

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x08 - "Property Values."

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 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

A couple of shuttles dotted about. Just the usual moment to bring us in...

2 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Beginning close on Orion dabo girl TREIR, who is furious...

TREIR

What is your problem now?

QUARK is equally furious, giving as good as he gets. The two of them are hissing at each other across the bar - Quark behind, Treir in front - while trying to keep their voices down for appearance's sake. No-one is fooled.

Extras and familiar faces keep their heads down and get on with their business for the lunch-time rush.

QUARK

You are! When are you going to learn that I am in charge here?

TREIR

(growl)

When are you going to learn that I have twice your body strength and could kick your ass with my eyes closed?

QUARK

Oh, that's real smart, Treir. Threaten your employer. That's solid grounds for a firing right there.

TREIR

What are you getting so twisted up about? All I said was that you should consider giving Hetik a raise.

QUARK

No, what you did was tell Hetik I was giving him a raise.

TREIR

I said you might.

QUARK

Yeah, well it doesn't take much for "he might" to become "he will," then "he promised" and then I've got people demanding the more money I never promised them in the first place!

TREIR

He deserves it. We all do, for putting up with you if nothing else.

QUARK

You know, Treir, for someone who claims to be so clever, you have a real hard time remembering who hands out the latinum around here.

TREIR

The customers do. And you wouldn't have half as many of them if not for me and Hetik actually showing them a good time instead of scaring them away with stupid macho posturing.

QUARK

Exactly. I'm getting everything I need out of the both of you as it is. So why should I give you more money to do what you were doing already?

TREIR

Do I really have to explain the concept of "a happy employee is a productive employee" to you? I

thought you were supposed to be a good businessman.

QUARK

(smug)

"Employees are the rungs on the ladder to success - don't hesitate to step on them."

TREIR

Yeah yeah, Rule of Acquisition two-hundred-and-eleven. We'll see how good that works for you when you've got no employees.

QUARK

(scoff)

Where are you gonna go? He's an orphan and you were a slave. You know perfectly well you've got a better life here with me than you would have anywhere else. If you'd only get this insane idea out of your head that you have any kind of say in what goes on around here.

TREIR

Just because I'm an employee doesn't mean I'm not entitled to my own opinions, Quark.

QUARK

Absolutely you are. It's this idea that the rest of us are entitled to your opinions as well that's the problem. Just shut your mouth and look pretty. That's all females will ever be good for.

Wow, that was really harsh. Treir stares at him, amazed.

TREIR

You disgust me.

She turns on the spot and stalks out of the room. Quark yells after her...

QUARK

"Everyone loves the bartender!"
Rule number one-forty-seven!

Still furious, he turns back to work.

But as Treir ignores him and continues to walk out of the bar, we notice that RO has been standing by the small section of bar that leads directly out onto the Promenade. Quark hasn't noticed her, but she heard the whole argument.

Off Ro's annoyed, worried face...

3 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING

Treir stomps along the corridor, still seething.

TREIR

Goddess, I hate that bigoted
little son of a *slorg*. I swear one
of these days I'm gonna tear his
ugly ears right off his fat head.

She turns a corner and comes face to face with a new person - the small and gnarly Orion merchant prince MALIC (last seen 8x12 "Demons of Air and Darkness"). Treir's previous slave-master. He's clearly been waiting for her.

MALIC

Bad day, Treir?

She jerks to a stop, shocked and scared to see him here. She starts subtly stepping backwards, away from him.

TREIR

(voice shaking)
Malic... what are you doing here?

MALIC

Oh, just some...
(nasty grin)
...unfinished business.

Treir keeps backing away. Malic advances slowly, taking his time. No need to rush this. His voice is smooth, seductive.

MALIC

I was very sad when you left my service, Treir.

TREIR

That wasn't my fault. I was taken hostage.

MALIC

You could have come back.

TREIR

Did you really expect me to?

Still slowly stalking forwards...

MALIC

A woman's place is to serve her man, Treir. You know that. It's what you were born to. But no... you had to run away...

(w/ disgust)

...with another female... and a Ferengi who obviously bought whatever junk she sold him.

TREIR

They did me a favour, both of them.

MALIC

Not really. All they did was bring the wrath of the Orion Syndicate down on themselves. Because you are my property, Treir, and if there's one thing the Syndicate protects, it's their property.

Treir backs up one more step, and as she does, two pairs of big green hands come from behind and quickly pull a cloth sack over her head.

She struggles against them, but the two huge, hulking and muscled Orion THUGS grab her roughly and hold her tight. She starts to scream, but they pull the sack tight over her face, strangling the breath out of her.

Malic continues to smile.

MALIC

There's no point struggling,
Treir. Just relax, and I'll soon
get you back home... where you
belong.

As Treir continues to struggle against the thugs...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING

Right where we left it, as Treir struggles against the big Orion thugs, her head thrashing about desperately in the sack. She is going nowhere - they are far too strong for her. Malic watches, a little sad. He sighs dramatically.

MALIC

I should have known you'd put up a fight, Treir. I wish you wouldn't - I prefer my slaves not to be covered in bruises. But in the circumstances I'd be willing to put up with it this once.

He nods to the thugs, and they start to drag her away...

RO (o.s.)

Hey!

Malic turns and sees that Ro has appeared at the next intersection down the corridor. She sees them, and she is pissed. She pelts towards them at full speed...

Malic steps back, unconcerned.

MALIC

Boys...

Thug 1 takes a tighter hold on Treir, while Thug 2 lets go and advances to face Ro...

As Ro reaches them, Thug 2 aims a punch. Ro swiftly ducks it before it gets anywhere near her, and aims a sharp JAB right at his plexus.

He STAGGERS back a bit, but it doesn't put him out. He comes back with another punch. Ro is too fast again - she dodges it. The thug ends up PUNCHING a big dent in the bulkhead.

Ro moves fast - before Thug 2 can set up for another punch, she pops him straight in the nose.

Malic is starting to get a little concerned now. Treir struggles harder than ever...

MALIC
(to Thug 1)
Give her to me.

He moves to take hold of Treir himself, so that Thug 1 can join the fight against Ro...

...but in the moment of distraction, Treir breaks free and SPINS on the spot. With the sack still on her head, she KNEES Thug 1 right in the groin, and when he bends over in pain, she ELBOWS him in the face.

Ro launches a karate high KICK at Thug 2's face (revealing that she is still wearing the anti-grav anklets). He goes down to his knees, and she delivers a hard THUMP to the back of his neck, sending him unconscious to the deck.

Thug 1 crumples too, still conscious but groaning at his battered groin... until Ro KICKS him hard in the face, and he bonks against the bulkhead, knocked unconscious.

Treir tears the sack from her head, shakes her hair loose. She and Ro turn to look at Malic, who has backed away to safety. He glares at Ro, seething.

MALIC
You.

Ro smiles back, smugly. She recognises him.

RO
You.

And Treir knocks him unconscious with a single PUNCH. Ro slumps against the bulkhead, catching her breath... Treir rushes to her...

TREIR
Laren! Are you okay?

RO
I've been better...

TREIR
Oh Goddess, Laren, thank you so
much. I'm lucky you were here...

RO
I just followed you to try and
apologise for Quark being such an
ass. I wasn't expecting to have to
take out three Orions.

She tests her leg and back. Her eyes flare with the pain.

RO
Oh... wow...

Treir moves to help her...

RO
No no, I'll be fine. Thanks
though.
(beat)
You did pretty well yourself
there.

TREIR
(grin)
You think I never had to put a man
in his place before?

Upright at last, they look down at the three Orion men
unconscious on the deck...

5 ON MONITOR SCREEN

The image on the screen shows the high angle of the
security cells area. Malic sits on the cot in the middle
cell, with his two thugs occupying the smaller cells to
either side of him.

CENN (o.s.)
So... who is this guy again?

WIDEN to reveal...

6 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

KIRA sits at the head of the table, with VAUGHN on one side and Ro on the other. Quark and Treir are also there, and they haven't exactly made up for the earlier fight.

Also present is Major CENN, the Bajoran liaison officer. They are all turned to look at the screen on the ward room wall, showing the view of the security cells...

RO

Malic was an Orion Merchant Prince - a high-up figure in the Orion Syndicate, which is an organised crime outfit that's been a periodic thorn in Starfleet's side since before there was a Starfleet. They've run operations with just about every shady character from here to Kronos. The Maquis had some dealings with them - weapons deals and so forth. I think even the Dominion used their services at one point.

(re screen)

About two years ago, Malic was approached by some aliens called the Petraw, who were trying to run a scam by selling the Iconian Gateways to the highest bidder. Malic hired Quark to be his negotiator... and Quark very wisely took me along as undercover security.

QUARK

Not under much cover.

Ro gives him a glare. He is already in her bad books.

RO

Anyway - after it all went inevitably wrong, we needed to escape. To help us do that, I took Treir as a hostage.

CENN

So Treir was one of his crew?

RO

(angry)

She was one of his slaves. Orions as a culture are even more sexist than Ferengi...

(bitter glance
at Quark)

...their women are little more than property of the men. Used as sexual playthings and then stored until they're needed again.

Cenn listens to this, disquieted. Treir has kept her head down and her eyes averted - she doesn't particularly enjoy having her past rehashed in front of all these people.

But now she raises her head and looks them all in the eye. She is not ashamed or cowed - she is going to own it.

TREIR

I was the best at what I did. I worked my way up the ranks...

QUARK

I'm sure the ranks were very grateful.

TREIR

(glower at Quark)

...and I lived in luxury. I had everything I could want. The best food, the best furs, the best jewels...

RO

Just not your freedom. But you're right - you were one of Malic's prized possessions.

VAUGHN

And now he's decided he wants her back. What took him so long?

RO

He only just got out of jail. With all the dirt I got on him during the Petraw scam, Starfleet should have been able to lock him up for a good long time.

KIRA

Then why is he out now?

RO

I don't know. But I can guess. He'll have pulled in favours from across the quadrant. Made deals and greased wheels every chance he got. If there's anybody who can figure out how to gild his own cage, it's Malic. And he didn't escape - I checked with Starfleet security, and he was officially released.

KIRA

So what do we do with him now that he's here?

RO

(frustrated)

There's not much we can do. Malic has managed to find and exploit a unique and very inconvenient legal loophole. Because the fact is, Treir has no legal status on this station.

KIRA

How can that be? She's been living here for two years.

TREIR

(pointed)

I'd really appreciate it if you all stopped talking about me like I wasn't here.

RO

I'm sorry, Treir - you're right. But the thing is, when I took you hostage from Malic's ship and brought you here, I did so against Orion law, obviously. Even after you started working for Quark, you never officially applied for citizenship. With all the upheaval of Bajor joining the Federation, and setting up the bar as the Ferengi embassy, you just kind of slipped through the cracks.

VAUGHN

So she's what they used to call an undocumented worker.

RO

I'm afraid so. And none of us ever thought to question it. Which unfortunately leads us to Malic. What he's done - coming after a runaway slave - is completely legal, even expected by Orion law. And since Treir has no legal status with us, the Federation has no legal grounds to interfere. It's an internal Orion matter. The Prime Directive applies.

KIRA

So we just have to let him take her?

RO

That's the letter of the law, yes. But I'll be damned if I'm going to let the letter of the law defeat the spirit of it.

(turns to Treir)

Orion law may not give you the right to decide what happens in your own life, Treir, but we do. We'll help, I promise.

VAUGHN

Assuming that's what you want.

TREIR

You're damn right I want. What are my options?

They all sit back to ponder for a moment.

KIRA

You could apply for asylum in the Federation.

VAUGHN

That'll take forever to process.

TREIR

And what's to stop Malic from just kidnapping me again in the meantime? He's not going to care if it's legal or not.

VAUGHN

She's right. And it's not going to be practical to have security tailing her twenty-six-seven.

RO

Then what?

VAUGHN

I can only think of one thing.

Vaughn turns and looks meaningfully at Quark. Getting the message, the rest of the room also turns to look at Quark.

QUARK

What?

VAUGHN

Treir can apply for asylum with the Ferengi Alliance. You are the Ferengi ambassador to Bajor, are you not, Quark? You could ensure Treir's legal status in a matter of minutes.

TREIR

Hold on a minute - you want me to become a Ferengi? They're as bad as the Orions, you just said so yourself.

RO

You might not have a choice.

QUARK

And who said I wanted her? She's been nothing but trouble since the day I hired her.

KIRA

(to Treir;
ignoring Quark)

Malic may be allowed to move around freely on the station because it's Federation space, but the bar is sovereign Ferengi territory. As long as you stay inside the walls of the embassy, he can't get you.

TREIR

So I have to live in the bar?

VAUGHN

Just until your legal status is settled. We can't protect you otherwise.

QUARK

Hey - I said no.

RO

(still ignoring Quark)

The bar is a finite space, it'll be easy to post security at the entrances so Malic doesn't get in.

TREIR

(resigned sigh)

Alright - I guess you're right, I don't have a choice.

QUARK

Is no-one listening to me? I do not agree to this.

RO

Quark, if you don't, you're sending Treir back to a life of slavery.

Quark pulls a face like "I don't care."

RO (cont)

But if you insist on pretending to be a heartless son of a *slorg*, then think of this in terms of business. If you lose Treir, you lose the best dabo girl you've ever had. Your customers might just decide not to bother coming to the bar anymore. Is that what you want?

Quark grits his teeth, annoyed.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

7 INT. DS9 - STORE ROOM

The storage room of Quark's bar, briefly seen in 7x24 "The Dogs of War." Crates and bottles and buckets and unused furniture are strewn everywhere in a chaotic mess.

Treir stands with a small travelling bag over her shoulder, looking around the room in horror. Quark stands behind her.

TREIR

You seriously expect me to sleep
in here?

QUARK

It's here or nowhere.

TREIR

Fine - as long as you don't mind
me working the dabo wheel stinking
like rotting fruit and synthehol.

QUARK

Everybody's got their fetish.

TREIR

Where am I supposed to wash?

QUARK

You know where the public
bathrooms are.

She turns to him, her jaw set.

TREIR

Nuh-uh. No way.

QUARK

You have a better idea?

TREIR

I always have a better idea.

8 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

VIC FONTAINE approaches Quark with arms wide in greeting. The lounge is middling-busy - an afternoon crowd, not full show time. Vic is in shirt-sleeves, casual but still smart.

VIC
Quark, you old degenerate. Good to see you, buddy.

QUARK
Hey Vic. I need to ask a favour.

VIC
Anything I can do, I'm happy to help.

Quark turns and indicates Treir stood nearby.

QUARK
Does this hotel of yours have a spare room for a few nights?

Vic gapes at Treir for the tiniest moment before recovering his cool. Staring is crass, but there is no denying he is impressed. Treir slinks towards him seductively, her hand out like a lady. Vic takes it gently and brings it to his lips for a chaste and gentlemanly kiss.

TREIR
Mister Fontaine, I don't believe we've been properly introduced. My name is Treir, and I would be very... very... grateful for any help you could provide.

VIC
(nervous gulp)
Absolutely. Umm... Ginger!

Vic's cocktail waitress GINGER (10x03 "Steppin' Out") quickly attends from where she was working the crowd.

GINGER
What's up, Vic?

VIC

Ginger, sweetheart, would you please escort this young lady to my suite? She's going to be staying with me for a few days.

GINGER

Sure, Vic. Come on, honey.

With a seductive smile of thanks for Vic, Treir allows Ginger to lead her away. Vic calls after them...

VIC

Oh, and while you're at it... set up the couch for me. Guess I got some bad backs coming my way.

(back to Quark)

So, spill. What's got your teeth a-gnashing?

QUARK

Euch. You don't wanna know. Thanks, Vic.

Suddenly light applause ripples through the crowd. Quark and Vic both look to the stage, where NOG is walking up to take pride of place. He is a bit nervous, and he's carrying a BOX, which he places on a STOOL before facing front.

QUARK

What's going on?

VIC

Your talented young nephew is about to put on a show.

QUARK

Why?

With the audience paying rapt attention, Nog reaches into his box and brings out an old-fashioned velvet TOP HAT.

Nog twists the hat this way and that for the audience's benefit, revealing that it is solid and empty. He places it on his head, which it of course nowhere near fits.

VIC

After I did that big show out on the Promenade, business has started to pick up in here again. I wanna make sure I don't lose it, so I came up with the idea of a support act. You know, someone to warm up the crowd and give the people more bang for their bucks. I've been trying out some auditions on the afternoon crowd.

Nog reaches into the hat and pulls out a bunch of FLOWERS. There are distinctly unenthusiastic "oohs" of excitement from the crowd, and half-hearted applause.

One of the more enthusiastic applauders is TENMEI, sat on the front row. She is being as encouraging as she can for Nog's sake, because nobody else is.

VIC

He's doing great so far, don't you think?

Quark scoffs and rolls his eyes, and turns and walks away.

On stage, Nog puts the hat away and pulls out an isolinear rod and a handkerchief. Placing the box on the floor, he places the rod on the top of the stool, and then drapes the handkerchief over the rod.

He waves his hands freely over the handkerchief, and with a final "Abracadabra!" flourish, the rod begins to levitate off the stool, pulling the handkerchief with it.

Tenmei cheers and claps harder. The rest of the audience are just being polite, unimpressed. Vic smiles tensely and claps lightly. This isn't going especially well.

9 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

The security office doors open and Malic emerges, followed by his two thugs. They are escorted by both Ro and Vaughn. Malic has a smug smirk, like he knows perfectly well there is nothing they can do to him.

MALIC

You should really consider upgrading your accommodations, Lieutenant. It was almost like a prison in there.

Ro only has a glare for the likes of him. With a superior smirk, Malic beckons his thugs and walks away.

As they pass the door to Quark's, Malic takes note of Major Cenn and Lieutenant BOWERS standing on either side of the door. They both have their arms folded, phasers at their hips, and a glare that says "Just try it."

Malic rolls his eyes and moves along, undeterred. As he goes, Quark appears in the doorway and watches him go.

Outside security, Vaughn nods "carry on" to Ro, and then walks away too. Ro looks over to the bar, sees Quark, and decides to wander over.

10 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Quark heads back to his bar. Ro follows.

RO

Quark.

(he turns to her)

I guess I should thank you... for doing the right thing.

QUARK

Don't. I couldn't care less about her legal rights. I just want those Orion pheromones working for me and not Malic.

Ro snaps, frustrated and exasperated with Quark.

RO

Quark, you really are the most stubborn, inflexible, sexist ingrate I've ever met.

QUARK

I'll take that as a compliment.

RO

I must have said it wrong.

QUARK

Why should I be grateful to that infuriating know-it-all?

RO

To acknowledge all the good things she's done for you. Every one of her ideas, you've ended up using, and they've all worked out great.

QUARK

"You paid for it, it's your idea."

RO

You respect her. You know you do. You just refuse to admit it because she's a female.

QUARK

I admit I respect you, don't I?

RO

A strong woman with a weapon, who can beat up Orions? That just feeds your sordid little fantasies. But a woman who's as good at business as you? That you could never handle.

Quark seems genuinely hurt and surprised.

QUARK

Do you really think that's all I see in you? A fantasy?

RO

Have you given me any reason to think otherwise?

Shaking her head with annoyance, Ro turns and walks back out of the bar.

11 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

A little later. Nog's magic show is over. Tenmei stands at the bar, ordering a drink from one of Vic's bartenders. The bartender brings the drink, and Prynn hands over some American money, without really having any idea what it is.

She turns back around, sipping at the drink through a straw, and is surprised to see SHAR standing there. He is awkward as always, as if plucking up the courage to speak.

TENMEI

Shar.

SHAR

Hello, Prynn.

TENMEI

I didn't realise you were here.

SHAR

I came to support Nog, as you did.

TENMEI

I didn't see you.

SHAR

I stood at the back. I wasn't sure you would wish to see me.

That makes her sad. She softens and steps closer.

TENMEI

Shar... I'm so sorry. I know I left things really uncomfortable between us. And I guess I have been kind of avoiding you. That was unfair of me. I'm sorry.

SHAR

I understand. You feel a relationship with me would be inappropriate.

TENMEI

An intimate relationship, yes. But that's not the only kind of relationship two people can have. I understand if you don't want to, after all the things I said. But I'd like it if we could find a way to still be friends.

SHAR

How do we do that?

TENMEI

(relieved)

Well... we just... talk. Tell me about what you're working on at the moment.

She directs him to a nearby table. They both move to sit. And they drift off into conversation...

SHAR

It is quite a complex research project, suggested to me by members of the Bajoran Science Ministry...

12 INT. VIC'S HOTEL SUITE

The glamorous and opulent '60s-styled décor of the Dunes Hotel's finest suite, befitting its headlining star. The door opens, and Vic gingerly pokes his head in.

VIC

Treir? You decent?

Treir enters from the bedroom, dressed very un-dabo. She wears a furry onesie, her hair rolled up in a towel, and waddling on feet whose toes are separated to allow nail-polish to dry. She is blowing on the nails of one hand, drying the polish there.

TREIR

I guess that depends on your definition.

Smiling politely, Vic moves to look into the bedroom.

BEDROOM

It's a disaster. Treir has thrown clothes everywhere, wet towels on the floor, make-up on the counters, the works. Vic gazes at the mess, bemused and slightly appalled.

VIC

I see you've been settling in.

TREIR

Oh. Yeah. Sorry. I'll clean it up. You'll never know I was here, I promise.

VIC

Treir... it's not that I mind the company, believe me. There are a lot worse things in the world than sharing your space with a beautiful lady. But I get the feeling this isn't a social call. What's going on?

Treir sighs sadly. Can't really not tell him.

TREIR

It's one of those worse things you mentioned.

VIC

Let me guess. Some idiot who won't take no for an answer?

TREIR

Pretty much.

VIC

Always gotta be a few bad apples spoiling it for the rest of us.

TREIR

(fake cheery)

Don't worry about me. I'm a chameleon. I'll find a way to make it work, whatever happens.

VIC

Well, I just gotta pick up a couple of things for the show tonight, and then I'll get out of your hair.

He moves around the room, grabbing a few bits and pieces - a freshly dry-cleaned tuxedo, a bottle of cologne, etc. Treir watches him as he does.

TREIR

(heartfelt)

Vic... I really am grateful to you for letting me stay. And you know, you really don't have to sleep on the couch tonight.

He gets her meaning, but he smiles warmly.

VIC

This ain't that kind of rodeo, sweetheart. You don't owe me a thing. Besides, a real gentleman doesn't take advantage of a lady in need. That just ain't how I was raised. Now you relax, get some rest, and I'll be back after the show, okay?

He has everything he needs now, so he nods a courteous goodbye and leaves the suite, closing the door behind him.

Treir is surprised - a man actually turned her down? But it's a nice surprise. She smiles, quite touched. What a rarity - a man who actually respects her.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

13 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Focusing on one particular shuttle craft sat on the docking ring...

14 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE, UPPER LEVEL

Looking from the crossover bridge down to the main door of Quark's, we can see two security still standing sentry.

At the upper level entrances, more security bodies stand guard, including Vulcan crewman SEVAK. Kira and Ro nod their acknowledgments as they approach.

RO
Any problems, crewman?

SEVAK
Negative, Lieutenant.

Kira and Ro walk past and enter the bar, passing through a FORCE FIELD over the doorway as they go.

15 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Walking along the upper corridor towards the holosuites...

RO
Any idea what this big surprise is?

KIRA
No idea at all. Vic's message went out to the whole station. He just said everyone should come for the lunch time show.

RO
He's still doing those tryouts?

KIRA
I guess so.

They reach the holosuites. Kira checks the panel of one...

KIRA

Hmm... Taran'atar's using that
Vulcan meditation program again.
I guess he's taking Counsellor
Matthias's advice to heart.
(correction)
Hearts.

RO

(nod to the door)
Maybe we should get Sevak to give
him some pointers.
(taps her
own ear)
Get it? Pointers?

Groaning at the terrible joke, Kira moves to the next holosuite and presses the button to open the door.

16 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

Kira and Ro enter, and blink in surprise to see a packed crowd. The bar is doing a roaring trade, and officers and civilians alike are milling about excitedly.

RO

Must be good, whatever it is.

Vic emerges from out of the crowd, and approaches them.

VIC

Captain! Lieutenant! You're just
in time.

KIRA

For what?

VIC

You'll see in...
(checks watch)
...thirty seconds.

And then he disappears back towards the stage.

Nonplussed, Kira and Ro perch on stools at the bar. Having pushed through the crowd, Vic finally makes it to the stage. He takes the mic, and shushes the crowd.

VIC

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming. I have a very special treat for you today. I know you've all laughed your guts out at his side-splitting stories. You've all chatted the night away with him over drinks. Now, get ready for the hilarious stand-up comedy stylings of my friend and yours - Morn!

Thunderous applause from the crowd. The lumpen barfly himself - MORN - strolls onto the stage, and with a welcome pat on the shoulder from Vic, takes over the mic.

Surprised and thrilled, Kira and Ro clap enthusiastically.

KIRA

Oh, this should be good.

Morn stands at the mic, gazing out at the crowd. Saying nothing. He stands and stares. And stares.

Vic stands by the side of the stage, urging Morn on. Go on then - what are you waiting for?

The crowd is wondering what's going on. Why isn't he saying anything?

Ro and Kira glance to each other, worried and confused.

MORN'S POV

From up on stage, looking down at the waiting faces, gazing hopefully up at him, starting to get restless...

BACK TO SCENE

His mouth drops open and hangs loosely, his eyes wide and terrified. And then he turns and runs clean off stage.

Unhappy buzz starts to spread through the crowd. Vamping for all he's worth, Vic quickly steps back up to the mic.

VIC

Umm... ladies and gentlemen... we're having some technical difficulties. Please enjoy the lounge, order a drink... I'm sure everything will be back on track in just a minute.

Vic dashes off stage after Morn.

KIRA

Wow. Of all the people to get struck by stage fright... who'd have thought it would be Morn?

On Ro and Kira's bemused faces...

17 INT. DS9 - TREIR'S QUARTERS

Last seen in 8x21 "Lesser Evil." The door opens, and Major Cenn pokes his head around the corner, his raised phaser leading the way. His eyes scan the room...

CENN

Clear.

He walks fully into the room, as Treir follows him. A Starfleet security officer waits outside in the corridor.

Treir moves into the room - which is in just as appalling a state as Vic's bedroom - and starts yanking clothes out of drawers and jamming them into her travelling bag.

TREIR

I don't normally need an armed escort just to pick out clean underwear.

CENN

I'm happy to do it. We never really get a chance to talk while you're working.

TREIR

(amused)

Yes, I noticed you didn't raise too much of a protest to this particular assignment.

(playful)

Almost as if you had an ulterior motive...

Cenn blushes furiously, embarrassed. He is crushing on her hard, and she knows it full well.

CENN

Umm... I... I... well...

She takes pity, and comes close, giving him an affectionate caress of the cheek. It's almost instinctive to flirt.

TREIR

Don't worry about it, Desca, sweetie. Now come on - give a girl a hand with her luggage.

He breathes in her pheromones, and he is completely at her mercy. He takes her travelling bag... but he hesitates.

CENN

(voice shaking)

Treir, I was wondering... after all this is over... if you'd consider having dinner with me one night?

She smiles, gives him the perfect gentle brush off without breaking his heart. She gets this every day.

TREIR

Oh, sweetie. I have no idea when this'll be over, if ever. I tell you what... why don't we wait a few days, see how things go, and then we'll see.

Cenn nods wholeheartedly, thrilled to grasp the tiny sliver of hope she's dangling. That done, Cenn moves to exit, with phaser in one hand and Treir's travelling bag in the other.

18 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Normal afternoon crowd. Quark is behind his bar, turned to face the SCREEN in the back wall. We don't need to see who he is talking to.

QUARK
(to screen)
Thanks. I owe you one.

He signs off, then turns back to face the room, pleased with himself. Nog is standing at the bar, waiting to speak.

QUARK
If you're about to make a *slorg* appear out of thin air, I'm not interested.

NOG
No. I just wanted to talk to you.

QUARK
What about?

NOG
About Treir.

QUARK
Stop right there. I've already had an earful from Ro.

NOG
Uncle, let me tell you a story. You remember last year, when we went home to Ferenginar? And I went to visit my moogie? I mean my real mother, not Leeta.

QUARK
Of course I remember. You don't forget a cluster-frinx like that.

NOG

I didn't remember much about her -
I was so young when we left home.
And when I met her again... I
couldn't believe it. She was
naked... she offered to chew tube
grubs for me... she said she
shouldn't even be talking to me
because I was a stranger to her.

QUARK

Sounds like the perfect Ferengi
woman to me.

NOG

Exactly. And I couldn't handle it.
Growing up on this station,
surrounded by independent,
powerful women like Kira, Dax, Mrs
O'Brien, Kasidy Yates... I got
used to having strong women in my
life. The Ferengi ideal of the
submissive, housebound slave just
seemed wrong. And I think you feel
the same way.

Quark turns away, not interested in hearing this.

QUARK

Now you're being ridiculous.

NOG

Am I? You've lived here longer
than I have. And who are the women
you've been closest to in that
time? A Cardassian. A Klingon. And
now a Bajoran. None of those are
particularly known for their
passive and subservient females.

Nog is making good points, and Quark doesn't like it.

QUARK

That's different. That's fun. But
the Rules are clear - females and
finances don't mix.

NOG

I bet you think females and engineering don't mix either. But more than half my department heads are females.

QUARK

That's your problem. Treir is my problem, and I don't believe in equality for females.

NOG

I think you do. But you think you shouldn't. That's why you give her such a hard time.

QUARK

It's a Rule, Nog. When you live by a set of Rules, you don't just get to pick and choose which ones you stick to.

NOG

Of course you do! If one of those rules doesn't make sense anymore, and getting rid of it would actually help you, then that's what you do. It's just a matter of making the best use of the resources you've got. Father realised that. The whole rest of Ferenginar has realised it. So why can't you?

Quark hates this. He knows Nog is right, but he's fighting against it with everything he has. He turns and walks away, round the end of the bar and onto the main floor. Then he won't have to listen anymore.

19 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

On one of the benches periodically dotted along the length the Promenade - specifically the one closest to Quark's - sits Malic. Casual, relaxed, legs crossed, just enjoying the fact that no-one can touch him.

Further down the Promenade, Treir approaches, escorted by Cenn (still carrying her bag) and the other officer. Treir and Cenn tense as they notice Malic sitting there.

CENN

Ignore him. Nothing he can do.

They keep walking, keeping a wary eye on Malic. They approach the door to Quark's bar, where two more security still stand. But just before they pass through the door...

MALIC

calmly lifts his wrist to his mouth, and with a smug smile, speaks into a comm device.

MALIC

Energise.

There is a TWINKLE sound in the air as a transporter signal begins to form...

CENN

reacts instantly. He drops the bag and SHOVES Treir hard, pushing her through the doorway into Quark's.

TREIR

passes through the force field, which FRITZES across the door. One of the other security joins her and stands in front of her, keeps her safe.

CENN

is now standing right where Treir was, where the transport signal is forming. He begins to dematerialise...

ECU

on Cenn's wrist - he is wearing a metallic cuff separate from his uniform. LIGHTS on the cuff flash...

...and the transporter signal gets distorted, interference getting in the way...

...and the transport finally gives up, Cenn resolidifying. The buzzing sound in the air is replaced with a small sonic BOOM as the transporter signal fails.

Malic's grin drops - he's foiled.

Treir pants, recovering from the shock and fear.

Cenn and the other security stand firm, staring Malic down.

Quark has seen the whole thing. He walks up to just inside the door of the bar, and shakes his head, gloating.

QUARK

Oh, Malic. Do you really think we're that naive?

Malic stands, trying to make himself look taller.

QUARK

See that little trinket on Major Cenn's wrist? That's a transport inhibitor. Blocks any signal that isn't pre-approved by station command. All the security folks wear them. One of Lieutenant Ro's inventions.

(beat)

You remember Lieutenant Ro. The woman who sent you to prison, and beat both of your enforcers unconscious?

Malic glares back. Quark reaches up and taps mid-air, making the force field fritz again.

QUARK

And this... this is a force field, so there's no way to transport Treir from inside the bar either. And don't bother trying to track the frequency - they change it every hour. In fact, I gotta say, this was a pretty weak effort all round, Malic.

Still refusing to say a word, Malic just turns and begins to walk away. But Quark isn't finished yet.

QUARK

Oh Malic...

Gritting his teeth, Malic turns back...

QUARK (cont)

...Just in case you do try and violate sovereign Ferengi territory anyway, you should probably know that I just got off the comm with my brother...

(pointedly)

...the Grand Nagus. He's sending three heavily armed Ferengi Marauders to the station to... protect his interests in this matter. And Malic... I really don't think you want to be here when they arrive.

Furious but trying not to show it, Malic turns and walks away. He's going to get Quark for this.

On Quark's smug, victorious expression...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

20 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

The station at rest, but there are three D'Kora-class FERENGI MARAUDERS positioned in a triangle around it (the large, crab-like Ferengi ships as seen in TNG). The smaller shuttle from earlier is still there too.

RO (o.s.)

This is getting out of hand.

21 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira sits behind her desk, Ro in front of it.

KIRA

I never even knew the Ferengi had a military.

RO

Strictly speaking, they don't. It's more of a Merchant Navy. But that doesn't mean we should underestimate them.

KIRA

How bad can it be? How are the Ferengi in any way threatening?

RO

You don't know how far a DaiMon will go to protect his profits. And those ships can do serious damage if someone says it's what the Nagus wants.

KIRA

And what about Malic?

RO

Hasn't set foot off his shuttle in three days.

KIRA
(rhetorical)
Why doesn't he just give up and go home?

RO
And lose face like that? No. He's squatting in there, trying to figure out how much risk he's willing to take over this.

KIRA
And the moment he does, Quark gives the order and we've got a shooting war.

RO
We need another plan.

They both sit back to think...

CUT TO:

22 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

DAX appears on the comm screen set into the wall. She sits against a generic Starfleet background in her commander's uniform, cheerful and enthusiastic. Kira and Ro stand at the panel, chatting amiably.

DAX (screen)
Nerys! Great to hear from you.
How's the station?

KIRA
Ah, you know how it is. Always something. How's the *Luna*?

DAX (screen)
Amazing. The kind of people they've got working here, Nerys... you wouldn't believe it. My chief science officer is a Sulamid! All those eyes and tentacles everywhere...

KIRA

Yikes. And I thought a Gallamite was bad enough.

DAX (screen)

There's even supposed to be some Pakhwa-thanh signing on. Can you imagine?

RO

I'd love to have one of those on my security team. You see that barrelling down the corridor at you, you'll never even dream of committing a crime again.

DAX (screen)

The tech is incredible too. Best sensors I've ever seen. And we're working on adapting the engines to work with the quantum slipstream drive *Voyager* brought back.

KIRA

That'll take years to be ready.

DAX (screen)

Don't be so sure. Doctor Xin Ra-Havreii himself designed the prototype. He's supposed to be a genius.

RO

So he tells everybody.

DAX (screen)

So what can I do for you? I'm guessing you didn't just call to gossip.

Kira's friendly grin falls. Down to business.

KIRA

I'm afraid not. Is this is a secure line?

That surprises Dax. What's going on? She taps a few keys on the panels in front of her.

DAX (screen)

It is now.

KIRA

I need to ask you a favour, Dax.
And I'll understand if you want to say no.

DAX (screen)

(worried now)

Nerys, what is it?

KIRA

Your family, back on New Sydney.
Do they still have connections...
to the Orion Syndicate?

Dax blinks, genuinely shocked at the question.

23 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Quark is likewise talking to someone on the screens behind his bar - an angry Ferengi DaiMon, GROB.

GROB (screen)

Ambassador! How much longer are we expected to sit here doing nothing? Time is money!

QUARK

As long as the Nagus requires you to, DaiMon Grob. But I can assure you, the Nagus is very grateful to all the crew of the *Flibb's Folly* for their help. He won't forget your name.

GROB (screen)

Of course, of course! Whatever the Nagus needs!

Now Grob leers lasciviously, licks his lips and strokes his lobe with his finger. It's kinda gross.

GROB (screen)
So... where is this Orion slave
girl we're here to protect? I've
always wanted to see one.

QUARK
She's... otherwise occupied.

Quark grins at Grob, and wiggles his eyebrows suggestively.
Grob chuckles along, assuming it's something dirty. But...

24 **INT. VIC'S LOUNGE**

DARKNESS... until a single spotlight appears, illuminating
Treir alone at the microphone. She looks fabulous - elegant
cocktail dress, sexy, confident, in total control.

She begins to sing in a throaty, bluesy soul voice - the
Peggy Lee classic, "Why Don't You Do Right."

TREIR
(singing)
You had plenty money, 1922
You let other women
make a fool of you
Why don't you do right,
like some other men do?
Get out of here
And get me some money too

Looking at the crowd, they're absolutely spellbound. Gazing
up at Treir, the men are falling in love on the spot. But
even the women are drawn in by the powerful woman on stage.

TREIR
(singing)
You're sittin' down and wonderin'
what it's all about
You ain't got no money,
They will put you out
Why don't you do right,
like some other men do?
Get out of here
and get me some money too

Customers pay rapt attention. Vic is there too, and he is gazing up at her with just as much admiration as the rest.

TREIR

(singing)

If you had prepared
twenty years ago
You wouldn't be a-wanderin'
from door to door
Why don't you do right,
like some other men do?
Get out of here
and get me some money too

Nog sidles up to Vic, also loving the show. Vic looks down at him, shakes his head in amazement.

TREIR

(singing,
background)

I fell for your jivin'
and I took you in
Now all you got to offer me's
a drink of gin
Why don't you do right,
like some other men do?
Get out of here
and get me some money too

VIC

Kid, that magic show of yours was just fine. But that... that's real magic right there on that stage. I think I found my support act.

Treir winds up to the end of her song, and as she does, she looks out into the crowd, making direct, unblinking eye contact with Vic. Vic can't help but fall into her eyes.

TREIR

Why don't you do right,
like some other men do?
Like some other men do.

The song ends, and the crowd goes wild with applause and cheers. But Treir only has eyes for Vic, and vice versa.

25 **INT. VIC'S HOTEL SUITE**

Dark, seductive lighting, late night. The door opens and Vic holds it open, allowing Treir to sweep into the room. She wears a fur stole over her cocktail dress, and she is buzzing with excitement.

TREIR

That was so much fun! I don't
remember the last time I had that
much fun. If ever.

Vic closes the door, and then gentlemanly takes the stole from her. She allows it, with a flirtatious glance over her shoulder at him. He catches it full force and gulps with nervousness.

Treir heads straight to the minibar while Vic hangs the stole on a coat rack. Treir grabs a champagne bottle and pops the cork. They both laugh as the bubbles overflow - Vic quickly grabs two glasses and catches the spill.

VIC

(laugh)

Whoa! Watch the carpet! What are
we celebratin'?

TREIR

A magical night... that's only
just begun.

She clinks her glass to his and takes a sip. He does too, a bit shell-shocked.

VIC

You are one knockout up on that
stage, sweetheart. You sure you
never sung before?

TREIR

No, never. It must be your...
(smile)
...expert tutelage.

Smiling seductively, Treir begins to lead into the bedroom. She sits coquettishly on the edge of the bed, and turns to look at him. But it's not the usual over-played seduction of a dabo girl. This is genuine, even a little nervous.

Vic comes to the doorway into the bedroom. No further. He sees what she is trying to do, but he won't give in.

VIC

I'll grab the spare sheets and pillows, and set up the couch.

He turns away, but Treir plaintively calls after him.

TREIR

Vic... don't go.

VIC

(sad smile)

Treir, sweetheart... much as I appreciate the offer, I told you, I ain't that kind of guy.

TREIR

Vic, please... just sit with me. That's all.

After a moment's pause, he relents and comes and sits with her on the bed. No physical contact. She takes a deep breath and plucks up her nerves.

TREIR

Vic... I am grateful to you. For taking me in... for putting me on that stage tonight... for being the kind of man who won't take advantage of a lady in need. I haven't met many of those in my time.

(beat)

But I'm not doing this because I'm grateful. I'm not doing this because I think I have to. I know that with you, I don't have to. But I want to.

She looks at him, makes a genuine connection. She's being completely honest here... and he is responding to it.

TREIR

Every man on this station wants me. That's not me being proud or conceited. It's pure chemistry, Orion pheromones. They can't help themselves.

(quibble)

Well, okay, not every man. But you know what I mean.

(beat)

But with you... it's different. The pheromones have no effect.

VIC

Because I'm just a hologram.

TREIR

Don't say it like that. It's a wonderful thing. Because you're more real to me than any of the others out there. And I'm real to you. When you look at me... like that... I know that you mean it. And that's...

She can't really explain how it makes her feel. Special.

She puts her feelings into action. She reaches out gently, tentatively... and kisses him. He doesn't pull away.

The kiss grows, becoming more passionate...

and we slowly **ZOOM IN**...

and simultaneously **DISSOLVE INTO**...

26 **INT. VIC'S HOTEL SUITE**

Later - night. The room is dark, only the flashing lights of the hotel's neon signs outside, coming through gently wafting lace curtains.

Vic and Treir lie in bed together, tastefully naked. He is fast asleep. She is awake, propped up on one elbow, and watching him sleep with a warm, wistful smile.

After a while, she gently and carefully manoeuvres herself out from under the covers (making sure that we don't see anything).

She steps across the room and grabs a negligee from a nearby hook, pulls it on. In the dim light, she turns and gazes at Vic's sleeping form with genuine affection. She is relaxed and truly happy.

Then in a sudden shocking rush of photons, the entire scene dissolves around her as the holosuite switches off...

27 **INT. HOLOSUITE (CONTINUOUS)**

...leaving her standing alone in her negligee on the bare holosuite grid. Before she has any chance to register her surprise and fear...

...two pairs of heavy green hands yank a cloth sack over her head and grab her hard. She SCREAMS...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

28 INT. DS9 - QUARK'S BAR

Dim lighting - it is after hours and the bar is closed.

Muffled VOICES coming down the stairs precede Malic, leading his two thugs, who are manhandling the struggling Treir. She is still in her negligee, with the sack over her head, pulled tight enough to stifle her terrified protests.

MALIC

(whisper)

Come on! The power tap won't hold
for long. We need to be on the
ship and away before they find it.

The two thugs drag Treir on. They approach the front door of Quark's, nearly away scot free...

...And suddenly all the LIGHTS come up. Malic jumps in surprise and looks around...

...to see Quark standing behind him, centre of the bar.

QUARK

Too late.

The thugs drop Treir in surprise, and she desperately staggers out of their way. She runs into Ro, who is just emerging from hiding behind one of the spiral staircases. Ro helps her, takes the sack off her head.

Kira emerges from hiding too. Then Prynn. Then ETANA, RICHTER, MATTHIAS, AYLAM and any other female crew member we regularly see. Nog and Shar appear from near the door, where they had been operating the lighting controls.

Cenn is there too. Bowers. Hetik. Hell, let's even throw Morn in for a laugh, although he is probably not entirely sure why he's there. They all join Quark in the middle of the room, making a line, confronting Malic.

Malic panics. He turns to make a run for the door...

...when TARAN'ATAR unshrouds right in his path. Malic whimper-shrieks in fear, and retreats behind his two thugs. Even the thugs stare up at the Jem'Hadar in terror...

...and Taran'atar reaches out and calmly grabs both thugs' heads, and bonks them together. They slump to the ground, out cold. Now Malic is alone.

MALIC

Alright! You got me! But you'll never make it stick and you know it. I've got a finger in every pie in the quadrant.

QUARK

We don't need to make it stick, Malic. And I really don't want to know where your fingers have been. But we'll always be here to stop you, whatever you do. Me...
(gestures around)
...and all these females.

MALIC

If you ask me, it looks like they know their place - letting their man speak for them.

QUARK

They don't need anyone to speak for them, least of all me. They set up this trap, and idiot that you are, you walked right in.

Quark parades up and down in front of the line of people, pointing out each person as he refers to them.

QUARK

Taran'atar tailed you from the moment you left your shuttle. We knew exactly what you were up to. Nog and Shar found the power tap you installed, and faked the power cut so you'd think your plan had worked.

(more)

Cenn, Bowers... took a break at exactly the right time to make it look like your way was clear. And they did it all under the orders of these females, because they know that these females are the equal of any male... and a lot better than some.

MALIC

Never! Females will never be the equal of males! You're a Ferengi, Quark! I know you agree with me!

QUARK

Actually, no I don't.

He walks up to Treir, and looks up into her face. Doesn't even check out the negligee.

QUARK

This woman is intelligent, powerful, and brave. She knew what was going to happen, and she put herself at risk to make sure you were stopped.

Treir smiles shyly, a bit flattered. Turns back to Malic...

QUARK (cont)

She's also as good at business as any male I've ever met. And I'm prepared to say it out loud, because I'm good at business too. I know how to make the best use of my resources, and that means acknowledging when I've got good employees.

Malic tries to muster as much indignant rage as he can.

MALIC

Treir is not your employee, Quark! She's my property!

QUARK

(simply)

No, she's not. She's nobody's property.

Quark pauses, seeming to come to a decision with himself.

QUARK

In fact, as of... oh let's say ten minutes ago, I officially accepted Treir as a citizen of the Ferengi Alliance, and you know what that means. According to current Ferengi law, females are equal to males in all things.

Treir smiles victoriously at Malic. Quark enjoys Malic's growl of frustration.

QUARK

It also means that you tried to kidnap a Ferengi citizen from sovereign Ferengi ground. That is a major diplomatic offence against the Ferengi Alliance, Malic. I'd be justified in ordering those three Marauders out there to open fire on your shuttle right now.

Kira and Ro exchange a worried glance - exactly what they didn't want. The tension is growing.

MALIC

You won't fire. You'd never risk damaging this precious station of yours.

QUARK

Not a problem. They've had your engines and weapons targeted since they got here. And right now they're manoeuvring into the perfect position to take you out without so much as a scratch to the station.

Malic can't take any more. He explodes with righteous anger and frustration.

MALIC

And then they'll send an army to blow you all to pieces! You shouldn't make an enemy of the Orion Syndicate, Quark. Don't you know who I am?

A pause, a moment of silence. Tense stand-off.

Then Quark bursts into gales of LAUGHTER, huge belly-laughs. Malic is surprised and confused, and not a little embarrassed at being laughed at in public. Gradually, Quark pulls himself under control.

QUARK

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. It's just - did you actually just say, "Do you know who I am?"

Quark LAUGHS some more at the sheer absurdity.

QUARK (cont)

You're nobody, Malic! The Orion Syndicate isn't your personal revenge machine. Think about it. Why aren't they here right now backing you up? Because they don't want anything to do with you! You let yourself get sent to prison, you practically handed over vital Syndicate information to Starfleet... and you lost Treir. You're an embarrassment to them, Malic. You're nobody.

Malic is quite shaken by this. He tries to maintain his hard edge, but he is very aware that everyone is watching him. He tries one last attack.

MALIC

I'm nobody? Who are you?

Quark straightens, puffs up like a peacock.

QUARK

I'm the Ambassador.

(beat)

Now get out of my bar and off my station, before I bring down the might of some extremely impatient DaiMons on your cute little shuttle.

As far as Quark is concerned, it's over. He turns away. Malic is beneath his notice. Kira steps forward.

KIRA

Taran'atar... would you please escort Mister Malic back to his shuttle. Just to make sure he doesn't lose his way.

TARAN'ATAR

Certainly, Captain.

Taran'atar reaches down, grabs the two unconscious Orion thugs by their collars and hoists them up as if they weighed nothing. Malic is duly impressed and terrified.

TARAN'ATAR

After you.

Malic stumbles forward and out of the bar. Taran'atar follows, carrying the thugs with ease.

The tension in the bar starts to release. The gathered people split up and go their way. Treir walks up to Quark and throws her arms around him in a big grateful hug.

TREIR

Thank you, Quark. Genuinely.

Quark is quite happy with how things turned out. But of course he won't say so.

QUARK

Go on. Get some sleep.

She nods, and starts to head back up the stairs towards the holosuites. But Quark calls after her.

QUARK

And don't think just because you were up late you can get away with being late for your shift in the morning.

Treir smiles - she knows it's just Quark being Quark.

TREIR

I won't be. Night, Quark.

And she heads off upstairs.

29 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Malic walks down the corridor, followed by his two thugs (who are now awake again), and finally by Taran'atar. Malic is scared of Taran'atar, and embarrassed by the events with Quark. But he is trying his best to cover it with bravado. The thugs are just throwing nervous glances at Taran'atar.

They turn the corner, and come to the airlock to the shuttle. Malic pauses, looks back at Taran'atar.

MALIC

We can take it from here.

Taran'atar doesn't have to say a word to make his thoughts on that clear. Frustrated and annoyed, Malic enters the airlock. Taran'atar stays out in the corridor.

30 INT. DS9 - AIRLOCK (CONTINUOUS)

Malic mutters to his thugs as they traverse the airlock...

MALIC

Say a word to anyone about any of this, and I'll have you both killed in an instant.

The thugs nervously nod their agreement. The three of them enter their ship...

31 INT. MALIC'S SHUTTLE - BRIDGE

An average, nondescript shuttle's control centre. The door opens at the rear of the bridge, the thugs lead the way...

...and immediately find themselves faced with the barrels of two large and threatening phaser rifles. They jerk to a halt, Malic walks into the back of them...

MALIC

Oof! What are you doing, you
brainless idiots...

Then he sees the guns. And the large random aliens holding them. He gapes with amazement.

The elaborate captain's chair is facing away from them... It slowly turns, revealing...

BOKAR, the FARIAN Orion Syndicate agent from 7x11 "Prodigal Daughter." He sits firmly in the captain's chair, suave and calm, a legitimate businessman.

BOKAR

Bad day, Malic?

Malic is surprised and worried to see Bokar here. He steps forward, attempting to look brave and confident.

MALIC

Bokar... what are you doing here?

BOKAR

Oh, just some... unfinished
business.

Bokar stands from the chair, and strides calm and confident towards Malic. Bokar's enforcers make sure to keep their weapons trained on Malic's thugs.

BOKAR

A former client of ours on New
Sydney was kind enough to inform
us that you were out of prison,
and making a nuisance of yourself
here on Deep Space Nine.

Consequently, I have been tasked
by the Syndicate with...

(searches for
the word)

...“reconnecting” with you.

MALIC

It wasn't my fault, Bokar. I was
tricked by those aliens, by those
damned Ferengi, by that damned
female...

BOKAR

(waves it away)

The Syndicate isn't interested in
your issues with women, Malic.
What the Syndicate is interested
in, is failure. If there's one
thing the Syndicate disapproves
of, Malic... it's failure.

Bokar feigns nakedly insincere concern for Malic, who tries
his best to hide the shudder of fear...

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

The excitement is over, most of the people have gone.

As the last few leave, Ro steps up to Quark. He looks up at
her, wondering what horrors she is about to send his way...

QUARK

What is the problem now?

After a pause, she leans down and places a soft, tender
KISS on his brow. Then she turns and walks to the door,
leaving him a bit confused.

QUARK

Laren...

She turns back to him.

QUARK

I didn't do this to impress you.

RO

I know. And that's what makes it
even more impressive.

With a smile, she turns and leaves.

Ending on Quark's bemused but happy face...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW