

= Past Prologue =

" Past Prologue " is the third episode of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : Deep Space Nine , broadcast during the first season . It originally aired in broadcast syndication beginning on January 10 , 1993 . The episode was written by Katharyn Powers , with additional elements added by executive producer Michael Piller and co @-@ producer Peter Allan Fields . It was directed by Winrich Kolbe .

Set in the 24th century , the series follows the adventures on Deep Space Nine , a space station located near a stable wormhole between the Alpha and Gamma quadrants of the Milky Way Galaxy . In this episode , a Bajoran terrorist seeks asylum aboard the station from pursuing Cardassians , publicly renouncing his past violent ways . He begins liaising with the Duras sisters (Barbara March and Gwynyth Walsh) , leading to suspicion that he was planning further acts of terrorism and causing Major Kira Nerys (Nana Visitor) to consider her loyalties .

The episode introduces the character of Garak , played by Andrew Robinson , who would return in the second season and made continued appearances throughout the series . The character 's traits were developed by Robinson , who was praised for his work by Kolbe . " Past Prologue " was the second most watched episode of the season , receiving a Nielsen rating of 13 @.@ 4 percent . It was received positively by critics , who praised the introduction of Garak , although it was suggested that the plot was predictable due to the need to maintain the status quo at the end of the episode .

= = Plot = =

The crew of Deep Space Nine rescue the Bajoran Tahna Los (Jeffrey Nordling) from a vessel that is being attacked by the Cardassians . They state that Tahna is a known member of a terrorist organization and demand his return , but Tahna asks for political asylum , pleading to his former friend Major Kira Nerys (Nana Visitor) for help . Commander Benjamin Sisko (Avery Brooks) grants his request . Later , Odo (René Auberjonois) spots Tahna with the Duras sisters (Barbara March and Gwynyth Walsh) making covert discussions . Tahna also seeks to gain the use of a runabout from Kira .

Dr. Julian Bashir (Alexander Siddig) , thanks to his new @-@ found friend Elim Garak (Andrew Robinson) , overhears the Duras sisters planning to rendezvous with the Bajoran to give him materials that could be used to build a bomb . The crew allow him to take a runabout and to arrest him after the transaction . Kira finds herself confused about her own past with the Bajoran resistance and where her current loyalties stand , and offers to go with Tahna in the runabout . Commander Sisko and Chief Miles O 'Brien (Colm Meaney) wait in a second runabout nearby while Tahna and Kira complete the transaction . When the second runabout appears , Tahna realizes he has been set up ; matters are further complicated by the arrival of the Cardassian warship .

Tahna orders Kira at gunpoint to return to the station , intending to collapse the wormhole with an explosive device , because then Bajor will have no motivation to invite Federation presence on Bajoran territory , which he sees as a new occupation . Kira lurches the runabout to one side , causing Tahna to fall over and allowing her to pilot the ship through the wormhole to the Gamma Quadrant ; where she ejects the bomb causing it to explode harmlessly in space . However , Tahna has regained control of his weapon and orders Kira to return to the Alpha Quadrant . There , Sisko gives Tahna an ultimatum , either to give himself over to the station 's authorities , or to wait to be destroyed by the Cardassians . Tahna hands over his weapon to Kira , and turns himself in ; Kira explains that he may come to understand why this was the right thing to do someday .

= = Production = =

Although it was shown second in broadcast order following the pilot , " Past Prologue " was filmed third , following " A Man Alone " . There were several changes to hair and makeup following " A Man Alone " , including modifications to Odo , and a simpler , closer haircut for Nana Visitor in her role as

Major Kira . Visitor had pushed for her changes as she did not find it believable that the character would style her hair on a daily basis , instead wanting a look that took minimal effort . The episode was directed by Winrich Kolbe , in line with executive producer Rick Berman 's policy of only allowing directors with previous experience on Star Trek : The Next Generation work on the first season of Deep Space Nine . He had previously directed the series finale of The Next Generation , " All Good Things ... " , and would go on to direct 48 episodes of the franchise across four separate series .

Katharyn Powers received the sole writing credit on the episode , although elements such as Garak were created by co @-@ producer Peter Allan Fields . Powers had previously written " Code of Honor " , a first season episode of The Next Generation . An initial version of her script featured Kira and Tahna as lovers , which was rejected by executive producer Michael Piller . The ending originally showed the terrorist giving up his violent ways and seeking peace with the Cardassians before being killed by the Bajorans . The episode was named after the line from William Shakespeare 's The Tempest ; " what ? s past is prologue . "

= = = Guest appearances = = =

Following a suggestion by Piller , the Duras sisters were written into the episode . The duo had previously appeared in the two @-@ part The Next Generation episode " Redemption " and would go on to appear in " Firstborn " and the film Star Trek Generations . The character of Admiral Rollman made her first appearance in " Past Prologue " , and would later return in the second season episode " Whispers " . Susan Bay , who played Rollman , has a long @-@ standing relationship with the Star Trek franchise as she is the wife of Leonard Nimoy , the actor who portrayed Spock in Star Trek : The Original Series and the film series . Also appearing in this episode was Vaughn Armstrong , who would go on to play thirteen different characters within the franchise , including the recurring part of Rear Admiral Maxwell Forrest in Star Trek : Enterprise .

The episode is best known for the introduction of recurring character Elim Garak . Fields said of the character at the time , " we didn 't want to make him an out and out spy , because then what would you do with him after the episode ? You 'd have to put him in jail on Bajor . So we tread a pretty thin line . " Fields had decided when creating the character that the station needed a Cardassian on @-@ board and when no @-@ one objected to his suggestion to put him in a tailor shop , that became Garak 's profession . This was a reference to the The Man from U.N.C.L.E. , which used a tailor shop as a front , as Fields had begun his writing career on that series . Andrew Robinson had originally been considered for the part of Odo , and was one of the final three actors vying for the part alongside Gerrit Graham and René Auberjonois . Robinson was invited back to audition for Garak , while Graham was cast as the Hunter in " Captive Pursuit " .

Kolbe thought at first that casting Robinson was " really off @-@ the @-@ way " but he felt the actor made the episode " bloom " . He gave general guidelines to Robinson about how he could approach the character , but it was Robinson who developed the traits of the character . Kolbe also praised the writing saying that " I wish there was more writing like this for television . I think we 'd have a much healthier industry . " Robinson said that Garak was a complicated character which required the use of subtext , adding that it wasn 't a simple way to portray a character " but when you do it well , you really get people 's attention " . He was told by the producers that they intended to bring him back onto the show , but in a later interview , he said that this was commonplace in the industry and doesn 't usually occur . When he was brought back for the second season episode " Cardassians " , executive producer Ira Steven Behr apologized for not bringing him back sooner .

= = Reception and home media release = =

" Past Prologue " was first released in broadcast syndication on January 11 , 1993 . It received a Nielsen rating of 13 @. @ 4 percent , placing second in its timeslot . This was the second highest rated episode of the season , behind " Emissary " .

Keith DeCandido , writing for Tor.com , said that Garak could have been a " walking , talking cliché

" , and that Robinson " imbues him with such charm that it ' s impossible not to love the character " . He said that it was an excellent episode , due in part to the way that the character ' s dynamics are formed . He gave it a rating of eight out of ten . Zack Handlen in his review for the A.V. Club , said that Garak was " striking " from his first appearance , and it was immediately apparent that he was an important character . He compared Kira ' s problem of loyalty to those experienced by Ro Laren in The Next Generation episode " Preemptive Strike " , however it didn ' t work as well since the show would have to maintain the status quo by the end of the episode since Kira was a main character . He summarised , saying that it was a good episode but not great .

The first home media release of the episode was on VHS cassette in the United States on September 10 , 1996 . It was part of the initial launch of cassettes by Paramount Home Video which saw the first six episodes released and was on a single episode cassette . It was released on DVD as part of the season one box set on June 3 , 2003 .