

OUTPOST 4

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OPS

by Jeff Morris

Welcome to OUTPOST 4! You'll notice a number of changes, ranging from the stunning color cover by Gabi Stiene to the new typesetting, and a few other tweaks here and there. We've also got some new writers and artists, a caption contest by Glenn Lash, a crossword puzzle by Judith Medina, and more!

A few comments about OUTPOST 3--first off, I neglected to credit Julie Nosal for her stunning cover of Dr. Julian Bashir (as played by Siddig el Fadil, or Alexander Siddig, or something along those lines). Second, I hope everyone appreciated my stunning rendition of a cloaked Cardassian cruiser in a white hole on the lower half of the last page. It took a great deal of effort to pull off, but I'm very proud of it.

Moving on to much more pleasanter topics, let's talk about this issue's stories:

Mary Draganis leads things off with **"A Helping Hand"**, where circumstances force a very reluctant Major Kira to play babysitter to the daughter of a Starfleet admiral. Oddly enough, though, she finds they have a common bond between them...

"Sidewinder", by Linda A. Furey, has the station crew scurrying to get rid of a deadly infestation of poisonous snakes. They have to be careful, though, because the first victim is Dr. Julian Bashir, and things don't look too good for him!

"Of Fathers and Sons" comes from Sherri Fillingham. It takes a look at Jake Sisko's decision to avoid Starfleet, the awkward breach it puts between him and his father, and how some things come in cycles...

"Necessity", by Kira Bacal and Vance F. Serchuk, features the unlikely team of Miles O'Brien and Quark as a simple trip to a starbase in need of aid becomes a dangerous mystery that requires both their unique talents to solve!

Karen E. Weber checks in with **"Treatment"**, where Bashir's worst nightmare comes true--Odo is critically injured in a vicious attack, and the multi-species specialist has to find a way to save the life of the one person he has no medical background on.

Jennifer Shipp reviews the aftermath of the controversial episode "Life Support" in her story, **"Peace"**. Burdened with their private guilt and grief, Kira and Bashir struggle to find the truth behind Bariel's death...and the new treaty between Bajor and Cardassia.

And Kira Bacal closes things out in **"Worst Enemy"**, as a teenaged Bajoran orphan runs wild throughout the station, driving the senior staff crazy trying to keep up with him. Only one person can control this hellion...Odo?

Art is provided by Gabi Stiene, Terry Cogliano, Maryann Jorgensen, Madalena Mumford, Janet D'Airo, Glenn Lash, K.A. Marshall and Judith Medina.

Judith has also provided us with OUTPOST's first DS9 Crossword Puzzle; in addition, we're holding our first "Caption Contest", where Glenn Lash provides the cartoon, and you have to provide the dialog. Of course, given Glenn's "unique" sense of humor (check out "A DIFFICULT CONCEPT", a collection of his Orion Press work--it was a big hit at the May Atlanta convention), you know it's not going to be an easy task. Check it out and send in your submission--the winner gets a trib copy of OUTPOST 5!

And of course, we are still looking for submissions to OUTPOST 5...and 6...and wait until you see the cover to next issue...