

Star Trek Mary Leakey Script

By Todd Edwards

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

A previously unseen Federation ship travels through warp. Viewed from above, the ship appears to follow the standard saucer, engineering hull, and twin nacelles design, but as the view orbits down, we see that the saucer section is, in fact, a sphere with a massive deflector dish that is aimed downward. The ship is designed for system surveys, not for speed or fighting.

GROBERU (V.O.)

Lead xenoarcheologist's log,  
stardate 53,938.21. A new ship. A  
new job. Rule of acquisition 103  
would seem to apply. I'm still  
getting to know my way around the  
*Mary Leakey*. It's an older  
Beagle-class survey ship, but it's  
a sign of future profit that the  
ship is named after a famous  
archeologist.

She sighs.

I'm also still getting to know my  
team, but I'm sure once we get a  
chance to dig into the fieldwork,  
we'll turn into a cohesive group.  
Hopefully the fact that I'm a  
Ferengi doesn't get in the way.

Beat.

The *Mary Leakey* is en route to the Taitale system to follow up on a survey performed by the U.S.S. *Ceylon* that showed evidence of an ancient civilization. Astrometrics predicts that the late stage star will run out of hydrogen for fusion and experience an abrupt core collapse in six days. The resulting transition to a red giant and accompanying radial expansion will engulf the inner planets, including all evidence of the ancient civilization on Taitale Prime. Our task is to gather as much data and as many artifacts as we can before they're lost forever.

EXT. SPACE

The U.S.S. *Mary Leakey* warps into orbit above a planet.

CAPTAIN LIU (V.O.)

We've entered orbit over Taitale Prime. Commence preliminary scans and launch probes. Lieutenant Groberu, report to my ready room.

INT. READY ROOM - DAY

LIEUTENANT GROBERU, a young Ferengi woman in a blue science uniform, enters and stands in front of an uncluttered desk in a small and utilitarian ready room. CAPTAIN LIU HONG, a male human wearing a red command uniform sits across the desk and reads a PADD. He has a calm, fatherly demeanor as he leans back in his desk chair. COMMANDER T'AVE, a female

Vulcan wearing a blue science uniform stands at attention across the desk from him. Like a typical Vulcan, she radiates an air of "all business". Captain Liu hands the PADD to T'Ave and looks up at Groberu, who waits nervously for her orders.

LIU

Lieutenant Groberu, when I reviewed xenoarcheological candidates with Commander T'Ave, she was dubious about giving the position to a Ferengi. There aren't many in Starfleet, and our "transactions" haven't always gone well.

GROBERU

Sir, if you give me a chance to explain-

Liu cuts her off with a quick gesture and a smile.

LIU

No need. You wouldn't be here if I didn't believe you could do the job.

GROBERU

I appreciate your confidence in me, sir, and I can assure you that I only care about artifacts because of the value they add to our understanding of lost cultures, not their value in gold pressed latinum.

LIU

I know you'll do well, Lieutenant.  
That said, Commander T'Ave is my  
Chief Science Officer, so you  
report to her, not me, and she has  
very high standards.

T'AVE

Lieutenant, you are a newly  
promoted officer, and you are a  
newcomer to the ship, so I would  
expect you to try to "outdo  
yourself" while leading your first  
away mission. Please do not.  
Standard protocol is the proven  
way to achieve maximum efficiency.  
I expect you to follow it.

T'Ave passes the PADD to Groberu.

GROBERU

(Formally)

Acknowledged, Commander.

(Less Formally)

Everything will be by the rules.

INT. ARCHEOLOGY LAB - DAY

The fairly standard Starfleet lab has tall ceilings and lots of storage bins along the walls. There's a scanning platform and workbenches around. Groberu speaks with LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE LIDRA ORD, a gender-doesn't-really-matter joined Trill who is very knowledgeable but doesn't feel the need to show off. They understand that the shorter-lived species need to figure things out on their own. Ord is content to focus on their own learning and offer advice only when asked or urgently needed. In the background, Technician ZOOK TERPIN, a gnomarian male (a race of spacefaring humanoids who visited Earth in the past and accidentally caused the "gnome"

mythology) and Technician VORI ZH'ZAVETH, a female Andorian, work in the background packing equipment into containers.

GROBERU

(Pretty much  
talking to  
herself.)

Once we make camp, we'll only have five days while the captain takes the *Leakey* out to do the detailed scans of the other inner planets. They'll be on the far side of the star, so we'll be on our own. Rule of Acquisition 240: Time, like latinum, is a highly limited commodity.

ORD

So... standard protocol?

GROBERU

Right. Sorry, Ord, you know what to do. I'm a little nervous since it's my first mission as the one in charge.

ORD

No worries. The techs and I will make sure everything goes well.

VORI

Yeah, boss. We're looking forward to heading planetside for a camping trip.

GROBERU

We won't have to rough it at least. When I transferred on board, I brought along my custom habitat. It's not much, but it has decent lab equipment, a holo scanner, and best of all, a class two replicator.

ORD

Wait 'til you try Zook's camp coffee. You'll never go back to that replicated swill.

ZOOK

My cousin hauls specialty foods, and he gets me fresh beans at wholesale.

GROBERU

Hah! Lookin' forward to it.

ORD

The crew and I will get the shuttle truck packed and ready to fly.

GROBERU

Thanks. Wait, the what?

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The *Unimog*, a Starfleet shuttle that has been modified to resemble a pickup truck, launches from the dorsal shuttle bay and heads towards the planet. A blue force shield in the back holds several cargo containers in place.

GROBERU (V.O.)

This thing can't be Starfleet  
issue, right?

ZOOK (V.O.)

Meh. I like to tinker.

EXT. BASE CAMP - DAY

A once lush valley nestled in a rugged mountain range has become a high desert as the surface temperature rose over the years and fires ravaged the area. On the positive side, the fires revealed the remains of a tower that toppled many years ago. On the negative side, ashen dust swirls in the wind and covers everything. The *Unimog* is parked near a small Federation habitat. Cargo containers and digging/scanning implements are arranged around the campsite.

INT. HABITAT

Groberu, Ord, Zook, and Vori stand around a holodisplay at one side of the habitat. More scanning equipment and work benches fill the middle, and the far side has a small replicator, dining table, and four chairs.

ORD

So, tell me, Groberu, is there a particular reason we set up camp out here beyond the outskirts of the city ruins rather than in the center? T'Ave usually wants things done by the rules.

GROBERU

Oh, we're doing things by the rules. Rule of Acquisition 9: Opportunity plus instinct equals profit. I studied the scans from the *Ceylon*, and there's evidence that there was once a structure here with a few deep chambers. It's far enough away from the main city to be an anomaly, but it's in a valley, which means it's not likely a military stronghold. There's no signs the terrain was altered to support agriculture, so I don't suspect a storage facility. Besides, it's too far from the city to be visited regularly. All of that suggests a religious building of some sort. My lobes tell me that's where we're going to find something special.

Ord shrugs.

ORD

I'm game for anything, but isn't there a Rule of Acquisition about sucking up to your boss?



GROBERU

Rule of Acquisition 33: It never hurts to suck up to the boss. But trust me. If we can get a quick win, we'll be able to requisition more people and really document this culture before it's destroyed. If we don't find any compelling artifacts before the *Mary Leakey* returns from their scans, this culture will be erased from history.

ORD

Works for me! Where do we start?

GROBERU

Gather the scanners. The entrance to the underground chambers should be nearby. If we can get in, it shouldn't take long to find the artifacts we need.

INT. ALIEN TUNNELS

(The camera flies through carved rock tunnels with alien symbols and debris, lit by Starfleet light sticks dropped on the ground like breadcrumbs until it finally enters a large chamber with a golden statue of an unknown alien life form.) Groberu and team stand around the golden statue setting up transporter pattern enhancers.

ORD

Gotta hand it to your lobes, L.T., they were spot on.

Groberu eagerly watches the work and taps her fingers together in a stereotypical Ferengi way.

GROBERU

I can smell profit in the winds!

ZOOK

Sorry, that was me. Takes my system a while to adjust to camp food.

There's an awkward pause as everyone looks at him.

I'll just head back up top...so I can run the transporter...when we're ready.

Beat.

OK, I'm going up now.

EXT. SPACE

The *Mary Leakey* slowly passes over a different planet, scanners working away.

INT. MARY LEAKEY BRIDGE

T'Ave works on her console to the rear and starboard of the captain's chair. Two red uniformed ensigns sit at the pilot and nav stations, and a security officer works at the console to the rear and port of the captain's chair. Liu sits in the captain's chair sipping hot tea and reading a PADD. He looks up and over his shoulder at T'Ave.

LIU

Commander, any news from our new lead xenoarcheologist?

T'AVE

Her daily log entries show progress. She chose an...unconventional location for her dig, but they have found evidence of an underground structure that may provide informative artifacts.

LIU

The lieutenant is showing some initiative. Excellent.

T'AVE

That is one way to describe it, sir.

INT. ANCIENT CHAMBER - DAY

The statue is now surrounded by all sorts of scanning equipment and transporter pattern enhancers. Groberu taps her comm badge.

GROBERU

Groberu to Zook, are you ready to transport?

There's a slight delay.

HARROL (O.S.)

(Disguising voice  
to sound like Zook)

Uh, yeah. All set here. We're all good up here.

GROBERU

What happened to your voice?

VORI

(side comment to  
Ord)

Did he say "we"?

Ord shrugs.

HARROL (O.S.)

(Pretending to be  
Zook)

There's a lot of dust--

He makes an obviously fake cough.

--up here now. Storm blowing  
in...uh...would explain it.

GROBERU

Will it affect the transport?

HARROL (O.S.)

(Still pretending  
to be Zook)

Nope! Transport away!

GROBERU

Copy that. Engage transporter!

Lights swirl around the statue and it disappears. The team  
cheers!

GROBERU

Zook, did the statue make it  
safely?

No response.

GROBERU

Zook? Respond, please.

Still no response.

GROBERU

Weird, let's get back up top and see what's going on.

EXT. HABITAT - DAY

The team hurries back into the habitat.

INT. HABITAT

Groberu and the others jog in to find Zook sprawled out on the floor next to an empty transporter pad. The room is in disarray and it appears that someone has rifled through the place.

The team rushes over to check on Zook. Ord grabs a medical tricorder and scans him. They give him a hypospray and he wakes up.

GROBERU

Zook! Are you OK? What happened?

ZOOK

Uuuuhg. Those jerks stunned me.

GROBERU

Who stunned you?

ZOOK

Thieves. There were two guys. The big one was an Orion. The little one was a Bolian.

GROBERU

Orion and Bolian? Uhhhh...

ZOOK

Yeah. They beamed in when I was setting up for the transport. They must have stunned me. Man, I hate getting stunned.

VORI

Hey, boss, over here. I can pull up the security footage.

Zook goes and gets a replicated coffee while the others go to the computer terminal to view the footage.

The two thieves beam in, confront Zook, and then phaser him. The Bolian works on the computer terminal near the transporter pad, while the Orion appears to be talking on Zook's comm badge. The relic appears briefly on the pad, and then disappears again. The thieves step onto the pad and transport away.

GROBERU

(Mumbles  
incoherently)

ORD

What's that, L.T.?

GROBERU

Nothing. Check the transporter log for the destination, and scan for residual tetryon emissions at that location.

Vori taps the controls for a few beats.

VORI

Wow, you're right. There's a trail of low-level tetryon emissions leading off towards the system asteroid belt.

GROBERU

I knew it.

ORD

Knew what?

Groberu shakes her head.

GROBERU

No time. I need you all to stay here and collect any artifacts and data you can at the site. I'm going to follow them and get our statue back.

ORD

Sorry, L.T., I'm coming with.

GROBERU

No. I'll be fine.

ORD

No can do, L.T. You're responsible for the mission, but I'm responsible for you, and I'm not letting you go into danger alone. Vori, Zook, head back into the tunnels and grab what you can. L.T. and I will be back before the *Mary Leakey* returns.

GROBERU

Fine. If T'Ave calls, bluff. Don't tell her what happened or that we're not on site.

VORI

Got it, boss.

ZOOK

Be sure to stun them an extra time for me.

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

The *Unimog* takes off. Shortly after liftoff, the cargo shield flickers off, and the lone cargo container tumbles out to the ground in a puff of dust.

EXT. SPACE

The *Mary Leakey* orbits a moon and performs another scan.

INT. BRIDGE

Another boring day on the bridge, same as before.

LIU

Commander T'Ave, have you ever witnessed a star reaching the Schönberg-Chandrasekhar limit?

T'AVE

No, sir.

LIU

(Excited)

It's gonna be pretty cool. I mean, that's my prediction at least. I've never seen it either.



T'AVE

Indeed.

EXT. ASTEROIDS

The *Unimog* deftly navigates its way through an asteroid field.

INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT

Ord pilots the shuttle while Groberu frets.

ORD

So, how do you know the thieves?

GROBERU

Why do you think I know them?

ORD

Please. I've lived nine lifetimes,  
and you're not that subtle. You  
can trust me.

Beat.

GROBERU

Okay, but promise you won't share  
this.

ORD

Deal.

GROBERU

They work for my father. He's...  
not an entirely legitimate  
businessman.

ORD

And you don't want his reputation  
to ruin your chances to advance in  
Starfleet?

GROBERU

Exactly.

ORD

Don't worry, your secret is safe  
with me.

GROBERU

Thanks. My father's still mad that  
I didn't take up the family  
business. I had to lie and tell  
him I wanted to learn archeology  
so I could scam collectors, but  
really, I don't care about profit.  
I just want to uncover the secrets  
of forgotten people.

ORD

I hear ya on that. I was a  
diplomat in my last life. This  
time around, I only want to work  
with people who have been dead for  
at least a thousand years. Present  
company excluded, of course. As  
for parents, I-

An ALARM BEEPS, and Ord taps the control panel in response.

We've got a winner! Sensors have  
picked up a Ferengi freighter. The  
trail leads right to it.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD

The *Unimog* comes to a halt face to face with a small Ferengi freighter, the *Converted Reserve*.

GROBERU (V.O.)

I always told him that modding engines with tetryon boosters made them faster but easier to track. I'm sure he's expecting us though, so no use being sneaky. I'm going to have to out Ferengi a Ferengi.

INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT

ORD

You mean "we're going to have to".

GROBERU

Go team!

Groberu taps the controls.

Federation shuttle *Unimog* to the Ferengi freighter *Disappointing Father*, return our stolen property at once.

MALK, a Ferengi businessman, appears on screen.

MALK

Oh, daughter, you wound me with your words. And after all those years carting you around to all those digs. So much lost profit. He shakes his head.

GROBERU

How many artifacts did you steal  
and sell to unlicensed  
"collectors"? You made plenty of  
latinum.

Malk shrugs and puts his hands up in a "forgive me"  
gesture.

MALK

Trinkets hardly worth my effort,  
but at least it was enough to keep  
fuel in the tank. Tell me,  
daughter, what brings you to me  
now?

GROBERU

You know what. Your goons stunned  
my colleague and stole a statue we  
had recovered from Taitale Prime.

HARROL, a heavysset Orion with tattoos and a wispy ring of  
hair, shoves his head into view from the side, pushing Malk  
out of the way.

HARROL

Goons? That hurts. We used to  
babysit you!

GROBERU

Hey, Harrol, long time no see.  
Why'd you stun Zook?

HARROL

Gnomarians are tricky. If we'd  
just tied him up, he would've  
escaped and interrupted us.

MALK shoves Harrol off screen.

MALK

Enough catching up! Rule of Acquisition 219: "Possession is eleven-tenths of the law." The statue is mine.

GROBERU

Don't quote the Rules of Acquisition at me, father. I need that statue back. Now.

MALK

Well, I might be willing to sell you MY statue, but, oh wait, Starfleet doesn't use latinum. How ever do you plan to pay for it?

GROBERU

(Exasperated)

Fine. What do you want in exchange?

MALK

I want you to leave Starfleet and come back home. Who will take over the business when I retire? Harrol? Please.

HARROL (O.S.)

Hey!

GROBERU

Never. When will you understand that I don't care about profit?

MALK

Bite your tongue! Besides, I know you. You want a reputation. Same thing, though you might need to take some extra steps to turn that into latinum. Still, I salute you. You're playing the long game. Me, I'm in it for the quick bar. These goons don't work for free.

HARROL (O.S.)

Hey!

GROBERU

Well, then that statue won't fetch much. Unknown culture from an unknown planet, and besides, we've already scanned it and sent the info to our ship. It's cataloged now. Stolen property is worth much less.

MALK

Rule of Acquisition 41: "Profit is its own reward."

Beat.

GROBERU

What if I could offer you a better deal? I want that piece, so I can show something concrete from that society. I can give you a crate full of smaller pieces that we haven't cataloged yet.

MALK

Rule of Acquisition 110:

"Exploitation begins at home." Why should I trust you?

GROBERU

Rule of Acquisition 6: "Never let family stand in the way of opportunity."

MALK

Oh, so you do remember your education after all.

GROBERU

Rule of Acquisition 189: "Let others keep their reputation. You keep their money." The statue you stole is worth more to me for my reputation. The others are worth more to you as profit. It's simple business.

MALK

I'm impressed, daughter. Starfleet hasn't softened you as much as I had worried. But I still don't trust you. Bring back those artifacts and if they impress me, I'll consider your offer. You have twelve hours before we leave the system, and if we detect your ship snooping our way...no deal!

The screen goes blank.

Beat

ORD

I sure hope Vori and Zook found  
something good.

EXT. SPACE

The *Mary Leakey* orbits a different planet and performs  
another scan.

INT. BRIDGE

Another boring day on the bridge, same as before.

LIU

Commander T'Ave, have you ever met  
a Q?

T'AVE

No, sir.

LIU

(Sad)

Yeah, me neither.

EXT. PLANET VALLEY - DAY

The *Unimog* sits parked next to the habitat.

GROBERU (V.O.)

That's it? That's all you  
recovered? I thought for sure  
there would be plenty of things  
laying around.

INT. HABITAT

The four archeologists stand around a table with a handful  
of small artifacts that aren't that impressive.



ZOOK

We did find plenty of wall carvings, though. They're all scanned. What if we replicated some fake panels using the scans?

GROBERU

Won't work. Replicated fakes are easy for an appraiser to spot. Are there any promising chambers you might have missed?

ZOOK

I mean, maybe? We sent drones in to scan, but they could have missed something. Cave-ins blocked a lot of the tunnels. There could be untouched chambers down there, but it would take time to clear the rubble if we wanted to explore in more detail.

GROBERU

Hmmm, we'll need to get creative.

Beat.

GROBERU

Vori, how good are you at hacking the transporter? Could you reprogram it to beam away parts of a piece of rubble but leave the rest? You know, to create a fake that's made of authentic materials?

VORI

Oooh, I like your thinking. I could patch in the scans and make a rough version, but I'm talking real rough. There won't be great resolution.

ORD

What if we routed the pattern buffer through the replicator? One of my past selves did something like that once for an art installation on Gallus Prime.

VORI

That could work. Yeah, but we'd have to create a data bridge..

Ord and Vori trail off in a deeply technical discussion, each alternating pointing at the screen and describing some trekno babble.

GROBERU

Right, you two make that happen, and Zook, come with me.

ZOOK

OK, boss. Where are we off to?

GROBERU

Back into the tunnels to collect rubble!

INT. RELIC CHAMBER

Inside the relic chamber, Groberu and Zook load rubble onto the statue's stand where the transport pattern enhancers are still set up.

ZOOK

Pardon my curiosity, but those thieves appeared to know you. They asked if it was your dig. Do you know them?

Groberu sighs.

GROBERU

Listen, I've been trying to hide it, but it sounds like that's not going to work. My family is into some shady dealings, but I am not involved. Those guys work for my father, and it seems like he followed us in order to steal our artifacts. Ord knows. I'll tell Vori when we return. Please don't tell the captain or anyone else. I should be the one to do it.

Zook shrugs.

ZOOK

Fine by me. Don't let it rattle you though. You don't pick your family, so no one's going to hold it against you.

GROBERU

I hope not.

ZOOK

Trust me. The captain is an all around good guy. T'Ave seems like a hardass, but she respects results above everything, and your bet paid off.

He waves his hands to indicate the relic chamber.

GROBERU

True, but we lost our prize.  
Without that, we just have scans.

Groberu taps her com badge and it BEEPS in response.

The rubble is ready to transport.

INT. HABITAT

Groberu inspects the first fake relic with a tricorder,  
while the rest of the team works to make more.

GROBERU

Wow, I'm impressed. If I didn't  
know better, I'd think this was  
real. There are a few giveaways,  
and it won't stand up to a real  
archeologist, but it should fool  
my father's crew. Nicely done,  
team!

ORD

Fabricating xenoarcheological  
fakes to fool a thief...

They shake their head.

ORD

...we couldn't have planned a  
better first mission team bonding  
experience!

VORI and ZOOK

(In unison)

Go team!

GROBERU

Awww. Thanks!

Beat.

Now, we don't have much time  
before the stellar core collapse.  
Ord, we'll take the fakes to  
father's ship. Vori and Zook, you  
pack up and prep for pickup.

ORD

Do you think your father will try  
to double-cross us?

GROBERU

He's a Ferengi.

ORD

Right.

They pick up a phaser.

But I'll set it to stun. He's  
family after all.

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

Once again, the *Unimog* lifts off, this time with a cargo  
container in place. The shuttle truck soars into the sky  
and once it reaches space, it warps out with a flash.

EXT. ASTEROIDS

The *Unimog* warps in and stops nose to nose with the  
*Converted Reserve*.

INT SHUTTLE COCKPIT

Groberu taps the console.

GROBERU

Clear the cargo bay, I'm beaming  
over with the relics.

She taps the console again to cut off the call before her  
father can respond.

ORD

What's the plan? Should I hide in  
the container and come out firing?

GROBERU

No. They'll scan anything we send.  
I'll beam over with a sample, and  
you stay here with the rest.

ORD

I don't like you being there  
alone. I know they're family, but  
they did stun Zook. I'll keep the  
comm channel open, and at the  
first sign of danger, I'm beaming  
over, stuns blazing.

GROBERU

We'll call that Plan B.

She picks up a fake relic.

GROBERU

One to beam over.

INT. CARGO HOLD

The cargo hold of the *Converted Reserve* is painted in  
shades of reddish brown. The floor is a grill, and the  
lighting is bad. Crates from various Alpha Quadrant  
factions are stored haphazardly to the sides, and there's a  
table with equipment on it at the center. Malk, Harrol, and

DARR, a scrawny Bolian guy with tattoos and piercings,  
stand next to the table.

MALK

(Hard to tell if  
truthful or lying)

Hello, Daughter. So nice to see  
you in person again. It's been too  
long. Your mother and I worry  
about you.

GROBERU

Right. You stopped caring when I  
left for Starfleet Academy. Let's  
get to business. The star's  
impending core collapse doesn't  
give us time to rehash old  
arguments

MALK

You wound me! But so be it.  
Where's the relic?

Groberu places the relic on the table. Darr, with an eye  
piece, looks it over in detail, then places it on a  
scanning bed. After a moment it dings.

DARR

(Giggling and  
giving a wink)

Looks like the real thing, boss!

Groberu breathes a sigh of relief.

MALK

Hmmm, check for nanometer  
periodicity along the carved  
edges. Just for fun.

Groberu's eyes widen with alarm. Darr recalibrates the device and runs it again. This time the device emits a LOW BUZZ, like a quiz show contestant getting a question wrong.

DARR

(In mock surprise)

Well look at that...it's a fake!  
She's double-crossing us!

HARROL

Hey!

GROBERU

Uhh, I can explain-

Before she can finish, Ord beams in and stuns Harrol with a single phaser blast.

HARROL

(weakly as he falls  
over)

Heeeyyyy...

Darr pulls a pistol on Ord and they have a standoff.

MALK

Now, now, no need for any more  
shooting. He's not dead, right?

ORD

Just stunned. Returning the favor  
for Zook.



MALK

OK, so we're even. Now let's get back to business. This "relic" is a fake. A very convincing fake, but a fake nonetheless. Daughter, I'm both impressed and upset.

Darr lowers his pistol, but Ord stays ready for trouble.

DARR

I told you it was a good idea to bug the habitat.

MALK

Indeed you did. Indeed you did. You always were the clever one. Now, daughter, whatever are we going to do about this deal? I can't very well trade the real thing for these fakes.

GROBERU

Nothing has changed. The relic is still worth less to you than me, and we're the only ones who know these are theoretical recreations based on scan data rather than the real thing. You can still sell them. Rule of Acquisition 212: "A good lie is easier to believe than the truth."

MALK

I don't know. It'll be hard to sell them since this culture is unknown, and the pieces aren't that impressive on their own. The big piece is impressive regardless.

GROBERU

If I have the larger piece, I can get my commander to send more people to help with the dig. We'll be able to catalog the culture well enough to publish in a major journal. Rich collectors love these niche finds.

MALK

Is that all you can offer?

GROBERU

The star's going to wipe out everything in a few days. You don't have time to sleep on this deal.

Beat.

MALK

Fine, but I'm taking a loss.

Ord lowers their pistol.

ORD

"A fool and his money are soon parted."

MALK

Good point. We'll be able to move these pieces quickly. I like you. Wanna join my crew?

GROBERU

Father!

Ord taps their belly.

ORD

I'm enjoying Starfleet this life, but maybe next time.

MALK

Your loss. OK, let's get this trade done. Time's wasting! You owe me a famous culture!

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD

The *Unimog* warps away with the relic in the back.

EXT. SPACE

The *Mary Leakey* holds station at a safe distance and observes as the star expands to engulf the planet and moons. Its color shifts from yellow to red as it grows.

GROBERU (V.O.)

Lead Xenoarcheologist's log, supplemental: With the recovery of the large statue, Commander T'Ave said my deductive reasoning about where to focus our search was "sound". I understand that's high praise coming from her.

She allocated extra crew members and tools so we could excavate the sealed off chambers. We managed to find a room covered with text etched onto the walls, which we scanned for future study. Hopefully we'll be able to decipher the writing and learn more about the society who's planet is now engulfed in the expanding corona of a dying star.

I hope the people were able to escape the confines of their home and move on to better things.

Beat.

I spoke with captain Liu about my family, though I left out a few details about the origin of the pieces I traded to recover the statue. The team was right, he didn't hold it against me, but he did say that it might be better to avoid advertising my family connections.

INT. ARCHEOLOGY LAB

Groberu inspects a Ferengi statue, shaking her head.

GROBERU

Speaking of escaping the confines of home, I scanned the family heirloom my parents gave me when I went to Starfleet Academy and found a subspace tracking beacon inside. I've disabled it and can now get on with my life without my parent's influence.

EXT. WARP FIELD

The *Converted Reserve* cruises at warp.

INT. CARGO HOLD

Malk sits at the table talking to someone on a viewscreen while showing them one of the fake relics.

MALK

The attention to detail is amazing. If we hadn't known what to look for, I doubt we'd have spotted that it was a fake.

(POV shifts over his shoulder to show the screen) On screen is a RINAGA, a modern Ferengi woman (i.e. fully clothed) and Groberu's mother.

RINAGA

I knew Starfleet wouldn't be able to depreciate her Ferengi spirit.

MALK

She's got her own plans and won't let anyone stop her. She gets that from you.

RINAGA

That's why you love us.

MALK

And that's why it doesn't matter  
that she found the tracking  
device. She'll succeed. No need to  
keep tabs on her anymore. We did  
well.

RINAGA

We did indeed.

Beat.

Now back to business. Do you have  
any buyers in mind for those  
pieces?

FADE OUT.