

<http://www.st-minutiae.com/academy/literature329/427.txt>

INT. QUARK'S

QUARK, ROM, and three of their Ferengi employees, including PEL, are seated around a table playing tongo, a popular Ferengi game best described as a cross between poker, mah-jongg, and craps. As with most games, the players' actions seem incomprehensible to any observer unfamiliar with its rules. The Ferengi appear to be simultaneously tossing in and pulling out strips of latinum from a central pot, throwing down oval shaped playing cards and frantically rolling dice; all with a level of intensity and reckless pace that is closer to combat than recreation.

Suddenly the betting abruptly ceases and all eyes turn suspiciously to a sixth, previously unseen, player seated to the right of Quark.

Interpretation: In the episode it did not seem that there were any characters taking money out of the pot. There were also simultaneous deposits out of turn going into the pot which I could not explain in terms of the rules.

3 NEW ANGLE

close on DAX, the only non-Ferengi at the table, and apparently the equivalent of the bank for this round of play. She studies her hand carefully, shrewdly appraises the expectant faces surrounding her.

4 ANGLE ON THE TABLE

A smiling Quark leans closer over to Dax.

QUARK: The risk is to you, Lieutenant.

Interpretation: It is your turn.

QUARK: (to Dax) So what's it gonna be? Confront? Evade? Acquire? Retreat?

Dax reaches her decision. She throws down her cards and rolls her dice.

DAX: (a challenge) Confront.

The players excitedly check their hands against Dax's. As the truth dawns on them, they issue disgruntled groans.

Interpretation: Dax had 3 cards in hand matching 3 cards on the table and was confident she could roll a 3<sup>rd</sup> match for 1 or more of them.

DAX: (triumphant) Yes.

She rakes in her winnings.

DAX: All right everyone. The opening risk is five strips of latinum. The purchase is at three. The sell at eight.

The players begin another round of frenzied betting.

Interpretation: Setting initial Sell Rate to 8 and Purchase/Buy rate to 3. Sell - Purchase/Buy = Risk of 5

Another after-hours tongo game is in progress. Dax, Quark, Rom, Pel and the other usual players are joined by Zek (with Maihar'du stationed behind him as always). The betting is fierce.

Ferengi 1: Stops the wheel and says Evade

Ferengi 2 & 3: Fold

ROM: Evade.

PEL: Evade.

QUARK: Retreat.

ZEK: Acquire.

DAX: Confront.

All cards are exposed. Dax reaches for the pot. Zek holds up a restraining hand.

ZEK: Did I say acquire? I meant evade.

DAX: You said acquire.

ZEK: But I meant evade.

Quark tries to play peacemaker.

QUARK: Why don't we just play the round over.

ROM: That sounds fair.

ZEK: (to Rom) Who asked you?

Interpretation: The players suspect DAX has a good hand but want Zek to win. The Evade is so Dax cannot Confront them. Quark's Retreat is just to see what happens (perhaps he has already

used his Evade Token). Zek then declares Acquire not expecting anyone to challenge him until Dax does. If Zek had Evaded then Dax could not confront him for another turn.

<http://www.st-minutiae.com/academy/literature329/540.txt>

It's after hours and DAX and QUARK are in the middle of a heated tongo game with four N.D. Ferengi. The stakes are large and the game has moved into the tense, take-no-prisoners phase.

(Wheel is spinning) Ferengi1 deposits latinum, Ferengi2 deposits Latinum, Ferengi1 deposits more latinum. Dax then stops the wheel.

DAX: Sell at twenty.

QUARK: Is that a joke?

DAX: Do I look like I'm joking?

Quark studies her face for a beat, then glances at his cards before making his next move.

QUARK: Evade.

Interpretation: Dax is selling a card at the cost of 20. There are many reasons Quark could be concerned. The fact that he evades could imply that Quark suspects she is building something that looks strong and isn't ready for her to call a Confront. He may just be reeling her in as we see later.

It's Dax's turn again.

DAX: A sale at fifty... and I'm buying at one hundred.

She spins the wheel as everyone at the table throws down their cards in frustration except Quark, who won't be cowed.

QUARK: Pretty big talk for a woman who's lost fifty strips.

Interpretation: The rate of the sell cost has been increased from 20 to 50 since her last turn which can be considered a large amount and the buy rate is set at 100 which is very high but Dax chooses to buy a card regardless. Although it is not entirely evident from the clip there may have been a card taken from the Free Exchange. This would mean that Dax had a key card hidden in the Free Exchange. Therefore the sell was to move a card from the Free

Exchange to the Floor and then she buys it to add that card to the floor. Her hand is now set.

DAX: Afraid I can't cover my bets?

QUARK: Perish the thought. I just hate to kick someone when they're down.

(beat)

I'll buy at a hundred. And confront.

Interpretation: Quark buys the key card he was waiting for knowing that Dax has her hand ready as well but also believing his hand will be stronger. He then confronts Dax to see what she has.

DAX: Well, if you're going to kick me, I'm going to have to kick back.

She lays down her cards with a look of triumph. Quark looks crushed. Worf lets out a Klingon battle cry of victory from the bar --

Dax begins to rake in her winnings, but Quark stops her.

QUARK: I'm afraid I'm going to have to disappoint all your fans.

He lays down the cards.

DAX: (oh, no) A Full Consortium.

Interpretation: Dax has a strong hand but a Full Consortium is even stronger.

O'BRIEN: Luck has nothing to do with it. Tongo is a game of strategy and calculated risk. Pull up a chair.

Interpretation: Tongo should be based on less luck and more strategy

A few hours have passed. O'Brien has his jacket off and is frowning at the cards in his hand, while Bashir is unruffled, but bored. (NOTE: They're using chips instead of latinum.)

Interpretation: If we look at this Tongo game as a version made for Humans then the bingo chips being used coincide with the chips used in the show.

O'BRIEN: All right. I'll buy at... thirty. With a sale at thirty-five...

He spins the wheel.

BASHIR: Buy at thirty-five, sell at one-fifty, and index the margin at ten

percent.

O'BRIEN: Index the margin... ?

He picks up the PADD and looks up the rule.

BASHIR: Miles, give it up. This just isn't your game.

O'BRIEN: (determined) We'll see about that. Evade.

He spins the wheel again.

BASHIR: Well, for one thing you can't play tongo. Confront.

He lays down his cards and O'Brien reacts in frustration.

Interpretation: With only two players present I rationalize the characters interchanging the terms Confront and Acquire. A Confront can be evaded but an Acquire cannot.

QUARK Don't try to scare me with that genetically engineered intellect of yours, doctor. Tongo is more than just number-crunching. They have yet to create the computer that can master this game.

Interpretation: Tongo must have elements that would be challenging for a computer to incorporate such as table talk, moving cards just to deceive others and the luck of the dice.

A few hours later. Bashir has taken off his jacket and rolled up his sleeves. Three of the N.D. Ferengi have dropped out of the game and are watching from the sidelines along with O'Brien. Bashir and Quark have the biggest piles of money left on the table and it's quickly becoming a two-man game. Quark is dealing the cards. Bashir only glances at his hand, then puts it down.

BASHIR Buy at three hundred and sell at three fifty.

He spins the wheel and when it finally stops, the N.D. throws down his cards in disgust and gets up from the table. Quark isn't fazed at all.

Interpretation: Just like poker, you can't play if you can't pay and the game has gotten up to ridiculously high amounts forcing other players to fold.

QUARK Of course. Evade. (Quark tosses a card from his hand, draws a card and then tosses it and then draws 2 more cards)

Interpretation: Bashir is not paying attention at this point as Quark should have paid equal to the risk to Evade which would be 50. The Sell was at 350



QUARK She's a real heartbreaker, that one. (That strikes a chord in Bashir, and his focus is definitely no longer on the game from now on.

BASHIR That she is.

QUARK Leverage the buy-in and sell at five-fifty. You know, you go through a lot of ups and downs in my business. There're days when the profits are down and the customers are scarce... and you begin to wonder if you'll ever see another strip of latinum. But then Jadzia comes in... and flashes that smile of hers... and suddenly things don't seem so bad after all.

Interpretation: If the Buy In cost was something established at the beginning of a game then leveraging the Buy In is to use the Buy In amount. Therefore think of the initial Buy In amount as a minimum amount in one's initial savings account which can be utilized once when needed. Quark uses the original Buy In of 5 slips to offset the sell cost of 500. Quark again increases the sell cost and sells a card Bashir wants basically challenging Bashir to turn down one of his cards and weakening Bashir by draining his funds.

BASHIR I'll buy that five fifty. Discount the exchange at ten.

Interpretation: Bashir buys his card back at the Buy rate. The 550 he refers to is just the cost Quark paid to sell it and Bashir gets it back for less but still pays the cost. Bashir also decreases the exchange cost indicating he is ready to move a card across the board if needed.

He spins the wheel and there's a quiet beat before  
Quark picks up the thread of the conversation again.

QUARK And now she's married.

BASHIR (doesn't like the word) Married.

QUARK Out of reach. I'm converting my reserves and selling at six hundred.

Interpretation: Quark goes all in.

(spins the wheel)

you know what's really sad? What really keeps me awake at night? She's out of reach because we let her go.

BASHIR I suppose so. But... some things were just not meant to be.  
(distracted) Evade.

Quark draws a card and spins the wheel

(beat)

But on the other hand, what if that's just a convenient rationalization? What if deep down in our heart of hearts we both know that she's something unique, something that we may never see again -- a chance at true happiness... and we let her slip through our fingers. What if fifty years from now we each look back and say, "What a fool I was?" Confront.

Bashir is disturbed by the thought and it shows.

QUARK Doctor?

BASHIR Hmm?

QUARK (beat) Confront.

BASHIR Oh. Sorry.

He lays down the cards.

BASHIR Full consortium.

QUARK (lays down his cards) Total monopoly.

He rakes in the whole pot and Bashir is just waking up to the realization that he's lost everything.

BASHIR What?

Interpretation: Bashir is concerned about Quark's aggressive move and wants to avoid a confront call. Quark is looking for a card in the pile to strengthen his hand. Bashir is so distracted that he is taking cues from Quark and forgets his Evade. Instead of challenging he shows his cards only to find that his strong hand has been beaten by the strongest hand possible.

INT. QUARK'S - AFTER HOURS - CLOSE ON TONGO WHEEL

A slender hand tosses some strips of latinum into the central pot and gives it a spin.

DAX (O.S.) I risk eight strips, with a purchase at six and a sale of ten.

REVEAL DAX as she draws two oval cards from a deck and rolls a pair of dice. She looks up to discover the chair at the other end of the table is empty, her opponent's cards laid carelessly next to a small stack of latinum.

Interpretation: Dax paid the Evade cost which is equal to the risk and the risk cost itself totalling 8 strips. Sell of 10 - Buy of 6 = Risk of 4 and since cost to evade and draw a card is equal to the risk, the total cost being paid is 8.

QUARK Okay, okay!

He rushes to the table, gives his cards a cursory glance, discards two and draws three.

QUARK Who would have dreamed they'd strike feldomite on Parsion Three? The entire Sepian Commodities Exchange is in chaos -- everyone selling, prices falling --

He tosses some latinum into the pot, spins the wheel.

QUARK Evade!

Interpretation: Quark pays to Evade and should have drawn 2 cards instead of 3.

He dashes back to the monitor. Dax looks at her cards.

DAX Are you sure?

QUARK You heard me, evade!

DAX (shrugs) Okay.

She draws a card, smiles and lays her hand down.

DAX Confront.

Interpretation: Quark should have used his Evade token since Dax was ready to Confront but paying to evade does not protect from a confront.

NT. DAX'S QUARTERS

CLOSE ON Dax as she calculatingly surveys the tongo wheel. After a beat, she decides her next move.

DAX Retreat.

ADJUST TO SHOW Quark sitting across from her.

QUARK Acquire.

DAX Confront.

QUARK (pleased) Evade.

Quark wins the round, taking the pot.

Interpretation: This is a fun play on terms as Dax retreats playing it safe Quark declares Acquire to claim the pot but Dax faces the Acquire with a Confront and then Quark jokingly calls Evade to dodge the Confront but it isn't a real tactic.

QUARK                   The risk is at ten, with a purchase of seven and a sale of fourteen.

Dax concedes nothing.

DAX                     Nice move. But then again you have a knack for getting out of tight spots.

QUARK                   (pleased with himself) It's a gift.  
(onto something else)About my tongo wheel...

DAX                     It's no longer your tongo wheel. You gave it to me, remember?

QUARK                   I know I gave it to you, but at the time I thought --

DAX I'm not giving it back, Quark. And that's final.

She spins the wheel.

DAX Confront.

QUARK Retreat.

Interpretation: More joking between the friends.