

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

11x16 - "Unleashed."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

DEEP SPACE NINE

"Unleashed."

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

The bar is in the midst of lunchtime rush. QUARK is behind his bar, PIF is welcoming new arrivals at the door, and HETIK is working hard at the dabo tables.

After a long, leisurely sweep around the room, we settle upon PRYNN and CANDLEWOOD having just finished their shared lunch at a table on the upper level.

PRYNN

Do it.

CANDLEWOOD

No.

PRYNN

Do it.

CANDLEWOOD

No.

PRYNN

Do it.

CANDLEWOOD

No.

PRYNN

Just ask him out!

CANDLEWOOD

I will not.

PRYNN

Why not? You know you like him.

CANDLEWOOD

Well, of course I like him. He's magnificent. But you can't ask out a guy you already dated and then broke up with.

PRYNN

Oh, *pflergh*. If I can ask a guy out while his newly dead fiancée is still in the room, you can ask out your own ex-boyfriend.

CANDLEWOOD

Not setting the bar especially high there, Prynn. Look, it took six months and about thirty cups of coffee to ask him out once, and then I nearly vomited with nerves on our first date. I'm sure Hetik has no interest in me asking him out again.

PRYNN

Maybe if you didn't put him on such a pedestal, you wouldn't have so much trouble talking to him.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh just let it lie, will you?

PRYNN

Aaagh! Men. Alright, fine. If you're not going to give me a show, I may as well head off. I've got maintenance checks on the *Defiant's* shuttle pods this afternoon anyway, and I'll probably get more fun out of that than I will you.

CANDLEWOOD

(deadpan)

It's been a delight as always.

She sticks her tongue out at him, but follows it with a smirk and a dramatic flourish as she leaves the bar.

He chuckles as she goes. But then he looks down to the dabo tables, where Hetik is working his magic. He does like him. But nothing will ever come of it, so he gets up and leaves.

As he does, Hetik looks up at the second level, and sees Candlewood's retreating back. He likes him too.

2 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

The usual, with the *Defiant* on the docking ring and one or two freighters and transports in place as well.

3 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

Candlewood moves through one of the less frequently used cargo bays of the station. The place is piled high with crates that look like they have been here unopened for years. He is alone, carrying a padd and comparing it to the manifests on the crates, and singing tunelessly to himself.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

Doo-de-doo, I'm not thinking about
Hetik... La-la-la, no no, not at
all...

He reaches a particular crate, peers at the manifest...

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

I couldn't care less about the
most gorgeous man I've ever met...

With a harrumph of effort, he lifts the lid off the crate and sets it aside, then peers inside the box.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

...because hunting through old
crates for Commander Ro-o-o-o...
for anything of vague interest is
so-o-o-o... exciting...

Rummaging through what appears to be mostly junk, he pulls one object out and gives it a closer inspection.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

Even though I have no-o-o-o idea
what I'm supposed to look for...

It is a data storage device of some kind, about the size of a small laptop computer. He turns it this way and that, but it has no labels or signage on it.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

Because apparently the chief
science officer has nothing better
to do-oo-oo...

He shrugs and takes the device across the room to a free-standing panel.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

So I guess you'll just have to do-
oo-oo...

He finds an interface socket and plugs the device into the console. Wait a second, nothing happens...

FOOoom. The entire lighting system dies. All the computers go totally dead. Complete and utter power failure, across the board, station-wide. Nothing left.

Left in complete darkness and silence, Candlewood sighs.

CANDLEWOOD

Yep.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A straight top-down view of the station, the three rings clear. The *Defiant* sticks out sideways at its usual berth, and a couple of other minor freighter ships elsewhere.

But the entire station is completely DARK. No power from the fusion core, no lights in the windows, no flashing indicator lights for docking ships. The entire construction is dead in space. Nada. Rien. Zilchingtons. Power? Nope.

5 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Totally dark in here too. The entire scene should be lit only by starlight coming through the high windows, and by the FLASHLIGHTS that concerned officers wave about.

There's a light moving around inside the commander's office - another flashlight that we can see through the glass. There's a CLUNK and a HISS. The door begins to inch open, pumped step by step using the manual release.

Once it's open enough, RO LAREN squeezes through.

RO

Report! What the hell happened?

Somewhere in the dark, NOG's voice echoes. She finds him standing in the engineering alcove to her left.

NOG

We don't know, sir. All power is completely gone.

RO

Where are the backups?

NOG

I don't know! There was no damage or explosion. The power just... wasn't there anymore.

RO
Alright, gimme a roll call. Cenn!

CENN (o.s.)
I'm here, Commander.

RO
Bowers!

BOWERS (o.s.)
Aye, sir.

6 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE / QUARK'S BAR

It's the same situation here. Totally black except for the stars shining through the windows.

But there's chaos. SCREAMS and CRASHES from inside Quark's as the patrons stumble about in the dark. The sound of BARKS from Pif and YIPS from his puppies.

At the security office, the door is being pumped open again using the manual release. EVIK emerges into the darkness, his own flashlight leading the way. He spots SEVAK already heading calmly towards him.

EVIK
Sevak! What's going on?

SEVAK
Unknown, Commander. The station appears to have suffered a massive power failure.

EVIK
I want you to track down every Starfleet officer you can find, hand them a weapon and a flashlight, and make sure they're keeping people calm. Until we know more, keeping the civilians safe is our top priority. Here.

Evik hands Sevak his own flashlight, and the Vulcan heads past Evik into the security office to grab the weapons.

Then Evik heads across to Quark's. The sounds of panic are rising. At the door, Evik attempts to shout over the crowd.

EVIK

Ladies and gentlemen...

But he can't be heard over the din. Without his own light it's harder than ever to see anything. But then he feels something against his leg, and he looks down. He can just make out Pif reaching out to touch his leg with a paw.

EVIK

Pif?

PIF

Oh, Commander! I'm glad it's you!

EVIK

Can you get everyone's attention?

PIF

Watch me. Oh, I guess you can't.

Pif turns, takes a deep lungful, and BARKS repeatedly at the top of his voice. He barks and barks and barks until the entire crowd has come to attention.

But before Evik can speak, there's a CRACK and a FIZZ, and a green light comes from the bar area. It's QUARK, breaking open an emergency flare that he kept behind his bar. The green light reveals the bartender, with a papoose strapped to his chest and one of Pif's puppies riding inside it.

QUARK

Commander Evik! I demand an explanation!

EVIK

When I have one to give, Quark, I'll be happy to. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm afraid I do not know what has caused this power outage, but I assure you that the crew is working on the problem. In the meantime, please all stay where you are, remain calm, and

don't do anything that may result
in you or anyone else being
injured. Thank you.

The crowd mostly follows his instructions, except for a few whimpers and mutters here and there. Evik follows the green light and heads slowly towards the bar, feeling his way.

The whole time they're talking, the puppy riding in Quark's papoose continually reaches out with his paws and tries to SWIPE at the burning flare, quite unafraid.

EVIK

Quark, I'm putting you in charge
here.

QUARK

Me?! You're in charge of security.

EVIK

And I'm mobilising every Starfleet
officer I can find, security or
not. But in the meantime, this is
your bar, and you're responsible
for your customers. Keep them calm
and safe. Understood?

QUARK

(reluctant)

Understood.

(to puppy)

Stop that.

EVIK

(shouts out)

Any Starfleet officers in this
room, please make your way calmly
and quickly to the main exit of
the bar. I'll meet you there and
issue orders.

With a nod towards Quark, Evik turns and begins to make his way back to the entrance again. Quark gulps with nerves.

Ro shines her flashlight around Ops - huge and cavernous in the darkness. High vaulted ceilings, worried faces, totally dead computer panels. There's not even emergency lighting.

RO

Is it just us? Or is the whole station affected?

NOG

Everybody be quiet for a minute.

FOCUS IN on Nog's giant Ferengi ear, as he closes his eyes and concentrates, stretching his senses out as far as he can. After a few moments, he shakes his head sadly.

NOG

Sounds like the fusion core is off too. No vibration in the decks. I'd say it's the whole station.

RO

Can anybody get a signal out?

Nog, Bowers and Cenn all try their combadges. They all give a dull SQUIGGLE sound. Nog is paradoxically excited.

NOG

They've still got power. There's just no signal 'cause the station's comm system is down. But...

He pulls out a tricorder, opens it up. It comes to life, the light almost too bright in this darkness.

NOG

Yes! We can retune the tricorders to serve as signal boosters.

RO

Okay everybody, grab yourselves a tricorder and tie it in to your combadges. Now! Good work, Nog.

All around Ops, tricorders start popping into life, small dots of light around the station's darkened nerve centre.

8 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Just as dark here as everywhere else. We can only hear Candlewood stumbling around in the dark.

CANDLEWOOD

No... no... no... no no no no no no
nononononono! This is not good,
oh this is definitely not good.
What did you do, what did you do?

He stumbles into something, and YOWLS as he goes flying, thrown to the floor. One of the crates of old junk falls with a CRASH, unidentified objects smashing or clanging or thudding into Candlewood's ribcage with a startled grunt.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh, come on!

9 **INT. DEFIANT - SHUTTLE BAY**

Normal lighting in here. Prynn sits cross-legged on the deck, one of the *Defiant's* tiny shuttlepods on the sci-fi version of a carjack, her hands in the guts of the machine.

She's humming along to herself, quite happy, unaware of any issues. Then her combadge crackles to life.

RO (comm)

(broken, static-y)

...Commander Ro to any Starfleet officer who can hear me. Please respond immediately. Repeat, this is Commander Ro...

That seems odd, thinks Prynn. She taps her badge to reply.

PRYNN

Commander? This is Lieutenant Tenmei. Is there a problem?

RO (comm)

Tenmei! Where are you?

PRYNN

The *Defiant*. In the shuttle bay.

RO (comm)
And do you have power?

PRYNN
Ummm... yeah. Why?

RO (comm)
The station's had a catastrophic power failure. I need you to access the *Defiant's* main computer and tie in every combadge on the station to its signal network.

PRYNN
I'm on it, sir.

Getting the urgency now, Prynn drops what she was doing and runs to a computer panel, working it at top speed.

10 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Ro sags with relief to know something is working. One by one, everybody's combadge comes to life with a bright BEEP. Ro thumps a console in victory.

RO
Great work, Prynn! Now what do the sensors say? Any sign of other ships out there?

A pause as Prynn works the computers again.

PRYNN (comm)
Not that I can see, sir.

RO
Okay. Keep the computer working on the combadges. Stand by for more.
(taps badge again)
Ro to Evik. Respond!

11 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Standing with a crowd of Starfleet officers just outside Quark's, lit only by the bobbing flashlights being handed out by Sevak, Evik responds with relief to the combadge.

EVIK

Commander! Yes, this is Evik.

RO (comm)

Report - what's your status?

EVIK

Total blackout, not a single panel or light is working. I'm putting armed officers at every point in the station, with orders to find and protect civilians.

RO (comm)

Good man. Pryn's working on getting all the combadges routed through the *Defiant*. Stand by.

12 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

BASHIR is also breaking out the flashlights here. He hands one to RICHTER, then moves off to a biobed that contains an alien PATIENT, unconscious and in mid-surgery.

RO (comm)

Ro to Bashir. Report, doctor.

BASHIR

Ro? What the hell's going on? I was in the middle of surgery!

RO (comm)

Is your patient in any imminent danger of dying?

BASHIR

Well, he wasn't until the power went out.

RO (comm)

We're working on it, Doctor. Do what you can and we'll get back to you. Ro out.

The signal dies. Bashir throws his hands up in frustration.

13 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Ro leans against a console, mind working fast.

RO
Tenmei. Status.

PRYNN (comm)
All combadges connected now, sir.

RO
Commander Ro to all hands. Level one emergency is in effect. This is not a drill. All hands report to your supervisors for orders.
(taps badge)
Okay, Prynn. Beam Bashir and anyone with him to the *Defiant's* sickbay. Warn him first. Then beam me and Bowers to the bridge. You start warming up the *Cooper* for immediate launch.

PRYNN (comm)
Understood, sir. Tenmei out.

RO
(deep breath)
Cenn, Nog, you've got Ops. Just... keep trying to figure it out.

CENN
Sir... what about the Yridian freighters? As far as we know they're still locked down. They won't know what's going on.

RO
Try to get in contact with their captains, and tell them to stay

where they are. They're better off
in there than we are in here.
(taps combadge)
Tenmei - energize.

Ro and Bowers dissolve in bright and glittering transporter beams. Cenn turns back to the crew, awaiting their orders.

14 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

Candlewood struggles out from beneath his pile of junk. He staggers back to his feet, begins feeling his way around.

CANDLEWOOD
Alright, what's that? That's a
crate. Okay. And this... yes,
yes... feels like a computer
console. So, if I reach round the
back, underneath the flap... Yes!

A flashlight bursts into life in his hand, revealing him standing by the computer console. The device he plugged in is still there. He unplugs it again, looks it over.

CANDLEWOOD
I don't know what you did, but it
is unacceptable behaviour. Bad...
thing!

Waving the flashlight around, he finds the large cargo bay door. He heads over to it, finds the manual control, and slowly pumps the door open inch by inch. He pokes his head out into the corridor. It's pitch black.

CANDLEWOOD
Yep, definitely not good.

He sees something out of the corner of his eye. A light has come on at the far end of the corridor to his left.

CANDLEWOOD
Yes!

The light moves towards him. The station's usual lighting system, coming to life one panel or bulb at a time before moving on. It gets closer. And closer. Candlewood gulps.

CANDLEWOOD

...Or no.

The ripple of power moves on past Candlewood, ignoring him, and carries on down the corridor to his right.

CANDLEWOOD

The hell was that?

15 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Ro and Bowers are on the bridge, working panels and bringing things to life.

BOWERS

Sensors don't detect any other ships in the vicinity, aside from the freighters already docked, and a standard Bajoran patrol at the edge of the system.

RO

Contact the Militia, tell them our situation and request assistance - tech and tactical. Damn it! I can't disengage the docking clamps - they're frozen.

BOWERS

Which means the runabouts will be the same way.

RO

Yeah. Ro to Tenmei - you ready?

PRYNN (comm)

Yessir.

RO

Okay, I need you to get outside and give us a visual on whatever the hell's going on out there. Keep your sensors open and your weapons hot, just in case.

Ro works some more panels...

16 **EXT. DEFIANT**

In the belly of the ship, the circular hatch opens and the tiny shuttlepod *Cooper* drops out, immediately zooming away.

The *Cooper* manoeuvres away from the ship and out into open space. After a moment it turns around again... and we see the station. As seen at the top of Act One - completely dark, with the *Defiant* and the two freighters still docked.

17 **INT. SHUTTLEPOD**

Prynn at the controls. She looks out, dismayed.

PRYNN

Cooper to *Defiant* - it's just like you said, sir. No power anywhere.

RO (comm)

Okay, what -

PRYNN

Wait!

There's the light again. In a couple of windows on the docking ring, and moving.

18 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

The light moves around the station, getting faster and faster all the time. It loops around the station, exploring the different decks, crossing over from the docking ring to the habitat ring and back again, but always looping around and around, running around the darkened station.

19 **INT. SHUTTLEPOD**

Prynn stands up to see clearer out of the window. Her jaw drops in utter confusion as she watches the light loop around and around and around...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

20 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Still dark, still with the light zooming around and around. We're focusing on the *Defiant*...

21 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro, Bowers and Prynn stand on the bridge. Ro is pacing back and forth in frustration.

RO

Alright, everybody catch me up.

BOWERS

The *Defiant* is in perfect health - the computer firewall protected her from the power loss. But we can't go anywhere or do anything.

22 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Cenn, Nog and a batch of extras, still in the dark.

CENN

The Militia is on their way, but it'll take a couple of hours.

RO (comm)

Nog?

NOG

I get no response from anything that's hardwired into the station computer. Except for these random energy flashes, there's just nothing. Even the back-ups, which are specifically designed to kick in when something like this happens. Independent items like tricorders or phasers are fine, as long as their batteries hold out.

On cue, the light rushes across Ops and then disappears.

23 **INT. DEFIANT - SICKBAY**

Bashir and Richter are now working on the alien patient in the *Defiant's* sickbay. Bashir talks while he works...

BASHIR

Ro, if the station doesn't get
life support back soon, the entire
population will freeze to death.
If they don't suffocate first.

24 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

RO

Noted, Doctor. Nog - were we
sabotaged? Could this be some kind
of prelude to an attack?

NOG (comm)

I have no way of knowing that. But
it's certainly possible.

EVIK (comm)

I haven't seen anything to suggest
that, Commander.

25 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

Evik stands in the doorway of security, watching officers
herd civilians off the darkened Promenade and into Quark's.

EVIK

I'm not even seeing anyone taking
the chance to loot. Everyone's
being remarkably well-behaved.

The moving light comes. It shoots down the Promenade from
left to right. Evik watches it go with a worried frown.

RO (comm)

What about Quark?

Across the bar, we see Quark lit by his green flare and
directing his customers. Evik grins at the surreal sight.

EVIK
You'd be proud of him, sir.

26 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

RO
If you say so.

PRYNN
And there's still no sign of any
other ships out there waiting to
take advantage of our weakness.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
It's not an attack.

RO
And how do you know that?

27 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Candlewood sits on a crate, and looks down at the computer
device in his hand. He's annoyed with himself.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
Because I did it.

RO (comm)
What exactly did you do?

CANDLEWOOD
I'm in cargo bay seventeen-D. I
found some kind of old computer
storage module in a box. Had no
signage on it. So I plugged it in.
And the moment I did... boom.

28 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Ro sags with annoyance. Candlewood screwed up. But she
keeps her patience.

RO

So you had no idea what this thing was, and you just decided to give it access to our entire computer?

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
Oh, well excuse me. I was only here because you sent me here.

RO
(jaw drop)
I beg your pardon, Lieutenant?

A moment of silence as Candlewood realises he went too far.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
I'm sorry, Commander.

RO
Do you still have the module?

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
Yes.

RO
We'll beam you and it over to the *Defiant* for analysis. Stand by.

29 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

CANDLEWOOD
Aye, sir.

Candlewood gets up from the crate, turns around, and KICKS it in frustration. As the crate falls and its content CRASH all over the place, Candlewood hops on the other foot...

CANDLEWOOD
Oww...
(grumble)
Best day ever.

RO (comm)
Ready for transport, Lieutenant.

Candlewood tries to stand on his injured foot, just in time for the TRANSPORTER to take him away. His flashlight is left abandoned on the side...

30 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Still dark, still with the light zooming around and around. We're still focusing on the *Defiant*...

31 **INT. DEFIANT - LABORATORY**

The computer device is on a counter, separate from anything else. Candlewood scans it with a tricorder, while Ro stands nearby awaiting his report.

CANDLEWOOD

No working parts, no transforming into an evil robot. Just simple data storage. Which is empty now.

RO

But it is Starfleet issue.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh yeah. Just don't know why it was in that crate, or who left it there. Or what was on it. But how am I supposed to find that out without plugging it in?

RO

Alright, Lieutenant. Now - what can you do about it?

CANDLEWOOD

(disgusted)

Nothing.

RO

You haven't even thought about it.

CANDLEWOOD

I don't need to. Just give it to Nog or somebody and I'll go back to scrubbing conduits on level seventy-four. Best place for me.

RO

What are you talking about?

CANDLEWOOD

Look, this is obviously my fault. So just demote me back to Ensign and get it over with. I know Captain Vaughn never wanted to promote me in the first place.

RO

You're right, he didn't. But he and I disagree on a lot of things. Are you going to prove him right?

CANDLEWOOD

He was right. I'm unprofessional, I'm stupid, I obviously can't be trusted with even the most basic of tasks.

RO

So you're unprofessional. I happen to like unprofessional people. But I know you're not stupid. And I had to do a lot worse than plug in a mysterious computer device to get bumped back down to Ensign. You are my chief science officer, so stop wallowing in self-pity and do your job. That's an order.

Candlewood brings himself under control, turns back to Ro, and straightens his shoulders.

CANDLEWOOD

Understood, sir.

RO

Alright. Now, there must be some kind of trace code left in there. Something to give us a hint of what used to live in there and is now running wild around DS-Nine.

Candlewood gets back to work.

32 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

It's quite the party in Quark's. More civilians have been herded into the finite space by Evik's officers, set up with small battery-powered floodlights to banish the dark.

While Quark and Treir work the bar, which is still doing a roaring trade, MORN stands by the dabo table, conducting the public in a classic LURIAN DRINKING SONG.

With dramatic flourishes and bombastic joy, Morn is having a whale of a time. The customers SING at the top of their voices. Pif and his puppies HOWL along roughly to the tune from various points around the bar.

Hetik stands behind the dabo table, also singing along, not really minding that no-one's playing the game.

Evik enters, shaking his head in delight. He wanders over to Quark. While they talk, the puppy riding in his papoose is conducting with his tiny paws and howling to the tune.

EVIK

The bar's still open? Even now?

QUARK

(duh)

Who are you talking to?

EVIK

Fair enough.

QUARK

I know how to keep my customers happy, Commander. Plus I need to get all this stuff sold before it goes off. I imagine this is all a bit too rough and ready for you Starfleet types, isn't it?

EVIK

I grew up in the Bajoran diaspora, Quark. I'm quite familiar with making do with what you've got.

Besides, I quite enjoy a bit of
wartime spirit.

(warmly)

You're doing well, Quark.

Evik turns, watches the crowd for a moment. But something catches his eye - a light from upstairs, at the holosuites.

EVIK

Quark... are your holosuites
operational?

QUARK

Not unless Nog worked another
miracle. Why?

EVIK

Because it looks like you've got
an unexpected guest.

Evik sets off towards the spiral staircase. Curious, Quark follows, handing the drink he was making to Treir but still carrying the puppy in his papoose.

QUARK

Look after the bar for a sec.

From elsewhere, Pif also notices Quark and Evik starting to climb the staircase, with his puppy. He runs after them.

As the three of them reach the top, Morn's song reaches a crashing, gurning crescendo. As the sound dies off, they can finally hear another sound underneath.

Trickling water, tweeting birds and a gentle breeze through the trees. Evik looks at the holosuite control panel.

EVIK

There's a program running.

PIF

How, with no power?

Frowning, Evik pulls his weapon, motions for Quark and Pif to stand out of harm's way, and then pulls the manual lever to open the holosuite door. They step through into...

33 EXT. PUBLIC FIELD - DAY

Gently rolling hills, freshly cut grass, tall trees waving in the breeze, and a bright sunny sky. The same place as in 11x08 "Puppy Love." Evik, Quark and Pif are amazed.

PIF

This is my picnic program - the one that you found for me, Quark.

The door closes behind them, and the illusion is complete.

EVIK

Don't go too far.

Keeping his phaser in one hand, Evik pulls out a tricorder and begins cautiously scanning around.

EVIK

Power in this holosuite appears to be running normally. Its own computer is at full capacity.

QUARK

Nobody's paying me for that.

PIF

But why here and nowhere else?

Then something comes CRASHING through the bushes and into the clearing. They turn, Evik raising his phaser...

It's a DATA CREATURE, roughly canine in shape, but made of static and scratched, pixillated images jumbled together. It's a Frankenstein monster made out of unfocused data from a dozen different programs, all jammed into one body.

The creature ignores the visitors, romping and gambolling happily around the clearing and snapping at insects.

But as Pif's hackles rise and a low growl gutters in his throat, the creature notices them. Its own hackles raise, and it lowers into attack mode. It GROWLS back at them, a sound equally made from all over the computer.

On Evik, Quark and Pif's reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

34 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

At the door of the bar, a Starfleet TRANSPORTER deposits Ro and Candlewood. Hetik is there to greet them.

HETIK

Hi Commander - they're upstairs waiting for you.

RO

Thanks, Hetik.

And she strides off. But Candlewood steps up to Hetik.

CANDLEWOOD

Are you okay?

HETIK

I'm fine, John. Why?

CANDLEWOOD

I was just... worried about you. Didn't want you getting hurt.

Hetik smiles - that's sweet. Then Candlewood keeps talking.

CANDLEWOOD

(flustered)

Not that you need looking after, obviously. Not that I'd object to looking after you. I mean - I could, if you... want?

RO (o.s.)

Lieutenant!

Candlewood closes his eyes, trying to escape the shame.

CANDLEWOOD

Coming, Commander!

Humiliated and defeated all over again, Candlewood heads after Ro. Hetik watches him go, chuckling.

35 EXT. PUBLIC FIELD - DAY

A door opens into nowhere, revealing the upper corridor of Quark's, and Candlewood and Ro enter. The door shuts behind them. Ro and Candlewood are rather confused to see...

Pif and the puppy gambolling about on the meadow, playing quite happily with the data creature. Evik and Quark both stand watching, one amused, the other appalled.

EVIK

First contact, Aarruri style.

QUARK

Make them stop. It's creepy.

RO

So this is what was inside your data module?

CANDLEWOOD

I guess so.

RO

So why did it cut power from the entire station, then send random flashes of energy around, then boot up the holosuite just so it could... play in the grass?

CANDLEWOOD

Oh! Oh oh oh oh oh oh! Oh! I know what this is! Oh I'm so good.

EVIK

What is it?

CANDLEWOOD

(does the dance)

I am so awesome, I am so awesome,
I am so awesome -

RO

John! Concentrate!

Candlewood pulls himself under control, but still has a big gloating grin on his face. He knows what it is.

36 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

The zooming light is no longer running around the station. But now there's one window on the Promenade that is shining bright, burning with all the station's power reserves.

We focus back on the *Defiant*...

37 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

An impromptu senior staff meeting, all stood on the bridge. Ro, Bowers, Candlewood, Prynne and Bashir are present.

CANDLEWOOD

It's the pup.

RO

It's the what?

CANDLEWOOD

I studied the hell out of the previous science officers' logs. And I distinctly remember Jadzia Dax talking about a computer program that came through the wormhole on this probe thingy, and caused havoc on the station. They called it 'pup'.

BASHIR

I remember that - some kind of electronic lifeform. Chief O'Brien told me all about it. But he said he left it in the computer. It seemed perfectly happy there. And that was more than a decade ago.

RO

Why would you think this is that?

CANDLEWOOD

Well, the symptoms are the same.
Tons of computer disruptions. Loss
of power. It came out of a data
storage device.

(awkward)

Plus, it... looks like a dog.

BASHIR

It was one of Miles' projects for
a while there. Especially once the
station started getting attacked
all the time. He wanted to find a
way to get it out of the computer
before it got blown up.

RO

I guess he figured it out. He must
have uploaded it into that data
storage device you found, John.

BASHIR

But then just left it there? To be
thrown into a crate full of junk?
That's doesn't sound like the
Miles O'Brien I know.

BOWERS

You did abandon the station to the
Dominion, doctor. And then we were
at war. Perhaps he just forgot.

CANDLEWOOD

And after being locked in a cage
all that time, as soon as the pup
got free, it wanted to run.

RO

Okay, can we communicate with it?

BASHIR

Chief O'Brien wasn't even sure it
was fully sentient. More like a
child, or a pet. Hence the name.

RO

Then let's throw it a steak or something! We need to get it out of the computer, or at least get it to calm down and stop ripping up the furniture.

BASHIR

And then what? Lock it back up?

RO

One problem at a time, doctor.
John - can you think of any way to talk to this thing?

They go quiet, trying to think of what to do. Candlewood has no idea...

38 **EXT. PUBLIC FIELD - DAY**

Now Candlewood stands with Prynn, watching Pif, all six of his puppies and the data creature playing together in the field. Despite the sunny day, he's miserable.

CANDLEWOOD

If I can't communicate with actual flesh and blood people without saying something appallingly inappropriate and making a total putz of myself, what on Earth makes Ro think I can communicate with a living computer program?

PRYNN

It's your job. You're the computer expert, aren't you?

CANDLEWOOD

(exasperated)

Do you know why I'm the computer expert? Because they're not like people. They're predictable. They make sense. They follow the rules. I understand computers. People... confuse me. And I confuse them.

PRYNN

What are you talking about? You're hilarious. People love your jokes.

CANDLEWOOD

And do you know why every word out of my mouth is a joke? Because I have no idea what else to say. I don't know how a normal human acts in real life. Not a clue.

PRYNN

So what, you're just faking it?

CANDLEWOOD

Yep. All day every day. Faking it. This conversation right now? Fake.

PRYNN

So fake this. You're the computer guy. Think of this creature as a computer program. What are its starting parameters?

CANDLEWOOD

It doesn't have any.

PRYNN

Is it an explorer? Is it designed to gather information and report it back to somebody?

CANDLEWOOD

I don't think so. It's not hunting through our tactical database or sensor records. Going by Dax and O'Brien's notes, it just came onto the station and wanted nothing but attention. As a computer program, it's pointless. It has no purpose.

PRYNN

Because it's not just a computer program. It's alive. And living things don't have to have a reason to exist. They just exist.

Candlewood stands and ponders, watching the others play. Suddenly, he gets revelation.

CANDLEWOOD

What about Pif? He's already made a connection with this lifeform. Communication doesn't have to be verbal, you know.

Prynn smiles proudly.

39 **EXT. PUBLIC FIELD - DUSK**

Time has moved on in the program. Prynn and Candlewood now sit together on the grass. Across from them, Pif and the data creature prowl amiably around the underbrush, digging and sniffing and exploring. The puppies have gone to sleep in a self-contained bundle of fur nearby.

RO (comm)

Ro to Candlewood. Progress report.

CANDLEWOOD

I, uh... I don't know, sir. Pif is spending time with the... 'pup'. I assume he's getting something out of it. But I didn't want to interrupt them and spook it.

RO (comm)

Lieutenant, people can't eat, and they can't wash, and before much longer they won't be able to breathe. So time is a factor.

CANDLEWOOD

Understood, sir.

RO (comm)

Ro out.

The signal drops. Candlewood sags.

PRYNN

I saw you looking out for Hetik, by the way. On the way in here.

CANDLEWOOD

Prynn, can we just fix one of my massive screw-ups at a time, please? Before we deal with all my other massive screw-ups.

PRYNN

He was looking out for you too.

CANDLEWOOD

I doubt that.

Meanwhile, Pif and the data creature continue to snuffle around. The environment is getting darker as the program moves closer to NIGHT. As night falls, the MOONS come out - Bajor's five natural satellites in formation.

The data creature stops, looks up into the sky. It steps tentatively out of the underbrush, back into the clearing.

Pif follows it, curious. He glances over to Candlewood. Candlewood sees the glance, shares it with Prynn. They all understand - something is about to happen here.

Pif sits next to the creature companionably. The creature is staring up at the moons in the sky. Finally, it HOWLS. A plaintive sound made from computer noise but nevertheless filled with genuine emotion - sadness, loneliness.

As the creature howls at the moons, Pif watches it, and understands. It wants to go home.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

40 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Upper level. Pif, Prynn and Candlewood now stand outside of the holosuite. Candlewood is down on one knee, as Pif talks into the combadge on his chest.

PIF

I'd know that howl anywhere in the galaxy, Commander. It wants to go home. That's all.

RO (comm)

You're sure? John, Prynn?

CANDLEWOOD

It certainly seemed that way, sir.

41 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro, Bowers and Bashir are here.

RO

Alright, so what next? Where is its home? How do we get it there? How do we get it to leave the station and let us take it there?

CANDLEWOOD (comm)

All excellent questions, sir.

RO

So find me some excellent answers.

PIF (comm)

I think I've made a connection with the creature. I've always been friendly with strangers. It's one of my best qualities, ask anyone. So maybe I can get it to follow me.

BASHIR

Follow you to where?

PRYNN (comm)

To a runabout. If we can drop the firewall and let it enter one of the runabouts' computers instead, it might leave the station.

BOWERS

And what if it doesn't? Commander, giving this thing access to even more computers than it already has might just make it want to stay where it is. We'd be doubling the problem, not fixing it.

RO

Possibly. But if Pif is right, it doesn't want to stay.

BOWERS

Besides which, the runabout bays are still locked down.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)

But once the creature is off the station, that should all come back to life. In theory.

BOWERS

This is a lot of ifs, Commander.

RO

It's a risk. But we can't just do nothing. Pif, do whatever you can to get that thing to follow you to runabout pad A. Sam, link to the *Rio Grande* and beam John and Prynn straight to it. You two, figure out some way to get it out of the computer and on board the ship.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)

Aye, sir.

RO

I'll warn Evik and Cenn what we're about to do. Get on it, everyone.

42 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Still dark, except for one bright light in the Promenade. We focus on one of the runabout pads, dark and dead in the habitat ring...

43 **INT. DS9 - RUNABOUT BAY**

The *Rio Grande* sits in the bay, the lights from inside standing out bright against the darkness around the ship.

44 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Candlewood and Prynn BEAM into the runabout's transporter bay. They step out, move straight to the controls. NOTE: Candlewood does not have his combadge on.

PRYNN

Was there anything in the records about where this thing came from? Anything on the original probe?

CANDLEWOOD

Nothing they could recognise.

PRYNN

Then even if we do get it on board, how do we know where to go?

CANDLEWOOD

I guess... we just bring up all our stellar cartography files on the Gamma Quadrant, and hope it recognises its own way home.

PRYNN

(not convinced)

I guess. I'll work on that, you start on the firewall.

They get to work.

45 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

Pif stands at the doorway of the holosuite, the program visible through the open doors. The bundle of sleeping puppies is not far away, but Pif is talking to Quark.

PIF

Thanks for looking after them,
Quark. Sett is still trapped in
our quarters, and I don't want to
leave them alone.

Quark just grunts unenthusiastically. Below, the party is drooping as the oxygen, heat and alcohol begin to run out.

Pif picks up one sleeping puppy in his teeth, and passes it to Quark. Quark takes it with a shudder of revulsion and lowers it gently into the papoose around his chest. Pif passes another, Quark shoves it on top of the first.

Eventually Quark has all six puppies - two in the papoose, four in his arms - and he is on the verge of vomiting. That done, Pif gives a wistful look at his sleeping children, then turns and enters the holosuite, door closing behind.

QUARK

Please Gint, let me die.

46 EXT. PUBLIC FIELD - NIGHT

Pif walks slowly over to the creature, which sits on the grass, in the dark, staring up into the night sky. NOTE: Pif is wearing Candlewood's combadge clipped to his collar.

The creature looks at Pif as he approaches, then lowers its head to the grass with a WHIMPER. Pif can't let this go on.

He steps in front of the creature, steadies himself, and BARKS. The creature looks up at him, confused. Pif BARKS again. "Stop feeling sorry for yourself!" He keeps BARKing, forcing the creature to react to him.

Finally it rouses to its feet, BARKing back at Pif with its peculiar computerised voice. He's got its attention now. They're barking together, in unison.

PIF

Computer - prepare a simulation of
the route from the holosuites to
runabout pad A.

The computer bleeps affirmatively.

PIF

I want you to blend the current
program into that simulation as we
move. Can you do that?

COMPUTER

Affirmative.

PIF

Okay, here we go.

Pif slowly turns, gesturing for the creature to follow him.
He walks into the woods surrounding the clearing, pausing
every few moments to check that the creature is following.

It is, tentatively. They pace on through the woods, Pif
leading, the creature following.

The trees and grass are slowly replaced by metal decks and
bulkheads. With a change of angle, we are now fully in...

47 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

The data creature, squiggles and hashes of static in the
form of a dog, cautiously follows Pif, looking around.

Pif pauses at an intersection, waits for the creature to
catch up. When it does, he BARKS repeatedly. The creature
BARKS back, as if understanding him.

Then Pif leads on, and the creature follows again.

After a few more corridors, they eventually reach the
airlock to a runabout pad, with the door rolled open and
the sight of the runabout's open hatch at the far end.

Pif stops and BARKS again, marking this as another place
for the creature to remember. The creature BARKS back.

PIF

Pif to Ro. I think we're ready,
Commander.

RO (comm)
Understood, Pif. Stand by.

48 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro, Bowers and Bashir remain here. She taps her combadge.

RO
Ro to all hands. We're about to
try removing the lifeform from our
computers. Please keep everyone
away from open computer consoles,
and prepare for turbulence.

49 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Covering the bar, Evik hears this command and shouts out.

EVIK
Everyone please gather in the
centre of the room, away from any
computer screens or systems. That
includes you, Quark.

The other officers around the bar begin to shuffle the
people away from the walls and panels. Many of them are
wheezing and out of breath, getting scared now.

Quark, carrying his armsful of puppies, comes to join
Treir, Hetik and Morn in the middle. Treir and Hetik take a
couple of puppies each off his hands. Morn is oblivious -
he's busy drinking. Evik remains alert.

50 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Now lit by temporary floodlights like Quark's bar. Cenn is
at the central Ops table, Nog at engineering, and all the
junior officers at their stations.

CENN
We're ready up here, Commander.

51 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro turns to Bowers...

RO

Do it.

Bowers works a console...

52 **INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR**

Pif and the creature stand together outside the airlock.

Then Pif disappears in a TRANSPORTER beam.

The creature goes WILD, barking and jumping about in fear and frustration. Where has its friend gone?

The image of the creature DISSOLVES, followed quickly by the entire room, returning us to...

53 **INT. DS9 - HOLOSUITE (CONTINUOUS)**

The bare holosuite set. ARCS of electricity jump back and forth around the room, angry and frustrated, lighting up the dark room like lightning.

54 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

From his position on the main deck, Evik looks up to the second level, tense and worried...

Then the SURGE of power and light reappears, rushing along the walls of the bar, a sense of anger rather than the playfulness of earlier. Bulbs and power relays BURST in sparks with the force of it, but the surge is moving fast. The customers and staff flinch back from the explosions.

The power surge dashes across the bar... across the Promenade... into the walls.

55 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

The light is chasing around the station again, not swooping gracefully now but hunting urgently. It moves around the corridors, across the bridges, up and down the pylons.

56 **INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR**

Pif sits exactly where he was outside the airlock - the real airlock. He's BARKing as loud as he can, trying to get the lifeform's attention. "I'm here! Come and find me!"

Elsewhere in the station, the surge of power runs along corridors, bursting lights and computer panels in its hurry, trying to find Pif.

Pif stands BARKing outside the airlock. The LIGHT seems to come from all directions, from both ends of the corridor, from above and below. It centres on Pif, and suddenly the airlock is bathed in BRIGHT LIGHT.

Pif continues to bark excitedly. He backs away, stepping over the threshold and into the airlock, still barking.

The light focuses more, surrounding the circular airlock. SPARKS of electricity arc across the space.

57 **INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK**

Pif continues to lure the entity towards the runabout. The light and power follows him along the walls and bulkheads and systems of the airlock, arcs of electricity jumping.

58 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Pif edges through the hatch and into the runabout, where Prynn and Candlewood wait anxiously.

PIF

It's here! Are you ready?

CANDLEWOOD

Yes - do it!

Pif steps fully into the runabout.

59 **INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK**

CLOSE on the hard connection between the airlock and the outer hull of the runabout. The electricity focuses in on the conduits linking the station to the ship...

...seems to hesitate...

...then SURGES on into the ship.

60 **INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR**

Power everywhere bursts back into life. Lights, computer screens, air conditioning, the hum of the station's power systems. Quark and his customers gaze around in amazement.

61 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Where this all started. The power returns here as well, lights coming up and revealing the crates of junk, with Candlewood's flashlight left abandoned on top of a crate.

62 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

Cenn and Nog and all the junior officers work feverishly as everything comes back to life around them.

CENN

Cenn to Ro - everything's coming back. Fusion core, life support, sensors, tactical systems.

RO (comm)

Activate runabout pad A!

Cenn works the newly re-energized panels...

63 **EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE**

Begin underneath the station, as the FUSION CORE burns back into life, lights reappearing in countless windows all over the station.

Then MOVE to above the station, focusing on the habitat ring as a runabout pad rises into position, carrying the *Rio Grande*...

64 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

It's chaos in here as the computer entity causes the ship's systems to stutter and flash and surge. Prynn, Candlewood and Pif stand amongst it all.

CANDLEWOOD

Come on, find what we loaded, it's
right there...

Every COMPUTER SCREEN is filled with information - stellar cartography charts and data. The screens begin to run with more and more information as the entity searches through the records.

Candlewood watches, fascinated and a bit worried...

Finally one particular record comes up on all the screens. One star chart that the entity has found and is bringing to everyone's attention.

Suddenly the engines start and the ship begins to lift off the pad. Prynn reacts with worry...

PRYNN

That's not me - I didn't do that!

CANDLEWOOD

It found where it wants to go, and
now it looks like it's found the
drive systems too.

PIF

I guess it's taking us home.

The ship continues to lift up, not under their control...

65 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The runabout lifts off the docking pad, surges away from the station, out into space.

The WORMHOLE bursts into life, and the runabout dives into it, heading for who knows where.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

66 EXT. SPACE

The runabout flies through space at high warp.

67 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Prynn, Candlewood and Pif have all taken seats. The ship is basically flying itself, but they keep an eye on the ever-shifting computer displays. (NOTE: Pif has given Candlewood his combadge back now.)

PRYNN

Is this really a good idea? It
could be taking us anywhere.

CANDLEWOOD

I don't think it means us any
harm, Prynn. Plus I kind of feel
like... if I tried to take back
control, it'd fight me for it.

PIF

Like playing tug o' war.

PRYNN

Can it even find its way home?
Things change out here.

PIF

If it's anything like Aarruri,
it'll have excellent sense memory.

CANDLEWOOD

Right. There's stories on Earth of
dogs crossing entire continents to
find their owners after they got
lost. This is the same thing...
just on a ridiculous scale.

The computer screens change again, locking onto the same star system they found earlier. Suddenly, the ship drops

out of warp, the stars outside returning to normal. The crew jumps to their feet in curiosity.

PRYNN

Are we here? And where is here?

CANDLEWOOD

(off panels)

We've been here, three years ago. On the Gamma Quadrant exploration mission. Shar charted it, but we didn't bother taking a closer look because there were no lifeforms.

PIF

No biological lifeforms, maybe.

They all prepare for whatever may come...

68 **EXT. SPACE**

The runabout changes course, pushing on towards a planet in the distance.

69 **EXT. MACHINE PLANET - SURFACE**

We follow the runabout down as it passes through a cloud layer and into the atmosphere. It's a beautiful sunny day here, with a greenish sky and five moons still visible, like in the holosuite. We see the ship's perspective...

...on a planet made of technology. A machine world. Strange constructions and towers made of gleaming metal. Power runs through various pathways in the form of lights or moving parts, creating shifting patterns in the landscape.

At various points, real stone pokes up through the metal, great rocky mountains that are dotted with occasional spots of mechanical life - Mines? Research stations? Penthouses?

Airborne constructions zoom through the air, some looking like the original probe from 1x17 "The Forsaken", some rather more sleek and advanced. There is no sense of danger here, only of wonder and beauty.

The runabout lowers to the surface, finally coming to rest on something like a helipad. The airborne machines let it through unmolested. The lights running through the machines all gather around the helipad, curious about this newcomer.

70 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

From inside the ship, Prynn, Candlewood and Pif gaze out at this view in amazement and wonder.

PRYNN

Oh my God... have you ever seen anything like this?

CANDLEWOOD

No... and it might be the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

All around them, power is building and building...

71 **EXT. MACHINE PLANET - SURFACE**

A surge of electricity LEAPS from one of the warp nacelles, up into the air and down into a channel in the machines.

The electricity runs along the channel and out to join the lights that are waiting for it. They all gather around, excited and intrigued, signals passing back and forth.

72 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Inside the ship, they all check the computers.

CANDLEWOOD

We've got control of the ship back. I think it's gone.

PRYNN

So is that it? We don't even get to say goodbye, or meet its friends and family?

PIF

They may not realise we're here.

CANDLEWOOD

What's the atmosphere like?

PRYNN

(off panels)

Thin, but breathable as long as we
don't stay too long.

73 EXT. MACHINE PLANET - SURFACE

The runabout hatch opens with a hiss, and lowers to the metal ground with a clang. Prynn, Candlewood and Pif step out, hesitantly walking on the metal surface.

PIF

Careful, we don't wanna step on
something that might be alive.

They walk out until they can see the lights all gathered, chatting animatedly between themselves. They look around at the environment, taking in as much as they can.

PRYNN

(points)

Look...

Four machines are moving into position. They have apertures on them. They come to rest around the gathering of lights, making a square, surrounding them. The lights dissipate to all four corners of the square, entering the machines.

The four machines point their apertures into the centre of the square and generate a HOLOGRAM. It's the DATA CREATURE, the canine shape, standing and wagging its tail.

The creature BARKS repeatedly in its computerised voice - a joyous, celebratory sound. It bounds on the spot, excited. It's happy to be home.

Pif BARKS back, joining the celebration. Candlewood and Prynn watch, tears in their eyes.

PRYNN

How does a world like this even
happen?

CANDLEWOOD

Who knows? Billions of years ago, silicon deep in the earth sparks against itself, creates the electrical equivalent of the primordial ooze. The signals get more and more complicated, until somewhere down the line, something happens, maybe by accident...

PRYNN

Are you saying this entire civilisation could just be the result of a computer glitch?

CANDLEWOOD

Yep. Life's a glitch, and then you die.

Prynn's hand reaches in and SMACKS him upside the head.

Ahead of them, the hologram dissolves and the four machines head their separate ways. Our three crew members watch them go with sad smiles. They've had their goodbye.

74 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The WORMHOLE bursts open, and the runabout flies out of it, heading towards the station.

The runabout settles into place on the habitat ring, the platform lowering it back into the body of the station.

75 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

The airlock rolls open, and Candlewood, Prynn and Pif step out into a fully lit and powered corridor. Candlewood is full of pride and chest-puffery.

(NOTE: in the background, unnoticed, Hetik is hovering. Candlewood's back is permanently to him so he doesn't see.)

CANDLEWOOD

Deep Space Nine, you are welcome!

PIF

To what?

CANDLEWOOD

To the benefit of my brilliance,
obviously. I knew I could solve
this all along.

PRYNN

(roll eyes)

Really. And how did you know?

CANDLEWOOD

Because, as I believe I may have
mentioned...

Candlewood begins the "I Am So Awesome" dance, proudly and
defiantly, throwing it in their faces. He sings along...

CANDLEWOOD (cont)

I am so awesome, I am so awesome,
I am so awesome...

HETIK

(clears throat)

Hmmm-hmmm.

Candlewood stops and closes his eyes, pinned to the spot.
Prynn smirks - she saw Hetik was there all along.

PRYNN

We'll, ah... leave you two alone.

PIF

Why, what's happening?

PRYNN

I'll explain it all later. Come
on, Ro's waiting for our report.

Prynn ushers Pif along, away and down the corridor. After a
long pause, Candlewood takes a deep breath, opens his eyes,
and turns to look at Hetik.

CANDLEWOOD

H-hi, Hetik.

HETIK

Hi, John.

CANDLEWOOD

What are you doing here?

HETIK

(steps closer)

I just wanted to make sure you
were okay. That you weren't hurt.
But you seem pretty happy.

CANDLEWOOD

(open book)

It's fake. I screwed up so big,
Hetik. I let this thing out, let
it take over the station, people
could have been killed...

(small)

You could have been killed.

HETIK

I'm fine. And from what I hear,
you saved the station, saved a
frightened, lonely creature... and
took it home. That's a long way
from screwed up, John.

CANDLEWOOD

You really think so?

HETIK

I do. So basically... thank you.

Hetik leans in close... and KISSES Candlewood tenderly.

Then he pulls back with a smile, and walks off. Candlewood
is left standing alone in the corridor, stunned, elated.

CANDLEWOOD

(whisper)

Best day ever.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW