What you did makes you a true Bajoran. When you helped in that battle. And then again at the monastery, saving the Cardassian woman. Those acts are what marks you, not the misguided beliefs of a few isolated villagers.

Elris considers that for a moment or two, as she eats her soup. Finally:

ELRIS

My mother was there.

KENNOR

Ah.

ELRIS

She asked about me. Did I go to services. Did I have my faith again. Not a word about my career, my marriage, how I feel. None of that.

KENNOR

I'm sorry.

ELRIS

So am I.

KENNOR

What will you do now?

ELRIS

I have three more days here. I have to finish the project. I'm not going to run away. I ran from the Enterprise, and I ran out here. At least this time I'll finish what I started.

KENNOR

And then?

ELRIS

I don't know.

With that, we linger for a moment more as they eat in silence, and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH -- MORNING

We're at the same path outside the village where Elris first arrived.

She's here, with her luggage. Kennor is with her.

KENNOR

I'll miss you.

ELRIS

No one else here will. Three days and not one of them said a word to me, except you.

KENNOR

It's their loss.

ELRIS

Thank you.

KENNOR

Be well, Doctor Elris.

ELRIS

Lea.

KENNOR

That's a pretty name. It suits you.  
Be well, Lea.

Kennor shakes Elris's hand and backs off a few steps.

ELRIS

Thank you. Take care of yourself.  
(Tapping her  
communicator)  
Transporter station... one to  
transport to B'Havral.

An instant later, Elris and her bags vanish in a dazzle of transporter effect.

CUT TO:

INT. ALIEN SHIP -- BRIDGE

Y'lan is still at his sensor console.

COMM VOICE

How much longer will this take?

Y'LAN

As long as is required. I expect you will be relieved to know that intervention will not be necessary on Bajor. The situation has resolved itself.

COMM VOICE

Shall I resume course to Earth?

Y'LAN

Do so immediately. Intervention will very likely be required there, and soon...

And on that, we CUT TO...

CUT TO:

EXT. BAJORAN CITY -- NIGHT

We see the Bajoran capital all lit up. The Starfleet building stands out near the center of the city.

EXT. RESEARCH CENTER -- ROOF -- NIGHT

Elris, bundled in a heavy coat, is on the roof staring up at the stars. We can see her breath; it's quite cold.

As she stares up, another figure emerges from the Center and onto the roof. It's Robert. He approaches her, carrying a small box.

ROBERT

Elris!

ELRIS

Robert, what are you doing up here?

ROBERT

I was about to ask you the same question.

ELRIS

(pointing to the box)  
What's that?

Robert hands the box to Elris.

ROBERT

It's your package. From Quanlan.

ELRIS

Quinlan.

ROBERT

Right. Anyway, I forgot to give it to you before you left for the countryside.

Elris stares at the box quizzically, and finally opens it.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

What is it?

Elris pulls a small piece of paper out of the box.

ELRIS

(reading)

"Dear Doctor. You left this on board the Enterprise. I retrieved it before she went into drydock. I thought you'd want it. Your friend, Jennifer Quinlan."

As we close on the box, we can see that it's several small personal effects: jewelry, some papers, and a few photographs. Elris takes one of the photos out and stares intently at it.

We can see that it's a photo of Elris and Quinlan. In the photo, both are smiling.

ROBERT

So?

ELRIS

It's... nothing important. Just some personal items.

ROBERT

And you didn't answer my other question. What are you doing up here?

ELRIS

Deciding what I'm going to do. But I think I've figured it out.

ROBERT

Yes?

ELRIS

I'm going home.

ROBERT

Home? You are home, aren't you?

ELRIS

No. This isn't home. Not anymore. Home is...

She points up into the sky.

ELRIS (CONT'D)

See there? That's where Earth is.

ROBERT

Earth? I don't understand.

ELRIS

Home isn't Earth, exactly. Home is orbiting Earth, in the drydock.

Elris turns her attention back to the photo in her hand.

ROBERT

The Enterprise?

ELRIS

I should have known it all along.  
But better late than never...

And on that, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END