

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"Child of the Prophets"

by  
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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - DS9

There are no ships docked at the station.

KIRA (V.O.)  
Personal log, Stardate XXXXX.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

Kira wanders through the Promenade which is bustling with activity.

KIRA (V.O.)  
The Festival of the Prophets has finally arrived. And for the first time since the Cardassian Occupation, my people are free to celebrate this most holy of holidays in public.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S ENTRANCE

Kira stops at Quark's which is mysteriously closed. She raps on the door.

KIRA  
Quark? Quark! Is anyone home?

She gives up and as she turns to leave a Bajoran woman carrying a package bumps into her.

WOMAN  
Oh! Sorry!

KIRA  
That's quite all right. No damage done.

WOMAN  
So sorry! Blessed Festival!

KIRA  
Blessed Festival to you too.

The women continue in opposite directions. Kira passes a group of children who are singing a Bajoran holiday song. She smiles and drops a coin in their pot. Then she spies Quark across the Promenade working at some kind of booth. She crosses the Promenade to investigate.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

Quark is behind a makeshift booth selling various Festival themed merchandise. He is in the process of completing a transaction.

QUARK

Thank you, good sir! And a Blessed Festival to you and your family!

MAN

Blessed Festival to you too!

KIRA

Quark?

QUARK

Major Kira! Blessed Festival to you!

KIRA

I'd wish you a Blessed Festival too if I thought you meant that. What is going on here? Since when has the Festival of the Prophets meant anything to you?

QUARK

Major! The Festival has always been near and dear to my heart.

KIRA

Uh-huh.

QUARK

Major, you act as though you don't believe me!

KIRA

That's probably because I don't. Look, Quark, you'd try to steal the gold off my comm badge if you thought you could get away with it.

He picks up a trinket and offers it to her.

QUARK

For you. A token of our reconciliation.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

The only thing you've ever reconciled is your financial report. Which brings me to the next question -- why are you here? Why is the bar closed?

QUARK

Do you think Bajorans have cornered the market on holidays? It just so happens that it is also the "Day of Reconciliation" -- a Ferengi holiday.

KIRA

Then you meant this!

She takes the trinket. He snatches it back.

QUARK

Actually, you were right the first time. The Day of Reconciliation comes once every Ferengi year, that is, once every 3.2 Bajoran years. By custom, Ferengis are required to close their establishments for three days and tithe their lost profits to the Empire.

KIRA

But you're out here trying to make money.

QUARK

Also by custom, Ferengis are expected to attempt to gain profit in other ways while their establishments are closed. It makes for a well rounded businessman. Plus it makes up for the lost profit.

KIRA

I can't believe you're hawking festival merchandise to cheat on your taxes!

QUARK

Well, when you put it like that --

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

This is intolerable Quark! This booth has got to go -- I'm shutting you down.

QUARK

You can't do that!

KIRA

But Commander Sisko can! The Festival of the Prophets is supposed to be about the innocence of children! I won't have it ruined with your shameless profiteering!

She leaves. He calls after her.

QUARK

You see to your Prophets, I'll see to mine!

FADE OUT.

END TEASE

(CONTINUED)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - DS9

Several small craft are docked at the station.

SISKO (V.O.)  
Personal log. With the Bajorans  
Festival of the Prophets upon us I  
have decided it is time to join in  
on the celebration...

INT. DS9 - SISKO'S QUARTERS

Jake is getting ready for school. He has misplaced something  
and is frantically searching for it.

JAKE  
Dad, have you seen my PADD?

Sisko enters the living area.

SISKO  
Isn't it in your schoolbag?

JAKE  
No.

Sisko looks in the bag and pulls out Jake's missing PADD.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Thanks.  
(Sighs)

SISKO  
You okay? You sure you're ready for  
the mid-term?

JAKE  
I think so.

SISKO  
Just take your time and remember  
you've got three weeks off as soon  
as it's over.

JAKE  
Right.

SISKO  
Jake...

(CONTINUED)

Sisko walks over to the replicator.

JAKE  
Yeah, Dad?

SISKO  
(to the replicator)  
Coffee. Black.

The coffee appears.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
(to Jake)  
About the holiday... What would you  
say to a big Thanksgiving feast  
like we used to have?

JAKE  
For just the two of us?

SISKO  
Actually, I was thinking about  
inviting the senior officers and  
their families.

Jake is unsure how to answer.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Look, I know it was your mom's  
favorite holiday, and we've kind of  
shied away from it for the past few  
years, but don't you think it's  
time...

Jake is suddenly excited about the prospect. He has missed  
celebrating the feast and it shows in his eyes.

JAKE  
Can I invite Nog?

SISKO  
Sure.

JAKE  
Do we have to sit with the  
officers?

SISKO  
Absolutely not. You'll have a table  
all to yourselves.

Jake heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

Great! I gotta go. Don't want to miss the start of the tests.

SISKO

Jake!

Jake stops.

SISKO (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're okay with this?

Jake understands that his dad is really asking for his permission.

JAKE

I'll always miss her, Dad. But you're right -- we should celebrate the holiday with our new family.

Sisko smiles, full of pride for his son.

SISKO

I'll put you down for you and a guest. Good luck on that test.

Jake leaves.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

Kira to Sisko.

SISKO

Sisko here.

KIRA'S COM VOICE

Do you have a minute, Commander?

Sisko knows exactly what she wants.

SISKO

Give me twenty, Major. My office.

He sips his coffee.

SISKO (CONT'D)

(to himself)

That didn't take long.

INT. DS9 - SISKO'S OFFICE

Commander Sisko is at his desk and is speaking with Kai Winn via his comm link.

(CONTINUED)



WINN

It is the first time in two generations that public celebration of the Festival has been not only allowed, but encouraged. It is an important healing time for my people. I'm sure you can appreciate how meaningful it would be for that a traditional ceremony be held on the station.

SISKO

Of course. I completely understand -  
- and I am looking forward to attending.

WINN

Thank you, Emissary. I too, look forward to attending. Blessed Festival.

SISKO

Blessed Festival to you, Kai Winn.

The comm link is terminated by Winn. Major Kira enters.

KIRA

Commander! I really have to speak with you --

SISKO

Blessed Festival, Major.

He has caught her off guard.

KIRA

What?

SISKO

I said "Blessed Festival."

KIRA

Oh -- uh -- Blessed Festival!

SISKO

You know, Major, I have always said there's nothing like a good old fashioned holiday to lift the spirit.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

With respect, sir, this is not just a good old fashioned holiday. This is the Festival of the Prophets.

SISKO

Yes.

KIRA

The most important Bajoran holiday of the year.

SISKO

Yes. What is your point?

KIRA

My point is -- this is a High Bajoran festival and it seems to me that there are an awful lot of non-Bajorans celebrating it.

SISKO

My apologies.

KIRA

No, it's not you, it's Quark. He's set up a cheap little booth in the Promenade selling tacky little Festival trinkets.

SISKO

And?

KIRA

And he's just doing it so he can cheat the Ferengi Empire!

SISKO

And you want me to stop him.

KIRA

Yes I want you to stop him!

SISKO

From being a Ferengi?

KIRA

It's not that -- it's --

SISKO

Major, there's nothing I can do. Quark's Festival stand is a legitimate enterprise.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

A legitimate enterprise?

SISKO

He submitted all the required paperwork and even bought a permit.

KIRA

You knew?

SISKO

Major, the Bajorans aren't the only residents of this station. Quark has a tradition of his own to celebrate -- in his own way -- and as long as it's legal -- and I assure you it is -- there's nothing I can -- or should -- do to interfere.

Kira is not convinced.

SISKO (CONT'D)

I know this is a significant time for your people. And you should know that I'm doing everything I can to aid in its celebration. In fact, I have just agreed to allow Cargo Bay 3 to be converted to a large chapel for a public Vigil service.

She is somewhat impressed.

SISKO (CONT'D)

It is also important that we show tolerance for the many cultures aboard this station. Most of them have holidays that offer their people a chance to reflect on their good fortune. We just have to allow for different definitions of good fortune.

She begins to come around.

SISKO (CONT'D)

Isn't the Festival of the Prophets all about peace and good will?

She sees his point and nods.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO (CONT'D)  
I'm glad we agree.

He rises and begins to make his way around his desk.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
In that spirit of good will, I am personally hosting a traditional Terran Thanksgiving feast for the senior officers tomorrow at 1900 hours. Shall I have Quark set a place for you?

KIRA  
Quark?

He begins to escort her to the door.

SISKO  
As part of his permit fee, Quark will be donating his services for the feast.

Kira smiles broadly.

KIRA  
Don't you think you could have found a better caterer?

SISKO  
I'll take that as a "yes".

They exit to Ops.

INT. DS9 - OPS

O'Brien and Dax are at their stations as Kira and Sisko join them.

O'BRIEN  
Commander! About this Thanksgiving feast...

SISKO  
Yes?

O'BRIEN  
I was wondering -- is this a pot lock sort of meal? Because Keiko makes a wonderful boiled cabbage...

Before Sisko can respond, an alarm sounds.

(CONTINUED)

DAX  
There's an unidentified ship coming  
through the wormhole.

A small ship emerges from the wormhole on the viewscreen.

SISKO  
Hailing frequencies.

KIRA  
No response.

O'BRIEN  
The ship's adrift, Commander.

SISKO  
Power systems?

O'BRIEN  
Levels look normal. Hull's intact.  
No signs exterior damage.

SISKO  
Lifesigns?

DAX  
I'm reading one life form.

O'BRIEN  
Shall I tow her in, sir?

Sisko nods.

SISKO  
Have Dr. Bashir and Odo meet us at  
Docking Bay 2. Dax. Kira. Time to  
spread some of that good will.

Kira and Dax follow Sisko to the lift.

O'BRIEN  
Sir? About the cabbage?

The lift begins to go down.

SISKO  
It's your digestive system, Chief.  
Not mine.

O'BRIEN  
Thank you, sir!

INT. DS9 - DOCKING BAY CORRIDOR

Kira, Dax and Sisko walk down the corridor heading to the Docking Bay.

DAX  
So, have any big plans for the Festival?

KIRA  
Not really -- apart from attending the Vigil ceremonies. It'll be my first time. I've celebrated alone for so many years. It's been a good opportunity to do a little soul-searching. That kind of thing. You know, it's kind of hard to have the traditional family reunion when you don't have a traditional family.

DAX  
I guess so.

They arrive at the airlock and wait at the entrance.

DAX (CONT'D)  
Kirzon always looked forward to holidays like this. He relished exploring new cultures to the fullest extent.

Sisko can't help but chuckle at the memory.

SISKO  
I don't know how many times I saw him gather a circle of children around him at holiday time. He would tell them their own folk tales in ways that made them sound incredibly new and inspiring.

DAX  
Quite the storyteller!

SISKO  
I can picture him now -- with a dozen or so Bajoran children, their eyes wide open with amazement as he tells them the story of the Child-King the Prophets have promised to deliver to Bajor.

(CONTINUED)

DAX

It is a beautiful story, Benjamin.  
You really should read it sometime.  
The poetry of the Scribes is  
inspiring!

KIRA

It's more than a story to a lot of  
people around here. It's been a  
reason not to give up hope for a  
very long time.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Ops to Sisko.

SISKO

Sisko here. Go ahead.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Docking procedures complete. You  
may board when ready.

Sisko opens the first door of the airlock and they enter.

INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK

Kira closes the first door. And as Sisko prepares to open the  
second, Dax begins tricorder scans.

SISKO

How's our lifesign?

DAX

Holding steady. I must be getting  
some kind of interference, though.  
The lifesign's mass is reading only  
ten kilos.

KIRA

What could be keeping Dr. Bashir  
and Odo?

SISKO

We can't wait much longer. Our  
guest may be injured. Let's go.

He opens the second door. Kira comes forward, finds the  
ship's emergency hatch control and opens the ship's door.  
They enter.

INT. ALIEN SHIP

Kira, Dax and Sisko enter the ship. Dax continues her tricorder scans.

SISKO

Dax?

DAX

That way.

Kira pulls her phaser and heads in the direction Dax indicated. Bashir and Odo enter the ship.

BASHIR

Sorry we're late, Commander. The Promenade is packed with Bajoran visitors!

ODO

It was damned foolish for the three of you to board this vessel without the proper security escort!

Sisko can see Kira coming back toward the bridge area.

SISKO

Really, Constable. I don't think we needed a security escort to protect us from a baby.

The others turn to discover Kira carrying an infant. The child has a Bajoron-like nose. Bashir immediately begins to scan the baby.

BASHIR

He looks perfectly fit!

SISKO

He can't possibly have been alone for very long.

BASHIR

Let's get him to the Infirmary. Major?

Bashir offers Kira the door and she leads the group back into the airlock.

INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK

Kira lead Dax, Bashir, Sisko and Odo through the airlock. Odo closes the second door.

(CONTINUED)



KIRA

"And the Prophets shall bring forth  
a child king, full of innocence,  
full of wonder!"

Kira and Dax realize the scriptural significance of the events unfolding. Dax opens the airlock entrance and Kira exits to the corridor.

INT. DS9 - DOCKING BAY CORRIDOR

Three Bajoran crew members are passing as Kira enters the corridor. They stop when they hear Dax's familiar words.

DAX

"And the matron who delivers him to  
this world shall be exalted above  
all women. For she brings hope to  
those who have no reason to hope  
and peace to those who have known  
no peace."

The three Bajoran crew members slowly drop to one knee. Sisko, Odo and Bashir look on as Kira slowly realizes the enormity of the situation.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

(CONTINUED)

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Dax, Sisko and Kira look on as Bashir concludes his examination of the Child.

BASHIR

This child is perfectly healthy. He definitely has not been on his own for very long.

SISKO

Someone has misplaced a baby.

BASHIR

There's more. The DNA scan found something remarkable. Genetically, this child is almost Bajoran.

He activates a screen comparing the Child's DNA with Bajoran DNA.

BASHIR (CONT'D)

Except for two sequences, here and here, the child's DNA is indistinguishable from Bajoran DNA.

DAX

Benjamin, do you realize what this means? Either this race or the Bajorans must have traveled through the wormhole centuries ago and populated a new system!

KIRA

In the Scribes' story of creation, the first Bajorans are said to have emerged from the heavenly abyss. The Prophets sent them from heaven.

SISKO

So this baby is an ancestor to all of Bajor?

KIRA

Commander, requesting a runabout to return the child to the Gamma Quadrant.

Odo appears on the comm screen.

(CONTINUED)

ODO

Commander, things are getting a little out of hand down here. This station is full of Bajoran fundamentalists who are demanding to see Major Kira and the baby. Something about paying homage to the Matron.

SISKO

Thank you, Odo. Try to keep things calm. Increase the number of officers on duty, but do it quietly.

ODO

Of course. I would like to assign a security escort to Major Kira as well.

KIRA

That's really not necessary!

SISKO

Are you sure? This could be serious.

KIRA

I'll be fine -- really.

SISKO

Hold off on the escort, Odo -- for now. Feel free to assign one at the first sign of trouble. And assign two officers to the Infirmary. No one see this baby without my permission. Understood?

ODO

Understood.

Odo disconnects the comm link.

SISKO

It would seem that news of our blessed event is traveling fast.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Ops to Commander Sisko.

SISKO

Sisko here.

(CONTINUED)

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE  
A communication from Bajor for you,  
sir. It's Kai Winn.

KIRA  
Kai Winn? How--?

SISKO  
Tell her I'm in an urgent meeting  
and I'll get back to her as soon as  
I can.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE  
I've already tried that, sir. She's  
very persistent.

SISKO  
Yes she is. I'll be there in  
fifteen minutes.

Sisko looks at each of his officers in turn, then takes a  
deep breath.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Suggestions?

DAX  
Allowing Kira to leave the station  
with the child at this point would  
trigger a great deal of unrest.

SISKO  
Major?

KIRA  
I can't just hide in my quarters.

SISKO  
Can't you?

She can't believe what he is suggesting, and they lock eyes.  
She sees that he means it and finally capitulates, dropping  
her head in frustration.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Dax, you and O'Brien take a  
runabout through the wormhole.  
Contact any ship you find near the  
entrance. If someone's on the other  
side looking for this kid, they  
can't be far from where we found  
him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SISKO(CONT'D)

Dr. Bashir, take exceptionally good care of our guest. Absolutely no visitors allowed!

BASHIR

Yes, sir.

SISKO

Meanwhile, I'll speak with Kai Winn.

EXT. DS9 - RUNABOUT PAD

A runabout takes off.

EXT. SPACE - THE WORMHOLE

The wormhole appears as the runabout approaches, and disappears as the runabout enters.

INT. DS9 - SISKO'S OFFICE

Sisko is at his desk. Kai Winn appears on his viewscreen.

WINN

Blessed Festival, Emissary!

SISKO

Blessed Festival to you, Kai Winn.

WINN

Word has reached Bajor of some momentous events aboard your space station!

SISKO

Word travels quickly.

WINN

You should know that tens of thousands of pilgrims are at this very minute flocking to the Capitol City in hopes of paying homage to the Child.

SISKO

The enthusiasm shown by the pilgrims is remarkable.

WINN

I will be arriving shortly to resolve the true nature of this child.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO

I'm sorry. What do you mean?

WINN

If I determine that this child could indeed be the Child of the Prophets, it is my intention to bring him back to Bajor with me.

SISKO

I'm afraid I can't allow the child to be taken from this station.

WINN

Can't allow it? You can't prevent it! I'm afraid both the Chamber of Ministries and the Vedek Assembly have already spoken.

SISKO

It is extremely likely that this child has simply been separated from his parents. The Federation can't allow him to be taken from the station until an exhaustive search for his parents has been concluded. There is also the matter of Dr. Bashir's ongoing medical examinations.

WINN

Once again, the mighty Federation is dabbling in areas better left to the Prophets. The true nature of the Child must be determined on Bajor by Bajorans!

SISKO

Perhaps you could make your determinations here on the station.

WINN

It is not wise to stand in the way of Prophecy, Emissary. I will arrive tomorrow.

She disconnects the communication.

INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR

Kira is walking down the corridor leading to her quarters. She notices a few Bajorans in the corridor.

(CONTINUED)

The respectfully bow their heads as she walks by. She turns down another corridor

INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR

As Kira continues down the corridor, it gets more and more crowded with Bajorans. They all bow as she passes.

INT. DS9 - ENTRANCE TO KIRA'S QUARTERS

A thick crowd of Bajorans is gathered at the entrance to Kira's quarters. They silently part and bow their heads as she comes to the door. She quickly keys in the combination to unlock her door and enters her quarters.

WOMAN  
Blessed Festival, Matron!

KIRA  
Blessed Festival!

The doors close.

INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS

The events have shaken Kira. She goes to the lavatory to wash her face.

INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS - LAVATORY

Kira splashes some water on her face then towels off. It is now obvious to her what she must do.

KIRA  
Computer, revise this quarter's  
security code -- authorization Kira  
Beta Three.

She keys in a new security code on the comm panel.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Security code revision confirmed.

Kira taps her comm badge as she moves to the main living area.

INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS

KIRA  
Kira to Odo.

ODO'S COMM VOICE  
Yes, Major?

(CONTINUED)

She is reluctant to bring it up.

KIRA  
Does that offer of a security  
escort still stand? Things are a  
little... close... outside my  
quarters.

ODO'S COMM VOICE  
Understood. Stay put until my men  
arrive.

KIRA  
Acknowledged.

She goes to the replicator.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Hot chocolate.

It appears. She takes the mug with her and curls up in a  
chair. Her attention goes to the entrance of her quarters.  
Her followers are singing the same Bajoran holiday song she  
heard earlier on the Promenade.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

(CONTINUED)



ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - DS9

A Bajoran shuttle is in the process of docking. The alien ship remains docked.

SISKO (V.O.)  
Station log, supplemental. Kai Winn has arrived to "inspect" our celebrated guest. Meanwhile, Lt. Dax and Chief O'Brien are some twenty-one hours into their search for the child's parents.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

Kai Winn and her entourage cross the Promenade.

SISKO (V.O.)  
I continue to hold hope that they will succeed in the mission...

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY ENTRANCE

Kai Winn and her entourage come down the corridor towards the Infirmary. Two security officers stand guard at the entrance.

SISKO (V.O.)  
...for the sake of the child and for the sake of my crew's safety.

One of the security guards taps his comm badge.

GUARD  
She's here, sir.

The guard stands aside and the door slides open, revealing Sisko and Bashir.

SISKO  
Kai Winn! We've been expecting you.  
Welcome! Blessed Festival!

She enters the Infirmary, a bit surprised by Sisko's presence. The security guards return to their original position, blocking Winn's entourage. The doors close.

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Kai Winn, Sisko and Bashir are alone in the Infirmary. The baby is nowhere to be seen. The absence of her entourage and the tight security have unnerved Kai Winn.

SISKO

I must apologize for the tight security. But I hope you understand, it is very important to the Federation that no harm come to our unexpected "guest."

WINN

Bajor thanks the Emissary for his extreme caution. We are honored by your concern. May I see the Child?

SISKO

Where are my manners? May I present Dr. Julian Bashir, my Chief Medical Officer.

BASHIR

Blessed Festival.

She is growing more and more impatient with every passing moment.

WINN

Blessed Festival, Doctor. You too must feel privileged to be playing such an important role in the fulfillment of the Prophecy of the Child-King.

BASHIR

It is indeed an honor.

WINN

May I see the Child?

BASHIR

Certainly. Right this way.

Bashir leads Kai Winn and Sisko out of the Infirmary and into the Nursery.

INT. DS9 - NURSERY

Bashir, Sisko and Winn enter. The Child is sleeping in a crib. Winn caresses his head.

(CONTINUED)

WINN

Such innocence. Such wonder. Sleep well, my king.

Bashir indicates that they should return to the main Infirmary and they do so.

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Sisko, Winn and Bashir return to the main area of the Infirmary.

WINN

Emmisary, I cannot express to you how important it is that the Child return with me to Bajor -- immediately.

SISKO

I'm sorry, but I can't allow that to happen. I have a search party in the Gamma Quadrant right now, looking for this child's parents. They aren't due back for another twenty-five hours. And there's still the matter of the medical exams --

WINN

You can stop your medical exams right now. Doctor, Bajor truly does thank you for your role to date, but the remainder of the fulfillment of the prophecy must be in the hands of Bajorans. Should any further examinations be needed, they will be conducted on Bajor. I will be returning home with the Child tomorrow at midday. Blessed Festival, Emissary.

She turns to leave.

SISKO

Kai Winn, what if this were your child lost somewhere in space?

WINN

Emissary, this is my child. This child belongs to all of Bajor. He is our future. He is no longer lost. And now, neither are we.

(CONTINUED)

She leaves. Sisko and Bashir exchange looks of doubt.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

The Promenade is filled with energy. It is much more crowded than usual. A children's choir is singing a traditional Bajoran holiday song.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

Quark is completing a transaction with a Bajoran man while several others wait to be served.

QUARK  
Blessed Festival, my good man!  
Remember to tell a friend about  
Quark's Festival booth! Who's next?  
Ah, an excellent choice!

The hustle and bustle comes to an abrupt halt. The couple Quark was serving is suddenly disinterested.

QUARK (CONT'D)  
Yes, I also have it --

Quark realizes that he is the one on the entire promenade speaking.

QUARK (CONT'D)  
... in red.

Quark looks down the Promenade to see what has everyone's attention.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

Kira and her security officers have entered the Promenade and are slowly making their way toward Quark's booth. The silence is overwhelming.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

As Kira arrives at Quark's booth, the attention of hundreds of people is focused on her every move.

QUARK  
Well don't just stand there, say  
something!

Kira is at a loss what to say. She reluctantly holds up a hand to the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
Blessed Festival, everyone!

The crowd erupts with holiday greetings.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Please! Enjoy yourself! Enjoy!

The Promenade slowly returns to its previous state of activity. Passers-by cut a wide path around the security guards and Quark's booth now has no customers.

QUARK  
Major! I've always said you have a face that makes time stand still -- but the entire Promenade? Incredible!

KIRA  
Dispense with the pick up lines, Quark. I'm here at great risk to life and limb to apologize.

QUARK  
Apologize? For what?

KIRA  
For our incident yesterday. If there's anything I've learned in the past twenty-six hours, it's tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

QUARK  
Major, you don't owe me an apology. Why, if it weren't for you, half of this crowd wouldn't be here. I'm making out like a band-- I'm doing very well.

KIRA  
Still, I feel I owe you something, and I'd like to make it up to you. I'd like to buy a Festival ornament for my quarters.

QUARK  
Splendid!

He directs her attention to one end of the booth.

(CONTINUED)

QUARK (CONT'D)

How about some incense? For you,  
wholesale plus five percent. Or  
maybe some scented Vigil candles?

Something at the other end of the booth catches her eye.

KIRA

What are those figurines down  
there?

QUARK

Those? Oh, just trinkets for those  
with a less discriminating sense of  
style. But you, Major --

She breaks away and goes to inspect the figurines. What she  
sees infuriates her.

KIRA

Quark! What is the meaning of this?

She brings a figurine to the center of the booth and slams it  
down on the counter.

QUARK

Major -- let me explain!

He picks up the figurine and checks it for damage. It is a  
replica of Kira holding the Child.

KIRA

And to think -- I came here to  
apologize to you!

QUARK

Honestly, Major -- I didn't think  
you'd mind.

KIRA

Didn't think I'd mind?

QUARK

I was going to cut you in for one  
percent of the profits!

KIRA

How dare you!

QUARK

All right! Five percent!

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
Tolerance only goes so far, Quark --  
and you've crossed way over the  
line!

The Promenade has grown quiet. Once again, Kira is the center of everyone's attention.

QUARK  
Keep your voice down, you're  
attracting attention.

KIRA  
Don't tell me to keep my voice  
down! How could you do this, Quark?  
How could you?

QUARK  
Peaceful coexistence, Major!  
Peaceful coexistence!

KIRA  
Any Bajoran who buys this junk from  
you should be ashamed. Anyone who  
understands the true meaning of the  
Festival would refuse to buy this  
garbage.

She storms off. The security guards follow. The onlookers rush Quark's booth demanding refunds.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - UPPER DECK

Kira comes up the stairs in a blind rage. She leans against the railing to compose herself, and eventually notices the commotion below her.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

Hundreds of Bajorans are crowding around Quark's booth demanding refunds.

QUARK  
I'm sorry -- all sales are final!  
No refunds! Security! Odo!

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - UPPER DECK

Kira is stunned by what she has caused to happen. The power of the Matron is now clear to her. She seems exhausted as she taps her comm badge.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
Security to the Promenade. Riot  
protocol.

ODO'S COMM VOICE  
Major! Are you injured?

KIRA  
No. I'm fine. We've got a crowd  
control problem on the Promenade!

She indicates to her guards to attempt to break up the crowd  
beneath them.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Don't worry about me! Go! Go!

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

The guards hurry down the stairs and try to work their way  
through the mob towards Quark's booth, but are unsuccessful.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

Quark's booth topples over on him under the force of the mob.  
He screams in terror and in pain. A phaser blast cuts through  
the air -- a warning shot from one of the six security  
officers who have now surrounded the mob. A second warning  
shot quiets the crowd. Odo steps forward.

ODO  
Leave this area and return to your  
quarters or transport ships  
immediately. Anyone who does not  
comply will be incarcerated for the  
duration of the Festival.

The crowd begins to disperse.

ODO (CONT'D)  
Move along. There's nothing more to  
see here. Move along.

He sees Kira's guards and goes to them.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

Kira's guards are guiding people away from the area.

ODO  
Where is Major Kira?

(CONTINUED)



The guards look up to the upper deck, then hurry up the stairway. Odo follows.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - UPPER DECK

Kira is overwhelmed by a dozen devoted followers. Her guards and Odo fight through the gathering.

ODO  
Step aside! Step aside! Major!  
Major?

KIRA  
I'm okay, Odo. How's Quark?

ODO  
Quark?

The crowd around them dwindles away. Odo goes to the railing to look down at Quark's collapsed booth. The debris shifts as something under it stirs. Odo taps his comm badge.

ODO (CONT'D)  
Odo to Dr. Bashir. Medical  
emergency on the Promenade.

Kira rushes to the railing to see what has happened.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S BOOTH

Quark's hand emerges from the pile of debris and merchandise. He manages to clear the rubble from around his face and gasps for air. Security officers begin to help clear the debris.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - UPPER DECK

Kira is shocked by her role in Quark's injuries. Odo gently leads her to her guards.

ODO  
Take her to her quarters. Keep the  
corridors clear. Absolutely no  
visitors without Sisko's  
permission. Keep your phasers on  
stun and be prepared to use them.  
I'll send the doctor shortly.

Kira and her guards leave as Odo begins to clear rubble.

EXT. SPACE - DS9

Ships are docked at every docking bay. The alien ship remains as before.

INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR - ENTRANCE TO KIRA'S QUARTERS

Sisko and Bashir arrive at Kira's quarters. The guards are at their posts and the corridor is clear.

INT. DS9 - KIRA'S QUARTERS

A buzzer sounds and Kira sits up in her bed.

KIRA  
Come in.

The doors open and Sisko and Bashir enter. Kira tries to smile but her efforts falls a bit short. Bashir opens his medical kit.

BASHIR  
How are you feeling?

KIRA  
Not too bad. I thought I might get some sleep...

She knows it's obvious she hasn't been successful. Bashir begins to scan her.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
How's Quark?

BASHIR  
Bumps and bruises mostly.

SISKO  
He'll be fine. How about you?

KIRA  
Physically?

She thnks about lying but changes her mind.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Nausea... headache... exhaustion.

SISKO  
Mentally?

Bashir gives her a hypo.

KIRA  
Commander, I have seen lots of horrors in my time. I have survived unspeakable atrocities at the hands of the Cardassians.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KIRA(CONT'D)

I have seen members of my own family ruthlessly tortured. I have even killed in cold blood. But never have I seen anything like what happened on the Promenade. I can make sense of the acts of war, but this -- this was an act of religion.

She is becoming agitated.

BASHIR

Easy, relax!

KIRA

How can I relax? I mean -- Quark and I are hardly dear friends -- but he could have very easily died out there!

SISKO

You can't blame yourself for what happened, Major. You can't carry the weight of all of Bajor on your shoulders.

KIRA

These are my people, Commander. And they're behaving like mindless sheep!

SISKO

They're just people who need something to believe in.

KIRA

But of all people -- they've crowned me Holy Matron! Just -- just because I carried a baby off a ship! I'm not cut out to be a religious leader, Commander.

Sisko makes the connection.

SISKO

What did you say?

KIRA

I said I'm not prepared to be a leader for all of Bajor.

SISKO

No -- the part about being crowned Holy Matron. Just because you --

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
-- carried a baby off a ship.

SISKO  
No -- because you delivered the  
child to Bajor!

She doesn't see where he's going.

KIRA  
But the baby hasn't been delivered  
to Bajor.

SISKO  
And if I have anything to do with  
it, it never will be.

Bashir also see the connection.

BASHIR  
Kai Winn?

KIRA  
Winn?

SISKO  
She insists on taking the child to  
Bajor for examination.

BASHIR  
But if she takes the child to  
Bajor...

Kira understand now!

KIRA  
She can claim to be Holy Matron!

SISKO  
And with the title of Holy Matron  
comes a very large following.

KIRA  
And power over that following! More  
power than a Kai could ever dream  
of!

SISKO  
It looks like this Kai can dream  
pretty big.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
Commander, requesting permission to  
return to duty.

SISKO  
Doctor?

BASHIR  
It's up to her. She's physically  
fit.

SISKO  
Are you going to be all right?

KIRA  
Definitely. I suddenly feel much  
more in control of the situation.

SISKO  
Permission granted on two  
conditions. One, you keep the  
security guards -- and two, you  
fight Kai Winn for the title of  
Holy Matron.

Kira smiles broadly.

KIRA  
Anytime, anywhere.

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE

(CONTINUED)

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Quark is in a bed and is grudgingly allowing Bashir to examine him.

BASHIR

You know, if you'd sit still, this wouldn't take as long.

QUARK

Doctor, I'm tired of being poked and prodded. Isn't it obvious that I'm in extreme pain? Leave me alone!

BASHIR

Quark, you've received a very serious concussion. I have to keep you here overnight for observation.

QUARK

Overnight? Oh... all that profit going down the drain! Doctor, give me a hypo.

BASHIR

I can't give you a hypo for a concussion.

QUARK

No -- end it. Put me to sleep. You know, the never ending sleep. I can't go on like this. I'm ruined. I have no reason to live.

BASHIR

Now, that's the old Quark I know. Keep making progress like that and you'll be back in business tomorrow!

Bashir leaves the room.

QUARK

If there's any business left!

Bashir steps back into the room.

BASHIR

Quark, you have a visitor.

(CONTINUED)

QUARK  
I don't want to see anyone like  
this.

Kira enters.

QUARK (CONT'D)  
Her!

He screams. It doesn't shake her one bit. She has regained  
her confidence.

KIRA  
Now, quark, is that any way to  
treat a friend? Especially during  
the Festival of Reconciliation!

Bashir smiles, then leaves.

QUARK  
You! You wrecked my establishment!  
Look what they did to me! I'm  
crippled!

KIRA  
Quark.

QUARK  
My vision is blurred -- I can  
barely see! I have a good mind to  
sue you for lost profits!

KIRA  
QUARK!

She has silenced him.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Quark, I can't tell you how sorry I  
am that you were injured. I had no  
idea you were going to get mobbed.  
I'm very sorry.

QUARK  
Well...

KIRA  
To make it up to you, I want you to  
have this.

She hands him a crudely carved wooden candle holder vaguely  
shaped like a lighthouse

(CONTINUED)

QUARK

What's this?

KIRA

It's a Vigil Lighthouse -- one of the most important symbols of the Festival of the Prophets. Most families use Lighthouses that have been handed down through the generations. Heirlooms. This one isn't as pretty or as old as most -- my brother made it for me -- in a Cardassian labor camp -- when I was fifteen. It got me through many hardships.

QUARK

Major -- I can't accept this.

He tries to hand the lighthouse back to her.

KIRA

It's traditional to celebrate the Vigil with family and loved ones. I know we've had our share of problems in the past, but I'd like to put all that behind us. I'd like you to join me in celebrating the Festival.

QUARK

Family?

She presses his hands around the Lighthouse.

KIRA

Family. Black sheep and all.

QUARK

Reconciliation?

KIRA

Reconciliation.

She leaves. He holds the Lighthouse close, somewhat amazed by what has just happened.

INT. DS9 - CORRIDOR - INFIRMARY ENTRANCE

Kira's guards follow her down the corridor. She feels really good about what she has just done.



INT. DS9 - OPS

Kira and her guards are on the lift as it rises to Ops. She joins Sisko and Odo near her station while the guards take a position near the lift.

SISKO  
Welcome back, Major.

KIRA  
Glad to be here, sir.

SISKO  
How is Quark?

KIRA  
We're fine.

SISKO  
The Constable and I were just reviewing security arrangements for tonight's Vigil ceremony.

ODO  
I still think we're taking an unnecessary risk by allowing the ceremony to take place.

SISKO  
Allowing the ceremony to continue as planned will keep Winn close by. I want her in the open when she makes her move.

An indicator on Kira's panel goes off.

KIRA  
Two ships coming through the wormhole.

The viewscreen shows a runabout followed by an alien ship.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Ships' configuration matches! One passenger.

SISKO  
Open a channel.

Paydon appears on the viewscreen. Although his style of clothing is very different, it is clear from his bone structure that he is genetically linked to Bajor.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO (CONT'D)

I am Benjamin Sisko, Commander of Deep Space 9. Welcome!

PAYDON

Commander Sisko, I am Paydon. I understand I owe you a debt of gratitude. How is my son?

SISKO

He's just fine. I'm sure you're eager to see him. Major Kira will assist you with docking procedures. As soon as you've docked, we'll take you directly to your son.

PAYDON

Thank you.

The viewscreen switches to an image of Paydon's ship.

SISKO

Kira, take care of Paydon first. Have O'Brien and Dax escort him to the Infirmary. Once they're on their way, contact Winn. Tell her I would like to meet her regarding tonight's Vigil ceremonies -- her quarters -- in one hour. Casually mention that you will be attending the meeting as well. That should keep her and her entourage busy while we reunite Paydon and his son.

KIRA

Yes, sir.

SISKO

Constable, join me in the Infirmary?

ODO

My pleasure.

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Quark is in one of the beds, still moaning in what he wants someone to believe is pain. Bashir enters with the child.

QUARK

What is the meaning of this?

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR

The meaning of what?

QUARK

What is that wretched child doing in here? Don't I merit a private room?

BASHIR

Dax and O'Brien think they've found this little fellow's father. He's about to get quite a few visitors. The nursery will be a bit close with all those people, so I'm moving him in here -- temporarily.

Bashir places the baby in a crib.

QUARK

All those people? I can't have visitors in here! I'm a very sick man! I demand some privacy!

BASHIR

Quark, you cry more than the baby! If you really want to be alone, I can move you to the overflow room.

QUARK

Well, I suppose that would be acceptable. If that's the best you can do.

BASHIR

Alright, then. Hop up.

QUARK

Hop up? I could be crippled for life and you're asking me to walk all the way over there?

BASHIR

Quark, it's up to you. Either walk, or suffer the indignity of crying like a baby in the presence of both Major Kira and Odo.

QUARK

Odo? Doctor, you have a lot to learn about bedside manners!

Quark moans loudly as he rolls out of bed. He continues to complain and whine as Bashir leads him out.

(CONTINUED)

Bashir returns to tend to the baby. Sisko, O'Brien, Dax and Paydon enter from the main corridor.

SISKO  
Dr. Bashir, may I introduce you to Paydon. Paydon, this is our Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Julian Bashir.

Bashir hands the child to Paydon.

BASHIR  
We've taken good care of him.

PAYDON  
Etrick! I thought i had lost you forever!

Paydon is overwhelmed with emotion as he holds the baby close.

PAYDON (CONT'D)  
He is the only family I have.

SISKO  
How is it that he came to be on the ship alone?

Paydon continues to hug and caress the baby as he pulls himself together.

PAYDON  
My people are miners, Commander. We are accustomed to traveling in a large convoy delivering ore to the Consortium. It is not unusual to transport from one ship to the next for various supplies. Unfortunately, while Etrick's caretaker was away, the ship's pilot had to disembark to aid another vessel that was experiencing a dangerous imbalance in its fuel mixture.

Kira enters.

SISKO  
Paydon, you know Major Kira.

PAYDON  
Major, may I again express my eternal gratitude.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

You're welcome. Please, continue.

PAYDON

It was only after the emergency repairs were completed that anyone noticed the ship carrying my son was no longer in the convoy.

O'BRIEN

They must have been right at the mouth of the wormhole when the ship broke away.

PAYDON

News of the wormhole had not reached us. My people aren't interested in such things.

DAX

But the wormhole can bring you new buyers for your ore.

PAYDON

My people are not interested in such things. The fewer changes, the better.

KIRA

Your people and my people have much in common, Paydon. You don't sound like you share those beliefs.

PAYDON

I grow weary of the mining trade. It has claimed each of my three brothers, and recently, my wife. I thought it had taken Etrick from me as well. I can't thank each of you enough.

SISKO

Dr. Bashir will need to run a few tests to confirm that you are genetically linked to the child.

PAYDON

Of course. Your caution is appreciated. The important thing is that we are back together. Our return to the convoy can wait.

INT. DS9 - KAI WINN'S QUARTERS

Sisko, Kira, Kai Winn and several of her associates are present. Winn is livid.

WINN

I will not wait any longer! Custody of the Child must be turned over to me immediately!

SISKO

Medical tests are being conducted at this very minute to determine the authenticity of the claim --

WINN

Tests that should be conducted by Bajorans. The Federation has no role in this any longer, Emissary.

SISKO

Which is why Dr. Bashir is reporting directly to Major Kira.

Kai Winn could not be more shocked if Sisko had slapped her. She stares at him in silence.

SISKO (CONT'D)

I'm sure you have every confidence in the Major, given her potential standing as Matron.

Kai Winn composes herself.

WINN

I see...

(to Kira)

Child, do you understand what it means to dedicate your life to the service of the people? Do you have the fortitude to heed the call of the Prophets?

KIRA

What choice do I have? I have been chosen.

WINN

Surely you realize that the Matron must be someone who is prepared for a life of religious servitude and moral leadership. It is a way of life few can lead.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

The responsibility and power that come with the title of Matron have become very clear to me, Kai Winn. Crystal clear.

SISKO

Major, I believe you have some medical tests to oversee.

KIRA

Yes. Excuse us. Blessed Festival.

WINN

Blessed festival, my child. Emissary.

As Kira and Sisko exit, her security escort is revealed in the corridor. The guards follow Kira and Sisko down the corridor. Kai Winn steams.

FADE OUT.

END ACT FOUR

(CONTINUED)

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - DS9

Several ships remain docked, including a Bajoran shuttle and two similar alien ships.

SISKO (V.O.)  
Station log, supplemental. Our  
situation seems to be on the verge  
of being resolved.

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Paydon is feeding Etrick.

SISKO (V.O.)  
Our tiny guest has been reunited  
with his father, and it is only a  
matter of time before we will be  
able to grant custody to Paydon.

INT. DS9 - SISKO'S OFFICE

Sisko is relaxed in his chair, gently tossing his baseball.  
There is a buzz at the door.

SISKO  
Come in.

He returns the baseball to its stand as Bashir enters.

BASHIR  
Good news, Commander. I have  
concluded my tests and can assure  
you that Paydon is Etrick's father.

SISKO  
Excellent! Does he know yet?

BASHIR  
No, sir.

SISKO  
Good. It will be more convincing to  
certain elements if Major Kira  
delivers the news.

Sisko activates his comm screen.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Sisko to Odo.

(CONTINUED)



Odo appears on the screen.

ODO  
Odo here.

SISKO  
The test results are in, Constable.  
Father and son will be departing  
shortly.

ODO  
Understood.

SISKO  
Unfortunately, I get the impression  
that these test results won't be  
recognized by everyone on the  
station. Let's keep a close eye on  
the movements of Kai Winn and her  
entourage.

ODO  
Acknowledged. Odo out.

The screen goes blank.

SISKO  
Let's get the Major, shall we?

Sisko rises. He and Bashir leave the office.

INT. DS9 - OPS

Kira, O'Brien and Dax are at their stations as Sisko and  
Bashir come down the steps to Ops.

SISKO  
Major, we have a farewell ceremony  
to attend.

Kira joins Sisko and Bashir.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
Chief, Dax. Ready Paydon's ship for  
departure. We'll be towing the  
other ship under potentially  
hostile circumstances. Be sure his  
tractor beam and shield generators  
are fully charged. Upgrade whatever  
you think is necessary.

(CONTINUED)

Sisko, Bashir and Kira turn to leave. Suddenly, an alarm sounds. Kira rushes to her post as Quark appears on her comm screen.

QUARK  
Intruder alert! Security to the  
Infirmary! Phaser fire! Officers  
down! They're taking the baby --

A phaser blast smashes into a control panel behind Quark. The screen goes blank.

SISKO  
Ops to Odo. Did you get that?

ODO  
Request emergency transport to the  
Infirmary.

SISKO  
O'Brien?

O'BRIEN  
Transporting Odo now, sir.

Sisko, Kira and Bashir rush to the transporter pads.

SISKO  
Dax, scan for that baby. Shut down  
any system necessary to keep him on  
this station! Energize!

Sisko, Kira and Bashir beam out.

INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Sisko, Kira and Bashir beam in. Two security guards lie unconscious in the doorway. Odo is in the process of reviving Paydon.

SISKO  
Doctor!

Sisko waves Bashir over to Paydon. Sisko checks one of the guards. Kira checks the other.

SISKO (CONT'D)  
He's alive.

KIRA  
Him too. Where's Quark?

(CONTINUED)

BASHIR  
In the back.

Kira exits to the overflow room.

SISKO  
Odo, check the corridor.

Odo goes out and comes back in.

ODO  
Two more stunned out there.

Kira escorts a drowsy Quark into the room.

SISKO  
Quark! Who did this?

Quark sits on the edge of one of the beds.

QUARK  
Bajorans. Heard on mention the  
Matron. Thought they were talking  
about Kira. Thought she was next.

Kira is surprised at Quark's motive. Odo comm badge beeps.

SECURITY OFFICER'S COM VOICE  
Security to Odo. We've located Winn  
on the Promenade. She has the baby.

ODO  
Take no action that might harm the  
child. Seal all lifts and airlocks.  
We're on our way.

Paydon pulls himself upright.

PAYDON  
Commander, what kind of people  
would do this? They've taken my  
son!

He tries to make his way to the doorway, but is too groggy.

BASHIR  
You've been stunned by a phaser.  
You need to rest.

Bashir administers a hypo.

(CONTINUED)

PAYDON

I will not rest until I am reunited  
with my son.

SISKO

Paydon, I'm afraid there's only one  
person who can get your son back  
now.

They all look at Kira.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

One of Winn's guards is carrying the child. The entourage has  
come face to face with an angry mob.

MAN

Heretic!

WINN

Stand aside!

WOMAN

Release the child!

Several security guards force their way through the crowd to  
surround Kai Winn and her entourage.

WINN

Stand aside! You must allow the  
Matron to fulfill the Prophecy! It  
is written!

As Kai Winn continues, the mob gradually grows silent.

WINN (CONT'D)

The Child of the Prophets must be  
delivered to Bajor! He is our hope  
for the future! He is Bajor reborn!

MAN

You are not the chosen one. She is.

Kai Winn turns to find Kira standing behind her. It was  
Kira's presence that silenced the mob.

WOMAN

She brought us the Child. The  
Scribes say she is the chosen one.

Kira steps forward with confidence.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA  
Give me the child.

WINN  
No. No. You are not prepared for  
this!

KIRA  
Give me the child.

Winn is hesitant, yet she knows she is outnumbered.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Give me the child.

Sisko, Odo and Paydon step through the mob. Kai Winn locks eyes with Kira, takes the child from her guard and hands the baby to Kira. The mob erupts with cheers.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Stop! Stop it! Be quiet!

Paydon comes forward. Kira hands him his son. The crowd becomes silent.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Listen to me! I understand your  
need to believe that this beautiful  
baby is the Child of the Prophets.  
But it's just not so.

The crowd boos.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Listen! Hear me out! This baby is  
not the Child-King of Bajor. He is  
just a baby. He does not belong to  
us. He belongs with his father.

MAN  
How can it be?

KIRA  
It's just a simple  
misunderstanding. You all want to  
believe so badly. You -- and I --  
have so much hope for Bajor after  
so many years of hardship. Don't  
lose that hope. Turn it into hope  
for the future -- the future of  
Bajor and the future of your  
children.

(CONTINUED)

Paydon stands next to Kira. She looks lovingly into the baby's eyes.

KIRA (CONT'D)

For it's the children who are the future of Bajor. They are the source of innocence and wonder. They are all the Child. And the Child is always with us.

EXT. SPACE - DS9

The docking ring is empty.

SISKO (V.O.)

Station log, supplemental. Paydon has returned to the Gamma Quadrant with his son.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE

The Promenade is empty. The doors to Quark's are closed.

SISKO (V.O.)

Kai Winn has returned to Bajor where she has rules on the true nature of the child, Etrick. She has found the entire incident quote "a sacrilegious plot to undermine the festival celebration." The holiday hustle and bustle has given way to peaceful observance of the Festival.

INT. DS9 - QUARK'S

The bar is closed. Sisko is seated at the end of a long table set with a traditional Thanksgiving dinner -- accentuated with various alien delicacies. To Sisko's right sit Bashir and O'Brien. To his left are Kira, Odo and Quark. They are all in civilian clothes. The table decorations include Vigil Lighthouses in front of Kira and Quark. Nearby, Jake shares a smaller table with Nog.

BASHIR

Has anyone seen Jadzia? It's not like her to be late.

O'BRIEN

She and Keiko said they had some important business to tend to first. It's some big surprise.

(CONTINUED)

SISKO  
They'll be here. Dax never misses a feast like this.

BASHIR  
Major, I've been thinking.

She doesn't like the sound of this.

KIRA  
Yes?

BASHIR  
Could it be possible that the entities within the wormhole showed the events of the past few days to a Scribe hundreds of years ago?

SISKO  
Interesting idea. The entities have no concept of linear time. To them, the events would have already occurred.

BASHIR  
Over the course of time, the story could have been embellished, until the Prophecy of a Child-King became self-fulfilling.

KIRA  
That would make the past few days this the ultimate fulfillment of the Prophecy.

Kira sighs and clears her head.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Why do we have such a hard time balancing religion and science?

SISKO  
Simple. Because we don't fully understand either one?

ODO  
What I fail to understand is why -- in all the diversity of the universe -- so many of you humanoids share such similar holidays. So many different races trying to earn salvation from so many higher beings!

(CONTINUED)

QUARK

We Ferengi believe in relying on one's self. We don't look to a higher being for salvation.

ODO

You wisely gave up all hope of redemption long ago.

QUARK

Why are you even here? You don't drink. You don't eat. You don't like holidays.

ODO

I was invited.

QUARK

I'm gonna go get the bird.

Quark exits. Odo hands Kira a small gift box.

ODO

Kira, although I really don't understand this tradition of gift-giving, I have made an attempt to participate.

KIRA

For me? Odo! Thank you!

She opens the box. It holds one of Quark's figurines depicting her as the matron with the Child. It now has a great deal of sentimental value to her. Quark returns with a roasted turkey. When he realizes what Kira has in her hands, he panics.

QUARK

Now -- now, Major -- don't get upset! I told him I'd give him a full refund! I offered to take it back! I destroyed all the others -- at great loss of profit, I might add.

KIRA

It's okay, Quark. It's okay. You know, Odo. I think you understand this holiday more than you realize.

QUARK

Enough about this blasted Festival! Could we eat now?

(CONTINUED)



Kira lights two long thin candles. She hands one to Quark and motions to the Vigil Lighthouse near him.

KIRA  
Blessed Festival, Quark.

Kira lights her new Lighthouse near her while Quark lights the Lighthouse Kira gave him earlier.

QUARK  
Blessed festival, Kira.

Everyone basks in the beauty of the moment, then it is over.

QUARK (CONT'D)  
Who wants dark meat?

Quark begins to carve the turkey as the feast begins.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - QUARK'S ENTRANCE

The crew is laughing and enjoying their feast. The faint sound of children's laughter can be heard echoing through the otherwise silent Promenade. A long, slow pan down to the other end of the Promenade reveals a gathering of children on the upper deck.

INT. DS9 - THE PROMENADE - UPPER DECK

Dax is at the center of a circle of a dozen children -- some human, some Bajoran, and Molly O'Brien. They are applauding. Keiko looks on with the other parents from a short distance away.

DAX  
That's one of my favorites, too!  
Would you like to hear another one?

CHILDREN  
Yes!

DAX  
Good we have time for just one more! Ready? Now I shall tell you the story of the Miracle of the Seas on Rayda III...

Dax spins to Molly behind her.

DAX (CONT'D)  
The heroine of this story is a beautiful little girl named Ivy, who looked a lot like... you!

(CONTINUED)

A gigantic smile covers Molly's face. Keiko looks on with pride as Dax continues her story. The other children beam with innocence and rapture as they hang on Dax's every word.

DAX (CONT'D)

Ivy lived on an island in the  
middle of a giant sea...

We pan up to a large window on the Promenade. Stars fill the screen as a music box version of the main theme is heard. One star flares a bit more brightly than the rest for a moment...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END