

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

13x12 - "Girls on Top"

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and on the *Star Trek* tie-in novels
by Pocket Books

TNG 18x12 - "ANCIENT HISTORY"

In 2161, just after the Romulan War, NX-07 *Intrepid* disappears mysteriously. In 2381, *Enterprise* discovers its remains. While *Enterprise* continues exploring for new worlds to settle post-Borg refugees, Starfleet assigns *Challenger* to investigate the *Intrepid*. A who's who of engineers is onboard - Geordi LaForge from *Enterprise*, Leah Brahms from Utopia Planitia, Nog from DS9, Sonya Gomez from *Da Vinci* - all reporting to the legendary Admiral Montgomery Scott. The engineers get to work, but once they get *Intrepid* moving, they are attacked by Klingon ships, luring *Challenger* away. The Klingon ships are really being run by pirates under the control of Daimon Bok (TNG "The Battle") and Berlinghof Rasmussen (TNG "A Matter of Time"), who have joined forces and want the secrets of *Intrepid* for themselves. With *Challenger* distracted, they manage to steal *Intrepid* out from under Starfleet's noses - with LaForge still onboard...

TTN 2x12 - "END OF LINE"

SecondGen Red-Gold attacks *Titan*, with hundreds of droneframes boarding the ship. While Vale and Keru lead the defence, Riker convinces Minuet to use their planned contingency - but it will mean turning herself off. She worries they won't turn her back on, but the plan works and Riker keeps his promise, reactivating Minuet. Tuvok persuades FirstGen Zero-Three to return and help, but doing so tears the subspace rifts wide open and allows the Null through *en masse*. The biggest battle of the Sentries' lives is on, and with Red-Gold finally convinced, they accept *Titan's* help. The fight looks hopeless, and many Sentries die. But Torvig, White-Blue and Pazlar use Zero-Three's data to devise a plan to seal the rifts forever. Minuet declares herself to be a "ThirdGen" - a wholly software life-form, the only thing that can exist inside the Null - and sacrifices herself to enact the plan, returning *Titan* to non-sentience. The Sentries are left without purpose, so White-Blue requests to join *Titan's* crew...

VOY 11x12 - "CHILDREN OF THE STORM"

Quirinal, *Planck* and *Demeter* are sent to find the Children of the Storm, contacted by *Aventine* (DS9 "Last Chance Saloon"). Since the Children can control telepaths, they place all such

crewmembers in stasis, except one - Ensign Ti'ana. At first the Children ignore the three ships, but the transfer of fresh food from *Demeter* to *Planck* (thanks to a simple replicator problem) catches their attention. They speak through Ti'ana, demanding that the fleet hand over "the life". The living balls of energy surround *Planck*, vaporising the ship and killing everyone onboard. Then the Children board *Quirinal* directly and possess her crew, tearing the ship inside out. With junior engineer Bryce's help, *Quirinal*'s Captain Farkas manages to capture some Children, then blindly slipstreams away to escape. All this leaves *Demeter*, the weakest ship in the fleet, alone at the Children's mercy and being dragged deeper into their system...

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

QUARK holds up a starter's pistol...

QUARK
On your marks...

Major CENN steps up to his mark outside the Bajoran shrine, BATON in his right hand. He glances around nervous, unsure how he ended up getting roped into this...

His Nausicaan friend SEBRIGAR (from 13x09 "Smalltown Boy") roars his support, one of a crowd of Starfleet officers and civilians of all types, all riled with anticipation...

QUARK
Get set...

Set further back near the airlock because she has the inside track, Cmdr RO settles into her mark, carrying her own baton, ready and eager to go.

Nurses ETANA and RICHTER are there cheering her on among more spectators...

ETANA
Like the wind, Laren!

Ro grins, keeping an eye on Cenn ahead of her...

QUARK
Go!

On the shout of "Go!", Quark FIRES his starter's pistol, knocking himself backwards with the sheer force and sound of it, landing in MORN's well-padded arms.

And Cenn and Ro are OFF - they SPRINT down two narrow lanes that have been taped off around the circle of the Promenade - CROWDS on all sides, all CHEERING their support.

RO and CENN run...

Past the shrine, where Vedek CAPRIL enjoys the happiness of the crowd even if it is a little unspiritual...

Past the infirmary, where Doctor AYLAM remains on duty even though she has no patients to worry about...

Past the security office, where a security NON-COM stands in the doorway watching the show...

Yet more crowds look down from the upper level, CHEERING as the two command officers sprint by...

At the near end of the REPLIMAT, counsellor MATTHIAS waits on her own mark, her husband SIBIAS and their children MIREH (8, f) and ARIOS (11, m) there to support her...

MIREH

Go mommy! Go mommy!

Sibias blows Matthias a kiss, which she catches and places on her heart before settling in and looking behind her...

At the far end of the replimat, security chief EVIK is on his own mark, also looking backwards for his approaching teammate, while SEVAK and other guards offer their support.

Ro and Cenn come running...

...and SLAP the batons into Matthias' and Evik's respective hands, and the next runners set off.

Sibias WOLF-WHISTLES at his wife's behind as she runs, while Sevak nods with dignified yet unemotional approval at his mature yet still fit supervising officer's progress.

And they RUN, taking the steps built into the deck, dodging the spiral staircases, taking the next curve, as the crowds continue to CHEER...

Outside his bar, QUARK struggles out of Morn's pillowy arms and back to his feet, ignoring TREIR's rolling eyes...

QUARK

Get off me...

...and pushes his way through the crowds towards the finish line, taped to the deck outside his bar...

Around the far side of the Promenade, *Defiant* transporter chief CHAO waits for Matthias, while CANDLEWOOD waits for Evik, both with their hands out waiting for the baton...

CHAO

Come on, come on, come on...

The other junior engineers - PERMENTER, K'UHLLO and the new Andorian ensign TH'SHANT - are cheering for Chao...

...while the *dabo* boy HETIK throws encouraging grins and come-hither looks at his boyfriend Candlewood, trying to amp him up for his leg of the race...

And here come Matthias and Evik, pretty much neck-and-neck, not much in it...

...and SLAP the batons into their relay partners' hands, who take off at top speed. Matthias and Evik stop and catch their breath, the women spectators welcoming Matthias and the men spectators clapping Evik on the back...

Candlewood and Chao RUN around the third quarter of the Promenade - the science officer almost tripping over his own feet at one point before recovering, while the young engineer takes advantage and surges ahead with a grin...

Outside MRS ETHRAKOI's shop, their marks closer together than anyone's, wait the team anchors - BASHIR and TENMEI. The shopkeeper herself watches excitedly from the doorway, while her little green puppy helper BIF yips happily...

Bashir grins with confidence - he's totally got this.

Tenmei is less certain, holding her hand out anxiously...

TENMEI

Come on, Jeanette, I know you can beat him...

As they appear around the curve of the station, Chao is indeed in the lead, Candlewood struggling to keep up...

TENMEI

Yes!

And Chao SLAPS the baton into her hand and off she goes.

A few seconds later, Candlewood SLAPS his own baton into Bashir's hand, and off he goes too.

Tenmei in the lead, the bar and the finish line it holds within visual range...

...but then Bashir SPRINTS past her, his engineered body quickly overtaking hers despite her initial head start...

TENMEI frowns, and puts on an extra burst of speed...

Both runners giving it their all, dodging around the bench in the middle of the deck...

Crowds CHEERING from every angle, filling both levels of the Promenade - Starfleet, Bajoran and civilian alike...

...the runners nearing the finish line, RO and CENN having returned there to cheer on their approaching team-mates...

QUARK raises a dishcloth as his finishing flag...

The tension reaches fever pitch... and

BLACK OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

RO and CENN enter together - the four junior engineering officers who had been lounging around the room SNAP to attention. They are CHAO and PERMENTER (human females), K'UHLLO (Damiani cogenitor) and TH'SHANT (Andorian *thaan*).

RO

At ease, everyone, take a seat.

(everyone sits)

So, as you know, we just lost Lieutenant Nog to a transfer and promotion. Which means we have an opening for a chief engineer.

CENN

The commander and I agree this is no time for a long, drawn-out process. And you four were Nog's department heads, so it only makes sense to promote from within.

PERMENTER

Sir...?

(Cenn nods)

Mikaela - Lieutenant Leishman, sorry - was Nog's deputy chief, but she's already gone.

RO

And we never did assign a new deputy, yes. But then we kinda had some other things to worry about at the time.

(chuckles of understatement)

So we pored through all of your permanent records and considered Nog's recommendations, and we've made a decision.

Ro places a single gold pip onto the desk in front of her.

RO

I hope you'll all join me in
congratulating the newly full-
grade Lieutenant Jeanette Chao.

Permenter WHOOPS and applauds. K'Uhllo claps along happily.
th'Shant smiles politely - it was never going to be him,
he's too new. Chao blushes at all the attention.

CHAO

Thank you, Commander, I'll try not
to let you down.

CENN

We're only calling this "acting"
chief engineer, I'm afraid, since
the fact is we don't know if Nog's
transfer is going to be permanent
or not. He may want his job back.

(Chao nods)

Also, we don't have the numbers to
assign a new transporter chief. So
you'll have to expand your duties
to compensate, as well as managing
larger teams of enlisted crew. But
I'm sure you can all handle that.

CHAO

Aye, sir. No need to worry about
us, we'll keep it under control.
Won't we, guys?

They all nod or "mm-hmm" their assent - Ro doesn't mind the
informality, she encourages that atmosphere in her crew.

RO

Glad to hear it. Okay, dismissed
everyone. Lieutenant Chao, there's
a senior staff meeting at 0800
tomorrow morning, and I expect to
see you there, so don't get too
drunk tonight, alright?

Off Ro's grin of amusement...

3 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Chao and Tenmei CHEERS their shot glasses together...

TENMEI
Knew you'd get there eventually!
Only took you seven years...

The two women knock their short drinks back quick, GASP at the burn, and SLAM the empty glasses down on the counter.

TREIR
More?

TENMEI
Line' em up, Treir. The night is
young and us girls is celebratin'.

Treir grabs a bottle and pours two more drinks, chuckling at the already slightly drunk ladies. With their new drinks in hand, Chao and Tenmei turn to look out across the bar...

...which is busy - the refugees who never left after 13x03, the ones who only just arrived in 13x09. But of them all, Chao and Tenmei are the only ones who are celebrating.

CHAO
You were always the more ambitious
one when we were on the *Mjolnir*...

TENMEI
Eh, it's easy to be alpha shift
conn when there's literally only
one job to do and one ship to fly.
Chief engineer is a harder climb -
especially of a place this size.
Enjoy your moment, Lieutenant.

Drinks knocked back, glasses slammed down, nod to Treir.

TENMEI
You know what - something just
occurred to me.

CHAO
Whassat?

TENMEI

With you replacing Nog as chief,
that means this station finally
has the same number of males and
females on the senior staff.

CHAO

And about time too.

Pick up new drinks, CHEERS them together, knock em back. As
they turn back to place the empties on the bar -

TIFF

Hi!

Barfly puppy TIFF is sitting in his usual place on the bar,
wide grin and thumping tail. He is bigger now than before,
having become the Aarruri version of a young teenager.

TENMEI

Hi, Tiff! How are you?

TIFF

I'm fine, thank you, Prynn. Are
you enjoying your evening here at
Quark's Bar, Grill and...

(loses track)

...and the other stuff?

TENMEI

We are indeed - Jeanette here just
got promoted!

She gestures to Chao, who is looking a bit bleary-eyed, but
nevertheless CHEERS her empty shot glass towards the puppy.

TREIR

Hey hey hey - you know you're not
supposed to be on the bar. Come
on, down you get...

Treir tries to gently usher Tiff off the bar, but he offers
his best sad puppy eyes and she relents, ending up tickling
him behind an ear instead while one foot pounds on the bar.

CHAO
(covers burp)
Treir, why is everyone around here
so miserable around here?

TREIR
(amused sarcasm)
You mean aside from the apocalypse
that killed billions of people?

TENMEI
(takes empty glass)
Probably enough drinks for now.

CHAO
No, wait - I just mean this is a
place for fun and relaxation, and
they don't look very relax...y.

TREIR
There's only so much we can do
without breaking the rules.

TIFF
Which Quark would never do.

The three women all LAUGH, which makes Tiff's tail thump.

TENMEI
We need to cheer them up.

CHAO
How are we supposed to do that?

Tenmei stares out at the crowd, pondering that question...
until a wicked GRIN fills her face. She's got it.

4 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Tenmei leans across the table eagerly...

TENMEI
A contest, between all the senior
staff, boys versus girls, for the
entire station to enjoy.

Counsellor MATTHIAS looks around at the senior staff...

MATTHIAS

It would be a mood lifter...

EVIK

And the station could certainly use one of those.

BASHIR

Why boys versus girls, though?

CHAO

(croaky, hungover)

Because thanks to me, the station has an equal number of women and men on its senior staff for the first time since Starfleet took control over a dozen years ago.

TENMEI

And I think that's something worth celebrating.

Matthias HIGH-FIVES Tenmei at the table, while Candlewood only shakes his head with pitying condescension.

CANDLEWOOD

With Mister Genetic Engineering here, and my own personal awesomeness? You've got no chance.

EVIK

I think that rather depends on the nature of the contest, John.

BASHIR

I don't know - those doctors were pretty thorough.

CHAO

Oh that is it - bring it on, boys.

TENMEI

Gentlemen, your new chief engineer has spoken.

CENN

Whoa, hold on a minute here!

They turn to Cenn and Ro, neither of whom spoke yet...

CENN

We haven't agreed to this. And to be honest, I think it's rather undignified for the senior staff to be engaging in silly games.

RO

I tend to agree. I know I like to keep it casual around here, but we are supposed to be professionals.

A moment of silence, as everyone absorbs the dashed hopes.

CANDLEWOOD

Wow... you two actually agreed on something.

Ro and Cenn smile shyly, and it brings the mood back up.

EVIK

Commander, I think allowing the station's citizens - especially the refugees - to see the senior staff as real people instead of distant authority figures would do a lot to ease their fears.

MATTHIAS

I think this is a very creative solution to the undeniable morale problem we're facing these days.

TENMEI

And it only has to be a one-day thing - I'm sure the station can survive one afternoon without suffering yet another crisis.

Ro looks around - this is clearly something her crew feels strongly about. She sighs and rolls her eyes, happy really.

RO

Fine. One afternoon, boys versus girls, for gender-based bragging rights. I'll ask Quark to come up with some contests, and to act as judge - at least with Nog gone he can be reasonably objective.

(pointedly)

Day after tomorrow alright with you, Lieutenant?

TENMEI

That'll be fine, Commander.

RO

Alright - assuming no-one has any more actual business to discuss, then dismissed. I'll let you know what Quark comes up with so you can all be suitably prepared.

Most get up from the table to EXIT, but Tenmei, Candlewood, Chao and Bashir all stay to exchange some trash talk.

CANDLEWOOD

You've really set yourself up for failure here, Prynn.

TENMEI

And your mouth has always been bigger than your mettle.

BASHIR

It's not just John who you'll be competing against.

CHAO

I'll happily pit us women against you men any day. You'll see.

CANDLEWOOD

Don't say we didn't warn you.

CUT TO:

5 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

And back to the relay race around the Promenade, REPLAY the last few moments as BASHIR and TENMEI dodge around the bench and head for the finish line outside Quark's...

...crowd cheering on all sides, RO and CENN egging their teammates on, QUARK raising his dishcloth...

...Bashir pulling ahead of Tenmei, grinning with victory...

...TIFF the puppy bounds out from between Quark's legs and into the runners' path, BARKING loud and excited...

...the crowd GASPS, all seeing the disaster coming, jaws dropped, pearls clutched...

...and because Tenmei is a few steps further back, Bashir is the first one to reach the puppy, his boot catching the little green furry body...

...and the doctor GOES FLYING head over heels...

...Tenmei gapes at the spectacle but keeps running...

...and crosses the finish line first!

As Tenmei slows to a stop, and Bashir hits the deck with a THUD, the crowd is unsure whether to celebrate or not...

CENN

Foul! That was a foul! Judge...?

RO

Prynn didn't foul anyone, Major.

CENN

Our contestant was in the lead, he would have won if that... puppy... hadn't tripped him up.

RO

Seems to me that Doctor Bashir's genetically engineered reflexes should have been able to handle not tripping over a puppy.

QUARK
(speaking up)
Judge rules...

Everyone on tenterhooks awaiting his decision - Tenmei with her girls, Bashir on the floor being helped up by Evik, the crowd holding its breath, Quark drawing out the drama...

QUARK
...no foul.

And all the women in the crowd EXPLODE in CHEERS and YELLS of victory, while the men GROAN in defeat.

Tenmei and Chao step up to Bashir and Candlewood...

TENMEI
Yeaaahhh! In your face, John
Candlewood. I am so awesome, I am
so awesome...

CANDLEWOOD
Yeah yeah yeah. Enjoy it while you
can, it won't last. This was only
one contest down, there are four
more to go. This was just a fluke.

CHAO
Alright - if this wasn't enough to
convince you, then let's see you
bring. it. on.

As the men and the women face off with the braying crowd around them...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

6 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

The station against the backdrop of the Denorios belt...

7 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Cmdr Ro jumps off the turbolift, a towel round her neck as she dries off the sweat of the race. She heads towards her office, checking in on the way with Lt ALECO who is running the tactical station. Everyone else is EXTRAS.

RO
Everything good, Lieutenant?

ALECO
Mostly...

His uncertainty makes her pause on her way to the office, and she comes over to check for herself...

RO
"Mostly" ? What does that mean?

ALECO
I've been getting strange signals from the relay station at the other end of the wormhole.

RO
So there's traffic in the Gamma Quadrant?

ALECO
That's the thing - I don't know. The readings are... slippery. Nothing stays the same long enough for me to get a clear fix.

RO
Could be an issue with the relay itself. I'll get Jeanette to take a look at the telemetry later.

ALECO

Speaking of which, how was the race? Did you win?

RO

As a matter of fact, we did. But the boys are querying the result, so we're moving straight onto contest number two. Just came back here to freshen up and check in. Let me know what happens with the relay - it's probably nothing, but keep an eye on it anyway.

Ro heads into her office, and Aleco turns back to his tactical console with a mutter...

ALECO

Aye, sir. Not like I wanted to be included or anything...

8 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Busy crowd for the next event. Chao and Tenmei push through to find their comrades Permenter, K'Uhllo and th'Shant.

TENMEI

Alright?

K'UHLLO

No. You know this whole thing is sexist and exclusionary, right?

CHAO

How so? The women are winning.

TH'SHANT

Against the men, exactly.

(re himself
and K'Uhllo)

But what about those of us who don't fit into your boring binary definitions? You're discriminating against other genders.

PERMENTER

They have a point, you know. For all your gender equality, with Nog gone the senior staff are actually more homogenous now, species-wise.

TENMEI

(ponders it)

You're right. And as someone who once loved an Andorian, I should know better. Ensign th'Shant, Ensign K'Uhllo, I apologise.

CHAO

Me too. What can we do to make it up to you?

K'Uhllo and th'Shant share a glance and turn back to them.

K'UHLLO

Well, as your fellow engineers, regardless of gender, I say... kick their ass.

Off Tenmei's grin...

The men's team - Bashir, Candlewood, Cenn and Evik - huddle together in a corner of the bar.

EVIK

You're sure you want to do this, John?

CANDLEWOOD

Absolutely, I'm a great singer. Don't worry, we've got this.

Meanwhile the women's team - Tenmei, Chao, Matthias and Ro - huddle together elsewhere.

TENMEI

John is a terrible singer, believe me. He is absolutely convinced otherwise, but he's wrong. You will slaughter him, Philippa.

MATTHIAS

I don't want to slaughter anyone,
Prynn. Don't you think you're
getting a little carried away?

TENMEI

No.

QUARK (o.s.)

(announcement)

Ladies and gentlemen... and other
genders...

K'Uhllo and th'Shant CLINK their glasses together. Then we
find QUARK climbing the steps to the dabo table stage...

QUARK

(continuing)

It's time for round two of the
Deep Space Nine Senior Staff
Challenge! First to the stage,
please welcome chief science
officer, John Candlewood! And
don't forget to save your vote
until you've heard both acts.

Limited APPLAUSE, as most of the civilians and refugees
filling the bar don't really know who Candlewood is anyway.

CANDLEWOOD emerges from the crowd, takes the microphone off
Quark, and turns to his "adoring masses"...

CANDLEWOOD

Maestro, if you please...

Quark nods to TREIR, who flicks a switch, and MUSIC begins
- "We Are the Champions" by Queen.

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

I've paid my dues, time after time
I've done my sentence,
But committed no crime

His voice actually isn't terrible, if a bit thin...

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

And bad mistakes, I've made a few
I've had my share of sand
Kicked in my face
But I've come through

Tenmei hears her friend singing these words, and feels a bit ashamed of herself. Candlewood builds to the chorus...

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

We are the champions, my friends
We'll keep on fighting til the end
We are the champions
We are the champions
No time for losers
'Cause we are the champions
Of the world

John was clearly hoping for a big rousing singalong, but he's not getting it. That knocks his confidence, and his voice gets weaker, but he ploughs on through regardless...

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

It's been no bed of roses
No pleasure cruise
I consider it a challenge
Before the whole human race
And I ain't gonna lose

Feeling the nerves, Candlewood looks out into the crowd and locates Hetik - the *dabo* boy spurs his boyfriend on, "keep going, bigger, bigger..." Candlewood rededicates himself...

CANDLEWOOD

(singing)

We are the champions, my friends
We'll keep on fighting til the end
We are the champions
We are the champions
No time for losers
'Cause we are the champions
Of the world

The MUSIC dies out, and Candlewood's warbly last note drifts off. His three teammates APPLAUD and CHEER loudly, as does Hetik, but the response from the crowd is tepid. Candlewood nevertheless bows dramatically, and steps down from the stage to rejoin his teammates.

EVIK

Well done, John.

BASHIR

I thought you were great.

CENN

You're braver than I am, I could never have got up on that stage. Besides, I've never once heard Philippa sing - for all we know she's completely tone deaf.

Candlewood appreciates their half-hearted encouragements.

Matthias welcomes the sincere good wishes of her teammates as she takes a deep breath and steps towards the stage. On her way, she blows kisses to her husband and children...

QUARK

Now please welcome to the stage,
Counsellor Philippa Matthias.

Quark hands the microphone to Matthias, and she turns to the crowd with a self-deprecating smile...

MATTHIAS

I've never done this outside the
sonic shower, so bear with me...

Polite chuckles. She nods to Quark, Quark nods to Treir, MUSIC begins - "Here Comes the Rain Again" by Eurythmics. Matthias reveals a surprisingly smooth, heartfelt voice...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

Here comes the rain again
Falling on my head like a memory
Falling on my head
like a new emotion

The rather downbeat lyrics are not what the crowd expected, and they hush up to listen more closely...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

I want to walk in the open wind
I want to talk like lovers do
I want to dive into your ocean
Is it raining with you?

Reaction shots from the crowd - Matthias' warm voice is reaching them, and they are feeling these lyrics. Then she brings it up into the more uplifting chorus...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

So baby talk to me, like lovers do
Walk with me, like lovers do
Talk to me, like lovers do

As the instrumental break arrives, Matthias' teammates - Ro, Tenmei and Chao - softly chime in with the layered "shoo-wop, shoo-wop" backing harmonies. The crowd turns in surprise - suddenly the music is all around them.

As the lyrics begin again, the women add more and more layers of vocals, ad-libs and embellishments, all swirling around, and all of it utterly enchanting the crowd...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

Here comes the rain again
Falling on my head like a memory
Falling on my head
like a new emotion

This is a spine-tingling experience for the audience, as even the men's team are stunned and caught up in it...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

I want to walk in the open wind
I want to talk like lovers do
I want dive into your ocean
Is it raining with you?

The MUSIC dies out, and Matthias' last line is delivered solo and a *cappella* into spellbound silence...

MATTHIAS

(singing)

So baby talk to me, like lovers do

A moment...

...and the place erupts with CHEERS and APPLAUSE. Even the men's team cannot deny that was an incredible performance.

Matthias passes the mic back to Quark, steps down from the stage, and falls into a deep hug with her family. Quark has to gather himself before speaking...

QUARK

Well... thank you to both of our talented performers. Voting begins immediately - remember the rules, only one vote per person. I'll announce the results in a moment.

The crowd surges towards the bar where PADDs are laid out across its surface, and eagerly thumb their choice into the screens, as a chorus of affirmative BLEEPS ring out.

Candlewood is with Hetik...

CANDLEWOOD

Go on, you can vote for Philippa if you want. Hell, I would, if I was allowed to vote.

HETIK

I would never do that, John.

Hetik offers a quick kiss, then heads off to vote.

Quark approaches Ro...

QUARK

That was really something, huh? Thank you for bringing me into this, Laren. Really.

RO
I'm glad you enjoyed it, Quark.

QUARK
Not just that - it's nice to be included. I see these people every day, but I haven't seen them this happy and engaged in months. I'm glad to be a part of it.

RO
(looking around)
You're right. Competition is one thing, but they needed this. And not to pre-judge, but I think we know which way the vote will go.

QUARK
Laren, I'm shocked! You cannot be suggesting I'd ever cheat, surely, can you?

They both chuckle, then Ro's combadge TRILLS.

ALECO (comm)
Ops to Commander Ro.

RO
(taps badge)
Go ahead, Lieutenant.

ALECO (comm)
I thought you should know, sir, that the Gamma relay picked up something entering the wormhole.

RO
I'll be right there.

Tensing with worry, Ro takes her leave of Quark and pushes through the crowd, heading straight for the door.

Meanwhile the BEEPS from the voting padds have died down, so Quark goes to the bar. He and Treir gather up all the padds and tabulate the results...

QUARK
(announcement)
Ladies and gentlemen... and other
genders... your attention please.

As the crowd quiets down...

QUARK
I have counted up all your votes,
and I can now announce that the
winner of round two is...
(pause for drama)
...Counsellor Matthias!

A CHEER for the women's team, more hugs between Matthias
and her family, between Tenmei and Chao and the engineers,
and disappointed but not surprised commiserations for the
men's team...

...but Quark is looking out for Ro, as she emerges from the
crowd of the bar and into the Promenade, striding towards a
turbolift with urgency. He hopes she is okay...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

9 EXT. SPACE

The WORMHOLE bursts open, and *stays* open longer than it normally does. Finally a small object emerges...

...an ALIEN VESSEL, unfamiliar design, small and seemingly harmless. The wormhole having closed, it just sits there...

10 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

RO stands at the central table, peering at the view of this unexpected visitor on the main VIEWSCREEN. She has rushed there from the bar, and looks up to ALECO at tactical...

ALECO

No response to any of my hails.

RO

Sensor readings?

ALECO

It's like a fog. Power output is negligible, no weapons signatures, no shields, no signs of distress. They're just... sitting there.

RO

And no match in the database?

ALECO

I've even checked the Dominion's files. Nobody has seen these guys before - or if they have, maybe they didn't live to tell the tale.

RO

That's cheerful. I think we can handle one ship, *Vel*, even one as mysterious as this. But send Naran and Minnar out in the *Nile*, just to be safe. I'll be in Quark's.

ALECO
(nervous)
You're not staying?

RO
Can't skulk out of the contest
now. Let me know what they find,
but I'm sure it's nothing.

She heads to the turbolift, but stops and turns back...

RO
On second thoughts, take us to
yellow alert as well. And put out
an alert for all the *Defiant* crew
except senior staff to report for
duty A-S-A-P. But do it quietly. I
don't want the civilians worrying.

ALECO
(relieved)
Aye, sir.

She steps into the turbolift...

11 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

A RUNABOUT launches from its platform and heads out towards
the visitor holding position in the Denorios belt...

12 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Betazoid male MINNAR pilots, while Thallonian male tactical
NARAN (seen 11x03) reads the results from his scanners...

NARAN
It's weird - I'm getting readings
from the space all round the ship,
but not from the ship itself.

MINNAR
Maybe it has some kind of sensor
deflecting shields...?

NARAN
Get us closer - but not too close.

13 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

QUARK outside his bar, announcing to the crowd...

QUARK

A treasure hunt! Round three's
contestants - investigator extra-
ordinaire Major Cenn Desca...

He points to CENN, who holds an ENVELOPE while standing
with his teammates, then to CHAO, who is doing likewise...

QUARK

...and young and hungry new chief
engineer Lieutenant Jeanette Chao
- must solve a series of riddles!

An *oooh* of excitement from the gathered crowd... Quark
turns to indicate the full circle of the station...

QUARK

These riddles are hidden around
the Promenade, each leading to
another riddle. Whoever solves the
final riddle first wins the round!

The two teams step back, leaving Cenn and Chao alone...

QUARK

Open your first riddle... now!

Cenn and Chao tear into their envelopes, stare at the words
on the card inside, brains working to figure it out...

CENN

Oh!

And he RUNS out of the bar. Chao desperately looks back at
her own clue...

Tenmei gestures at her silently - "follow him!" Chao does,
but on the way she figures it out...

CHAO

Oh! I get it!

14 **INT. DS9 - MRS ETHRAKOIS' SHOP**

Last seen 12x15 "Ghost Ship". Cenn dashes in...

CENN

(rhyming)

To start the race and earn a pass,
the first clue lies where green
meets glass... You!

BIF, the Aarruri puppy who works here, sits on the counter with tail thumping. Cenn dashes over, picks him up...

...revealing two envelopes under the puppy's furry little butt. He grabs one, rips it open... Chao dashes in...

CHAO

Damn it!

CENN

Sorry, Lieutenant. Good luck!

Cenn dashes back out to off-screen CHEERS from the male populace. Chao rushes to pick up the second envelope...

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

BASHIR stands at the oche of the bar's dartboard, blind-folded and steadying himself...

QUARK

Round four - blind-fold darts! Can
the genetically enhanced Doctor
Bashir redeem himself after his
humiliation in the relay race?

Bashir purses at that description as he readies his throw. All around, the crowd hush in anticipation...

...and the blind-folded Bashir THROWS the dart...

16 **INT. DS9 - KLINGON RESTAURANT**

Chao is first through the door this time, the Klingon CHEF roaring with victory to see her...

CHAO

If you would stand strong and
firm, honour those who make you
squirm - *gagh!* Show me the *gagh!*

CHEF

Excellent! A worthy riddle indeed!

Chao lifts up a plate of *gagh* - two envelopes underneath.
She grabs one and runs for the door, passing Cenn...

CHAO

Sorry, Major - I beat you to it!

While the Chef LAUGHS boisterously, Cenn grabs his clue...

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

CHEERS as the dartboard LIGHTS with Bashir's perfect score.
He whips off his blind-fold and goes to join his teammates.

BASHIR

I have played this game so many
times - we can't fail this round.

RO

Oh, we'll see, Doctor...

As Ro ties another blind-fold over Tenmei's eyes...

18 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

MINNAR presses the comm, repeats for the dozenth time...

MINNAR

Nile to unidentified vessel. Are
you in need of assistance?

(no response)

I don't like this. Is there even
anyone on board?

NARAN

I still can't get a clear reading.

As they slowly approach the unresponsive stranger...

19 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

Cenn and Chao dash in together. SEVAK eyebrows from behind the desk, but they ignore him and head for the cells...

20 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS**

As Cenn and Chao both emerge into the cells area...

CHAO

Seek beyond the thin grey line...

CENN

...to secure another clue in time.

On the table are the next two envelopes. They grab them...

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

More CHEERS as the dartboard LIGHTS up again with Tenmei's successful shot. The women's team celebrates...

QUARK

It's neck and neck in the blind-folded darts game... but who will win the best out of three?

22 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Minnar and Naran...

NARAN

I'm going to try a tractor beam...

23 **EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT AND ALIEN SHIP**

The runabout sends out a TRACTOR BEAM... and it skitters over the alien ship's surface, unable to get a purchase.

24 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Minnar and Naran growl in frustration...

MINNAR

What is this thing?

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

Quark behind the bar, RO and EVIK in front facing him...

QUARK

Round five - spatial reasoning.
Commander Ro and Commander Evik
must complete these puzzles...

He works two large devices set on the bar - each generates
a complex hologram SHAPE. Ro and Evik try to memorise it...

QUARK

Each contestant has sixty seconds
to recreate this shape. Both have
been through Starfleet's advanced
tactical training program - will
that be enough to secure victory?

26 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE - UPPER LEVEL**

CHAO emerges from a door on the upper level, another clue
card in her hand, as she stares at it intently...

CHAO

The final clue is pretty tough,
you find it with the other stuff.
(beat)
Other stuff? What other stuff?

She spots CENN stepping out of a different door, looking at
his own clue with confusion. Neither knows which way to
jump. Then suddenly Chao gets inspiration...

FLASHBACK - ACT 1 SCENE 3

As Tiff the puppy sits on the bar, tail thumping...

TIFF

Are you enjoying your evening here
at Quark's Bar, Grill and...
(loses track)
...and the other stuff?

BACK TO SCENE

Chao LAUNCHES towards the nearest spiral staircase...

...seeing her, Cenn does the same...

LOWER LEVEL

Chao has the head start, PUSHES through the crowds...

CHAO
Out of the way!

27 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Chao practically VAULTS over the bar itself, Cenn right on her tail... a glass goes flying, SMASHING on the deck...

Chao desperately rummages behind the bar, shoving padds and cloths and bottles out of the way...

CHAO
Here it is!

With a victorious YELL, she holds up a final clue card that has the word WINNER printed on it in big bold letters...

QUARK
And the women win round three!

...the crowd ERUPTS in cheers and applause. Ro, Tenmei and Matthias rush up to hug Chao. Cenn catches his breath...

CENN
How did you know? What does "the other stuff" even mean?

CHAO
It's how little Tiff describes the bar. You wouldn't know that 'cause you never come in here.

As Cenn sags, and his teammates commiserate with him...

28 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Back to the dartboard, as Tenmei's final shot flies...

...and hits the BULLSEYE! Flashing lights, ringing bells,
and huge CHEERS from the women, as the men sag *again*.

QUARK

And the women's team wins round
four! Only one more to go!

As her teammates gather around her, Tenmei smile-shrugs...

TENMEI

You may have superhuman reflexes,
Julian, but I understand simple
geometry and aerodynamics.

29 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

The holographic puzzles on the bar. Candlewood sidles up...

CANDLEWOOD

This is our last chance, Nath.
Deep breath, clear your mind...

EVIK

(quietly
annoyed)
Yes, thank you, John...

QUARK

On your marks... get set...

30 INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT

Minnar and Naran...

NARAN

Wait, the readings are changing...

MINNAR

What the -

31 EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT AND ALIEN SHIP

The small alien ship POWERS UP, a hum of energy as running
lights and weapons ports suddenly come to life...

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

As in sc 29, with the crowd on tenterhooks...

QUARK

Go!

The two holographic puzzles instantly RESHUFFLE into small pieces. Ro and Evik quickly reach in and begin moving the pieces around, trying to figure out how they fit together.

A rhythmic BEEP indicates a ticking clock...

QUARK

Forty-five seconds...

33 **EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT AND ALIEN SHIP**

Next to the alien ship, a SECOND identical ship suddenly SHIMMERS into view... and then a THIRD...

34 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Minnar and Naran...

MINNAR

Holy rings...

NARAN

Cloaked. That's why the readings weren't clear - they were cloaked.

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

RO, as she scans the shapes with her eyes, racks her brains to figure out the pattern, shifts them around...

EVIK, as he does likewise, sweating and licking his lips with nerves at the pressure he is under...

They both have a few jigsaw pieces fitted together by now, but a lot more yet to go...

QUARK

Thirty seconds...

36 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Minnar and Naran's sensor readouts clearly show more of the small alien ships appearing all the time, more and more...

MINNAR

Oh, this is bad. This is really really bad...

NARAN

I'm contacting the station...

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

A negative BUZZ as Evik puts a holographic piece in the wrong place. He curses under his breath...

Next to him, Ro smiles as she gets no such buzz, only an affirmative BLEEP at her own next move...

...and all the while, the clock is ticking down...

QUARK

Fifteen seconds...

38 **EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT AND ALIEN SHIP**

Still more ships SHIMMER into view, and more, and more...

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

Ro's puzzle is almost complete...

QUARK

Five...

She slots another piece into place...

QUARK

Four...

Evik looks nervously at Ro's puzzle, further on than his...

QUARK

Three...

40 **EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT AND ALIEN SHIP**

A CLOUD of alien ships, looming over the single runabout, seemingly big enough to swallow the station whole...

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

Where we were...

QUARK

One...

Ro slots her last piece into place and her puzzle CHIMES with success, while Evik's only offers a defeated BELCH.

RO

Yes!

QUARK

Zero! The women's team wins round five, and the entire challenge!

The gathered crowd ERUPTS again with cheers and applause and YELLS of victory, all the women hugging and high-fiving, the station's mood at its highest in months...

...and then an ALARM sounds, followed by Aleco's voice...

ALECO (comm)

Red alert! Commander Ro, please report to Ops immediately. This is not a drill. I repeat, red alert - we are under attack.

As everyone present reacts to that...

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

42 EXT. SPACE - RUNABOUT

The runabout runs for its life, just barely evading as one of the ALIEN SHIPS fires an unfamiliar weapon...

43 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

The anxiety in the room is rising as the RED ALERT siren continues to sound. RO strides out of a quiet corner, rejoining her gathered senior staff...

RO

Aleco says it's not just one ship
now - it's dozens of them, and for
some reason, they're firing on us.

Nervous nods as they all grasp what this means.

RO

Computer... activate program Ro
nine-alpha-two.

The computer BEEPS affirmatively, and TRANSPORTERS take all the senior staff but Matthias. She takes a deep breath...

44 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

While the RED ALERT lights flash, and junior officers and crewmen dash about...

CENN beams right to the central table...

...CHAO to the engineering station...

...and EVIK to the tactical station, nodding acknowledgment to ALECO just as the latter beams out...

45 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

...and Aleco beams onto the *Defiant* bridge, quickly taking the tactical station. RO, CANDLEWOOD, TENMEI and BASHIR are already in their own positions, with EXTRAS elsewhere.

RO
Prynn, you know what to do.

Tenmei grins as she works her helm - she does indeed.

46 **EXT. SPACE - DEFIANT**

The Starfleet warship is already pushed back and turned around, ready to do what it does now...

...it SURGES straight out, between the station's pylons and into open space...

...right towards the oncoming fleet of ALIEN SHIPS.

PULL BACK to bring the station into foreground again...

...and the other two RUNABOUTS launch, follow the *Defiant*.

Weapons emplacements all over the pylons, docking ring and defence sails deploy and begin targeting...

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

EVIK at the tactical console...

EVIK
Having trouble acquiring targets.

CHAO
(off panels)
Some kind of stealth technology I haven't seen before.

CENN
Naran's message said they were cloaked - they must have come through the wormhole that way.

EVIK
With just one ship visible to lure us in. They're also now jamming communications to the *Defiant*...

Cenn grits his teeth in frustration...

48 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

While Tenmei flies and swerves, Ro turns to Candlewood...

RO

John, any luck cutting through
that interference...

CANDLEWOOD

(already working)

Switching to tight-beam tachyon
channel now... come on, Jeanette,
remember what Nog taught us...

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

CHAO grins victoriously as she sees the readings flow
across her console, and she immediately works with them...

CHAO

Tight-beam tachyon channel. Clever
boy. Comms re-established, Major -
Candlewood just side-stepped their
jamming frequencies altogether.

CENN

(smiling)

Keep it open. Ops to *Defiant* -
what's your status? We're having
problems targeting here...

50 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

As the ship SWERVES, shuddering under a weapons HIT...

RO

Us too, but apparently they don't
have the same issue. Do we even
know who these guys are yet, or
what they want with us?

ALECO

Still no contact, no transponder
IDs, no response to hails.

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

CENN coordinating readings on his various consoles...

CENN

Sir, I think they've made their intentions perfectly clear, and we need to respond in kind. Our primary concern must be to protect the civilians on the station.

52 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

As Tenmei swerves it the other way, Ro sighs grudgingly...

RO

You're right. Evik, Aleco - forget auto-targeting, we're going old school. Weapons free.

ALECO

Aye sir.

53 **EXT. SPACE**

Defiant SWINGS around, PULSE PHASERS firing...

The station's weapons strafe the area with phaser fire...

The three runabouts follow suit, also opening fire...

...half the shots go wide as the aliens SWERVE and TWIST. The few shots that hit their targets skitter harmlessly...

Six of the alien ships TWIST straight past the *Defiant* and the runabouts, and head straight for the station...

...they FIRE, and their weapons pass straight through the flaring shield bubble and HIT actual bulkhead.

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

The room SHAKES, metal bulkheads RING, power conduits RUPTURE in sparks and fire... and people SCREAM and RUN. MATTHIAS is near the door, trying to guide them...

MATTHIAS

Everyone please move quickly to
the emergency shelters...

(she spots
an extra)

Crewman! Can you guide these
people to the shelters, please?

The crewman does. Elsewhere Quark, Treir, Hetik and Pif
shepherd people calmly to the door, keeping them away from
the damage. The whole station SHAKES under weapons fire...

...and SEBRIGAR the Nausicaan ROARS - a strangled sound of
rage and fear, as he backs against a wall under the stairs.

Matthias looks to Quark - you handle the rest of them, I'll
take him. Quark nods, and Matthias strides to the thrashing
Nausicaan, shouting out loud to be heard over his wails...

MATTHIAS

Sebrigar! Control yourself!

SEBRIGAR

They're back! The Borg are back!
They've come for us all now...

MATTHIAS

Be silent! Are you a Nausicaan or
a whimpering Ferengi? Will you
allow your *tegol* to fly to the
Heart of the Sky in such a state?

That brings him up short. Matthias steps closer, quieter...

MATTHIAS

That's better. You're safe here,
Sebrigar. We're under attack, yes,
but Starfleet will protect you.

SEBRIGAR

(small, timid)
They didn't last time...

MATTHIAS

All the more reason for them to
try harder now. Please trust us.

TIFF the puppy JUMPS up onto the nearest table...

TIFF
I'll stay with him, Counsellor.

MATTHIAS
Are you sure, Tiff?

TIFF
There's lots of people who need
your help. I'll stay with him.

Matthias nods and heads away. Tiff looks up at the fearsome Nausicaan, who whimpers quietly as the station SHAKES...

55 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

A conduit EXPLODES in sparks...

CENN
How are they piercing the shields?

CHAO
Wait, I can reprogram the shields,
I can definitely do that...

The station ROCKS again under fire. Cenn looks to Chao, not unsympathetically, as the new chief engineer flusters...

CENN
Quick but calm, Lieutenant...

EVIK
I'm reluctant to suggest it Major,
but we do have the transphasic
torpedoes we planned for the Borg.
If nothing else is working...

Chao hits one control victoriously...

56 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE

An ENERGY PULSE flows around the shield bubble, THICKENING it. A new ATTACK by the alien ships flying by just skitters off the surface like our weapons did to them.

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

Quieter now that no weapons are getting through, but RED ALERT lights still flash and EXTRAS run about to contain the existing damage...

EVIK

Excellent. I'm getting a targeting fix too. How did you manage that?

CHAO

John analysed the aliens' cloaks and weapon signatures, I was just working off his data, really...

58 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

As before...

CANDLEWOOD

It was Jeanette who figured out how to turn it into a practical solution, though. The new shield configuration is active.

RO

Well done to both of you. Tenmei, attack pattern theta. Evik, Aleco - enjoy yourselves. Bashir, pass it on to the runabouts.

59 **EXT. SPACE**

The alien ships realise they have lost their advantage and turn away to regroup...

Defiant and the runabouts don't let them get away with it, following and firing with all weapons...

...and hitting half a dozen ships - two EXPLODE, the others spin off wildly, damaged and bleeding gases...

The station fires TRANSPHASIC TORPEDOES, catching a couple more ships - they EXPLODE. But there are plenty more, and they are coming back around...

60 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Some of the EXTRAS shout with victory. Evik does not...

EVIK

Commander, I don't like this. It's not exactly the Starfleet way to just "blow them out of the sky".

RO (comm)

They haven't given us any other option, Mister Evik.

EVIK

Respectfully, sir, I believe it's our job to find another option.

61 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro considers, while Tenmei and Aleco are occupied...

RO

You know what, I'm open to ideas. So who's got some?

CENN (comm)

Mister Candlewood, any more good data in your scans of their tech?

CANDLEWOOD

Umm... well, the only reason I could break through their stealth tech is that it wasn't working right. The verteron nodes in the wormhole interfered with it.

ALECO

That's why our sensors could tell that something was there, just not exactly what it was.

CANDLEWOOD

Right. We've learned to shield our systems against verteron decay, but it looks like they haven't.

RO
Okay, how can we use that?

CANDLEWOOD
(thinking as
he talks)
By... reversing the polarity?
(shouts)
Yes! That'll work! Sorry, I got
excited.

62 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Chao is listening intently, working her console...

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
(continuing)
If we can generate a geodesic
energy field that's the inverse
of that verteron flux signature,
it'll act like a magnet to the
alien ships' stealth systems...

CENN
Dragging them all back into the
wormhole...

EVIK
...and sending them back where
they came from without us having
to destroy them. Nicely done,
Lieutenant.

CANDLEWOOD (comm)
Thanks. Problem is I have no idea
how to actually make that happen.

CHAO
On it! Connecting to the Gamma
Quadrant relay now...
(beat)
Damn it! The relay isn't set up
for tachyon comms. I can't get
through the interference with
standard comms.

63 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Ro returns to her command seat, takes it confidently...

RO

Then it's up to us. John, you work on your inverterons, or whatever. Jeanette, send us the protocols to get the relay to generate John's energy field. Prynne, get us safely to the mouth of the wormhole so we can transmit them. Nath and Vel, your job is to -

BOOM - a direct weapons hit causes EXPLOSIONS all over the bridge, SHAKING the ship violently until girders CRUNCH and conduits RUPTURE and consoles SHATTER.

Candlewood's science station EXPLODES, throwing him back in a hail of sparks and broken metal. He hits the deck hard with a THUD and a CRUNCH, right arm twisted at an unnatural angle and eyes closed.

As the ship falls apart around her, Ro looks down at her young science officer on the deck - is he dead?

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

64 EXT. SPACE - DEFIANT

Tumbling as it struggles to right itself, plasma leaking from a warp nacelle...

65 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

EVIK glares at the viewscreen, working his tactical console in uncharacteristically dark fashion...

66 EXT. SPACE

The station pours out angry weapons fire...

...creating a cocoon of safety around the *Defiant* that the alien attackers cannot break through...

67 INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE

Tenmei works her helm console with one hand while the other hauls her body up from the deck and back to her seat.

BASHIR runs to check on Candlewood, checks his vitals...

BASHIR
He's alive. But...

Candlewood suddenly jolts awake with a start, looks down at his twisted, broken right arm... and SCREAMS.

RO
Damage report!

ALECO
Warp drive down, they got lucky and hit a shield generator. But the comm array is still online.

RO
Forget that - John's down. We'll have to think of something else.

CANDLEWOOD
(from the floor,
hissing in pain)
No! I can do it. Just get me to a
working console.

BASHIR
Lieutenant, you can't even work a
console in your current condition
- your arm is broken.

CANDLEWOOD
Console, damn it!

Bashir looks to Ro for confirmation...

RO
If he says he can do it, let him.
We need to end this before they
get lucky somewhere else.

Reluctantly, Bashir helps Candlewood off the floor and
across to Bashir's own console, Candlewood's being on fire.
Candlewood settles in, grits his teeth, brings up his left
hand and starts reconfiguring the station for sciences...

BASHIR
You're ambidextrous? Impressive.

CANDLEWOOD
All part of that whole "being
awesome" thing. You're welcome
to work on my other arm in the
meantime, Doctor.

BASHIR
It will mean resetting the bone...

CANDLEWOOD
Whatever you need to doAAAAGGGHH
OH MY GOD WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU,
YOU ABSOLUTE PSYCHOPATH -

BASHIR
Don't say I didn't warn you.

CANDLEWOOD

I knew I never should have trusted you, I haven't forgotten that time you stabbed me through the leg with a laser scalpel. I'm ready!

RO

Alright - Evik, drop the covering fire. Tenmei, get us to the mouth of the wormhole. Aleco, prepare to take power from everywhere except comms to reinforce shields. Go!

The *Defiant's* crew gets to work...

68 **EXT. SPACE**

As the station's covering fire dies out, *Defiant* turns...
...but the aliens turn too and SWARM after the *Defiant*.

69 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Tenmei at her helm...

TENMEI

Approaching event horizon now...

RO

Get ready, John...

70 **EXT. SPACE**

The wormhole BLOOMS open, the *Defiant* right in its maw...

71 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Ro on the edge of her command seat...

RO

Hold position! John, Vel - now!

Around them the LIGHTS DIM as power is diverted...

Candlewood's console shows a SIGNAL being transmitted...

72 **EXT. SPACE**

Holding place in the mouth of the wormhole, the *Defiant's* shield bubble visibly strengthens and thickens...

We HEAR a high-pitched SQUEAL as the signal transmits...

The attacking ships all TURN, trying to run away from the wormhole's gaping mouth... but they can't get away.

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

Cenn watching the readings come into the central table...

CENN
It's working...

74 **EXT. SPACE**

The audible SQUEAL grows ever more intense, and the alien ships are PULLED BACKWARDS, sucked into the wormhole...

...more and more of them... faster and faster...

...until the last of them is gone.

75 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Aleco reading his tactical console...

ALECO
That's it, they're all gone.

WHOOPS of relief around the bridge. Ro smiles...

RO
Stand down red alert. Well done,
everyone!

BASHIR
Commander, I'd like to get John
back to the Infirmary...

RO
Absolutely. Minnar, Naran, are you
guys still out here?

76 **INT. RUNABOUT - COCKPIT**

Minnar and Naran, looking a bit worse for wear...

MINNAR

Still here, Commander, all three runabouts in one piece.

RO (comm)

Good to know. I want all three of you to set up a perimeter around the wormhole just to be safe - hopefully they've learned their lesson, but we can't bank on it.

MINNAR

Understood, sir, I'll see to it.

77 **INT. DEFIANT - BRIDGE**

Ro in command, looking around her damaged bridge...

RO

Thanks, Minnar. Tenmei, back to the station. Lieutenant Chao, you might want to call your department heads - I've got a job for you.

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

Chao smiles, feeling included and respected...

CHAO

I look forward to it, Commander.

CENN

Major Cenn to all hands - stand down red alert. I repeat...

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

The gathered civilians, Quark and Matthias in control...

CENN (comm)

...Stand down red alert.

CHEERS go up around the room, PIF and his puppies BARK in excitement, and Matthias sags with relief.

Matthias goes to find Sebrigar, still sat with Tiff...

MATTHIAS

There you go - it's all over. How are you feeling?

SEBRIGAR

I am... alive. Again.

MATTHIAS

(grin)

Yes you are.

80 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE

The damaged *Defiant* is back on the docking ring...

81 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

QUARK on the raised platform by the dabo wheel...

QUARK

After all that excitement, there's only one thing left to do - and that's to present the prize for the winner of the Deep Space Nine Senior Staff Challenge!

Quark brandishes a large decorated BOTTLE in the air - the prize - to more CHEERS from the fuller-than-ever audience of civilians, officers and refugees.

QUARK

And of course, as if there was any doubt, the prize goes to... the women's team!

RO steps up to collect the prize to WHOOPS and HOLLERS from Tenmei, Chao and Matthias, while the men applaud happily - all except for Candlewood, whose right arm is in a sling.

The crowd quiets down for Ro's victory speech...

RO

Thank you, everyone. But really, this prize belongs to all of the station's senior staff, not just the women. This contest might have started off as a silly bit of fun to lift spirits, but I've come to realise it had a deeper purpose.

She has everyone's undivided attention now...

RO

You see, we Starfleet officers needed our spirits lifting as well as those of you who are refugees. The Borg invasion devastated so much, but it never came to Bajor, it never came to Deep Space Nine. Believe me, I'm not mad about that. But it left us feeling... not quite left out? More like... untested. We never got the chance to put ourselves on the line, to prove we have what it takes. But today, thanks to some unknown aliens from the Gamma Quadrant, I know - we know - we can do it. And more importantly, you know.

More CHEERS from the crowd.

RO

So it doesn't matter who won this contest -

TENMEI

(light heckle)

You mean who utterly obliterated the opposition.

The crowd CHUCKLES.

RO

What matters is that when we need to, we all work together.

TENMEI

I guess men do have some uses,
after all.

CANDLEWOOD

Damn right they do.

Nudge nudge, wink wink. The crowd CHUCKLES again.

RO

So I want us to thank Lieutenant
John Candlewood, who figured out
the aliens' weakness...

(applause)

Lieutenant Jeanette Chao, who
figured out how to use it...

(applause)

Lieutenant Prynne Tenmei, who flew
us through the fire...

(applause)

Doctor Julian Bashir, who kept his
crewmates at their posts so they
could do their jobs...

(applause)

Lieutenant Aleco Vel, to whom I
apologise for leaving him out of
things earlier...

(applause)

Counsellor Philippa Matthias, who
kept her charges safe and calm
throughout the crisis...

(applause)

Lieutenant Commander Evik Nath,
who held me to higher principles
when anger got the better of me...

(applause)

Major Cenn Desca, the calm centre
of the storm I know I can always
rely on...

(applause)

And of course Ambassador Quark,
who threw together such a fabulous
event in no time at all with his
usual mix of grace and grumbling.

More CHEERS as Quark bows for his beloved audience.

QUARK

Thank you, thank you all. But I think there was someone who got missed off that list...

(off Ro's
confusion)

Commander Ro Laren, who led this crew and this community safely through yet another crisis... we thank you too.

The loudest CHEERS yet, which Ro receives bashfully. Tenmei catcalls again...

TENMEI

Maybe it doesn't matter who wins the contest... but it's still a woman in command, hey Laren?

More CHUCKLES. Ro raises the bottle in the air...

RO

(toast)

To Deep Space Nine!

ALL SENIOR STAFF

Deep Space Nine!

And Ro POPS the cork to resounding CHEERS...

82 EXT. SPACE - DEEP SPACE NINE

A standard establishing shot to take us out...

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW