

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Destiny"

by

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A NOTE ON THIS DOCUMENT: This is the spec draft of "Destiny" purchased by "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" and Paramount Television. We wrote it with WordPerfect for Mac 2.1 and the file doesn't open on most word processors today so I imported it into Final Draft and roughly corrected the formatting. The dialogue and action are exactly as we submitted them. Page breaks, headers and "Continueds," not so much.

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-- David S. Cohen  
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STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Destiny"

TEASER

INT. PROMENADE

We hear an eerie metallic sound. A knot of robed Bajoran monks and Bajoran civilians are gathered, clearly waiting for something. The eerie sound comes from a young monk playing a set of tall conical metal chimes. KIRA and DAX, in dress uniform, wait at the back.

KIRA  
He's not coming.

DAX  
He'll be here.

KIRA  
A bottle of synth-ale says he won't.

DAX  
Make it a case. He'd rather be here than escorting Admiral Marlowe on an inspection tour.

KIRA  
He doesn't like dealing with Vedeks. Especially when they call him "Emissary."

DAX  
He just doesn't like having his earlobe squeezed.

She shoots Dax a "that's-not-funny" look. SISKO comes around a corner, side by side with Starfleet Admiral Aaron MARLOWE. Marlowe is human, middle-aged, energetic and avuncular, with a bureaucrat's fondness for order.

DAX (CONT'D)  
(aside, to Kira)  
Melvonian Stout. Extra Dark.

MARLOWE

...I'd like to do an exterior inspection as soon as possible, just the two of us.

SISKO

The sooner the better, before that comet gets too close.

They join Kira and Dax.

DAX

I'm glad you made it in time to greet Vedek Baz, Benjamin. He specifically asked to meet the Emissary.

MARLOWE

You must get a lot of that, eh Commander?

SISKO

Too much, I'm afraid. I try to discourage it.

MARLOWE

Not very successfully, I see.

A commotion rises in the crowd and the Bajorans surge forward. Several monks form a cordon. Dax adjusts her uniform.

DAX

How do I look?

KIRA

Don't worry about it.

Out of a corridor steps Vedek BAZ, a frail, elderly monk with solid white blind eyes, led by a female monk in her early 30's. The monks begin to chant and lay their hands in turn on Baz as he passes. Baz accepts their adulation humbly.

Marlowe gets a good look at Baz, his face darkens and he grabs Sisko's arm, pulling him back.

MARLOWE

We're doing that exterior inspection now.

SISKO

This will only take a moment...

MARLOWE

I said now.

Sisko offers a puzzled look but nods and leans forward to Kira and Dax.

SISKO

Give the Vedek my apologies, Major.

Dax frowns.

DAX

I don't think that's wise,  
Benjamin.

SISKO

I know. Tell him I was called away  
on urgent business.

KIRA

Well, Commander, I'd be happy to  
brief you later. Over an ale or  
two.

SISKO

Thank you, Major.

Sisko and Marlowe step back and around a corner.

KIRA

(aside, to Dax)  
Algolian Mead. Special Reserve.

Baz's guide brings him to Kira and Dax.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Vedek Baz, welcome to Deep Space  
Nine. I'm Major Kira Nerys, and  
this is Lieutenant Jadzia Dax, our  
science officer.

BAZ

Thank you, child, for letting us be  
here. (indicating his guide) This  
is Jerone.

JERONE nervously hands Kira a set of small conical chimes.

JERONE

I'm so glad to finally meet you,  
Nerys.

KIRA

I'm afraid you picked a difficult time to visit, Vedek. Comet Herald is going to pass near the station today, and shipping's about to be suspended. You'll be stuck here.

BAZ

We are here to witness the Herald's passing. We must stay until his call is answered. Is the Emissary here?

DAX

Commander Sisko was detained by urgent business.

BAZ

Ah, his ordeal has begun. I will not trouble him.

DAX

Ordeal?

BAZ

I hope you will join us to hear the Prophets sing.

Kira stops, thunderstruck.

KIRA

When? When will the Prophets sing?

BAZ

Today. Excuse me, but we have much to prepare.

Baz moves away with Jerone, leaving Kira and Dax behind. Kira gapes after him.

DAX

What's wrong?

KIRA

There's going to be... a miracle here.

Dax's puzzled look, we fade out.

END TEASER

ACT I

INT. RUNABOUT - IN SPACE NEAR DS9 - SISKO AND MARLOWE

alone in the Runabout, Marlowe at the controls. We see a comet through the forward window, its tail casting a slight haze across the nearby space.

MARLOWE

Remarkable. Even to an old space hand it looks like magic. Any chance I can see this wormhole of yours, Commander?

SISKO

There's a ship due to come through soon.

Marlowe steers away from the comet, banking too sharply. Sisko grips his chair, clearly irritated, but says nothing.

MARLOWE

Whoa! (righting the ship) She's peppier than a shuttlepod.

SISKO

I can take over if you like, sir.

MARLOWE

Just takes some getting used to.

The runabout settles out of its turn.

SISKO

You didn't keep me from meeting with a member of the Vedek Assembly just to see the local scenery, Admiral.

MARLOWE

I wanted to talk to you in private.

SISKO

Well, here we are.

MARLOWE

Let me start by saying there's no doubt you're a fine administrator. You've done wonders making this facility operational.

SISKO

But.

MARLOWE

But... you've allowed yourself to become a major figure in Bajoran religion: "Emissary to the Prophets."

SISKO

I've never accepted that title.

MARLOWE

Yes, I've read your reports. But a lot of people at Command still feel you've violated the non-interference directive.

SISKO

Including you, Admiral?

MARLOWE

It's a tough call. Fact is, for everyone who wants to clap you in irons there's another who wants to give you a medal.

SISKO

I don't think I deserve either. I think that in the same circumstances, any Starfleet officer...

MARLOWE

A Starfleet officer has no place in the Bajorans' Celestial Temple. Period. That much is clear.

SISKO

It's the Bajorans you have to convince, not me.

MARLOWE

And that's what I'm here for.  
(pause) Have you ever heard of the Song of the Prophets?

Dead ahead, the wormhole opens, filling the window...

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

My God...

...a mid-sized vessel gracefully exits the vortex...

SISKO  
It's even more impressive inside.

...and the wormhole closes as suddenly as it opened.

MARLOWE  
Remarkable!

A glowing ripple passes through the haze; the runabout is rocked by a sudden turbulence, knocking it into a slow horizontal spin.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)  
I can't hold the yaw.

SISKO  
I've got it.

Sisko takes the controls and stabilizes the runabout.

MARLOWE  
Was that a wormhole effect?

SISKO  
Not one I've ever seen.

KIRA'S COM VOICE  
DS9 to Orinoco. Commander, I need to see you immediately.

Sisko glances at Marlowe, who nods his assent.

SISKO  
We're on our way in now.

KIRA'S COM VOICE  
Are you alright, Commander? You're way off your flight plan. avoids eye contact with Marlowe.

SISKO  
We're okay. We just ran into some kind of turbulence. Did you pick it up?

KIRA'S COM VOICE  
Dax is looking at it now.

SISKO

Good. Orinoco out.

MARLOWE

Don't worry, Ben. I'm going to get you out of this. One way or another.

INT. PROMENADE - OUTSIDE QUARK'S

A monk - EKIM - uses four wooden rods, two in each hand, to play a large set of chimes, to the delight of the Bajoran crowd. He is in his 20's, with sad, deep-set eyes. The chimes are long metal cones, hung by their sharp ends. Some monks, Jerone among them, hand out miniature chimes to the crowd. Other monks chant a discordant hymn. QUARK and ODO watch from the edge of the crowd.

QUARK

They've been at it for hours. It's downright annoying.

ODO

Unfortunately, there's no law against being annoying. Otherwise I'd have locked you up long ago.

QUARK

Oh, very droll. Are you going to do something or not?

ODO

Alright, I'll talk to them. Although these religious types... Might as well try teaching charity to a Ferengi.

Odo approaches Ekim, who remains oblivious.

ODO (CONT'D)

Excuse me, but we've had some complaints about your... music. If you want to continue this, you'll have to do it at the temple.

Ekim ignores him. The music and chanting continues, but some Bajoran civilians grumble. Jerone touches Odo's shoulder.

JERONE

Ekim will not hear you.

ODO  
With all the racket, I'm not surprised.

JERONE  
Please forgive him. He is summoning our people to hear the Prophets sing. It is his dying wish.

ODO  
Dying wish? He looks pretty lively to me.

JERONE  
Ekim will die today.

ODO  
If he's ill, he should see Doctor Bashir.

JERONE  
He's fine. But he will die.

Ekim stares unblinkingly at Odo and smiles knowingly.

ODO  
I won't have suicides on my base, young lady. No matter how piously motivated.

You don't understand. Ekim doesn't want to die. But it's his destiny.

eyes these two with a mixture of suspicion and disdain.

ODO (CONT'D)  
Well, then you won't mind if I keep an eye on him.

JERONE  
There's nothing you can do.

ODO  
We'll see about that.

She shrugs sadly and rejoins the chant, an eerie, discordant melody. Odo sits at a table in Quark's. Quark hurries to him, indignant.

QUARK  
Well?

ODO  
They're staying.

QUARK  
How am I supposed to make an honest profit without the most basic support from the civil authorities?

ODO  
You'd be breaking my heart, if I had one. You know what I like about these people?

QUARK  
They're as humorless as you are.

ODO  
You can't corrupt them.

QUARK  
Same thing.

ODO  
All they want is their religion. And that's something you can't sell them.

Quark walks away toward Ekim. Odo listens to the discordant chanting and shakes his head.

ODO (CONT'D)  
I hope the Prophets sing better than they do.

Quark strokes one of Ekim's chimes thoughtfully. Without looking - and without missing a beat - Ekim slaps Quark's hand away with one of his rods. As Quark nurses his hand, cut to:

INT. SISCO'S OFFICE - ON VIEWSCREEN

Sisko, Kira, Dax and Marlowe watch the monks on the viewer; we hear the chanting and chimes. Dax is examining Kira's miniature chimes. Sisko turns down the audio.

KIRA  
(excited)  
We have been waiting 800 years for this prophecy to come true. (Off Sisko's look) I don't remember the exact text

DAX

"The Sightless One shall spark the Golden Lamp, Temple Gates unsealed by Herald's call, Emissary suffer Heaven's Fire, all will pause to hear the Prophets sing."

They look at her in astonishment. She holds up the chimes.

DAX (CONT'D)

It's inscribed on these.

SISKO

The Bajorans call the wormhole the Temple.

DAX

The comet is going to open the wormhole as it passes, 'unsealing the gates.'

MARLOWE

Vedek Baz looks like "The Sightless One."

KIRA

(to Sisko)

And you're the Emissary.

DAX

You're supposed to undergo some sort of ordeal.

SISKO

Heaven's Fire. Whatever that is.

DAX

Vedek Baz says it'll happen today.

MARLOWE

(to Sisko)

That's why I'm here, Ben. To make sure nothing happens to you.

SISKO

I appreciate your concern, Admiral, but I'm sure our own security will be adequate.

MARLOWE

No, I mean we've got to make sure that when this Heaven's Fire happens, it doesn't happen to you. That will prove you're not the Emissary.

SISKO

And resolve your concerns about a Prime Directive violation.

KIRA

I don't know about this. I don't think the Prophets are worried about conforming to Starfleet regulations.

DAX

Besides, how can we keep you away from Heaven's Fire? We don't know what it is.

Sisko touches a viewer control, and we see Vedek Baz, chanting his devotions.

SISKO

I think it's time I paid my respects to the Vedek.

INT. PROMENADE - ON SISKO AND MARLOWE

walking briskly toward the Bajoran temple.

MARLOWE

How reliable is this Vedek's opinion?

SISKO

He's devoted his life to the study of this prophecy. If there's an expert, he's it.

As they pass, many in the the Bajoran murmur and point. some follow Sisko. Marlowe takes this all in, frowning. At the temple, Sisko comes face to face with Jerone, who blanches and averts her eyes. She beckons Sisko inside. The crowd presses expectantly around the doorway.

INT. BAJORAN TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Jerone leads Sisko to the Vedek, with Marlowe following close behind. Jerone speaks into Baz's ear. Baz turns excitedly.

BAZ  
Emissary?

SISKO  
I'm Benjamin Sisko, Vedek Baz. I  
have Admiral Aaron Marlowe with me.

BAZ  
I have awaited your coming.

Be extends his hand, and Sisko and Marlowe take it in turn.

SISKO  
We have some questions, Vedek, that  
only you can answer.

BAZ  
There is little I can do to help  
you in your ordeal, Emissary.

SISKO  
We need your help to understand the  
prophecy.

MARLOWE  
What does it mean?

BAZ  
(baffled)  
It means what it says. No more, no  
less.

MARLOWE  
But... what is Heaven's Fire?

BAZ  
If I knew that, I'd be Kai, not a  
simple Vedek.

Sisko and Marlowe exchange frustrated looks.

BAZ (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry you cannot see. There is  
nothing else to understand.

SISKO  
(giving up)  
Thank you, Vedek Baz. Is there  
anything I can do for you?

BAZ  
I'd like to look at your face, if I  
may.

SISKO  
Of course.

searches Sisko's face with his hands. A rush of emotions  
plays across Baz's face, then, satisfied, he lowers his  
hands.

BAZ  
Walk with the Prophets, Emissary.

SISKO  
Thank you.

INT. PROMENADE - OUTSIDE BAJORAN TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

the officers leave, the crowd surges toward Sisko, thrusting  
assorted trinkets, gewgaws, and lucky charms upon him, amidst  
murmurs of well-wishing. Sisko pushes the gifts away.

BAJORAN WOMAN  
For your ordeal, Emissary.

SISKO  
I can't accept this... please...

's voice stops them like a thunderbolt.

BAZ (O.S.)  
Stop it!! All of you!!!

crowd falls silent. Baz has appeared at the temple door, on  
Jerone's arm.

BAZ (CONT'D)  
You must not do this! It is wrong!  
He is just a man. (To Sisko) Are  
you not a man?

SISKO  
Of course I am.

BAZ

(to the crowd)

He is just a man. Frail, as we are. You tempt him with offerings he must not accept.

SISKO

Thank you, Vedek Baz.

BAZ

We must not tamper with the Prophecy. The Emissary's ordeal is his alone. Who would take his place? Would you?

Full of brimstone, he gropes about, grasping at frightened people in the crowd.

BAZ (CONT'D)

You? It is our place only to bear witness to his courage. We may offer him our strength, but no more.

He lays his hands upon Sisko reverently, as the others had laid their hands on him earlier.

BAZ (CONT'D)

The Emissary's ordeal has begun. Give him your strength!

Jerone lays her hands upon Sisko rapturously.

JERONE

Strength to the Emissary!

Quickly, the others pick up the cry - "Strength" - and lay their hands upon Sisko. Marlowe is horrified. The officers shoulder through the throng of adoring Bajorans. Marlowe pulls Sisko around a corner, livid.

MARLOWE

This is a disaster. Far worse than your reports indicated.

SISKO

Nothing like this has happened before.

MARLOWE

You're in gross violation of the non-interference directive.

(MORE)

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

I can't let it continue. As of  
now, you're relieved of command.

SISKO

That won't solve...

MARLOWE

Don't argue with me. I'm ordering  
your immediate transfer. You've  
done enough damage at Deep Space  
Nine.

END ACT I

ACT II

INT. PROMENADE - ON SISKO AND MARLOWE - CONTINUOUS

The chanting resumes from the crowd, and Ekim's chimes echo down the Promenade.

SISKO  
If I thought running away was the answer I'd have asked for a transfer.

MARLOWE  
Maybe you should have. You've crossed the line.

SISKO  
(loudly)  
I have never...

Bajoran civilian notices them and touches Sisko for luck.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
(lowering his voice)  
I've never interfered in Bajoran affairs.

MARLOWE  
Your very presence is interference. We've got to get this situation under control. I'm assuming command. Period.

SISKO  
I know this looks bad...

MARLOWE  
Look, do you want to be the Emissary?

SISKO  
Of course not.

MARLOWE  
Then don't fight me on this.

Sisko wrestles with this for a moment.

SISKO

I still don't think this solves anything.

MARLOWE

I'm sorry, Ben. We're getting you out of here. It's over.

CUT TO:

INT. PROMENADE - NEAR QUARK'S - ON ODO

The crowd of Bajorans has grown, some now chanting with the monks. All wear earrings with tiny conical chimes hanging from chains. Odo watches from the replimat. A chanting Bajoran dances over to him, offers him an earring. He forces a smile, points to his lobeless ears and shakes his head. The Bajoran dances away. Odo rolls his eyes.

Kira's snaking through the crowd. Jerone approaches Kira, offering her a chime-earring.

JERONE

Nerys! For when the Prophets sing.

Kira shakes the earring, and we hear its soft tinkling. Kira smiles and starts to put on the earring.

KIRA

It's lovely.

JERONE

Mr. Quark has been so helpful.

KIRA

Helpful? I heard he wanted you to move.

JERONE

Oh no. In fact, he insisted we stay. He said he found our presence quite enriching.

Realization dawns.

KIRA

Quark!

INT. QUARK'S - ON QUARK - CONTINUOUS

Several monks wait around the bar, trays of chime-earrings in front of each. Kira and Jerone enter from the Promenade.

QUARK  
...and tell your friend on Level 10  
his order is ready.

They hand Quark some coins, which he accepts with exaggerated humility. The monks take the trays of earrings and leave. Kira storms up to the bar. Quark clinks a few coins together.

QUARK (CONT'D)  
Ah, now that's music... Why, what  
beautiful ear-chimes, Major. It's  
heartening to see such open  
expressions of faith and piety.

She yanks off the earring.

KIRA  
This is a new low even for you,  
Quark.

QUARK  
I'm only helping these people get  
in tune with their spiritual  
nature.

KIRA  
You're taking advantage of them to  
line your own greedy pockets.

QUARK  
Look, they're interested in  
Prophets, I'm interested in  
profits.

JERONE  
He's giving us a very good price.

Kira shoots Quark a withering glance. He edges away.

QUARK  
Ah, excuse me... other customers.

KIRA  
(To Jerone)  
Watch out for Quark. There isn't  
an honest bone in his body.

JERON  
We all have our parts to play,  
Nerys. Even Quark. (Off Kira's  
look) What's wrong?

KIRA  
You keep calling me Nerys.

JERONE  
I'm sorry. I feel I know you.

KIRA  
How?

JERONE  
I've seen... (catching herself) We  
have so much in common. We both  
serve holy men.

KIRA  
Commander Sisko?

JERONE  
The Emissary. You must learn so  
much from him. He found the  
Celestial Temple, talked to the  
Prophets...

KIRA  
He doesn't even believe in the  
Prophets.

SISKO'S COM VOICE  
Sisko to Kira. Could I see to you  
in my office right away, Major?

KIRA  
On my way.

touches Kira's arm, a strange, sad look on her face.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

JERONE  
Learn from him... while you can.

KIRA  
While I can?

JERONE  
We are here and gone... so quickly.

Kira's look, cut to:

INT. SISKO'S OFFICE - ON SISKO

his personal belongings. Kira stands near him, agape.

KIRA  
(reeling)  
Transferred?

SISKO  
(off her overreaction)  
It's not a death sentence.

KIRA  
(recovering)  
But... it doesn't make sense.  
You've never abused your position  
as Emissary.

SISKO  
I'm not supposed to have that  
position, Major. That's the whole  
point.

KIRA  
Then you think he's right.

SISKO  
I'm not sure.

KIRA  
Well I am. If you won't fight  
this, I will. I owe you that much.

SISKO  
I appreciate that, but Admiral  
Marlowe feels I've become too  
important to too many Bajorans. An  
impassioned plea from their liaison  
officer will only prove his point.

He's right and she knows it. He gives her a faint, wry  
smile.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Besides, you've complained The  
Federation has too much influence  
here. The Admiral agrees with you.

He's right again. She softens.

KIRA  
He doesn't know anything about  
Bajor. Or Bajorans.

SISKO  
Sometimes I wonder if I do.

KIRA  
At least you're trying.

SISKO  
That's what got me into this mess.

He's finished packing, except for the baseball on his desk;  
Kira picks it up.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Excuse me, Major, but I'm meeting  
my son.

KIRA  
There must be something I can do.

SISKO  
If I think of anything, you'll be  
the first to know.

Sisko opens his bag, but she holds the ball.

KIRA  
You know, Commander, this base and  
the wormhole are Bajor's greatest  
assets. Your decisions ripple  
through Bajor in a thousand ways.  
And that's no problem for the  
Federation. But when somebody  
calls you 'Emissary,' you're  
interfering with our culture. Even  
if you aren't doing a thing.

She hands him the ball and exits. He looks at it and we cut  
to:up of a baseball thudding into a catcher's mitt. We pull  
back to see Sisko, who has just swung and missed, collecting  
himself.

The first baseman - Fred MERKLE - taunts him good-naturedly. Merkle's a thin, intense man in a New York Giants uniform, circa 1908. He spits tobacco juice on the dirt.

MERKLE

Going to have to do better than that!

Sisko glares at him. The pitcher, tall and very handsome, peers in for the sign. They're interrupted by the sound of the HOLOSUITE DOORS opening. JAKE Sisko enters, carrying some trinkets. Sisko steps out of the batter's box.

JAKE

Dad!

SISKO

Grab a bat, Jake. You're on deck.

Merkle pounds his mitt impatiently.

JAKE

Sorry.

The door closes behind Jake and vanishes. Sisko steps back in, and the pitcher goes into his windup. Sisko swings mightily and hits a dribbler down to Merkle. He pounds his bat on the ground in frustration as he runs down to first.

MERKLE

You're bailing out.

Sisko races Merkle to the bag but Merkle beats him easily. Sisko pulls up, winded.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

Matty's got the Fadeaway going. If you pull off the ball, you'll never get it out of the infield.

SISKO

Thanks.

He trots back to Jake. Jake hands Sisko the trinkets. Sisko looks at them quizzically.

JAKE

The kids at school said you'd need these.

SISKO

For strength. (Jake nods) I've had enough of that today.

MERKLE

Are you going to talk or hit?

SISKO

Let's take a break.

Merkle and the pitcher - Christy MATHEWSON - join Sisko and Jake in the dugout. Sisko hands them cups of water.

JAKE

Dad, this Emissary stuff really gives me the creeps.

SISKO

We won't have to worry about it anymore. I've been transferred.

JAKE

Where!?

SISKO

They haven't told me yet. But someplace where nobody will call me Emissary.

MERKLE

There are worse nicknames.

SISKO

Fred, Matty. This is my son Jake.

Handshakes all around.

MATHEWSON

Christy Mathewson. Good to meet you.

JAKE

Wow.

MERKLE

Fred Merkle.

JAKE

Bonehead Merkle?!

Merkle sighs.

SISKO

Jake!

MERKLE

games in the bigs and I must have heard that every one.

picks up a pouch of chewing tobacco, offers some to Jake. Jake looks interested, until Ben glares at him. Jake waves it off.

JAKE

You're the one that lost the pennant for the Giants when you didn't touch second base.

MATHEWSON

They never should have called him out. That rule was never enforced. It was a technicality. He didn't do anything wrong.

SISKO

But the nickname stuck.

MATHEWSON

The worst of it was that Fred was the smartest fellow on the team. But it was "Bonehead" this and "Bonehead" that.

JAKE

(to Merkle)

How could you listen to that all the time?

MERKLE

My teammates stood by me. They knew the score.

MATHEWSON

Fred's being modest. He's the most courageous man I've ever known. The abuse he took... well, most men would have quit. But Fred, he'd just walk out there every day and spit in the devil's eye.

Merkle nods to Mathewson and spits tobacco juice.

SISKO

(to Merkle)

Was it worth it?

MERKLE

I played more than 10 years, won a few championships. I loved the game. That was worth it, I guess. Besides, I was stuck being "Bonehead" whether I played or not. So I just went out there... (he shrugs)

SISKO

And spit in the devil's eye?

Merkle spits.

SISKO (CONT'D)

Would you have given it up if it meant not being called Bonehead?

Merkle ponders this for a moment.

MERKLE

I didn't get to make that call.

Merkle and Mathewson trot back onto the field. Jake heads for the plate.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

Let's see if you can do any better than ol' Emissary, kid.

Mathewson and Merkle laugh. Sisko watches from the dugout, absently fingering the trinkets.

INT. PROMENADE - NEAR QUARK'S - ON SISKO AND JAKE

Quark's, their hands filled with gloves, bats and trinkets. They immediately find themselves face to face with Marlowe and BASHIR. Bashir rushes up to Sisko, and tries to shake his hand, but both Sisko's hands are full.

BASHIR

Congratulations, Commander!

SISKO

Excuse me, Doctor?

MARLOWE

I took the liberty of informing the staff of your promotion. To spaceport supervisor for Pacifica.

(MORE)

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Up one grade in rank, with all privileges. The perfect place for a fine administrator like you.

SISKO

It's a... resort.

JAKE

Pacifica! Wow! Can I go tell Nog?

nods, and Jake dashes off.

BASHIR

A well-earned reward, if you ask me, Commander.

MARLOWE

A great place to live, to raise your boy. Beautiful beaches, sunshine, even an occasional baseball game, I hear.

BASHIR

The Bajorans say this comet brings good fortune. It certainly has for you.

SISKO

Excuse me, Doctor, I have to pack.

Sisko hands Bashir the trinkets and leaves brusquely. Off Bashir's clueless look

CUT TO:

INT. OPS

Kira, Dax and O'BRIEN at their stations.

O'BRIEN

Major, there's a ship coming through the wormhole.

KIRA

On screen.

The main viewer shows the comet, a thick haze from its tail spread across the screen. The wormhole flares open and a ship exits, heads for the station.

DAX

It's a Rigelian freighter. They're requesting permission to dock.

KIRA

Clear them for docking at port...

DAX

Major!

A visible wave ripples through the haze. It overtakes the ship, knocking it aside, as if by a huge gust of wind.

O'BRIEN

What the devil?

KIRA

Shields up! All decks, stand...

But it arrives too soon. She braces herself as Ops rocks violently.

INT. PROMENADE - CONTINUOUS

The impact knocks most people off their feet. Marlowe and Bashir grab a table. Odo falls from his chair in the replimat. Ekim pitches forward, clattering into his chimes.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

staff check to make sure they're still in one piece, which they are. A clamor of voices comes over the com system.

KIRA

Status report.

O'BRIEN

No structural damage... We seem to have come through it alright, whatever it was.

DAX

The freighter's reporting minor injuries.

INT. PROMENADE - ON MARLOWE AND BASHIR - CONTINUOUS

MARLOWE

Marlowe to Ops. What's going on?

DAX'S COM VOICE

We were hit with some kind of pressure wave.

MARLOWE  
Casualties?

ODO (O.S.)  
One.

Marlowe whirls to see Odo standing by Ekim. The monk's splayed like a grotesque scarecrow amidst his ruined chimes, impaled on the sharp tip of the largest cone. His eyes are lifeless and staring. Off Odo's grim look, we

FADE OUT.

END ACT II

ACT III

INT. INFIRMARY - ON EKIM'S BODY

Odo and Bashir stand over Ekim's body, while Baz and Jerone look on. In the background, Marlowe waits near the door.

ODO  
She told me he was going to die.

BASHIR  
There's nothing you could have done.

ODO  
I could have put him in protective custody.

BAZ  
You can't lock a man away from his destiny.

ODO  
Hmph. What good is knowing the future if you can't change it?

INT. INFIRMARY - ON MARLOWE - CONTINUOUS

Sisko and Dax enter just as Bashir covers the body. Throughout this scene, Sisko finds himself as useful as a fifth wheel.

MARLOWE  
Any word on what happened, Lieutenant?

DAX  
We were hit by a gust of wind.

MARLOWE  
Wind? In space?

DAX  
We passed through a cloud of ionized gas. Or rather, it passed around us. I'm sorry Admiral, but I don't have any further explanation yet.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE  
O'Brien to Marlowe.

MARLOWE

Go ahead, Chief.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

The main power conduits on the Promenade took some damage. I'm going to have to take automatic fire suppression and weapons detectors off-line for a few hours.

MARLOWE

Understood. Keep me posted.

ODO

I'll assign extra security.

SISKO

Admiral, I could assist Lieutenant Dax with her analysis.

MARLOWE

I guess there's no harm in that. But keep your head down.

Jerone approaches Sisko.

JERONE

Emissary, we would be honored if you would attend Ekim's funeral rites.

Marlowe cocks an eyebrow at Sisko. Sisko's exasperation shows through his best efforts.

SISKO

Thank you, but that honor belongs to the base commander.

BAZ

(sharply)

Jerone! We must leave the Emissary to his trial.

Baz scans Ekim's face with his hands, reverently closing Ekim's lifeless eyes.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - ON DAX AND SISKO

Dax is sitting at her station, Sisko standing next to her.

DAX  
Spectrographic analysis of the  
pressure wave matches the comet's  
tail perfectly.

SISKO  
Marlowe and I ran into the same  
kind of turbulence in the runabout.

sits at the other workstation, calls up some data.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
You've been quiet about your new  
commander.

DAX  
You've been quiet about your new  
command.

SISKO  
It's hard to watch somebody else do  
your job.

DAX  
Then why did you take the transfer?

SISKO  
The Admiral decided to relieve me  
of being Emissary to the Prophets.  
And of command.

DAX  
It's not really a promotion, then?

SISKO  
It's a way out. (off a new readout)  
The wave that hit the runabout had  
the same signature as the one that  
hit the station.

DAX  
And both hit after the wormhole  
opened. Let's check the EM band...  
I didn't know you were looking for  
a way out.

SISKO  
I wasn't. But now that it's here,  
I don't see why I shouldn't take  
it...

(MORE)

SISKO (CONT'D)

Sensors showed no unusual energy readings from the wormhole... It could just as easily have been you, you know.

DAX

I'm sorry?

SISKO

The Emissary to the Prophets. We found that wormhole together. The beings inside sent you out and kept me. It could have been the other way around. I didn't ask for it. I don't want it. And I don't have to live with it.

DAX

Being the Emissary or being promoted?

Sisko gives her a surprised glance, but doesn't answer.

DAX (CONT'D)

Kai Opaka once told you that it was your destiny to be the Emissary.

SISKO

But why?

DAX

There's no answer to that question, Benjamin. Do you remember Professor Avery's chaos lectures at the Academy?

SISKO

Destiny is just another word for 'I don't know.'

DAX

That's right. (The readout changes) There. When the wormhole opened, the tachyon emissions created an ionization field. It has the same polarity as the comet's tail.

SISKO

That's what deflected the ionized gas toward us. But why was the second wave so much stronger?

DAX

As the comet gets closer, the tail becomes more dense. Benjamin, the comet is going to open the wormhole...

SISKO

...at maximum density.

DAX

The resulting wave will be three orders of magnitude greater.

SISKO

Will the shields protect us?

DAX

They should... but we'll need to divert all available power.

SISKO

I'll tell Admiral Marlowe.

turns to go.

DAX

Benjamin! (Sisko turns to her) If there is a way out, I hope you find it.

SISKO

(wryly)

Out of being the Emissary or of being promoted?

Dax smiles mischievously. Cut to:

INT. BAJORAN TEMPLE

Jerone lights candles and incense around Ekim's shrouded body. Baz stands in deep meditation before the altar. Kira enters from the Promenade, sees Jerone, steels herself.

KIRA

I'm sorry about your friend.

JERONE

He's with the Prophets now. I cannot grieve for him. (gazing at Ekim's shrouded body) I will miss him, though.

She glances at Baz; he's motionless. The two women move toward the doorway.

JERONE (CONT'D)

It was so strange. I'd seen him die before, but this time it was real.

KIRA

You've had a vision? (Jerone nods)  
That's how you knew Commander Sisko would be transferred.

JERONE

(surprised)

No! I didn't know that at all.

KIRA

But you said he might be gone soon.

JERONE

I... I was thinking of Ekim.

KIRA

What else did you see?

JERONE

I'd rather not talk about it.  
(pause) Have you ever had a vision?

KIRA

Once.

JERONE

Then you've been thrice blessed.

KIRA

I've only had the one vision.

JERONE

The Emissary to the Prophets is your friend. And you saw Kai Opaka rise from the dead. That was a great miracle.

KIRA

It wasn't... That wasn't a real miracle. It was a security system on a penal colony. Everyone who died there came back.

JERONE

Vedek Baz teaches us 'The stone is not the statue, and the statue not the stone.' What things are and what they mean are not the same.

KIRA

But things are... what they are. You can't deny that there's a perfectly rational explanation for these--

JERONE

Rational explanations are not enough! Faith held our people together for generations. Now rational explanations are tearing us apart.

KIRA

But you can't ignore them.

Jerone shakes her head angrily.

JERONE

You'd explain away the Golden Lamp, if we let you.

KIRA

What's that supposed to mean?

JERONE

(caught)  
I... I must go.

Jerone rushes out of the temple. Kira follows.

INT. PROMENADE - ON MARLOWE AND SSKO - CONTINUOUS

walking toward the temple. There are few Bajoran civilians about. There's a faint murmuring in the background.

SSKO

We have just over an hour. Dax and O'Brien are securing the station.

MARLOWE

Excellent! You'd better take cover. We don't want you burned by that Heaven's Fire.

Marlowe calls out to Kira as she hurries after Jerone.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Major!?

Off Kira's look

CUT TO:

INT. TEMPLE - ON BAZ - CONTINUOUS

Incense rises from small braziers around Ekim's body. Baz breaks meditation.

BAZ

Jerone...?

he reaches out blindly, he knocks over an incense burner. The glowing embers fall on Ekim's shroud, setting it afire.

BAZ (CONT'D)

Jerone!

Smelling smoke, hearing flames, he stumbles about, panic rising.

INT. PROMENADE - OUTSIDE TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Marlowe, Sisko and Kira stand off to one side of the crowd.

MARLOWE

I'm afraid my briefing didn't cover Bajoran funeral etiquette. I'd hate to make the wrong impression.

KIRA

(agitated)

Could this wait, Admiral? I think Jerone knows something about the prophecy.

SISKO

What did she tell you?

KIRA

Not much, yet. But she's hiding...

Fire klaxons sound, reverberating through the Promenade. The officers turn to see smoke drifting from the temple entrance. Jerone rushes to the door, but monks hold her back.

JERONE

The Vedek!

Sisko steps toward the temple. Marlowe grabs him.

MARLOWE

No, Ben! You can't!

Sisko stops and stands, frustrated, as Marlowe, Kira and Jerone rush inside. He holds back the crowd, touches his com badge.

SISKO

Sisko to Bashir. Emergency medical teams to the Promenade immediately.

INT. TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

walls are aflame, the room filling with smoke. They find Baz near the altar, coughing violently; they hustle him toward the doorway.

KIRA

Where's fire suppression?

MARLOWE

Still off-line. Where's the override?

KIRA

Behind the altar.

Kira and Jerone take Baz outside. Marlowe rushes behind the altar, opens a panel and throws a switch.

INT. PROMENADE - OUTSIDE TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Odo arrives with emergency crews. Sisko helps Kira with Baz.

KIRA

Marlowe's still inside.

Sisko heads straight for the temple door.

SISKO

Constable, you're with me.

MARLOWE (O.S.)

It's okay, Ben.

Marlowe walks wearily out of the smoke, his face streaked with sweat and soot. He raises his hands toward the crowd.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

It's alright! Everything's under control. (to Sisko) Shut off those alarms.

SISKO

Are you alright?

MARLOWE

I'll live. How's the Vedek?

Jerone nods to them and smiles - Baz is okay.

The alarms fall silent. Suddenly, there's a low rumble and a small shudder goes through the station. A strange golden light from inside the temple filters through the smoke.

SISKO

Sisko to Dax. Was that another pressure wave?

DAX'S COM VOICE

No. But I am reading a rupture in a power conduit near you.

Jerone peers cautiously into the ruins of the temple, gasps.

JERONE

The Golden Lamp!

SISKO

Dax, stand by.

EXT./INT. BAJORAN TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Sisko, Kira and Marlowe move slowly into the temple. A golden glow fills the room through the haze. As the smoke clears, we see a glowing, pulsating sphere of light near the temple ceiling. It seems to swirl in subtle shades and colors.

Jerone leads a still shaky Baz into the temple, a crowd of curious Bajorans behind them.

SISKO

Dax, that rupture's in the temple.

DAX'S COM VOICE

The fire suppression systems must have overloaded the conduit. The radiation containment field is holding, for now.

JERONE

(awestruck, to Marlowe)  
You've lit the Lamp.

MARLOWE

It's just plasma, leaking from a conduit.

BAZ

You are The Sightless One.

MARLOWE

Don't be ridiculous. My eyes are fine.

BAZ

But you do not see. (to the crowd)  
The Sightless One has set the Golden Lamp ablaze! Let all who would hear the Prophets sing stand before its light!

MARLOWE

It's a power conduit. And I'm not the Sightless One!

BAZ

The Sightless One has lit the Lamp. He needs our strength that he may see. The Emissary's ordeal has begun. He needs our strength that he may prevail. Give them your strength!

Baz and Jerone lay their hands upon Marlowe and Sisko, while Kira stands back, uncertain. The Bajorans surge forward, trapping the two officers at the center of the room. The crowd presses in to lay their hands upon Sisko and an aghast Marlowe.

SISKO

Admiral, welcome to the Celestial Temple

END ACT III

ACT IV

INT. OPS - ON VIEWSCREEN

Dozens of Bajorans from all over the base sprint toward the temple, monks waving them on. We hear a swell of chanting voices in the background. Dax watches from her station, amazed. Otherwise, Ops is empty.

Sisko, Kira, Odo and Marlowe hustle in from a turbolift.

SISKO

Where is everybody?

DAX

The Temple. They went to see the lamp.

MARLOWE

All of them?

KIRA

The miracle's beginning.

ODO

Most of my security guards are down there, bleating like sheep.

MARLOWE

There is no damn miracle. It's a power leak. Period.

KIRA

I think they'd tell you that's what The Sightless One would say.

MARLOWE

Don't you start too, Major. I'm not the Sightless One.

KIRA

You don't want to be. But you are.

MARLOWE

Command's going to roast me alive for this.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

O'Brien to Ops.

MARLOWE  
What now, Chief?

INTERCUT INT. OPS/INT. PROMENADE - CONTINUOUS

A phalanx of monks blocks the entrance to the temple. O'Brien, toolbox in hand, stands amidst a crowd of chanting Bajorans as they mill about in eager anticipation. Quark's happily selling souvenirs in the background.

O'BRIEN  
We've got a problem, sir. The monks won't let me into the temple. I can't fix the power conduit.

KIRA  
They said they have to stand before the Lamp until the Prophets sing.

O'BRIEN  
But that's the main power supply for the shields. Without it, we'll be lucky to get thirty percent.

SISKO  
The comet's going to pass the wormhole in less than an hour. If we don't have full shields, we're going to take that pressure wave head-on. We'll be torn to pieces.

O'BRIEN  
If we don't burn up first.

MARLOWE  
Can't we reroute the power?

O'BRIEN  
Sure, if I had three hours and my staff hadn't gone on holiday.

SISKO  
How long do you need for the repairs?

O'BRIEN  
Maybe half an hour.

MARLOWE

Report to Ops and get ready to cut the power flow through that conduit. (To Kira) We've got about 20 minutes. If they won't leave, we're just going to have to turn off their lamp.

BAZ (O.S.)

That will only make matters worse. For all of us.

turn to see Baz and Jerone stepping in from the Turbolift.

INT. SISKO'S OFFICE - ON BAZ

before the desk. Jerone stands behind him. Marlowe sits across from him, while Sisko and Kira stand.

BAZ

The Lamp is a sign. It tells us we must stay in the Temple.

KIRA

The 'Lamp' is a ruptured power conduit.

JERONE

A very rational explanation.

BAZ

Do you really believe that's all it is?

For Kira, the light bulb goes on. She locks her eyes on Jerone.

BAZ (CONT'D)

(to Sisko)

You see, Emissary, this is the problem. Your discovery of the Celestial Temple has been a... mixed blessing. For some, it has reaffirmed their faith. But our religion has lost much of its mystery. Too many, lacking that sense of awe, have begun to stray. The Song of the Prophets could end that drift.

MARLOWE

Believe me, Vedek, we don't want to do anything to prevent your miracle.

BAZ

You still do not see. The miracle cannot be 'prevented.' But it can be... diminished. You have the power to strip it of its meaning.

SISKO

If we don't repair the conduit, everyone on this station could die. How will that strengthen your people's faith?

JERONE

We have been taught... A test is meaningless if it is not difficult.

Baz pats her hand approvingly.

MARLOWE

Then you won't let us into the temple.

BAZ

We must not.

SISKO

If you want to be martyrs, that's your business. But don't ask for our help.

Baz rises, Jerone leads him toward the door.

BAZ

You must decide for yourselves how you will play your parts. But I ask you to consider that your actions have... repercussions.

SISKO

What about the repercussions of your actions? Just sitting in the temple, doing nothing, may be enough to kill everyone on the station.

Baz turns.

BAZ  
How can we do less than nothing?

Jerone leads him out. Marlowe sighs heavily.

SISKO  
Speaking of Prime Directive  
violations...

MARLOWE  
Any suggestions, Major?

KIRA  
Excuse me.

She hurries out after Baz and Jerone.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS - ON KIRA

as she catches Jerone near the Turbolift.

KIRA  
Vedek, I need to speak to Jerone.

Baz nods and lets go of Jerone's arm. Kira pulls Jerone  
aside and tries to keep her voice to a whisper.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
You saw this in your vision, didn't  
you?

JERONE  
I don't know what you're--

KIRA  
Stop it! You knew this would  
happen.

Jerone nods, her eyes screwed shut against the painful  
memory.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
What else did you see?

JERONE  
I can't.

KIRA  
It's all going to happen anyway.  
What difference does it make if you  
tell me or not?

BAZ (O.S.)  
Jerone?

KIRA  
Tell me!

JERONE  
I saw the Emissary in a dark  
place... he was falling... then  
there were flames.

KIRA  
What else?

JERONE  
That's all. There was no more. I  
swear.

Jerone rushes off to join Baz. Off Kira's reaction, cut to:

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

Sisko, Dax, Odo, O'Brien and Marlowe are gathered around the  
Operations Table. Kira joins them from the upper level  
during the discussion.

DAX  
41 minutes.

SISKO  
Admiral, I suggest that we begin  
moving non-essential personnel to  
the escape pods.

Marlowe nods at Odo, who moves briskly from the room.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
We need a way to survive this  
pressure wave without shields.

O'BRIEN  
We might have enough photons to  
change the comet's orbit, move it  
away from the wormhole.

DAX  
It's just as likely the photons  
would break the comet up as deflect  
it.

MARLOWE

Can we move the station?

SISKO

We don't have time to get out of  
the blast zone.

O'BRIEN

Why not just beam those people out  
of the temple?

Sisko and Marlowe look at Kira. She takes a deep breath.

KIRA

No.

O'BRIEN

It's for their own good.

KIRA

They know what they're doing.

O'BRIEN

Do they know they're going to get  
us all killed?

SISKO

Kira's right. It's not our place  
to save these people from  
themselves.

DAX

I hope faith is a good substitute  
for shields.

MARLOWE

The Klingons say: 'The wind does  
not respect a fool.'

O'BRIEN

This wind certainly won't.

SISKO

Wait a minute. Wind. That's it.  
A windbreak.

MARLOWE

I don't follow.

SISKO

This pressure wave is basically a gust of wind. We don't need to stop the wind, just make a shelter.

DAX

A grid of photons, set for synchronous detonation, would create a counter wave.

O'BRIEN

Like an umbrella in a windstorm!

KIRA

Won't the blast hit us, too?

DAX

Not if we set the photons for directional discharge. We can set up their propulsion systems for station keeping and drop them from the runabouts. If we use all three, we'll have just enough time.

O'BRIEN

We can align and detonate the photons from here. But if we don't get them exactly to the grid, the counter wave will collapse like a broken umbrella.

MARLOWE

It's the best option we've got. Start your calculations, Lieutenant. Chief O'Brien, Major Kira and I will pilot the runabouts.

There's a pause as the other officers look at each other, astonished.

O'BRIEN

You, sir?

SISKO

Admiral, you're not familiar with this class of vessel.

MARLOWE

I'll manage.

O'BRIEN

Even if this works, it's going to be a rough ride all around.

SISKO

You'll be flying blind in a hurricane.

MARLOWE

If not me, whom do you suggest?

DAX

Based on his experience around the wormhole, Commander Sisko would be--

MARLOWE

Out of the question.

SISKO

Why?!

MARLOWE

This is exactly what I came here to prevent. You out there, playing hero to a throng of adoring Bajorans.

KIRA

There's something else. (All look at her) Jerone had a vision of you, Commander. You were falling in flames.

Pause.

MARLOWE

That clinches it.

SISKO

That could happen anywhere, any time.

MARLOWE

And it could happen in the next hour.

This is more than Sisko can take.

SISKO

If you don't fly this trip better than your last one, we're all going down in flames.

MARLOWE

You are out of line, Mister. Take your son, get down to an escape pod and sit this one out.

SISKO

Are you relieving me of duty, sir?

MARLOWE

I'm issuing you new orders. Are you prepared to follow them?

Sisko steps forward, seething. The others watch, waiting for the explosion, but Sisko stops himself. He hisses his answer.

SISKO

Yes, sir!

MARLOWE

Good. Dismissed.

Sisko steps back and turns sharply on his heel.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Ben!

Sisko stops but doesn't look back.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Congratulations. As of now, you're no longer the Emissary.

Sisko marches off, containing his anger. As he passes, Kira opens her mouth to say something, but catches herself. Off her concerned look, cut to:

INT. CORRIDOR - ON SISKO

The klaxons sound red alert. The corridor is crowded with Federation personnel and miscellaneous aliens hurrying toward the escape pods. Sisko strains to look above the crowd. He turns a corner to find Odo directing traffic.

ODO

Pod 6 please, Commander.

SISKO

Have you seen Jake?

Odo shakes his head.

SISKO (CONT'D)

Jake?!

(O.S.)

Dad! Over here!

Sisko hurries forward. He's angry; he hears Jake, but can't see him. Then Jake ducks between two burly aliens. They give each other a quick hug.

JAKE

Are you okay?

SISKO

I've had better days.

Jake puts Sisko's souvenir baseball in Sisko's hands.

JAKE

For luck.

KIRA

Commander!

Kira hurries up to Sisko.

SISKO

I thought you'd be prepping by now.

KIRA

I just wanted to say... Walk with the Prophets.

Sisko smiles.

SISKO

You too.

Sisko and Jake duck into an escape pod.

INT. ESCAPE POD - CONTINUOUS

Bashir's seated near the back, next to a curvaceous Dabo girl from Quark's. Quark and his regulars, including Morn, have most of the seats. Jake and Sisko sit near the door. Quark comes up to Sisko with a small recording device.

QUARK

Ah, Commander Sisko. Very good. Could you move a little to the left?

SISKO  
What is this?

QUARK  
I intend to make a complete record  
of the Emissary suffering Heaven's  
Fire. For posterity.

JAKE  
Dad?

SISKO  
It's going to be alright, Jake. Go  
ahead, Quark. Have a seat.

Quark touches a control on the recorder, starts edging toward  
the hatch.

QUARK  
Oh, no. I couldn't possibly.

Sisko steps in front of him; he's going to nip this in the  
bud.

SISKO  
Take a seat.

QUARK  
I'm having no part of any  
suffering, Commander. Heaven's  
Fire?

SISKO  
There's not going to be any fire!  
Do you hear me?

QUARK  
Very well, then I'll watch the  
recording of you not suffering the  
fire that doesn't happen. Later.  
But in the meantime...

relents. Quark ducks out. Morn eyes Sisko suspiciously,  
then leans over to Bashir.

MORN  
Heaven's Fire? What's that?

BASHIR  
Poetic hyperbole.

MORN  
Sounds painful.

He follows Quark. With exaggerated nonchalance, so do the rest of the riff-raff. The Dabo girl hesitates as Bashir gives her a searching look, but she shrugs and walks out, leaving Bashir, Sisko and Jake alone in the pod. Odo sticks his head in from the corridor.

ODO  
You are a miracle worker,  
Commander.

Odo sits, making himself very comfortable.

SISKO  
Has everyone around here gone  
crazy?

BASHIR  
I suppose they think if Mohammed  
won't go to the mountain, the  
mountain will come to Mohammed.

SISKO  
They're running from nothing. It's  
safe here.

JAKE  
The kids at school said it wouldn't  
matter where you go.

BASHIR  
I'm rather looking forward to it,  
myself. I've never seen a miracle  
before.

ODO  
There may not be much to see. (To  
Sisko) You could scald your tongue  
on a cup of coffee and they'd call  
it Heaven's Fire.

Sisko's face registers a moment of realization. He steps into the doorway.

SISKO  
Stay with Odo, son.

ODO  
Commander?

SISKO  
I'll be alright.

JAKE  
Where are you going?

Sisko tosses his baseball to Jake.

SISKO  
To spit in the devil's eye.  
closes the pod door. Off Jake's fearful expression, we

FADE OUT.

END ACT IV

ACT V

INT. RUNABOUT

Marlowe walks in to find Sisko at the controls.

MARLOWE  
What do you think you're doing,  
Commander?

SISKO  
I'm sorry, Admiral, but I'm  
piloting this ship.

MARLOWE  
The hell you are.

SISKO  
You're going to get yourself killed  
and us along with you.

MARLOWE  
You're looking at a court-martial,  
Mister.

SISKO  
I'll worry about that later, if  
we're still alive.

DAX'S COM VOICE  
Ops to Rio Grande. The Ganges and  
Orinoco are away.

MARLOWE  
Stand by, Lieutenant.  
(to Sisko)  
You can't do this, Ben. Your oath--

SISKO  
There's no Prime Directive  
violation here. I am the Emissary.

Marlowe is aghast.

MARLOWE  
My God, Ben. All along, I thought  
the problem was them. But it's  
you. You've got some kind of  
messiah complex.

SISKO

No sir, you're the problem. You don't understand what's happened here.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

Ganges to Rio Grande. Conditions are getting worse, sir. Better hurry.

MARLOWE

Understood.

SISKO

You said I could stop being the Emissary. And I listened, because that's what I wanted too. But it doesn't matter what I want. There is no way out.

MARLOWE

I won't let you play God to these people.

SISKO

I'm not playing God! I'm the Emissary because I found the wormhole. We can't change that, and we can't undo it. It's already happened.

MARLOWE

Don't make me put you under arrest, Ben.

SISKO

Listen to me, damn it! We can't stop this! If you throw me in the brig and this station gets destroyed, they'll just call that Heaven's Fire. Don't you see? You're putting the lives of those people in danger for nothing.

MARLOWE

I'm trying to save them, if you'd let me go.

SISKO

No, you're trying to prove a point. You want to show them that I'm not the Emissary, even if it kills them. Well listen, Admiral, whatever I do, wherever I go, they'll still call me Emissary. That's my burden. I can't hide from it in an escape pod, or run away from it to Pacifica. Even if this station is blown to bits, it won't change a thing. I'll still be the Emissary. But they'll all be dead. I'm not going to let that happen. You can throw me in a penal colony later, but I'm going out there.

DAX'S COM VOICE

Ops to Rio Grande. You've got to go now.

Sisko and Marlowe lock gazes. Cut to:

INT. RUNABOUT - ON KIRA

The runabout viewscreen is a shimmering white; she's flying blind. An alert sounds and the runabout shudders as debris hits the shields.

KIRA

Ganges to DS9. Approaching deployment position.

INT. OPS

Dax, alone in Ops, mans the Operations Table.

DAX

Stand by. Bumpy ride?

KIRA'S COM VOICE

You might say that.

Dax touches the controls, and a grid composed of concentric rings of red points appears on the main viewer. Three arcs, dotted white, indicate the position and course of the runabouts.

DAX  
DS9 to Orinoco.

O'Brien's voice is barely audible through static.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE  
Having... reading you...  
Ionization's... communications...

DAX  
You're clear for photon drop. (no  
reply) DS9 to Rio Grande. Admiral,  
can you make contact with Chief  
O'Brien?

MARLOWE (O.S.)  
Only if you can, Lieutenant.

Dax whirls; Marlowe's getting off the turbolift.

INT. RUNABOUT - CONTINUOUS - ON SISKO

at the controls. It's a bumpy ride for him, too.

SISKO  
Rio Grande to DS9. Chief O'Brien  
has begun his photon drop.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

One point on the viewer grid turns green, then, quickly,  
another and another.

DAX  
DS9 to Ganges. Begin deployment,  
Major.

More points turn green.

MARLOWE  
So far, so good.

INT. RUNABOUT - ON SISKO

Suddenly, the ship rocks violently. The runabout goes dark  
as sparks fly from the controls. Sisko is thrown to the  
floor.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

An alarm sounds and one of the runabout symbols on the display flashes yellow.

DAX  
Commander Sisko's off course.

MARLOWE  
DS9 to Rio Grande. Are you alright?

INT. RUNABOUT - CONTINUOUS

Rio Grande tumbles end over end.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

The viewer shows the runabout off the path and moving in the wrong direction.

DAX  
He's lost power.

MARLOWE  
Time?

DAX  
1 minute 19 seconds.

INT. RUNABOUT - ON SISKO

as he claws his way back to the console. His hands move quickly across the instrument panel, but it shorts out, spitting sparks and smoke and burning his arm. He cries out in pain but stays at the controls. The lights come back on...

EXT. RUNABOUT

Runabout stops tumbling and turns sharply, narrowly avoiding collision with a large chunk of cometary debris.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

The grid shows the runabout coming around.

MARLOWE

Come on, Ben.

The runabout symbol stops flashing and resumes proper course. The other two runabout symbols reach the outermost ring of the display, the third still heading for the center.

DAX

Ganges and Orinoco are clear, sir.  
I still can't raise the Rio Grande.

The red points on the viewer grid start to turn green, but suddenly the entire display disappears.

DAX (CONT'D)

We've lost sensors and  
communications. Too much  
interference.

MARLOWE

External view.

The viewer changes to show the comet, barely visible through the gas and debris.

DAX

Detonation in 13 seconds.

MARLOWE

Give him as much time as you can,  
Lieutenant.

INT. PROMENADE - ON VEDEK BAZ

He strikes Ekim's chimes and the Bajorans fall silent.

BAZ

It is time.

EXT. SPACE - THE COMET

hurls through space, a milky streak. Suddenly, breathtakingly, the wormhole flares open near the comet. Almost immediately, a portion of the comet's tail seems to explode at a right angle, toward the station.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

DAX  
Detonation in 3... 2... 1... mark.

The screen fills with a brilliant white light. Quickly, the light settles into a glowing disc; we see tendrils of fiery gas streaming around the edges of the disc, hurtling toward the station.

MARLOWE  
He did it!

DAX  
We're getting some leakage around the edges.

INT. RUNABOUTS - CONTINUOUS

O'Brien and Kira are jostled violently as the wave overtakes the runabouts.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

MARLOWE  
Marlowe to all personnel. Brace for impact.

The wave fills the screen. A violent shudder goes through the station as it strikes.

INT. ESCAPE POD - CONTINUOUS

The riff-raff cry out in panic.

INT. PROMENADE - CONTINUOUS

The shudder shakes the Bajorans' chimes, filling the air with a tinkling sound. The Bajorans gaze toward the Lamp, listening intently, expectantly.

INT. OPS - CONTINUOUS

The station continues to shudder, only more violently.

MARLOWE  
Boost the structural integrity field!

DAX  
Transferring emergency power...  
works the controls.

The shaking becomes more rapid but less violent, becoming a vibration. For a second, it stops, but then there's a strange sound, an elusive, eerie chord of metallic tones, similar to the Bajorans' chanting.

MARLOWE  
What is that?

DAX  
It's a sympathetic harmonic  
vibration in the superstructure.  
The whole station's ringing like a  
bell.

ESCAPE POD/PROMENADE/OPS

The ringing sound resonates into a tremendous crescendo, almost deafening. Marlowe covers his ears. In the pod, Odo, Bashir and Jake look at each other in astonishment. On the Promenade, Baz's blind eyes fill with tears of joy.

EXT. SPACE

The wormhole closes.

INT. OPS

The glowing disk on the viewer vanishes. The milky cloud around the station dissipates, as the sound quickly fades away. There's silence for a moment, as Dax and Marlowe look at each other, stunned. Dax's console begins to chirp.

SISKO'S COM VOICE  
Rio Grande to DS9....come in DS9...

MARLOWE  
Here.

INT. RUNABOUT - CONTINUOUS

Sisko's pretty battered, but the fire's out and the ship's running smoothly.

SISKO  
Are you alright, Admiral? What happened?

MARLOWE'S COM VOICE  
They... sang...

INT. QUARK'S

The bar is mobbed with joyous, celebrating Bajorans. Sisko, his arm bandaged, and Marlowe watch from the entrance.

SISKO  
And they've been drinking ever since?

MARLOWE  
I guess all that chanting made them thirsty.

A monk squeezes by them, completely ignoring Sisko.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)  
You might as well be invisible, Ben.

SISKO  
That's how it is... most of the time.

They shoulder through the crowd toward the bar.

MARLOWE  
It's a remarkable balancing act you're doing, Commander.

SISKO  
It's important to keep your balance when you're working without a net.

MARLOWE  
Well, I leave the high wire to you.

SISKO  
I'll try not to fall off. What do you think they'll say back at Command?

MARLOWE

I don't know whether they'll clap me in irons or give me a medal. But I'm going to tell them to leave you alone. Besides, I'm going to have my hands full explaining how I turned out to be The Sightless One.

INT. QUARK'S - ON JERONE

sitting alone at a table. She's playing Ekim's chimes softly, and with great difficulty. Kira comes up behind her.

KIRA

That's nice.

She turns to Kira, embarrassed.

JERONE

Ekim made it seem so easy. (putting down the rods) Will you join me?

Kira calls to Quark behind the bar

KIRA

Quark? 2 Algolian Meads. And Lieutenant Dax is buying.

JERONE

Thank you for saving our lives.

KIRA

I couldn't let you miss the miracle.

JERONE

It wouldn't have happened without you. YOU should be proud.

KIRA

I wish I could have heard it.

JERONE

(teasing)

A sympathetic harmonic vibration in the station's superstructure?

KIRA

The Song of the Prophets.

They look at each other for a beat; finally, they understand each other. Quark brings their drinks.

JERONE

Oh, and I'd like to buy Nerys one of your chips, please. (to Kira)  
Quark was kind enough to record the Prophets' Song. He's made copies to share with all of Bajor.

She hands Jerone an isolinear chip; she hands him a few coins. He eyes Kira.

JERONE (CONT'D)

Thank you, Quark. You'll help millions of our people find their faith.

Kira's speechless, but Quark can't resist a shot.

QUARK

Walk with the Prophets, Major. I always do.

INT. QUARK'S - ON SISKO AND MARLOWE

at the bar.

SISKO

Right now, my biggest problem is telling my son that we're not going to Pacifica.

A hand suddenly touches Sisko's shoulder. He flinches, but it's only Baz trying to get his attention.

BAZ

Commander Sisko... You are not leaving after all?

SISKO

Looks that way.

BAZ

I'm glad your ordeal is over. This has been a difficult day.

(MORE)

BAZ (CONT'D)  
Thank you for your patience. And  
to you, Admiral Marlowe.

MARLOWE  
Not 'The Sightless One?'

Baz smiles enigmatically.

BAZ  
You know the answer to that better  
than I.

Baz puts his hand on a monk's shoulder and starts away, then  
stops and turns back to them.

BAZ (CONT'D)  
If it's any comfort, Admiral, our  
next meeting will be more...  
illuminating.

He turns and disappears into the crowd.

MARLOWE  
Our next meeting?

Sisko puts his hand on MARLOWE'S shoulder.

SISKO  
Have another ale, Admiral.

Marlowe's look of dismay, we fade out.

THE END