

Eye of the Beholder

The alien envoy frowned. “I suppose that we still do not understand why you will sell us that planet so cheaply.”

The broker waved his hands. “I don’t know: because it’s cold? Wet? Vaguely radioactive? Sun’s the wrong color? Gravity’s too strong? And, worse of all: the native life’s amino acids are all left-handed, so my people can’t even digest any of the food. This is what we call a Hell Planet.” The broker paused. “No offense.”

“No offense was taken. We will agree to the terms.”

“Excellent! Have you picked a new name?”

“Yes.” The alien smiled. “New California.”

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