

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

11x13 - "The Late Show!
With Morn."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. TV STUDIO - BACKSTAGE

Production assistants dash anxiously back and forth, head sets in their ears, fluttering pieces of paper in their hands. Executives in business suits stride purposefully.

A door emblazoned with a big gold star opens and MORN steps out. Dressed in a smart suit, with a towel around his neck.

The moment the huge lumpen barfly emerges into this chaos, NOG dashes up to him, urgent and flustered. He's wearing an even bigger headset stretched around his huge Ferengi head, with a clipboard in hand.

NOG

Morn, great! You're on stage in five. The writers came up with some new jokes for your opening monologue. Real topical stuff.

(hands him paper)

Here, have a quick read through. You're on in five. The band's setting up now. It looks like we've got a full house. Do you need anything?

(Morn starts
to answer)

No, save your voice. I'll just bring you everything. Looking good! You're on in five!

Nog dashes off again, leaving Morn to look blankly to the camera and shrug.

Morn walks on, turns a corner, and hears SCREAMS. A big group of adoring female FANS stand behind a velvet rope, with Lt Cmdr EVIK holding them back.

Morn approaches the fans - they SCREAM all the louder.

EVIK

Alright, now calm down, ladies.
Plenty of him to go around.

Morn waves greetings, kisses on cheeks, signs an autograph,
jerks in surprise when someone grabs a handful.

Nog runs back over, more flustered than ever.

NOG

You're on in three, big guy!

Nog hands Morn a plastic cup of water, which he knocks back
quickly. Then Nog whips the towel from around Morn's neck,
pads all over the star's enormous fleshy head with it.

Suitably prepared, Morn heads towards the stage. With him
gone, Nog pads his own enormous fleshy head with the towel.
Then he absently casts the sweaty towel away towards the
crowd of adoring fans. They SCREAM again and fight over it.

Morn stands near a curtain. On the other side of it, we can
hear the BAND tuning up, a crowd taking its seats.

VIC (o.s.)

Hey there, pallie.

VIC FONTAINE strolls up, smooth and sophisticated as ever.
He pats Morn on the padded shoulder as he passes.

VIC

Sounds like they started without
me. That ain't right!

(over shoulder
as he goes)

Break a leg, big fella!

And Vic is gone behind his own curtain. We hear the crowd
CHEER louder at his appearance.

Waiting behind his curtain, Morn turns to camera and holds
two thumbs up, ready to go on stage. Nog runs up one last
time, grabs the paper out of Morn's hand, takes a timepiece
out of his pocket and checks it.

Then we hear Vic's voice bellow out over the loudspeakers.

VIC (o.s.)
Ladies and gentlemen! Here he is -
the most talkative man in the
galaxy, your friend and mine...
(pause for
audience hysteria)
...Mooooorn!

We hear the band burst out into a massive musical FANFARE. Nog holds out his hand in front of Morn, counts down on his fingers - three, two, one, GO.

Nog pulls back the curtain, and Morn steps into blinding STAGE LIGHTS. We follow behind him, emerging onto...

2 INT. TV STUDIO - SET (CONTINUOUS)

The lights reveal an AUDIENCE on their feet, APPLAUDING and CHEERING raucously. They include numerous familiar faces from Deep Space Nine, crew and civilians alike.

As Morn moves to the centre of the set, we gradually PAN around him, revealing...

Vic and his band at stage right. A backdrop of stars as seen through DS9-style windows. A desk on a slight angle, and a long couch for guests. It's the perfect late-night chat show TV set, and at the centre of it, absorbing the adoration of his audience with arms wide, is Morn.

A BURST OF SPARKLES fills the screen, taking us into...

3 OPENING CREDITS

Under a boisterous big band arrangement of the usual DS9 theme music, as played by Vic's band, we watch a whole new CREDIT SEQUENCE, made up of obviously photoshopped fake images and videos of Morn in various locations.

-- Morn dressed in a black-and-white striped shirt, beret jauntily perched on his giant head, a string of onions around his neck. He holds up a large old-fashioned camera, pointing it at the EIFFEL TOWER. With each click of the camera, a postcard-type image appears around the edge of the screen, showing Morn doing other touristy things, like getting drunk, trying to kiss the Mona Lisa, etc.

-- Dark and ominous, the KLINGON HALL OF WARRIORS looms in front of us. A gang of Klingons stand before it, *bat'leths* held aloft as they roar with bloodlust. At the middle of the group is Morn, dressed in Klingon armour, his own *bat'leth* at the ready. They all work themselves up and up, and finally, with Morn and his *bat'leth* leading the way, they launch off towards battle.

-- Morn sits in a mud bath, naked from the shoulders up, and as we pull back we see several nubile and equally naked RISIAN girls on either side of him, slinking sexily up to him. The background is all trees and mountains and a huge *horga'hn* fertility statue. One of the Risian women reaches off screen and comes back with a smaller *horga'hn*, passes it hopefully to Morn. Morn looks to camera and winks.

-- DEEP SPACE NINE itself, hanging among the stars. Except that Morn is on the outside, climbing up one of the docking pylons like King Kong. A tiny dabo girl is clutched in one hand, screaming and struggling. Runabouts buzz around the pylon; Morn tries to bat them away with his free hand. Eventually he loses his grip on the pylon and falls...

-- In QUARK'S BAR. Morn sits on his usual barstool, holding court at the centre of a crowd of adoring onlookers as he relates another of his hilarious and ribald tales. Behind, QUARK himself serves drinks. As Morn reaches his gut-busting punchline, and the crowd erupts in laughter, Morn turns to camera, raises his stein of beer, and TOASTS.

Over the top of this image, cursive script writes out...

DEEP SPACE NINE PRESENTS...

THE LATE SHOW! WITH MORN

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

(NOTE: The usual main cast credits play over the first few minutes of Act One as on-screen captions, followed by guest and production credits as normal.)

We're CLOSE IN with the audience, some background faces that we're used to seeing around the station. They LAUGH at something. The VOICES of Morn and Vic are distant and off-screen, muffled under the sound of the crowd.

As we PAN across the crowd, periodically laughing, we come upon PRYNN and CANDLEWOOD in the crowd. Both are out of uniform, dressed in fancy evening attire. Candlewood laughs along with everyone else, but Prynn is not really in the mood to laugh. Nothing too extreme, she's just a bit down.

In between punchlines, Candlewood glances to Prynn, sees her mood. He speaks quietly sideways under the crowd noise.

CANDLEWOOD

Prynn? You okay?

PRYNN

Fine.

CANDLEWOOD

These tickets are like gold dust,
Prynn. If you didn't want to come,
you didn't have to.

PRYNN

Maybe you should have invited
Hetik, then.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh yeah, that's a great idea. Then
the whole station can see me red-
faced and sweating and making a
total ass of myself.

PRYNN

Like they haven't already.

CANDLEWOOD

Hey! I'm a respected member of the senior staff, thank you very much.

PRYNN

Then stop talking during the show. You're missing his entire opening monologue.

The drummer of Vic's band hits a BA-DUM-TSH! for the last big punchline, followed by a last big LAUGH and APPLAUSE from the crowd. Candlewood looks up, annoyed.

PRYNN

See? You missed it.

CANDLEWOOD

(pout)

Your fault.

On stage, Morn takes a seat behind his big desk.

CANDLEWOOD

I wonder who his big guests are this week?

Prynn shrugs.

CANDLEWOOD

I heard last week he had Vedek Capril on, and they got into a really fascinating discussion about the wormhole aliens and the various interpretations.

PRYNN

You didn't watch? I thought Morn Night was the big new thing all across the station.

CANDLEWOOD

I was on duty.

PRYNN

(mutter)
I wish I was.

At his desk, Morn pulls out some ridiculously complex Rube Goldberg device and sets it onto the table. Vic is at the microphone on his band rostrum.

VIC
What you got there, big guy? No wait, don't tell me. Let me guess. Umm... is it a new way of mixing up some sweet cocktails? I know you like a tippie.

Morn shakes his head 'no'. Chuckles from the audience.

VIC
Alright, you gotta gimme a clue. Demonstrate it.

5 ON SCREEN

The image of Morn demonstrating this ludicrous device is now on a large oval-shaped screen...

WIDEN to reveal...

6 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

CENN and RO both stand at the central Ops table, looking up at the main viewscreen. Ro is laughing at what she sees. Cenn looks askance at her... what's so funny?

Then he looks around at the rest of Ops. Every other EXTRA filling the various stations is paying more attention to Morn on the screen than they are their own jobs, all laughing along as well. Cenn just doesn't get it.

CENN
Are we sure this is appropriate to be watching in Ops? This is supposed to be a place of work, isn't it?

RO
It's Morn. Everybody loves Morn.

Cenn looks around again, baffled by that very phenomenon.

CENN

But... isn't there something these people should be doing?

RO

(dismissing it)

It's delta shift. Nothing happens on delta shift. A few freighters, a few shuttles... it's fine.

(glance at him)

Have a sense of humour, Major.

CENN

I do have a sense of humour, Commander. It just... isn't registering anything right now.

Morn does something - Ro and the rest of the crew laugh.

CENN

Speaking of delta shift, why are you even here?

RO

(shrug)

I was working late. Some pretty big stuff happening. Can't talk about it - not yet, anyway. And since I was here...

On screen, the strange device manages to squirt shaving foam all up into Morn's face. Ro and the crew erupt in laughter. Cenn looks on, just confused.

7 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

Candlewood is laughing as well, Prynn is not.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh, come on, Prynn. It's funny! You laughed when I did it to Nog. What's wrong?

PRYNN

John, I'm fine. Stop worrying
about me.

On stage, far away from Prynn and Candlewood's perspective
in the nosebleed seats, Morn wipes his face from the foam.
Then he stands up from his desk with a microphone in hand.

PRYNN

Oh no... he's coming to talk to
the audience.

CANDLEWOOD

Oh great!
(cross fingers)
Please come to me, please come to
me, please come to me...

PRYNN

(head down,
mutter)
Don't come to me, don't come to
me, please don't come to me...

Luckily for Prynn, Morn heads in the opposite direction. At
the other end of the audience, Morn walks up a few steps
and shoves his microphone into the face of a BAJORAN WOMAN.
She SHRIEKS with excitement.

BAJORAN WOMAN

Oh Prophets, this is so exciting!
I just want to wave and say hi to
my sisters and their children I
love you all and oh Morn I love
you too the whole family loves
your stories you've led such an
exciting life and your poetry just
made us cry and oh Prophets I
can't believe I'm on your show
this is so exciting!

Morn is just "Aww shucks, lil old me?" and leans in to peck
the woman on the cheek. She shrieks anew and Morn moves on.

While Prynn buries herself deeper into her seat, trying to hide from view, Morn reaches Vulcan security non-com SEVAK and shoves the mic in his face.

Sevak stares back at him unblinkingly. The audience laughs.

Morn stares back. The audience laughs.

Sevak stares at Morn.

Morn stares at Sevak.

The audience is wetting themselves.

Prynn's head is buried in her shoulders, her arms folded, please god don't let him see me.

The staring contest continues... until finally Sevak is the first one to blink. The audience CHEERS, Morn poses like "Yes! I am the champion!" and moves on to huge applause.

Candlewood bounces in his seat with excitement.

CANDLEWOOD

Yes! He's coming this way!

Prynn rolls her eyes and tries to bury herself even deeper.

Morn gets closer, closer... leans right past Candlewood, shoving his microphone into Prynn's face. She turns and smiles politely up at him.

PRYNN

No thanks.

The audience 'awwww's. Morn inches his microphone closer.

PRYNN

No really, it's okay. John, why don't you talk to him?

As the audience anticipation ramps up, Morn shoves his mic practically right up Prynn's nose, not letting her escape.

Prynn grabs Morn's wrist with one hand and pushes it far away, holding it there. Then she stands, slinks her other

hand around Morn's neck, and drags him close. They're leaning right across Candlewood's lap.

Prynn puts her lips to Morn's ear, away from the camera and the microphone, and hisses...

CLOSE-UP on Prynn's mouth at Morn's ear...

PRYNN

Go. Away. I'm not doing it.

BACK TO SCENE

She sits back down with a polite but insincere smile for the camera.

Shaken but hiding it, Morn winks for the camera and moves along. The audience 'ooohh's, thinking that Prynn said something saucy. But they are soon distracted by Morn's next shenanigans.

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

Having just watched this on the screen in Ops, Cenn frowns. He doesn't believe what the rest of the crowd believe - he can see Prynn is upset. But why?

He looks to Ro for any help. Ro knows full well what Prynn is upset over but won't say it.

Against the canned laughter from the TV studio, Ro worries for Prynn...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

9 SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #1

We are at a high angle, viewing Quark's bar as if on a security cam. Quark himself is working the bar, with TREIR and HETIK moving back and forth as customers come and go.

As we watch, Lieutenant LEISHMAN (last seen 11x08 "Puppy Love") approaches the bar. We hear what they say through hidden microphones.

QUARK

Lieutenant Leishman. And what can I do for you today?

LEISHMAN

Hi, Quark. Captain Vaughn received a diplomatic communiqué from the Lurian government this morning. And it involves you.

QUARK

Me? What did I do?

LEISHMAN

The First Gheljar has decided to honour Morn with a statue for his services during the war -

10 SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #2

High up on the top-level balcony, Morn and Nog and a couple of other hangers-on are huddled in a dark corner.

QUARK (comm)

Services?! He passed one message.

Everyone giggles. Morn shushes the others with a finger on lips, then brings up his microphone. He speaks into it...

11 SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #1

The security image ZOOMS IN super-close until we see that there is a small ear-piece inserted inside Leishman's ear. Leishman says Morn's words, not knowing what's about to come out of her own mouth...

LEISHMAN

All I know is, they think he's a war hero. And since this is where he spends most of his time, they want to have his statue here.

QUARK

Here? Where here?

LEISHMAN

Right... here.

Leishman grabs a bar stool - Morn's usual - and brandishes it for Quark.

QUARK

What?!

12 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

In the studio, the DS9-style 'windows' on the set backdrop are now revealed as giant screens, and this recording is being played for the live audience.

Morn behind his desk, Vic with his band, and the entire audience are busting a gut laughing at Quark and Leishman. On screen, Quark is shocked and appalled.

QUARK (screen)

I'm supposed to give up one of my precious barstools for a statue? That's valuable real estate!

LEISHMAN (screen)

Vaughn already agreed to it. And he asked me to take measurements.

QUARK (screen)

This is my bar! Not to mention sovereign Ferengi territory!

Quark stomps around the bar and perches unhappily on the stool. Leishman takes a step back, looks the scene over.

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

The real-time Quark's bar now. Even here, the evening crowd is watching the show live on the screens in the walls.

It even plays on the screens behind the bar, where the real Quark is watching himself be embarrassed in front of the whole station. Arms folded, lips pursed, not impressed.

LEISHMAN (screen)
I think he's taller than you.

QUARK (screen)
Who isn't?

The crowd in the bar laughs. Quark grinds his teeth.

17 **SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #2**

The recording again. Hidden in his corner with Morn and the entourage, Nog stifles a laugh. Morn speaks into the mic...

18 **SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #1**

Leishman ponders...

LEISHMAN
Let's find you some cushions to sit on.

QUARK
Oh for...

But Leishman has already gone to find some cushions. She comes back with four from around the bar, and passes two to Quark. Annoyed, he manoeuvres them under his butt. Leishman steps back again to observe, then pulls out a holo-imager and starts snapping images.

19 **INT. TV STUDIO - SET**

In the studio, the screen-windows show the still images taken by the camera - Quark looking miserable on a pile of cushions. The audience is loving it.

QUARK (screen)
Are you done?

20 SECURITY CAM RECORDING - ANGLE #1

Continuing on the security cam recording...

LEISHMAN
Not quite. I think he's bigger
round the shoulders than you too.
Ooh I know! Lift your arms up...

He reluctantly does, and she wedges the other two cushions under his arms. He ends up perched on the stool looking like a Ferengi Michelin Man. She snaps a few more shots.

LEISHMAN
Great! That's all I need for
dimensions... but we should make
sure the stool can handle the
weight of the statue as well.

QUARK
Fine, what do you need me to do?

LEISHMAN
Morn's a big guy, and you're kinda
tiny. We need to make you heavier.
So... why don't you bounce up and
down on the stool.

QUARK
(deadpan)
Are you serious?

LEISHMAN
It would be really helpful.

With a depressed sigh, Quark begins bouncing himself up and down on the stool, arms flapping as they try to hold onto the cushions, while Leishman takes more photos.

21 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Nurse ETANA laughs, watching Quark flap about on one of the screens in the Infirmary.

In the background, BASHIR is tending to a patient, nothing major, just a sprain or a rash or something. He finishes up and guides the patient to the exit with a sympathetic hand.

As the door opens and the patient exits, the ROAR of more laughter from Quark's sounds through. Bashir looks out, vaguely amused at the spectacle, then shakes his head and comes back inside. He looks to Etana, still laughing.

BASHIR

I don't want to be a buzzkill,
Kol...

ETANA

Sorry, Doctor. But you know nobody
can resist making fun of Quark.
What do you need me to do?

BASHIR

Probably nothing, really. Seems
like the whole station is staying
in tonight... or going out. Either
way, it's all about Morn.

Something else funny happens on screen - Etana laughs.

BASHIR

You could have got a ticket, you
know. You could have made a date
of it.

ETANA

Eh, with Kristen back on Proxima
visiting her family, I don't have
anyone to go with. This is fine.
What about you? I'm sure Aylam
would have covered if you asked.

BASHIR

Oh, not really my thing either. I
don't have much of a social life

these days. Not since... well, not since Ezri left, I suppose.

ETANA

I tell you what - next week, why don't you and I go together? If you really think we can get tickets.

BASHIR

You sure Kristen won't mind?

ETANA

(chuckle)

I am allowed to leave the house without her, you know.

BASHIR

Alright then, it's a date. A non-romantic, totally platonic date.

On screen, Vic's band strikes up with a dramatic flourish.

22 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

While the band plays, Vic speaks over the speakers...

VIC

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you, thank you. The big fella needs to take a break. Bein' this loveable is hard work!

NOG (o.s.)

How would you know?

BA-DUM-TSH! The audience laughs. It's all part of the show.

VIC

Now you guys and gals go on and enjoy a drink at the bar, but before you do, let's hear a few words from tonight's sponsor!

The band ramps up, and with a musical fanfare, we're out.

A BURST OF SPARKLES fills the screen, taking us into...

23 **COMMERCIAL BREAK**

A gaudy and tasteless advertisement with cheerful music.

QUARK (v.o.)
Any time you're in town, why not
come on down... to Quark's!

A big sweeping shot of Quark's, making the place look as huge and fabulous as possible. Drinkers are drinking, gamblers are gambling, revellers are revelling.

QUARK (v.o.)
Whatever you want, we've got it.

A video clip of Quark mixing drinks for customers:

QUARK (v.o.)
Whether it's drinks with friends...

A video clip of two people together in a quiet corner...

QUARK (v.o.)
A romantic dinner...

Somebody winning big at the dabo table...

QUARK (v.o.)
Or the best games in the sector...
it's all here at Quark's.

A family with children sits watching a musician play...

QUARK (v.o.)
Entertainment for all the family.

A dabo girl leading a client up the spiral staircase...

QUARK (v.o.)
Or even something a little more...
exotic.

Quark stands at the bar, handing official paperwork over to an alien customer, who looks disreputable...

QUARK (v.o.)

Quark's also doubles as the only
Ferengi Embassy, dealing in travel
documents, legal paperwork, asylum
requests and much more!

The alien slips the documents into his coat, and Quark
shoos him away, glancing around to make sure no-one saw.

QUARK (v.o.)

At once completely respectable...

More dodgy dealings in a dark corner...

QUARK (v.o.)

And completely discreet. Endorsed
by important figures from across
the galaxy...

A clip of MARTOK in the bar...

QUARK (c.o.)

The Klingon Chancellor!

A clip of ROM during last year's visit...

QUARK (v.o.)

The Ferengi Grand Nagus!

A clip of SISKO...

QUARK (v.o.)

The Emissary of the Prophets!

A clip of VANNIS at the bar, earlier this season...

QUARK (v.o.)

Even agents of the Dominion!

A clip of Morn laughing it up with his fanbase...

QUARK (v.o.)

Oh... and this guy. Everyone is
welcome at Quark's!

Finally Quark himself, standing in front of his bar in his best suit, a dabo girl on each arm, and happy customers all around him (including Morn).

QUARK

So come on down to Quark's Bar, Grill, Embassy, Gaming Hall and Holo-suite Arcade. A full service establishment! And we'll make all your dreams come true.

As Quark is standing there as grand as he can manage...

Morn BELCHES loudly. Quark's smile tenses...

EVIK (v.o.)

(super-fast)

The proprietor retains the right to refuse service. No refunds or cancellations. Quark's is not responsible for any items lost or stolen while on the premises, food or drink poisoning, injuries in the holosuites or any unforeseen side-effects. All actions taken at customers' own risk.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

24 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

It's INTERMISSION time, and the crowd from the holosuite has returned to the bar. Quark and TREIR are both serving their hearts out. The entire audience is here at once, all clamouring for drinks and snacks.

CANDLEWOOD

Come on, Quark. This whole pre-ordered drinks thing is supposed to speed it up, not drag it out.

QUARK

Doesn't help when everybody pre-orders their drinks.

Quark finally hands two drinks to Candlewood and shoos him away. The bartender hasn't got time to breathe before the next customer is demanding his attention.

Squeezing his way through the crowd, Candlewood reaches Prynn standing on the opposite side and hands her one of the drinks. She's still a bit downcast.

CANDLEWOOD

Here you go - this should cheer you up.

PRYNN

Thanks, John.

CANDLEWOOD

Are you ever going to tell me what's wrong?

She gives him a look like, "Ask me again and you die." He rolls his eyes in exasperation.

Then Prynn's eyes cheer up with mischief. Candlewood wonders what changed.

HETIK (o.s.)

Hi, John.

Candlewood CHOKES on his drink, spluttering all down his front. Coughing and dribbling, he looks up in humiliation and sees HETIK standing there, trying not to smirk. Candlewood could just DIE from embarrassment.

CANDLEWOOD
(spluttering)
Hetik... hi...

HETIK
I was going to say, you look good
in your dinner suit. But then...

CANDLEWOOD
Thanks... yeah... I thought I'd
make an effort...

HETIK
You having a nice night?

CANDLEWOOD
I'm... with Prynn, Hetik...

PRYNN
Don't you dare. Go. I'll be fine.

Prynn shoves Candlewood towards Hetik, almost spilling his drink again. Candlewood is going to have to talk to him. He's sweating with nerves, drink all down his front...

HETIK
So how've you been? Haven't seen
you in a while.

CANDLEWOOD
Oh, not too bad. Umm, you know...
stuff.
(false bravado)
I'm an important senior officer
now! Giving orders and everything.
"You! Drop and give me twenty!"

Hetik's smile is strained. He has no idea what the hell that means.

FLASH

Candlewood stands facing the wall, with his head against the bulkhead, and he BANGS his head repeatedly against the wall. He throws his hands out as if to say, "Why?!"

FLASH

Back where he was, Candlewood gazes up at Hetik and gulps with nervousness. Hetik just has this effect on him.

At the bar, Quark is rushing around serving customers. Out of the corner of his eye, he spots Nog, hovering at the gap in the bar, wearing his giant headset stretched across his head. Quark just keeps on serving.

QUARK

I'm not talking to you.

NOG

(smirk)

Why not?

QUARK

I wondered what that was about all night. I almost called the captain to tell him one of his junior officers had gone insane. But no - it was just you humiliating me in front of the whole station. I knew that headset'd go to your... head.

NOG

Lighten up, uncle. It was a joke.

QUARK

Yeah? Well Lieutenant Tenmei doesn't seem to be laughing.

Quark gestures towards Prynn across the room - she stands alone, sipping her drink, not talking to anyone.

Then VAUGHN approaches her out of the crowd. Quark watches as the captain comforts Prynn. They talk MOS, he seeming to reassure her, she accepting it grudgingly.

QUARK

Any idea what that's about?

NOG

Not a clue. Anyway, it's time.

QUARK

(snooty)

I'm not sure I should. Why would I do you a favour after the way I've been treated?

NOG

Because you're getting all this business. Because your holosuites are busier than they've been in months. Because you're getting a cut of the ticket price.

QUARK

Fine.

Pouting, Quark lays down the bottle he was holding, hits a key on the computer panel behind the bar, and makes all the lights around the bar dim on and off rhythmically. Then he takes a deep breath and bellows at the top of his voice.

QUARK

Ladies and gentlemen! If you'd like to take your drinks and proceed upstairs to the holosuites, The Late Show With Morn is due to begin its second half in three minutes! Thank you!

All around, people either knock back their drinks and place down their glasses, or begin to carry them back towards the spiral staircases and up towards the holosuites.

NOG

Thanks, uncle. See you after the show!

Quark grumbles as Nog moves away. Then his attention is caught by Vaughn and Prynn again. He can't help wondering - what's going on there?

Candlewood is still trying to sputter out words.

CANDLEWOOD
I'd... better... go.

HETIK
That's fine. I'm working anyway.
Nice to see you. Have fun!

Candlewood can't even process that, so he just turns away back to Prynn. Vaughn is just stepping back from her.

VAUGHN
Saved by the bell, Lieutenants. Go on and enjoy the show. I'll speak to you later.

PRYNN
Seeya, dad.

Prynn and Candlewood head towards the stairs. On the way...

CANDLEWOOD
What the hell is wrong with me, Prynn? All I wanted was a nice sophisticated evening of elegant entertainment...

CUT TO:

25 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

MRS ETHRAKOI (female alien, not human or Bajoran) picks up her chair and HURLS it across the stage in a fury.

MRS ETHRAKOI
You tried to steal mah neckliss!

MR ETHRAKOI (male alien, same species as his ex-wife) is also on his feet, raging right back at her.

MR ETHRAKOI

It ain't yo neckliss! It's mahn!

The two arguing aliens are up on their feet, shouting at the top of their voices, practically frothing at the mouth with hatred and anger at each other.

The chairs are set apart on the stage (or were, before they were thrown), with Morn between them holding a microphone. He's struggling to calm them down - they pay him no mind.

MRS ETHRAKOI

You think you can do that? You think I'd just let you get away with that?

MR ETHRAKOI

(sneer)

Nothing you can do about it!

The audience are up on their feet, CATCALLING and HOLLERING like spectators at a bloodsport.

MRS ETHRAKOI

I called the poh-lice on yo dirty behaahnd once, I can do it again, you son of a gumprat!

MR ETHRAKOI

Don't you talk about mah mama!

The male alien LAUNCHES across the stage in a fury, aiming for his ex-wife, not caring that Morn is in between them. Morn gets buffeted about, battling aliens on either side of him trying to land punches and smacks. Neither hit their targets - they only hit Morn.

On the band stand, Vic gulps anxiously.

VIC

Now Mister and Missus Ethrakoi, we asked you up on stage to calmly discuss your marital problems -

MRS ETHRAKOI

We ain't got no marital problems!
We ain't got no damn marriage! I
divorced the son of a -

MR ETHRAKOI

Don't you talk about mah mama!

And they're off again, shirt-grabbing and slap-fighting and knocking poor Morn about between them.

VIC

Alright, that does it. Nath!

The security chief Evik Nath lumbers onto the stage to the sound of CHEERS and JEERS from the audience. They're up on their feet, rhythmically fist-pumping the air as one.

AUDIENCE

Nath! Nath! Nath! Nath! Nath!

Evik forces himself between the aliens, pushing them apart. They're still swinging and flailing and yelling all sorts of filth at each other. The crowd whoops with delight.

VIC

(rhetorical)

How does this happen every time?!

Evik finally succeeds in dragging the two aliens off the stage and into the wings. We can still hear their shrieking and cursing as they go. Morn is left behind on stage.

VIC

Y'alright there, big fella?

Morn pants as he recovers, holding a hand up to stall Vic, as if to say, "Gimme a minute here."

VIC

Yeah, you just catch your breath.

The audience "Awww"s with disappointment that the fighting is over, but eventually settles back down into their seats.

In Ops, Cenn is stood at the central Ops table, trying to concentrate on his work. Glancing up at the screen with its raucous shrieking and caterwauling, he shakes his head in confused exasperation. Ro is wandering the stations.

CENN

Honestly, I don't know why those two don't just move apart. Then they wouldn't keep getting into fights all the time.

RO

I guess people just don't know what's good for them.

Cenn looks askance at Ro - that was an odd comment. When Ro makes her way back to the central table, Cenn takes his chance and speaks to her confidentially.

CENN

Commander... What's going on?
What's this big news?

RO

Stop worrying about it, Major.
It's nothing that concerns you.

CENN

Then why can't you tell me?

RO

Because it's not my place to tell,
alright? Trust me, you'll know
when you need to know.

That's not good enough for Cenn. He takes a chance.

CENN

Can we speak privately, please?

Puzzled, Ro nevertheless nods and heads up towards the office. Cenn follows, beckoning an EXTRA to take over his place on the boards. We go with them, into...

Ro lets the door close, and turns to speak to Cenn. She's calm, not confrontational.

RO

What's the problem, Major?

CENN

Commander, you may have called me stupid in the past, but believe it or not, I'm actually not stupid. I know that you're keeping something from me. As your Bajoran liaison, I have to say I'm insulted that you don't trust me.

Very delicate moment for Ro. She has to play this very carefully. She counts to ten first.

RO

Major... please. You need to stop worrying. Yes, I have a secret. But it's nothing you need to lose sleep over. There are only three people on this station who do know about it, so you're hardly being singled out as untrustworthy.

CENN

Evik, Nog, Bashir? They don't know either?

RO

They'll know soon enough, when it's time. Just like you will. So please relax. Shall we?

She gestures back out to Ops. Cenn reluctantly nods. Ro walks out ahead of him, but as she goes, Cenn pauses and watches her distrustfully.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

28 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

Vic announces over the mic...

VIC

Ladies and gentlemen, please give
a warm Late Show welcome for the
fastest Aarruri in the Gamma
Quadrant... Mister Pifko Gaber!

A hand pulls back a curtain, and the dog-like alien PIF
pops his head through, looking around uncertainly.

As the audience APPLAUDS, Pif grins a big toothy grin and
steps out onto the set. Green fur bushy, spines erect, tail
wagging furiously. He strides forwards and jumps up onto a
guest couch by Morn's desk. He sits upright, face on...

PRYNN

turns her eyes away, as others around her react similarly.

PRYNN

Whoa there, Pif. That's more than
I needed to know.

MORN

pulls a "whoops!" face, and the audience recovers. He's
about to start the interview... but Pif jumps in first.

PIF

Thanks for having me, Morn. And
thanks to Vic, too! But call me
Pif - everybody does!

Morn opens his mouth to talk - Pif barrels right over him.

PIF

You know, Morn has been begging me
to come on his show. Ever since I
started working at the bar, he's

been pestering and pestering... I kept telling him, "What do you want me for? I've got nothing to talk about!" But he just wouldn't give up. You know how he is, right folks? Once he gets going, you can never get him to stop. So finally I just said, "You know what? If you want me that much, I'm all yours." So here I am!

The preamble is over, so Morn tries to speak again. But again, Pif just rambles right over him, oblivious. Morn looks around at the audience, at his producers... Help?

PIF

Maybe one thing I could talk about is that I'm new to the station. I only moved here a few months ago. So I'm only just getting to know the place! But you're the one with the fascinating stories to tell, Morn - you've been on and off this station for years! Go on - tell us all some of your stories.

Finally! Morn gets ready to launch into one...

PIF

Ooh, you know which one is my favourite? The one where you had a whole shipment of Valerian snuffle bunnies in your hold and they got loose and starting snuffling all over your ship - it was so funny! It all started on Lya Four, I think that's right? Anyway...

29 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

While on-screen Pif witters on, Bashir enters the bar from the Infirmary. The massive crowds have gone now, and those who remain are rapt to the screens.

Bashir heads to the bar, boisterous and friendly. Quark himself stands with a pout, arms folded.

BASHIR

Quark! Get me a Greek salad, a slice of tiramisu, and a large decaf coffee. And be sharp about it, barkeep!

QUARK

(gets to work)
You're in a loud mood.

BASHIR

I'm ravenous. Plus I'm just glad to stretch my legs a bit.

On the screen behind the bar, Pif is on the couch, talking.

PIF (screen)

...And then the bunnies made a nest in your maintenance tubes!

The audience laughs - both on the screen and in the bar. Bashir himself smirks. Somewhere else in the bar, a couple of Pif's PUPPIES begin to yip excitedly at the sight of their daddy on TV. Quark mutters under his breath.

BASHIR

What's wrong?

QUARK

They got that damned animal on the show as a guest... and not me?!

BASHIR

Would you have wanted to be?

QUARK

Of course not. I'm the Ferengi Ambassador to Bajor! I'm far too important. I don't have time to waste on that nonsense.

Quark turns away to collect Bashir's food, and places it on the bar. Bashir begins to tuck in, still chuckling.

BASHIR

Should have ordered sour grapes.

30 **INT. TV STUDIO - SET**

Morn sits at his desk, chin in his hand. He's about to say something... and then Pif starts talking again. Morn sags.

PIF

Oh, that reminds me of a great story from when I worked on the *Even Odds*. That was a trader ship, you know. Kinda like a freighter except, well, Dez always liked to call it "retrieval". Bit of a euphemism, really. Other people might like to call us a pirate ship. They just don't understand. Anyway, this one story I remember, it was just like your snuffle bunnies, except we had a shipment of Merdosian numpties. We were supposed to be selling them to the Cheka in return for something the Dosi wanted but, well, you know how the Cheka are...

Morn sighs, stares blankly into the middle distance, drums his fingers on the desk...

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

Bashir has a mouthful of salad, watching the screens behind Quark's back. He nods, talks with his mouth full.

BASHIR

He's right, you know.

QUARK

Excuse me?

BASHIR

(swallows)

About the Cheka. We never even actually met them and they still gave us nothing but trouble.

QUARK

I really couldn't care less,
Doctor.

BASHIR

Oh come on, Quark. You can't be
that put out that you didn't get
an invite. And there's always next
week, you know. Like you said, you
are the Ferengi Ambassador. I'm
sure you could provide fascinating
insights into galactic politics,
the state of the Ferengi economy,
the history of the Occupation...

PIF (screen)

...and then the Merdosian said,
"But I only just went to the
bathroom in there!"

The audience laughs again. Quark grinds his teeth.

QUARK

I don't need that kind of false
celebrity, Doctor. I'm a serious
businessman. All I care about are
a healthy bank balance and the
respect of my peers.

BASHIR

(mutter)

Yeah, you certainly looked like a
serious businessman when you were
flapping your arms and bouncing
about on a barstool.

QUARK

(ignores him)

Besides, I could do a better job
than Morn any day.

BASHIR

(yeah right)

As a chat show host?

QUARK

I was a bartender long before I was the Ambassador, Doctor. And everybody loves the bartender. It's rule number one-forty-seven.

BASHIR
Alright, then. Prove it.

QUARK
Fine. I will. You'll see.

Bashir shakes his head in amusement, returns to his food.

32 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

On stage, Morn makes one last valiant attempt to interrupt Pif. But Pif obliviously rolls on through.

PIF
Of course, you know all about large families, don't you Morn? Seventeen brothers and sisters? Whew! I'm only one of seven myself, but let me tell you, that was no walk in the park. Except for the times we did walk in the park, of course. There were some beautiful parks in Ga. I remember this one time with my parents...

Morn face-palms...

33 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Bashir continues to eat and watch the TV behind the bar. Quark straightens his jacket, puffs himself up and heads out to roam the room.

Across the room, Quark reaches a table of guests, including Ensign ALECO, who are all watching the nearby screen. A puppy sits in Aleco's lap. Quark sidles up the table, and after wincing at the puppy, he begins to schmooze.

QUARK
So... how are you enjoying your evening, Ensign?

ALECO
(not paying
attention)
It's fine, Quark. Thanks.

Quark grabs a spare chair and sits beside Aleco at the table, leaning in sociably.

QUARK
You know, I've always found it fascinating - a former Militia officer being in Starfleet. Why don't you tell me about it?

ALECO
Now...? But I'm watching Morn.

QUARK
Yeah, but -

ALECO
Later, Quark. I'm watching Morn.

Quark sighs, accepts that this one isn't going to work. But he's not going to give up. He stands, moves away, and finds another table.

At this one, an ALIEN slumps in the chair, head on his chest, drooling and semi-conscious with drink.

QUARK
Ah, Murg, my old co-conspirator.
How's life treating you?

The alien barely manages to lift his head and focus on Quark's presence. Not deterred, Quark takes a seat.

QUARK
Why don't you tell your old pal
Quark all about it?

The alien BELCHES hard, then slumps back into oblivion.

At the bar, Bashir has been keeping an eye on Quark, and chuckles. Then he turns back to the screen...

PIF (screen)

But still, seventeen brothers and sisters... you'd think they'd have figured out what caused it by now.

34 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

Morn's head is on the desk. Face-palm is no longer enough. Meanwhile Pif continues to witter on next to him.

PIF

My whole life changed when I met Sett. I'd just been injured - did I tell you that part? - and to meet another Aarruri, never mind one from Ga like me, well it was fate. I'm so glad I found her, and we started our own little litter.

Morn begins to bang his head softly on the table.

35 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Chewing the last mouthfuls of his dinner, Bashir watches Quark tour the room. The Ferengi approaches a table, tries to strike up a conversation, and is rebuffed. Onto another table - the same routine. And again.

Nobody wants to talk - they're all watching Morn on the TV. Bashir is beginning to feel sorry for Quark. Finally he gives up and comes back to the bar.

BASHIR

Cheer up, Quark. They're all just distracted. I'm sure at any other time, you'd be the most popular man in the room.

QUARK

How are you doing, Doctor? I feel like we haven't spent much time together lately.

BASHIR

Oh no, sorry. Not me. This was
just a dine and dash. Maybe
another time. Thanks, Quark!

Bashir wipes his mouth with a napkin, gets up from the table, and heads out back towards the Infirmary. Quark is astonished. Indignant, he grabs Bashir's used dishes and turns to put them into the reclamator.

On the screen, Quark watches Pif standing up on the guest couch and jumping up and down excitedly as Morn tries to get him to calm down.

PIF (screen)
I'm in love! I'm in love!

Quark grunts in disgust, then turns back and JUMPS...

QUARK
Bah!

...because TIFF the puppy is sat right where Bashir was.

TIFF
Hi!

Quark gets his pounding heart under control with a mutter.

36 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

As Pif continues to jump about and bark excitedly, Morn turns with gritted teeth to look off camera, at his producers, and makes a cut-throat gesture.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

Another BURST OF SPARKLES takes us into...

37 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

Vic clears his throat, a bit uncomfortable.

VIC

Ookay... let's get this back on track, shall we? Tonight's big guest, ladies and gentlemen. Please put your hands together for... Captain Elias Vaughn!

The audience applauds politely - they're intrigued by the station's captain lowering himself to this level.

38 INT. TV STUDIO - BACKSTAGE

In the wings, Vaughn readies himself for the stage. Nog counts down three-two-one on his fingers, then pulls back the curtains. Vaughn steps through, and we follow him...

39 INT. TV STUDIO - SET (CONTINUOUS)

...through onto the set. As Vaughn adjusts to the bright lights, he peers into the audience...

...and picks out Prynn, sitting beside Candlewood. She makes eye contact with him, still obviously troubled. He nods encouragingly at her, then proceeds to the couch.

Taking his seat with a polite wave to the audience, Vaughn holds his hand up to forestall Morn.

VAUGHN

Thank you Morn, and thank you Vic, for inviting me on to speak. It's certainly been another great show! But before you begin, I do have something I'd like to announce, if that's okay with you.

Morn puts his hands up, backing off. Go for it.

VAUGHN

Thank you.

(turns to audience)

This is not going to be easy for me to say. But I will be leaving Deep Space Nine soon.

Pause for reaction from the audience.

Candlewood looks to Prynn - she is looking down at her hands, twisting in her lap. He realises she already knew, and that this is what she's been upset about all along.

40 INT. TV STUDIO - BACKSTAGE

In the wings, Nog reacts to this news as he peers through a tiny gap in the curtains ...

41 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

Meanwhile Vaughn continues:

VAUGHN

Though I've only had the pleasure of leading this station and this community for a short time, I have been one of you for more than three years now. I've made friends here, reconnected with family.

On Prynn - she's the family he's talking about.

VAUGHN

I don't regret the time I've spent here, not for one moment. And I will be sad to leave you. But the fact is, I'm no longer convinced that DS-Nine and I are the right fit for each other. Therefore, in one week's time, the USS *James T Kirk* will arrive and I will take command, leading her crew on an exciting exploratory mission into

the unknown. It's a challenge, but one I look forward to enormously.

Pausing, Vaughn turns to Morn at his side. Morn's mouth hangs open, face in dumb shock. Vic clears his throat.

VIC

Wow. I don't think I've ever seen him speechless before.

VAUGHN

Well then, I'm glad to have achieved the impossible at least once before I die.

The audience chuckles.

VIC

Until the big guy finds his voice again, I guess it's up to me. So let me say on behalf of myself, the band, and everyone at The Late Show, that we'll be sorry to see you go, Captain, and we wish you all the best for the future.

VAUGHN

Thank you, Vic. That means a lot.

At Vic's initiation, the audience begins to applaud.

Prynn and Candlewood are not among them. Instead, Candlewood reaches across and grips Prynn's hand in sympathy and solidarity. Smiling her gratitude, Prynn grips back.

VAUGHN

As for my replacement, upon my departure the station will fall under the command of one who is far better suited to the task than I ever was - Commander Ro Laren.

45 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Quark turns to Tiff, sitting on the bar. Nobody else to talk to, so Quark may as well talk to him. Tiff listens with rapt attention, like Quark is delivering revelation.

QUARK

Of course, you realise I'm going to get to see Ro even less often now. If she's back in charge...

(sigh)

Ah well. At least I don't have to worry about you ever leaving me, do I?

In response, Tiff leans forward and nuzzles Quark's hand affectionately. Quark is quite touched for a second, until he comes to his senses and shudders in revulsion.

46 INT. TV STUDIO - SET

While down on the stage Vaughn and Morn (hey, that rhymes) are finishing up their interview, we are up in the audience with Prynn and Candlewood. They speak quietly so as not to disturb everyone around them.

CANDLEWOOD

I'm sorry, Prynn.

PRYNN

Ah, it's fine. I shouldn't be sad. I'm not a little girl anymore, and I don't need my daddy around me all the time. I'm a grown woman, and god knows he's a grown man. He has to do what he thinks is best.

CANDLEWOOD

Yeah but... you spent all those years not speaking... and then you finally made friends again. It's okay, you know, if you wanna be sad that he's leaving.

PRYNN

(smile)

Thanks, John. You're a good guy.

The audience breaks into applause, catching John and Prynn's attention. On stage, Vaughn has gone, and Morn, Nog and Evik are standing together, holding hands, and giving a big goodbye bow for the audience.

PRYNN

You did it again! We missed his closing monologue!

CANDLEWOOD

(pout)

Your fault.

The band strikes up, and Vic begins his closing spiel.

VIC

One last number to close us out!
And this one goes out especially
to Captain Vaughn, wishing him
happy trails. Goodnight folks!

And we go into a big-band arrangement of the Cole Porter cowboy classic "Don't Fence Me In".

For the first half of the song we stay on Vic and the band, letting them have the limelight...

VIC

(singing)

Oh, give me land, lots of land,
under starry skies above
Don't fence me in
Let me ride through that
wide open country that I love
Don't fence me in

Let me be by myself
in the evenin' breeze
And listen to the murmur
of the cottonwood trees
Send me off forever
but I ask you please

Don't fence me in

Then we go into...

47 **CLOSING CREDITS**

Vic continues to play, and we see the CLOSING CREDITS, but instead of the usual visual we see a SERIES OF STILL IMAGES taken from various episodes in which Morn has appeared.

-- Morn pulling darts out of his chest after Quark threw them ("Visionary")

VIC
(singing)
Just turn me loose, let me
straddle my old saddle
Underneath the western skies

-- Morn vomiting up a mouthful of latinum into a cocktail glass ("Who Mourns for Morn?")

VIC
(singing)
On my cayuse, let me wander
over yonder
Till I see the mountains rise

-- Morn passed out on a bench on the Promenade, and being woken up by Odo ("Necessary Evil")

VIC
(singing)
I want to ride to the ridge
where the west commences
And gaze at the moon
till I lose my senses

-- Morn bringing a flower to woo a woman in Quark's bar ("Let He Who Is Without Sin...")

VIC
(singing)
And I can't stand hobbles

And I can't stand fences
Don't fence me in

-- Morn being thrown off his barstool by an amorous Worf
("Looking for par'Mach in All the Wrong Places")

VIC
(singing)
Oh, give me land, lots of land,
under starry skies above
Don't fence me in

-- Morn looking up in worry as Kira places her finger on
his gift wrapping ("Favour the Bold")

VIC
(singing)
Let me ride through that
wide open country that I love
Don't fence me in

-- Morn partying at Jadzia Dax's bachelorette party ("You
Are Cordially Invited")

VIC
(singing)
Let me be by myself
in the evenin' breeze
And listen to the murmur
of the cottonwood trees

-- Morn on stage trying to do stand-up comedy, but finding
himself with stage fright ("Property Values")

VIC
(singing)
Send me off forever
but I ask you please
Don't fence me in

-- Morn leading an entire crowd of adoring followers back
into Quark's ("Twilight")

VIC

(singing)
So don't fence me in, oh no
Don't you fence me in

-- The image of Morn in Quark's, looking to camera and
toasting the audience. Hold on this image as we...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW