

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

9x12 - "Satisfaction Is
Not Guaranteed."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on the novella

"Satisfaction Is Not Guaranteed"
by Keith RA DeCandido

appearing in

Star Trek: Worlds of Deep Space Nine
Book 3 - Ferenginar / The Dominion

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. FERENGINAR - NAGAL RESIDENCE

Re-establishing Rom's new home.

2 INT. NAGAL RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

RO LAREN sits at a table, numerous pads and papers in front of her, talking on a comm screen to KIRA NERYS (who is sat in her office on DS9).

KIRA (screen)

Ro. Good to see you. Status report?

RO

The ambassador's safe and sound. I'm not sure I can say the same for his brother. Brunt is accusing him of breaking his marriage contract to his first wife.

KIRA (screen)

I can't believe Rom'd be capable of something like that. Any other Ferengi, maybe, but not Rom.

RO

That's what Quark said. We're looking into it.

KIRA (screen)

Good. Rom's doing some real good over there. I'd hate to see some of those trolls ruin it.

RO

You really don't like Ferengi very much, do you?

KIRA (screen)

What was your first clue? I don't think I could stand to visit their

homeworld. Do you know the first time I met Zek, he hit on me?

RO

Somehow that doesn't surprise me.

KIRA (screen)

You'll be okay there?

RO

Oh, it's not that bad. Being here has actually put a lot of Quark's personality into perspective.

KIRA (screen)

And that's a good thing?

RO

Useful data, if nothing else. What's happening on the station?

KIRA (screen)

Nothing much. Pretty quiet actually. Lenaris and Cenn are still working on the Sidau investigation. Vaughn's still grumbling about being old. Oh, and tell Quark that Treir's doing a fine job running the bar.

RO

I'm not sure he'll be happy to hear that.

KIRA (screen)

(grin)

Why do you think I want you to tell him? Alright - keep me posted on what's going on, Lieutenant. Any change in power on Ferenginar is going to have an impact on the rest of the quadrant.

(thinks a moment)

I'm not sure how big exactly, but definitely some kind of impact.

RO

Don't worry, Captain. I'll update
you every twenty-six hours.

KIRA (screen)

Good. Kira out.

Kira's face fades from the screen, replaced with a Ferengi
Alliance logo.

COMPUTER

Please confirm payment.

RO

Put it on Ambassador Quark's
account.

COMPUTER

Confirmed.

Then a new image comes on the screen - a COMMERCIAL like
the one on the train. This one features a well-dressed
Ferengi male, watching a naked female chew food.

VOICEOVER

Do you miss the good old days,
when males were real males, and
females were naked and quiet?

The woman spits the food out and hands it to the man. Ro
seethes at the sight of it. Then we see the man typing on a
padd - the screen of it says TRANSACTION CONCLUDED.

VOICEOVER (cont)

When Ferengi businessmen were free
to earn profit without worrying
about ridiculous tax burdens, or
unwanted competition?

The image switches to a photo of ROM, looking even more
befuddled than usual.

VOICEOVER (cont)

The Grand Nagus is trying to spit
in the face of Ferengi traditions

and values. Ferenginar doesn't need a Grand Nagus who breaks a contract and destroys the Ferengi family by interbreeding with aliens. Ferenginar needs...

Rom's image fades, to be replaced by BRUNT, looking smug.

VOICEOVER (cont)

...Brunt. He understands what made Ferenginar great. Sponsored by Chek Pharmaceuticals, on behalf of the "Brunt for Nagus" Campaign.

Brunt's face is replaced by the Chek Pharmaceuticals logo and the horribly cheerful jingle. Ro stabs the screen to shut it off, and sits back, hissing angry.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 EXT. FERENGINAR - ESTABLISHING

Standard daytime establishing shot. Raining, of course.

4 INT. HOSPITAL - LEETA'S ROOM

A simple, plain, drab room, nothing like the rest of Ferenginar. LEETA lies in the single bed - pale, blotchy and exhausted, her hair unstyled and bushy.

ROM is in a chair by the bed, drooped forward and asleep on the bed, next to the large bulge at Leeta's belly. Leeta opens her bleary eyes as RO enters, and smiles.

LEETA

Hi. You must be Lieutenant Ro. Rom said you came with Quark and Nog.

RO

Yes, I did. We met briefly at the signing ceremony. I just wanted to see how you were doing.

LEETA

I've been better. Pregnancy's supposed to be a wonderful time. You're creating new life. But this has just been awful. I've been sick, I've been tired... and now this whole thing with Rom...

Leeta begins to COUGH. Ro looks around for a glass of water. She sees an empty cup and a tap with a latinum slot. Gritting her teeth, she pays and turns the tap, filling the glass. She brings it back to Leeta, and takes another seat.

LEETA

Thanks. Still, it's worth it. Rom and I are having a baby.

She gazes over at the snoring, drooling Rom with clear warmth and affection.

RO

Can I ask you something?

LEETA

Sure.

RO

How can you stand living here? I mean, it's been an interesting visit, but I think I'd go crazy if I had to stay here.

LEETA

It's not easy. Nobody here really likes me. Rom's servants are all nice, but that's just because I'm the Nagus's wife. I don't have any real friends. Rom's mother doesn't approve of me. You're the first Bajoran face I've seen in more than a year. There's nothing for me to do, either, other than stand next to Rom and look pretty.

(pause)

Can I ask you something?

RO

Of course.

LEETA

You seem to like Quark... Why?

Ro bursts out laughing, which Leeta soon joins. When Rom snorts and shuffles in his sleep, they both calm down.

RO

Honestly, there are times I have no idea. But... he's really not a bad person. For all his bluster, he's as compassionate in his own way as Rom is.

(pause)

Okay... mind if I ask a really personal question?

LEETA

I guess.

RO

What's it like - being in bed with a Ferengi?

Leeta had been in the middle of taking a sip of water, which she now spits back out and coughs again.

LEETA

I'm sorry - I just, I guess I assumed that you and Quark... I mean, knowing Quark, I can't believe he'd hold back...

RO

He's got a romantic streak in him. He mostly tries to hit it over the head and keep it tied up in a dark room, but it does exist.

LEETA

Hmm. Well, I guess the best way to describe it is... enthusiastic. But I don't know how much of that is being a Ferengi, and how much of it is just Rom. He's certainly a lot different from Julian.

There is a BEEP - Ro pulls a Starfleet padd from a pocket, taps some commands, and inspects it. Looks unhappy.

LEETA

What is it?

RO

Something about the investigation. I'm sorry - I need to get back.

LEETA

Of course. Thanks for coming by.

RO

No problem.

LEETA

I mean it, Lieutenant. Apart from Rom and Nog, you're the only person who's visited me. It's just nice to have a friend to talk to.

Ro is surprised to be called "friend", but then smiles. She looks over at the sleeping, muttering Rom.

RO

Well... we have a lot in common.

5 INT. DAV'S BASEMENT

Dark, damp and dingy, with trestle tables carrying some kind of trays for growing plants. In a dark corner, a panel opens and NOG emerges, dropping down a few feet. He lands with a SPLASH, ankle deep in swamp-water that covers the floor of the basement. He grimaces as he wades through it.

NOG

(sotto)

I see grandfather still has the mold farm. Wonder if he ever managed to turn a profit from it.

DAV (o.s.)

Oh, it's you.

Nog JERKS as he hears the voice. A silhouette appears on the staircase that leads to the rest of the house, before moving forward into the dim light, holding a phaser.

This is DAV, Nog's grandfather, a mean old Ferengi with drooping jowls. Nog is instinctively afraid - he has bad memories of this man - but stands his ground.

DAV

What are you doing here, boy?

NOG

I came to see my mother.

DAV

So you came in through the sewer?

NOG

I didn't want to be seen. How did you know I was here, Grandfather?

DAV

Don't call me that! Your father made it clear I wasn't family.

NOG

As I recall, that was your idea.

DAV

Your father's a failure. Always has been. Didn't matter none when he was just working on some dumb station in the middle of nowhere. But the Nagus? That's just wrong.

NOG

My father has done nothing wrong!

DAV

You're kidding, right? He married someone else. He's having another kid. He broke the contract!

NOG

So did she! Father told us mother remarried too, after you swindled him out of everything he owned.

DAV

I didn't swindle anybody! And your mother never remarried! She spent time with another man, but they never married. She wanted to - I wanted her to - but we weren't about to break a contract. We ain't that kind o' Ferengi.

NOG

Look, we can argue all day, but I just want to see my mother.

DAV

Too bad, she don't wanna see you.

NOG
I'm her son!

DAV
So? All you'll do is remind her of pain. She didn't mind being apart from Rom before, but now? With him going all over the planet with that Bajoran hussy? Everyone talking about that damn half-breed baby? I won't tolerate it, and I won't tolerate you in my house upsetting my daughter. Get out.

Dav begins brandishing the phaser. Nog doesn't want to back down, but he has little choice.

NOG
Alright, I'll leave. Will you at least tell her I was here?

DAV
I said get out, boy!

With a sigh, Nog slobes back towards the open panel, climbs on a few boxes to get there and slips back inside.

6 **ON SCREEN**

A new COMMERCIAL - a naked, miserable Ferengi female....

VOICEOVER
Females of Ferenginar - do you miss the 'good old days'?

The female sneezes...

VOICEOVER
Always getting colds...

She opens her mouth - a male clamps his hand over it.

VOICEOVER
Never being allowed to speak...

The male hands her grubs - she chews them.

VOICEOVER

Having to chew men's food for
them...

The female is holding a slip of latinum - the male snatches
it out of her hand.

VOICEOVER

Never allowed to earn profit...

Close up on the female, looking miserable.

VOICEOVER

Of course you don't! Why should
you? Why should you be denied the
warmth of clothing?

The female now appears in a fashionable dress.

VOICEOVER

The right to speak?

The female is chatting happily with a group of others.

VOICEOVER

And most important, the right to
earn profit?

The female holds a slip of latinum, and she places it
securely in a pocket of her dress.

VOICEOVER

And for you males out there, why
would you want to keep half your
household from earning profit for
the whole family? Sure, you may
think you're earning enough now.
But doesn't the Ninety-Seventh
Rule of Acquisition state that
enough is never enough?

The picture changes again to show the male and the female
now sitting together at the table, happily counting their
latinum together.

7 INT. NAGAL RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

Now we see that Nog is watching the commercial, still sad after his meeting with Dav.

VOICEOVER

The new Ferenginar - giving all
Ferengi a chance to be true
Ferengi. Sponsored by Lakwa
Clothiers, on behalf of Grand
Nagus Rom and his supporters.

The commercial ends with a logo for Lakwa Clothiers. Quark and Ro are both present, having watched the commercial too.

RO

Not bad. Certainly better than
looking at Brunt's smile for the
ninety-seventh time.

QUARK

Count yourself lucky - you never
had to deal with him in person.
Have you proven that contract's a
fake yet?

RO

No. But I've been doing a little
checking into this Investigator
Rwogo - the woman who found the
contract in the first place.

QUARK

She's a female?

RO

You have a problem with female
investigators, Quark?

An awkward pause.

QUARK

There's no way I can answer that
question without getting in
trouble, is there?

RO

Not really, no. In any case, Rwego's financial portfolio turned up some interesting transactions. She recently came into possession of about two dozen shares... in Chek Pharmaceuticals.

QUARK

How'd she afford that?

RO

Good question. I haven't been able to track down that information.

NOG

Chek is the company sponsoring all those ads to Brunt.

RO

But why would Chek want to bring Rom down?

QUARK

He does. Trust me.

RO

How do you know?

QUARK

I hear things. The point is, we need to check that contract against the Glat Archive.

NOG

I don't see how. Only authorised personnel can access the archive.

RO

And who is authorised?

NOG

Only two people. Glat himself, and Torf, the programmer who maintains the archive.

RO
State of the art systems?

QUARK
Not just that. Glat is one of the
richest Ferengi in the galaxy, and
he pays Torf an obscene salary.
Nobody can afford to bribe either
one of them.

RO
So there's no way we can get
access to it?

QUARK
(wide grin)
Oh, there's a way. Just let me
make a call.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. DAV'S BASEMENT

Nog emerges again into the basement room. He SPLASHES down into the mucky water to his ankles - this time he thought to wear waterproof boots. He wades forward again, past the mold farm set-up. He gets closer to the stairway, but again the light goes on suddenly and a voice calls out.

PRINADORA (o.s.)

Is anyone there?

Nog's breath catches as he recognises the voice. The figure comes into view at the top of the stairs - PRINADORA, his mother. She is quite pretty for a Ferengi; delicate lobes, small nose, and of course naked (tastefully photographed).

NOG

It's... it's Nog.

PRINADORA

Nog... I think I know that name.
Oh, but I shouldn't be talking to you. It isn't done. Are you a friend of my father's? I'm afraid he's not here right now...

NOG

I know, that's why I came. Moogie, it's me... Nog. I'm your son.

PRINADORA

Son? Oh yes, I do believe I had a son once. I think. It was such a long time ago.

(steps further in)

I'm being very rude - can I get you anything?

NOG

I'm fine, really, Moogie, I... don't you remember me at all?

PRINADORA

You do look vaguely familiar...
I'm sorry, I don't remember these things very well. Father says it's because I'm a female. We don't have lobes as \developed as males, which is why we have to stay at home and not wear clothes. That is a privilege for males only.

Nog is distressed, disappointed to meet his mother at last. She's the perfect Ferengi female and Nog can't handle that.

NOG

Don't you remember my father at all? Rom? You used to be married?

PRINADORA

I think so... yes, it was a long time ago. I seem to remember that he was a very nice fellow. Had a good heart. I was sorry when he left. He had a boy with him, I think I was the mother... Oh! That would be you.

NOG

Uh, yes... that was me.

PRINADORA

Father told me only the other day that we were still married. I don't remember the details. That's male business, after all. I do know that it makes Father very upset. For the last few weeks, he keeps meeting with people, and talking about how they're going to bring down the Grand Nagus. Are you sure there isn't anything I can get for you? I can chew some fresh tube grubs for you.

NOG

I can't stay for long. I just...
I just wanted to see you again.

PRINADORA

Well, that's very sweet of you...
Nog, is it? That's a nice name.
What is that outfit you're
wearing? I don't recall seeing a
male in anything so... drab.

NOG

I'm a Starfleet officer.

PRINADORA

Starfleet? Is that something to do
with the FCA?

Nog hangs his head and sighs. He is not angry - if anything
he pities her and the life she has lived.

PRINADORA

You look sad. What's wrong?

NOG

(deflated)
Nothing's wrong...
(new idea)
May I ask you something?

PRINADORA

Of course.

NOG

Do you know who Dav has been
meeting with?

PRINADORA

Not by name, no. I could describe
them for you, if you wish.

NOG

Yes, please...

PRINADORA

One of them I remember very well,
because he smelled just awful...

That little detail catches Nog's curiosity...

9 INT. TONGO PARLOUR

A large, elaborate tongo table. Hands throw latinum into the bowl, spin the table, and check their cards.

This is like a backroom poker game in a dingy dive bar, with drinkers and prostitutes hanging around. One man at the table, named NIK, places his cards on the table.

NIK
Confront.

His competitors place their own cards on the table.

NIK
(whine)
Full monopoly?! Frinx!

He slams his cards down in frustration as his competitors take the money. Another male, GELN, calls over to him.

GELN
Hey Nik, there's someone here to see you.

NIK
Divest.

Nik relinquishes his place at the table and heads over to Geln. Geln points him to a corner, where RO waits, looking tired and fed up.

GELN
Her.

Nik heads over, intrigued. What is Starfleet doing here?

NIK
Can I help you?

RO
Assuming you're Nik, yes you can.
I understand you quietly sold some shares in Chek Pharmaceuticals.

NIK

(evasive, wary)

What makes you say that?

RO

You know, Nik, it's been a very long day. I've been trying for hours to track down these stock transactions, and it's taken me all over the capital city. I already know some of them went to an investigator named Rwogo, but the amounts sold don't match the amounts in her portfolio. So I want to know where the rest of them went. I've bribed, I've offered *oo-mox*, and I've bribed some more. I've even offered privileged information.

NIK

Privileged information? I didn't think you Starfleeters did that sort of thing.

RO

It wasn't like I was giving away access codes or anything. Someone wanted to know the erogenous zones on a Vulcan.

NIK

(intrigued)

You know the erogenous zones on a Vulcan?

RO

Of course not. I made something up. My only regret is that I won't get to see the look on his face when he tries it on the next Vulcan woman he meets.

NIK

So what is it you want from me?

RO

I thought I said that already. I want to know who you sold the rest of the shares to.

NIK

My dear -

(checks her collar)

- Lieutenant, even if I did have such information, why would I give it to you?

RO

Well, like I said, I've done all sorts of things to get this information, and I'm tired of it. There are times that call for the direct approach.

Ro reaches out to Nik's ear. Nik grins, expecting *oo-mox*. But Ro grabs his ear and TWISTS it violently. Nik SHRIEKS in pain, squealing and moaning. His legs buckle and he falls to his knees, but Ro doesn't let up.

RO

Tell me who you sold the shares to, please.

GELN

Hey, what do you think you're -

Ro uses her other hand to swiftly draw her PHASER and point it at the approaching bartender.

RO

I'm talking to my friend here, something I paid you quite handsomely for the privilege of doing, so back off.

Geln raises his hands and backs away. Nik is SQUEALING like a stuck pig on his knees. Ro twists his ear even harder.

NIK

Alright, alright!

She lets go, and he collapses back onto his haunches,
catching his breath.

RO
I'm waiting.

NIK
I sold the other shares to someone
named Gash.

RO
And he's the only one?

NIK
(nodding)
I can give you his account number.

Ro produces a padd, hands it to Nik, who types on it with
shaking hands, then hands it back to her.

NIK
Anything else?

RO
It'll do for now.
(to Geln)
Sorry for the disruption.

She turns and walks away, leaving Nik on his knees.

RO
Now, where have I heard the name
Gash before?

Of course, she knows perfectly well where.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

10 EXT. FERENGINAR - ESTABLISHING

The same establishing shot as before will be fine.

11 INT. HOSPITAL - LEETA'S ROOM

Leeta lies asleep in bed. Rom sits beside her, holding her hand, gazing at her in mixed adoration and helpless worry.

QUARK (o.s.)
How's she doing?

Quark stands in the door, quiet and respectful. He enters and quietly takes another seat. Rom is glad to see him.

ROM
Not good. Doctor Orpax says he's
going to wait another three hours
to see if she goes into labour.

QUARK
And if she doesn't?

ROM
Then... he'll have to operate.

QUARK
So what's the problem?

ROM
Her immune system may not be able
to handle surgery. She could die!

QUARK
Listen to me, Rom. Doctor Orpax is
the best there is. And Leeta's a
tough customer. She'll be fine,
and so will your child.

ROM
Thank you, brother.

QUARK

Now that we've got that out of the way, we need to talk.

ROM

What about?

QUARK

I think you know.

ROM

(blank)

I really don't, brother.

QUARK

(exasperated)

I'm talking about the marriage contract to Prinadora that Brunt showed to the Economic Congress.

ROM

What about it?

Rom remains barely with the conversation, so worried for Leeta. Quark holds up an isoiner rod and brandishes it.

QUARK

It's a fake!

ROM

...Okay.

QUARK

It took us days to figure out that it was a fake, and do you know why? The forgery was done by Gash.

ROM

Oh. He's very good.

QUARK

I know he's very good, Rom. Why do you think I keep hiring him? He's the best there is, and his forgery was so good nobody could crack it.

ROM

So how'd you find out?

QUARK

I hired Leck to break into the Glat Archive and retrieve the original contract.

ROM

Leck broke into the archive? And survived? And didn't get caught?

QUARK

Yes, yes and yes.

ROM

That's amazing.

QUARK

That's all you've got to say?

ROM

What do you mean?

QUARK

I mean, why did we have to go to all this trouble to find out what you could have told us in three seconds? Why didn't you just tell us the contract was a fake?

ROM

(quiet sigh)

Because I didn't know.

QUARK

What do you mean, you didn't know? You signed the contract, right?

ROM

Signed, yes. Read, no.

QUARK

You didn't read the contract? How big of an idiot are you? Don't answer that.

ROM

I didn't remember the details of the contract, just what Dav told me when we separated. For all I knew, Brunt was telling the truth.

QUARK

Why would he start now?

(shakes head)

It's amazing. Your entire life has just been one insane decision after another.

ROM

No it hasn't. That's just it. I never made any decisions.

(re Leeta)

Until I met her, anyway.

QUARK

That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard you say. And considering all the things I've heard you say, you know I'm not saying that lightly.

ROM

It's true! You know what I was like before. Always letting people push me around and make decisions for me. And then I met Leeta.

(gazes at her again)

You know why I formed that union in the bar? For her. And that led me to become an engineer on the station, because I knew it would make me a better match for her. Especially if we weren't co-workers anymore.

QUARK

Great. Someone else you're in love with who's making you be an even bigger idiot. I should never have done it.

ROM

Done what?

QUARK

Taken you in!

(angry pacing)

Leaving home was the smartest thing I ever did, because it got me away from my family. Away from father and his failures. Away from mother and her radical ideas. Away from you and your stupidity! But then you show up with your little kid, begging me to take you in. And did I listen to the Sixth Rule? Of course I didn't! And now look where it's gotten me. My entire life is disintegrating before my eyes because you didn't read a contract! The most basic concept of Ferengi life, and you can't even manage that!

ROM

I'm sorry, brother.

QUARK

Oh, well, wonderful. That makes it all alright. You're sorry. Rom, I don't want you to be Grand Nagus because I think you and mother are destroying the Ferengi Alliance. But I have to do everything I can to keep you in power because if I don't, I lose the bar and Brunt becomes Nagus, and that way lies even bigger disaster.

Quark walks around the bed, grabs Rom and hauls him up.

QUARK

You're coming with me, right now.

ROM

I can't.

QUARK

Yes you can. You're going to call an emergency session of the Economic Congress and present every bit of the evidence that Laren, Nog and I have spent the last week pulling together.

ROM

(yanks arm free)

No, brother, I'm not. I'm not leaving her until this is over.

QUARK

Rom, you could lose the Nagushood!

ROM

I could lose Leeta, and that's more important than anything. Even the Nagushood. When Leeta and the baby are okay, then I'll leave. But I'm not setting foot outside this hospital until then.

QUARK

I can't believe you're throwing it away for a female - again.

ROM

I love her, Quark! Wouldn't you do the same for Lieutenant Ro?

QUARK

What's she got to do with this?

ROM

I see the way you look at her, brother, so don't bother denying it. You love her.

QUARK

Maybe I do. But to answer your question - no. I wouldn't. No female is worth that.

Quark turns and leaves the room. Rom slumps in the chair and gazes at his unconscious wife.

12 INT. LIMOUSINE

Still furious with Rom, Quark clambers into the limousine with a huff, slamming the door behind him. But then he jumps as he realises someone else is in the limo - CHEK.

QUARK

What are you doing here?

Grinning, Chek drops a large number of slips into the latinum slot, and the chauffeur pulls away without a word.

CHEK

I'm here to reiterate my offer to you, Quark. You've been on Ferenginar for several days. More than long enough to see what a failure your brother is.

QUARK

I already knew about my brother long before I came, and nothing I've seen has changed my mind.

Chek picks up a drink - Eelwasser - and sips it daintily.

CHEK

That's excellent news. Then we can count on your support in our campaign to oust Rom.

QUARK

Not a chance.

CHEK

(splutter)

But - but - you said you were on our side!

QUARK

(innocent)

When did I say that?

CHEK

You said you wanted to restore the Ferengi Alliance to the old ways!

QUARK

When did I say that?

CHEK

You can't fool me, Quark. I know you. You're on our side in this.

QUARK

Chek, don't say you've forgotten Rule of Acquisition number two-hundred - "A Ferengi chooses no side but his own." I freely admit I'd prefer a Ferenginar I could be proud of. A return to the good old days of full-fledged greed and exploitation. But let's look at it from my perspective. If things stay the way they are, I'm the Ferengi Ambassador to Bajor, and I have a thriving bar on one of the most important ports of call in the quadrant. Ever since Bajor joined the Federation, the place has been lousy with tourists.

CHEK

But -

QUARK

On the other hand, if I throw in with you, I support Brunt. He's a liquidator, and he wouldn't think twice about revoking my diplomatic post. Brunt's dedicated his life to making my life miserable, and it would take a lot more latinum than even you can afford to convince me to help him become Nagus. Not to mention the fact that your entire campaign is based on slander against my brother.

CHEK

(astonished)

You yourself call him an idiot!

QUARK

That's not slander, that's fact.
But a contract-breaker? Not even
my brother would do that. He may
be an idiot, but he's not a moron.

CHEK

There's a difference?

QUARK

Of course there is. Even the most
lobeless Ferengi doesn't break a
contract without good reason, and
Rom had no good reason to break
this one.

CHEK

But the evidence -

QUARK

(grinning)

- Is completely false. And I have
the proof.

Chek is getting nervous now. He takes another drink of
Eelwasser in an attempt to cover it.

CHEK

Your so-called proof won't
withstand scrutiny.

QUARK

Oh, I know how good a forger Gash
is. And I'm sure he did his best
work. But my proof comes direct
from the Glat Archive.

CHEK

That's impossible!

QUARK

I assure you it's not.

The aircar comes to a stop with a LURCH, and Chek spills Eelwasser all over his fancy suit. Quark gets up, opens the door and steps out, much more happy and confident now.

QUARK

Oh, driver... please take Chek anywhere he wants to go - as long as it's far from here.

(pause)

What I have to wonder is if you're in on the scam, or if you really believe Brunt's evidence. Cause I gotta tell you, if you did believe Brunt, you're a bigger idiot than my brother could ever be.

He slams the door in Chek's face, whistling happily.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

13 EXT. FERENGINAR - TOWER OF COMMERCE

Re-establishing the location of the Ferengi Government.

14 INT. TOWER OF COMMERCE - ENTRY HALL

The elevator door opens onto the hall, disgorging Quark, Ro, Nog and Ishka. They are all holding their breath, gasping or otherwise trying to control their revulsion at the presence - and odour - of the other passenger - GASH.

Ishka leads the forger to the seating area, and they sit, Ishka swallowing a retch of near-vomit. Ro takes a few deep breaths - her eyes are watering from the smell. Then she, Nog and Quark open the grand doors and enter...

15 INT. HALL OF CONGRESS (CONTINUOUS)

The congressmen sit around the table. First clerk KRAX stands to one side. The Nagus's throne at the far end of the table remains empty, but BRUNT stands as close to it as he dares. He points irately as the newcomers enter.

BRUNT

This is a closed session! Krax is entitled to be here as the Nagus's proxy, but the rest of you must leave. Especially that clothed female!

QUARK

If she takes her clothes off, can she stay?

BRUNT

That isn't funny, Quark.

RO

(mutter)

Damn right it isn't.

One of the congress speaks up.

CONGRESSMAN 1

Actually, Krax is entitled to bring assistants to aid in the testimony. They will have to leave when the vote is taken, but they can stay for the deliberations.

BRUNT

What a ridiculous notion. I'll have to remember to abolish that when I'm Grand Nagus.

NOG

I wouldn't get so overconfident if I were you. Remember what happened the last time you thought you were Grand Nagus.

BRUNT

Don't think that uniform entitles you to anything, child. Or you either, female. Starfleet has no jurisdiction here.

KRAX

Perhaps not. But they have aided in the Nagus's investigation into the slanderous accusations made against him.

CONGRESSMAN 2

What investigation is there to be made? The contract was verified by Investigator Rwogo.

KRAX

We only have her word for that.

BRUNT

Enough! There's nothing to debate. I have presented incontrovertible evidence to this Congress that Rom broke his marriage contract to Prinadora. He should be removed from the Nagushood immediately!

But Quark is calm and collected, which only annoys Brunt all the more. Quark hands the isolinear rod to Krax.

KRAX

I have in my hands the actual marriage contract between Rom and Prinadora, as retrieved from the Glat Archive.

Krax drops the rod into a reader on the table, and each congressman's individual screen displays the contract.

KRAX

If you'll turn to clause forty-seven, paragraph twenty-two, you'll see that in fact the marriage extension had a limited term, and the marriage is now over. There was no violation of the clause when the Grand Nagus married again.

CONGRESSMAN 2

How do we know this is not a fake?

NOG

It was retrieved from the Glat archive itself.

CONGRESSMAN 2

How? No order was made to Glat to retrieve it, except the one made by Investigator Rwogo.

QUARK

(smile)

That would be the same Rwogo who received multiple shares in Chek Pharmaceuticals immediately before she produced Brunt's contract?

BRUNT

(sneering)

Females are allowed to buy stocks now. Perhaps she did so.

RO

This job with the investigator's office is the first one Rwego's had that allows her to support herself beyond basic room and board. And she hasn't even reached her first payday yet. There's no way she could have afforded those shares. Besides, a gentleman named Nik has already admitted to giving the shares to her on behalf of a third party.

Several congressmen squirm silently in their seats. They've had dealings with Nik too, and would rather not admit it.

CONGRESSMAN 1

And who is this third party?

RO

In a moment.

Nog goes to the door, opens it, pokes his head out.

NOG

Grand-moogie... bring him in.

Ro and Quark take a deep breath in preparation, and then Gash and Ishka enter the room. RETCHES and COUGHS explode around the room. Brunt pulls out a handkerchief and covers his mouth and nose with it. One of the older congressmen turns in his seat and VOMITS on the floor.

BRUNT

(coughing)

What is that doing here?

QUARK

His name is Gash. He's probably the best forger in the galaxy, and he has confessed to being hired by Prinadora's father Dav on behalf of Chek, Eelwasser, and their "Brunt for Nagus" campaign... to forge a marriage contract.

GASH

That's right. Pretty complicated job, if'n ya ask me. But that Dav fella, he paid me in Chek stocks - good'uns too. Went on about how it was for a noble cause an' all, but I din' give two slips 'bout that - just a job well done. And I gotta say, I done right well on that.

CONGRESSMAN 1

So you're saying that the contract Brunt gave this Congress -

GASH

- Was a piece o' my finest work, you betcha.

BRUNT

This is outrageous! Are we to believe the words of a female, a bartender, two Starfleet officers and this filthy creature over a liquidator in good standing of the Ferengi Commerce Authority?

CONGRESSMAN 2

The phrase "liquidator in good standing" is a contradiction.

BRUNT

The point is, we are Ferengi. Do we base our decisions on these types of people?! A Ferengi contract has been violated!

RO

No, one hasn't!

BRUNT

Females have no place in -

CONGRESSMAN 1

Shut up, Brunt! What is it you want to say, Lieutenant?

RO

Let's just for a second ignore the fact that we have a confession from the forger, corroborated by the man who provided his payment, and that a copy of the original contract was retrieved from the archive. Let's say you dismiss all this overwhelming evidence, and believe that Brunt here showed you the real contract. Rom still didn't break it.

General mutters around the table, concerning females and finances. Even Quark looks unconvinced.

RO

Hear me out. Rom didn't break the contract, and the reason I know that is because I know the Rules of Acquisition - specifically the seventeenth one. Specifically, the clause you guys like to leave out when you're dealing with off-worlders. "A contract is a contract is a contract - but only between Ferengi."

BRUNT

What does this have to -

RO

It has to do with Rom's second marriage. If that contract is in violation of the first, then you really should present the second contract to prove it, right?

(blank looks)

But you don't have one on file, do you? Because Rom's second marriage was Bajoran - performed on a Bajoran station by the Bajoran Emissary. And by your own Rules, that isn't a legitimate contract, because it isn't between Ferengi.

CONGRESSMAN 2

She has a point.

BRUNT

(hysterical)

It doesn't matter! The Grand Nagus has lost the faith of the people! He must be removed from office immediately! And where is the Nagus, anyhow? Why does he not defend himself? He sends females and children and aliens to do his dirty work, but he himself is nowhere to be found! Why?

ROM (o.s.)

Uh... I was busy.

The room all turns in surprise to see that Rom is standing in the doorway. His shoulders are sagged, exhausted.

BRUNT

Oh, so now you're here. What do you have to say for yourself, contract breaker?

ROM

Well, for one thing, I want to say that I'm not a contract breaker. I loved Prinadora very much, so I signed a contract that gave Dav all my worldly assets. All I had left was my son.

He gives a fond glance to Nog, then steels himself.

ROM

When I took over as Grand Nagus, it was to lead the Ferengi into a new era. Because the old Ferengi are the joke of the galaxy. Even the Klingons treat their women better than we do. We're worth making fun of, and maybe, maybe doing business with, but only if

there's no other choice. Maybe that was good enough before. But not anymore. Things are different now. If Ferenginar is going to survive, if we're gonna be an important part of the galactic community, then that's what we have to be - a part of it, not just its exploiters. And I believe we can do it. I believe we can still earn a profit, but not at the expense of others.

(pause)

Anyway, that's all I have to say. I guess you're gonna vote now.

KRAX

(standing)

I'm afraid you'll all have to leave while the Congress votes.

The family look to Rom, supporting him, but he nods.

ROM

I'll be okay, brother.

Nodding, Quark leads Nog, Ro, Ishka and Gash out of the room. As the door closes behind them, Rom turns to look at the seething Brunt.

16 INT. TOWER OF COMMERCE - ENTRY HALL

Later - Quark, Ro, Nog and Ishka sit in the waiting area. They have been waiting for some time. Gash has already gone, to everyone's relief.

NOG

I wonder what happened to Leeta and the baby...

RO

We're about to find out.

Ro indicates the door opening. Rom emerges, grinning wide and walking on air, followed by Krax.

ROM
Hello, Brother! Hi Nog. Hello,
Moogie.

QUARK
You're in a good mood.

ROM
Why shouldn't I be? I'm the Grand
Nagus!

NOG
(fist pump)
Yes!

ISHKA
(hugs him)
That's great news, Rom!

NOG
What about the baby?

ROM
(grins even wider)
She's just fine.

QUARK
Damn.

ISHKA
Quark!

QUARK
Sorry, Mother... it's just I had a
boy in the raffle.

RO
Well, I'm happy for both of you,
Rom.

ROM
Thank you. Leeta's resting in the
hospital, and so's our baby girl.

KRAX
Thank the Divine Exchequer.

QUARK

What he said. What about Brunt?

ROM

He's being voted out right now. I abstained from voting, but I don't think it matters much. He's finished with the Congress, I'm sure of that.

KRAX

(consulting a padd)

Well, he'll have some consolation.

RO

What do you mean?

KRAX

Brunt won the baby raffle. He guessed a girl, today, only two minutes off the actual time.

Stunned silence. After a moment, Ro breaks out laughing. Soon all of them are laughing their frunkies off.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

17 INT. HOSPITAL - NAGAL SUITE

Leeta now lies in a much bigger, fancier room - palatial and as over-decorated as every other Ferengi room. Now that Rom is Nagus again, Leeta is being given every luxury. She holds the new baby in her arms, and while she does not look any more together than before, she glows with happiness.

Rom is by her side, and Quark, Ishka, Nog and Ro are also around the bed, all cooing and smiling wide over the baby.

ISHKA

What's her name?

LEETA

Bena. We sort of named her after the Emissary.

RO

And it means 'joy' in Bajoran.

ISHKA

It fits.

QUARK

I don't know about Bajoran, but in Ferengi it means 'underflooring.'

ROM

Uh, well... it, uh, symbolises how children are always getting under foot.

NOG

Nice save, Father.

ISHKA

Anyway, she's a beautiful child.

Ro takes a quick look - and her face freezes in a shocked smile. By Bajoran standards the child is quite hideous.

ROM

Today is a great day. My wife and child are healthy, we came out ten bars ahead in the baby raffle, the market's back up another fifty points, Brunt's not on the congress anymore -

QUARK

Can't complain about any of that.

ROM

- and I'm still Grand Nagus!

QUARK

That, on the other hand...

ISHKA

That's enough, Quark.

NOG

I just feel sorry for anyone who invested in Chek Pharmaceuticals or Eelwasser. They've both taken huge losses since it was revealed they sponsored someone who'd forged a contract.

ROM

Oh, by the way... I went to see Prinadora.

LEETA

You did what?!

(baby reacts)

Oh no, mommy's sorry. I didn't mean to wake you, my sweet baby.

QUARK

What did you go and do that for?

ROM

After what Nog told me about how she acted, I wanted to see if it was true for myself. To know if she really - that is, if she...

QUARK

Rom, spit it out already!

ROM

She never loved me. She barely even remembered me. I think if I hadn't become Nagus, she'd have forgotten me completely. She only pretended to love me because Dav told her to.

NOG

Everything she ever did was because Dav told her to.

ISHKA

Well, that won't last. Dav won't be able to afford to feed her. He can barely afford to feed himself. And it's long past time she got her own job.

QUARK

Oh... what did you do, mother?

ISHKA

(grin)

I hired her. She'll be my personal assistant when I go back to Risa. I'll teach her how to read and do math. When she's ready, she'll be able to handle my affairs so I can spend more time with my Zekkie.

ROM

Thank you, moogie.

QUARK

Can we go home now?

ISHKA

Can't you wish your brother well just once, Quark? After all the trouble you went to to save his position as Nagus.

QUARK

Only because Brunt would have been
an even worse Nagus. And any day
Brunt loses is a good day for me.

Ro observes Quark's greedy, sadistic grin... and doesn't
like what she sees.

18 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Bringing us back home to the station.

19 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

TREIR

Dabo!

Quark grins at TREIR's cry and her crowd's cheers, while he
comes down the spiral staircase towards the dabo tables. He
goes to the table, slips an arm around Treir and schmoozes.

QUARK

How's everyone doing tonight? I'm
sure our lovely Treir will see to
your every need, won't you?

TREIR

Of course.

QUARK

Enjoy yourselves - we're here to
make sure you have a good time.

Happy, he heads back to his bar, calls up some reports on
the screens. One shows the Chek Pharmaceuticals logo, and a
chart showing their profits plummeting. Another shows the
Eelwasser logo, with a similar chart. Quark grins.

RO (o.s.)

Barkeep? A tarkalean tea, please?

Quark turns to see that Ro has crept up on him.

QUARK

Coming right up.

RO
Quark, we need to talk.

QUARK
Just let me get the drink...

RO
Forget the drink. Walk with me.

Quark realises this is serious. He comes around the bar and strolls with her out of the bar...

20 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE (CONTINUOUS)**

...across the Promenade, and into...

21 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)**

Ro goes to her own seat.

RO
Have a seat.

QUARK
(he does)
Is this an interrogation?

RO
I don't think you and I are going to work out, Quark.

QUARK
(gut-punched)
What?

RO
Going back to Ferenginar with you, I think I understand you better now. Ironically, you're actually the perfect embodiment of Rom's new regime.

QUARK
I don't have to sit here and be insulted.

RO

It's not an insult, Quark. It's not that you're not eager for profit, but you don't generally screw people over. Or at least I didn't think so. I mean, you worked so hard to help Rom, even though it went against everything you believe...

QUARK

Laren -

RO

But then Brunt... I saw the thrill in your eyes when he was taken down. You're loving the thought of him destitute on the streets.

QUARK

Well, can you blame me? You know what he's done to me.

RO

I saw your little meeting with Rionoj. I saw the way you put your arm around Treir. I've seen how you look at Ezri. When she and Julian broke up, the first thought in your head was how you could get Ezri in a holosuite with you.

QUARK

Look, I'm a male with active lobes, I can't help -

RO

I know you can't. It's just who you are. You're incapable of committing to one person because you're incapable of committing to one of anything. How many dozens of scams do you have going at any given time?

Quark isn't going to answer that one.

RO

(holds up padd)

Oh by the way, Balancar didn't raise their tariffs. So the next time you tell someone you raised the price of squill because of it, I'm busting you for fraud.

QUARK

(spluttering)

Laren, I had no idea...

RO

I can't do this, Quark. You're always going to be after the next big score, whether it's financial or sexual. It's the way you are.

QUARK

(pleading)

I can change.

RO

No, Quark, you really can't. And I don't want you to. If you change, you won't be Quark anymore, and I like Quark. But here now, with me as security chief and you as bartender, I think I'd be better off sticking with Quark as my friend and occasional pain in my ass. Is that okay with you?

QUARK

Do I have a choice?

RO

Actually, yes.

That actually surprises him. He thinks for a moment.

QUARK

Then I choose... for us to be friends. If that's okay with you.

RO
Definitely.

Quark gets up to leave. As the door opens...

RO
Oh, Quark?

QUARK
Yes?

RO
If Gash ever sets foot on this station again, I'm posting a guard on him, understood?

QUARK
Fine, as long I don't have to pay for the toxic atmosphere mask.

Quark leaves, and Ro gets back to work.

22 EXT. FERENGINAR - ESTABLISHING

The usual daytime shot of the city in the rain.

23 EXT. FERENGINAR - STREET

Brunt is THROWN out on his ear from Geln's tongo parlour.

GELN
And stay out!

Brunt stumbles to the wet ground, already soaking through from the constant rain. He sneers back at the closed door.

GAILA (o.s.)
Down on your luck, Brunt?

Brunt looks up and sees Quark's cousin GAILA (last seen in 8x12 "Demons") looming over him, smiling insincerely. Brunt snaps to his feet and tries to brush himself off.

BRUNT
What are you doing here, Gaila?

GAILA

I want to talk.

BRUNT

I have nothing to say to you, or any member of your lunatic family.

GAILA

I think you do. I know you've only got ten bars of latinum to your name, and that's only because the Nagus gave you special permission to keep your raffle winnings. I know you've been banned by the FCA, and no-one will hire you for even the simplest job. No bar will take you as a waiter, no aircar service will hire you as driver, no rich family wants you as their servant... Well, you don't have to be a failure.

BRUNT

Is this what ten bars buys these days? My own life story followed by insults?

GAILA

You know the Rules, Brunt. "A wise man can hear profit in the wind."

BRUNT

(mutter)

And you're certainly creating a lot of it.

GAILA

Fine, then. I'll get to the point. I could use a new partner. There are plenty of opportunities out there - ones that could use an ex-liquidator's assistance.

BRUNT

(are you stupid?)

I've been banned by the FCA. You can't do business with me.

GAILA

(laughing)

The FCA's influence doesn't extend beyond the Alliance's borders. And my business takes me far beyond the Alliance's borders.

Brunt looks into Gaila's beady eyes, tries to gauge him.

BRUNT

Tell me more.

GAILA

Of course, but not here. Let's go into the tongo parlour.

BRUNT

The owner just threw me out.

GAILA

For me, he'll let you in. Who do you think sold him that Minosian rifle?

Brunt slowly smiles, growing into a grin. He throws his arm around Gaila's shoulders as they open the door.

BRUNT

Gaila, this could be the start of a beautiful friendship.

FADE OUT:

THE END