

STAR TREK GENERATIONS

SCREENPLAY

by

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STORY

by

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FINAL DRAFT
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"STAR TREK: GENERATIONS"

FADE IN:

- 1 EXT. SPACE (VFX-I) 1
A vast and sparkling starfield. A pinpoint of LIGHT appears and starts moving toward the camera... a small and distant cylindrical object tumbling end-over-end... As the object comes closer, we can see that it is a CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE -- Dom Perignon, 2265. Follow the bottle as it tumbles through space...
- 2 NEW ANGLE (VFX-I) 2
The champagne bottle SMASHES onto the bow of a Federation starship. FOLLOW the shards of glass from the bottle as they spread over the ship... revealing the name on the hull: USS ENTERPRISE NCC-1701-B.
- 3 ANGLE ON SPACEDOCK WINDOW 3
A large picture window overlooking the starship in its berth. The window is filled with people in Starfleet uniforms, applauding the christening of the ship (but we hear nothing).
- 4 INT. SPACEDOCK OBSERVATION ROOM (VFX-I) 4
The people are still applauding and we can see that they are looking out over the ship in its berth.
- 5 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B IN SPACEDOCK (VFX-I) 5
The great ship sits in spacedock in orbit around EARTH.
- 6 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 6
CLOSE ON A SET OF TURBOLIFT DOORS as they slide open to reveal Kirk, Scotty and Chekov. A BRIGHT LIGHT shines into their faces and they react. MOVE TO REVEAL -- that the bright light is coming from a futuristic CAMERA with a small bank of lights attached to it. The camera is a holographic recorder with two lenses and is worn on an operator's head. There are FOUR JOURNALISTS clustered in front of the Turbolift -- one associated with the camera, the others using PADDs to make notations.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Also clustered around the door are the BRIDGE CREW of the Enterprise-B. Everyone is APPLAUDING as Kirk and the others blink under the bright lights and ENTER the Bridge.

JOURNALISTS

(overlapping)

Captain Kirk, how does it feel to be back on the Enterprise Bridge... Captain, can I have a minute... Captain Scott, do you have any comment on... Commander Chekov... etc.

CAPTAIN JOHN HARRIMAN pushes through the crowd.

HARRIMAN

Excuse me, excuse me... there will be plenty of time for questions later...

The journalists edge away, and the cameraman moves to get a good angle.

HARRIMAN

(continuing, to all)

I'm Captain John Harriman. I'd like to welcome you all aboard.

KIRK

It's our pleasure.

Harriman is young, confident, eager -- this is his first command and he takes it very seriously.

HARRIMAN

I just want you to know how excited we all are to have a group of living legends with us on our maiden voyage.

(beat)

I remember reading about your missions when I was in grade school.

The original Enterprise officers all stop and give him a look. Harriman looks a little embarrassed -- he didn't mean to insult them. But Kirk gives him a little smile, lets it roll off.

KIRK

Well... may we have a look around?

HARRIMAN

Please... please.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

Chekov sees someone in the background, calls out to them.

CHEKOV

Demora!

Chekov moves off.

JOURNALIST

(breezy)

So, Captain... this is the first Starship Enterprise in thirty years without James T. Kirk in command. How do you feel about that?

The Journalist has unknowingly touched a nerve. Kirk's eyes flash for a moment -- the longer he's on this Bridge, the more he realizes he doesn't feel good about it at all. He tries to shrug it off with a smile.

KIRK

Just fine. I'm glad to be here to send her on her way...

He tries to move away from the Journalist, who dogs him.

JOURNALIST

What have you been doing since you retired?

KIRK

I've been... keeping busy.

At this point, Chekov approaches with a young (mid-twenties) attractive Asian female Ensign named DEMORA. She's youthful, enthusiastic, and she clearly has a close friendship with Chekov.

CHEKOV

(to Kirk)

Excuse me, Captain. I'd like you to meet the Helmsman of the Enterprise-B. Ensign Demora Sulu -- Captain James Kirk.

DEMORA

It's a pleasure to meet you, sir. My father's told me some... interesting stories about you.

Kirk is shocked. For a long moment, he stares at her in amazement.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (3)

6

KIRK

Your father... Hikaru Sulu is your
father?

DEMORA

Yes, sir.

CHEKOV

You met her once before, but she
was...

Chekov holds out his hand and indicates a very short
height.

KIRK

But that wasn't so long ago... it
couldn't have been more than...

CHEKOV

Twelve years, sir.

KIRK

Yes... well... congratulations,
Ensign. It wouldn't be the
Enterprise without a Sulu at the
helm.

DEMORA

Thank you, sir.

She turns and beams a wide smile at Chekov.

CHEKOV

I'm sure Hikaru must be very proud
of you.

DEMORA

I hope so. When you have a minute
I'd like to show you the new
inertial guidance system.

Demora moves off. Chekov gives Kirk a rueful smile.

CHEKOV

I was never that young.

KIRK

No... you were younger.

Chekov gives him a look and then joins Demora. Kirk
looks after them for a long beat. The expression on
his face changes from shock to sadness... something is
clearly bothering him.

Scotty moves over to Kirk, with a smile on his face.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (4)

6

SCOTTY
(to Kirk)
Damn fine ship if you ask me...

But Kirk's mind is still on Demora. He watches her as she moves to the Helmsman's position.

KIRK
You know, Scotty... it amazes me.

SCOTTY
And what would that be, sir?

KIRK
Sulu. When did he find the time for a family?

SCOTTY
It's like you always said -- if something's important enough, you make the time.

Kirk nods absently. Scotty realizes something...

SCOTTY
So... that's why you've been running around the galaxy like an eighteen year-old. Finding retirement a little lonely are we?

Kirk gives him a look.

KIRK
With that kind of tact, I'm glad you're an engineer and not a psychiatrist.

Harriman interrupts --

HARRIMAN
Excuse me, gentlemen... if you'll take your seats.

KIRK
Oh... of course.

7 NEW ANGLE

7

Revealing that three CHAIRS have been neatly arranged to one side.

Scotty, Kirk, and Chekov all take their seats. The Journalists take positions on the opposite side of the Bridge. Harriman moves to the command chair, and the rest of the Bridge crew go to their stations.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

HARRIMAN

(to all)

Prepare to leave spacedock. Aft thrusters ahead one quarter, port and starboard at station keeping.

(beat)

Captain Kirk, I'd be honored if you would give the order to get underway.

KIRK

No... no. Thank you.

HARRIMAN

Please, I insist.

All eyes on Kirk -- he has little choice. He stands uncomfortably... all eyes on him. There is a moment of anticipation.

KIRK

(to all)

Take us out.

Everyone breaks out into APPLAUSE. Kirk sits down in acute embarrassment and annoyance.

CHEKOV

(sotto)

Very good, sir.

SCOTTY

(sotto)

Brought a tear to my eye.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I)

8

The great ship majestically LEAVES the dock, and heads out into space, passing DIRECTLY OVERHEAD.

9 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE

9

A short time later. Kirk, Scotty, and Chekov are still in their chairs. The Cameraman has his camera trained on them as the Journalist continues to ask questions. The three men have smiles frozen on their faces for the camera.

JOURNALIST

Here you are, back on the Bridge of the starship Enterprise... how does it feel?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

Kirk, Scotty and Chekov exchange a look, each of them hoping that the other will answer. They all end up giving the same response.

SCOTTY
(overlapping)
Fine.

KIRK
(overlapping)
Just fine.

CHEKOV
(overlapping)
Fine.

Harriman clears his throat and steps in.

HARRIMAN
Well, Ladies and Gentlemen...
we've just cleared the asteroid
belt. Our course will take us out
beyond Pluto and then back to
spacedock... just a quick run
around the block.

JOURNALIST
(to Harriman)
Captain, will there be time to
conduct a test of the warp --

Suddenly the communications console starts to BEEP.
The COM OFFICER hits a few commands in response.

COM OFFICER
(to Harriman)
We're picking up a distress call,
Captain.

This grabs everyone's attention.

HARRIMAN
On speakers.

We hear the voice of a crewmember who sounds panicked
and urgent.

COM VOICE
(fritzed)
This is the transport ship Lakul.
We're caught in some kind of
energy distortion. We can't break
free... need immediate help...
it's tearing us --

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

The voice is drowned out by STATIC. The SCIENCE OFFICER checks something on his console. The Journalist with the Holo-camera turns ON his light and pans it around to capture the action.

SCIENCE OFFICER

The Lakul is one of two ships transporting El-Aurian refugees to Earth.

Harriman blinks a couple of times, surprised at this unexpected turn of events. Kirk watches him intently. Harriman clears his throat, then turns to Demora.

HARRIMAN

Can you locate them?

DEMORA

The ships are bearing at three one zero mark two one five. Distance: three light years.

HARRIMAN

Signal the closest starship. We're in no condition to mount a rescue... we don't even have a full crew aboard.

The NAVIGATOR checks his console.

NAVIGATOR

We're the only one in range, sir.

The Holo-camera light is shined on Harriman as he shifts in his seat, hesitant to take the plunge. Kirk is drumming his fingers impatiently on his leg. Finally Harriman takes a breath and straightens his jacket a bit.

HARRIMAN

Well, then... I guess it's up to us.

(to Demora)

Helm, lay in an intercept course and engage at maximum warp.

Kirk fidgets in his chair, itching to get in on the action -- his instincts taking over. Scotty shoots him a side-long glance.

SCOTTY

Is there something wrong with your chair, Captain?

Kirk gives him a look.

- 10 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I) 10
The ship GOES INTO WARP.
- 11 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 11
A few minutes later. Demora is working her console.
DEMORA
We're within visual range of the
energy distortion, Captain.
HARRIMAN
On screen.
- 12 INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (VFX-I) 12
Which now shows a HUGE RIBBON OF CRACKLING ENERGY
directly ahead of the Enterprise-B.
Everyone reacts to the bizarre sight.
CHEKOV
What the hell is that?
DEMORA
(off console)
I've found the transport ships.
- 13 INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (VFX-I) 13
The Viewscreen now shows TWO TRANSPORT SHIPS trapped
like insects in the violent torrent of energy. The
ships are being buffeted and thrown about by large
TENDRILS of CRACKLING ENERGY.
DEMORA
(continuing)
Their hulls are starting to buckle
under the stress -- they won't
survive much longer...
The ship suddenly SHAKES. The Navigator works his
console.
LIEUTENANT
We're encountering severe
gravimetric distortions from the
energy ribbon...
HARRIMAN
We'll have to keep our distance...
we don't want to get pulled in
too...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

Harriman frowns at the screen, trying to figure out what to do. Kirk can barely contain himself -- to him the answer is obvious. He blurts out the answer --

KIRK
Tractor beam...

Scotty quickly elbows him in the side -- this isn't Kirk's ship. Kirk shuts up. Harriman glances at Kirk.

HARRIMAN
We don't have a tractor beam.

KIRK
You left spacedock without a tractor beam?

HARRIMAN
It won't be installed until Tuesday.
(beat)
Ensign Sulu... try generating a subspace field around the ships. That might break them free.

DEMORA
Aye, sir.

When Kirk hears this order, he shakes his head slightly and mouths the word "no" under his breath. He knows that won't work.

DEMORA
(continuing, shakes her head)
There's too much quantum interference, Captain.

Harriman frowns again, trying to come up with another solution but it isn't easy -- it's his first day in command, his ship is under-manned and ill-prepared. It's a nightmare come true. Kirk is itching to get in on this, his fingers digging into the arms of his chair -- but he restrains himself.

HARRIMAN
What about... venting plasma from the warp nacelles? That might disrupt the ribbon's hold on the ships.

NAVIGATOR
Aye, sir... releasing drive plasma...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

A tense beat. Harriman glances over at the journalists, then glances over at Kirk. Kirk gives him a pained smile, trying to be encouraging even though he knows this is not the right course of action.

NAVIGATOR

(continuing)

It's not having any effect, sir.
I think --

DEMORA

Sir! The starboard vessel's hull
is collapsing --

14 INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (VFX-I)

14

Suddenly the right hand ship on the screen is engulfed by a fiery TENDRIL of energy and it EXPLODES. The other ship continues to be thrown about and buffeted. Everyone reacts with shock on the Bridge.

CHEKOV

How many people were on that ship?

DEMORA

Two hundred sixty-five.

Harriman pales at the sight... seems shell-shocked by the destruction of the ship. He's overwhelmed now, at a genuine loss of what do next.

SCIENCE OFFICER

(urgent)

Sir, the Lakul's hull integrity is
down to twelve percent.

Harriman looks over at Kirk, who has remained quiet during this entire sequence only through great effort and out of deference to the young Captain. This is a delicate moment -- Harriman doesn't want to look incapable, but at the same time he needs help.

HARRIMAN

Captain Kirk... I would appreciate
any... suggestions you might have.

Kirk is out of his chair like a cork out of a bottle. He moves down to stand next to Harriman.

KIRK

(sotto, to Harriman)

First -- move us within
transporter range and beam those
people to the Enterprise.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

Harriman looks at him in surprise.

HARRIMAN

What about the gravimetric distortions? They'll tear us apart...

KIRK

(gently)

Risk is part of the game if you want to sit in that chair.

Kirk gives him a supportive look. Harriman buckles down and grimly looks at the image on the screen.

HARRIMAN

Helm, close to within transporter range.

Kirk glances at the Cameraman, who's still shining the light on them all.

KIRK

And second -- turn that damned thing off.

The Cameraman turns OFF the light.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I)

15

The ship edges in yet closer to the crackling ribbon. The Tendrils from the ribbon lash out at the ship, just missing it.

16 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE

16

As before.

DEMORA

We're within range, sir.

HARRIMAN

(to Lieutenant)

Beam them directly to Sickbay.

LIEUTENANT

Aye, sir.

CHEKOV

(concerned)

How big's your medical staff?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

HARRIMAN
(embarrassed)
The medical staff... doesn't
arrive until Tuesday.

CHEKOV
(sarcastic)
Velekoelepmo.
(wonderful)

Chekov turns to the two Journalists.

CHEKOV
(continuing)
You and you. You've just become
nurses. Let's go.

Chekov and the Journalists EXIT to the Turbolift.

DEMORA
Main Engineering reports
fluctuations in the warp plasma
relays.

SCOTTY
By-pass the relays and go to
auxiliary systems.

The LIEUTENANT is having problems at the aft console.

LIEUTENANT
Sir, I'm having trouble locking
onto them. They appear to be...
in some sort of... temporal flux.

Kirk turns to Scotty.

KIRK
Scotty?

Scotty quickly moves to look at the Transporter
console.

SCOTTY
What the hell...

Kirk moves to him.

SCOTTY
(continuing)
Their life signs are... are
phasing in and out of our
spacetime continuum.

KIRK
Phasing? To where?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2) 16
Scotty begins to work.

NAVIGATOR
Sir! Their hull's collapsing!

17 EXT. SPACE - THE LAKUL (VFX-I) 17
The ship is DESTROYED by an energy TENDRIL.

18 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 18
All eyes on Scotty.

SCOTTY
I got forty-seven of them...
(beat, grim)
...out of one hundred fifty.

Suddenly, the ship is ROCKED violently. KLAXONS and ALARMS start to wail and the lights FLICKER on and off. A BULKHEAD EXPLODES, sending metal fragments screaming across the Bridge and KILLING the Navigator. Scotty quickly takes over the dead man's console.

KIRK
Report!

SCIENCE OFFICER
We're caught in a gravimetric field emanating from the trailing edge of the ribbon.

Kirk indicates the dignitaries and reporters.

KIRK
Lieutenant, get these people out of here.

The Lieutenant nods and begins to quickly move the dignitaries and reporters out of the room.

HARRIMAN
All engines, full reverse!

19 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B & RIBBON (VFX-I) 19
The ship is turning sideways into the WAKE of the Ribbon, but cannot break away. It is clearly being pulled along out of control. Tendrils leap up from the ribbon, lashing against the ship.

20 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - SICKBAY

20

The room is filled with the SURVIVORS of the Lakul. They are all members of the EL-AURIAN race -- humanoid and dressed in distinctive clothing. The survivors are in various states of shock. Many sit on the floor, staring into middle distance... some lie on tables, unconscious... others are mumbling incoherently to themselves. Chekov and the Journalists are moving from person to person trying to get control of the situation, as the ship is ROCKED and FLUNG about. Chekov has a tricorder.

SURVIVORS

(incoherent,
overlapping)

The colors are touching me... I'm
caught in the glass... Help me...
I can see the seconds... Over
here... etc.

CHEKOV

(trying to comfort them)

It will be all right. We're going
to take care of you.

He looks at the tricorder.

CHEKOV

(off tricorder)

Only minor injuries so far...

(beat)

But it looks like they're all
suffering from some kind of...
neural shock.

One Journalist moves past a man sitting on a biobed with a dazed look on his face. He has a nasty-looking wound on one side of his face. (We will later learn that this man is named DOCTOR SORAN.)

The Journalist is about to turn away, when suddenly Soran GRABS him roughly -- clearly a man of great strength -- and pulls him close. Soran's eyes are suddenly wild, crazed.

SORAN

Why... why?

JOURNALIST

It's all right. You're safe...
you're on the Enterprise.

SORAN

No... I have to go... I have to
get back... You don't understand!
Let me go!

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

Soran begins to attack the Journalist, but before he can do any real damage, Chekov injects Soran with a hypospray and Soran falls unconscious.

JOURNALIST

What was he talking about?

Suddenly, a WOMAN with her back toward us stumbles nearby. Chekov quickly grabs her arm and catches her before she falls.

CHEKOV

Easy there...

The woman turns around and we see her face for the first time -- it's GUINAN. She seems dazed and confused. Chekov smiles at her warmly.

CHEKOV

(continuing)

It's going to be okay. Here, just lie down.

As he guides Guinan onto a table...

21 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE (VFX-I)

21

Energy Ribbon on Viewscreen.

DEMORA

Inertial dampers failing.

SCOTTY

Engines not responding!

Harriman is gripping the arms of his chair with one hand. His face pales.

HARRIMAN

(quiet)

I didn't expect to die my first day on the job...

Kirk tries to buck up the young Captain.

KIRK

(sotto)

The first thing you learn as Captain is how to cheat death.

(beat, then louder)

Scotty?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

SCOTTY

(outraged)

There's just no way to disrupt a gravimetric field of this magnitude!

LIEUTENANT

Hull integrity at eighty-two percent.

Kirk looks at Scotty expectantly for a moment.

SCOTTY

(continuing)

But, I do have a theory...

KIRK

I thought you might.

SCOTTY

An anti-matter discharge directly ahead... it might disrupt the field long enough for us to break away.

KIRK

A photon torpedo?

SCOTTY

Aye.

SCIENCE OFFICER

We're losing main power!

KIRK

(quickly, to Demora)

Load torpedo bays, prepare to fire on my command.

Demora turns to him.

DEMORA

Captain... we don't have any torpedoes.

Kirk glances at Harriman.

KIRK

Don't tell me... Tuesday.

Harriman nods, a little embarrassed. The SHAKING gets worse.

LIEUTENANT

(urgent)

Hull integrity at forty percent.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

SCOTTY

Captain, it may be possible to simulate a torpedo blast using a resonance burst from the main deflector dish.

KIRK

(onto the idea)
Where are the deflector relays?

DEMORA

Deck fifteen, section twenty-one alpha.

HARRIMAN

(to Kirk)
I'll go. You have the Bridge.

SCIENCE OFFICER

(working)
Switching to emergency life support!

Harriman heads for the Turbolift, and there is a moment as Kirk is sorely tempted to take command of the ship and sit in the Captain's chair one more time. But he pulls himself back before Harriman can exit.

KIRK

No... a Captain's place is on the Bridge of his ship.
(beat)
I'll take care of it.

Harriman nods in acknowledgement. Kirk heads for the Turbolift.

KIRK

(on the move, to Scotty)
Keep her together until I get back.

SCOTTY

(matter of fact)
I always do.

Kirk smiles as the Turbolift doors slide shut...

22 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - CORRIDOR

22

Kirk running down the Corridor, and OPENS a door.

23 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - DEFLECTOR ROOM (CONTINUOUS) 23

A small control room with a few consoles. Kirk rushes in and rips off one of the large wall panels. He quickly begins to re-route cabling and circuitry...

24 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 24

As before. The ship is SHAKING badly.

LIEUTENANT
Forty-five seconds to structural
collapse!

Scotty is working consoles frantically.

SCOTTY
Bridge to Captain Kirk.

INTERCUT:

25 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - DEFLECTOR ROOM 25

Kirk working furiously.

KIRK
Kirk, here.

SCOTTY
Captain, I don't know how much
longer I can hold her together!

Kirk finishes working and slams the wall panel closed.

KIRK
That's it. Go!

26 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 26

As before.

HARRIMAN
(to Demora)
Activate main deflector.

Demora works the console.

27 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I) 27

A large BURST of ENERGY leaps out of the main deflector dish and EXPLODES in front of the ship. There is an immediate REACTION within the Energy Ribbon, which roils and fluctuates in response.

28 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 28

As before.

SCOTTY
We're breaking free.

29 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I) 29

The ship now begins to turn away from the crackling Ribbon. But just as it's turning, one final TENDRIL of energy suddenly leaps out and hits the ship.

30 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE 30

The ship is ROCKED so hard that everyone is knocked off their feet. Gradually, the SHAKING STOPS. Demora scrambles back into position.

DEMORA
We're clear.

Everyone reacts with relief.

HARRIMAN
(excited, to com)
You did it, Kirk!
(to Demora)
Damage report, Ensign.

DEMORA
(off console)
There's some buckling on the starboard nacelle...
(reacts)
We've also got a hull breach in the Engineering section. Emergency forcefields are in place and holding.

SCOTTY
Where?

DEMORA
Sections twenty through twenty-eight on decks thirteen... fourteen...
(looks at Scotty, with meaning)
...and fifteen.

Everyone turns around and looks at Scotty.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

SCOTTY
(to com)
Bridge to Captain Kirk.
(beat)
Captain Kirk, please respond.

Still no response. Scotty's face falls.

SCOTTY
(continuing, to Demora)
Have Chekov meet me on deck
fifteen.

Harriman, very concerned, gets up and follows Scotty.
They EXIT to the Turbolift.

CUT TO:

31 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - CORRIDOR

31

Scotty and Harriman head down the Corridor. They round a bend... and then stop short. They react to something ahead of them...

32 NEW ANGLE (VFX-P)

32

Revealing that the corridor ahead of them is GONE. A jagged hole has been ripped in the ship and OPEN SPACE can be seen beyond the twisted metal.

A FORCEFIELD flickers on and off, holding the vacuum of space at bay.

Scotty and Harriman look at the awesome sight for a moment. Chekov comes running up the Corridor behind them. He stops and reacts.

CHEKOV
My God...
(beat)
Was anyone in there?

A long silent beat as Scotty looks out into space.

SCOTTY
Aye.

33 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I)

33

A HUGE CHUNK has been ripped out of the Engineering section, looking like an open wound.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

Scotty, Chekov, and Harriman can be seen standing inside the small Corridor, looking out into space...

CUT TO:

34 INT. ENTERPRISE-B - BRIDGE

34

A short time later. Scotty, Harriman and Chekov are listening to Demora, who is working the Helm console.

DEMORA

I've checked the entire ship and the surrounding space... there's no sign of him.

A silent moment. Chekov looks to Scotty, hoping to hear some sort of miracle. Scotty takes a moment... looks at the empty command chair. Then he shakes his head. A long beat as everyone is forced to accept this terrible truth.

SCOTTY

(quiet)

Just a quick... run around the block.

Chekov is shocked... overcome with grief and anguish.

CHEKOV

It can't be... it's not possible... it can't be...

Scotty looks to Chekov... puts a hand on Chekov's shoulder to steady him as they both grapple with something they thought would never happen.

CHEKOV

I never thought it would end like this...

SCOTTY

All things must end, lad.

Harriman finally breaks the stillness of the Bridge.

HARRIMAN

Let's go home.

Harriman goes down to the Captain's chair and takes command of his ship.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 34

Scotty and Chekov exchange a final look. Off the reactions of these two friends who've just lost someone very dear to them both...

CUT TO:

35 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE-B (VFX-I) 35

The crippled ship turns and then heads away...

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS LATER...

36 CLOSE ON A HALYARD 36

as a FLAG is quickly hoisted to the top of a mast. The flag reaches the top and then is caught by the wind -- the blue and white banner of the United Federation of Planets waves in the breeze.

MOVE TO REVEAL THE LOCATION:

37 EXT. SAILING VESSEL - DAY 37

A nineteenth century three-masted sailing vessel (about the size of a frigate) is hove-to and sitting in the water gently rocking. Across the stern of the ship, we can see the name ENTERPRISE picked out in gold letters.

38 ON THE MAIN DECK 38

Where PICARD and RIKER are standing before the assembled CREW of the ship. Everyone is dressed in full-dress naval uniforms of the period, complete with cocked hats, epaulettes, etc. The crew is standing at attention... the wind whistles through the rigging... the timbers creak...

Picard grimly looks over his crew... then finally he nods to Riker.

RIKER

Bring out the prisoner!

A DRUMMER begins a long DRUM ROLL.

39 ON A HATCH 39

as WORF is brought on deck by TROI and GEORDI. Worf is shackled by hand and leg irons.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

Troi and Geordi hold him by either arm and shove him toward the Captain. The drum roll STOPS. Picard moves to Worf and peers at him closely.

PICARD

Mister Worf... I always knew this day would come. Are you prepared to face the charges?

Worf doesn't answer and Troi jabs him in the side.

TROI

Answer him!

WORF

I am prepared.

Picard looks to Riker, who then pulls out a large rolled piece of parchment. He opens the scroll and begins to read from it. In the b.g. Geordi removes Worf's shackles.

RIKER

"We, the officers and crew of the USS Enterprise, being of sound mind and judgement, hereby make the following charges against Lieutenant Worf: One. That he did knowingly and willfully perform above and beyond the call of duty on countless occasions. Two. That he has been a good and solid officer on this ship for one score less twelve years. And Three. Most seriously... that he has earned the respect and admiration of the entire crew."

Riker puts away the scroll.

PICARD

There can be only one judgement for such crimes...

(beat)

I hereby promote you to the rank of Lieutenant Commander, with all the rights and privileges thereto. And may God have mercy on your soul.

Everyone ROARS in APPROVAL. Picard smiles at Worf and shakes his hand.

PICARD

(continuing)

Congratulations, Commander.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

WORF
(smiles)
Thank you, sir.

Picard continues to smile at him for a moment... then Riker steps in.

RIKER
Extend the plank!!

Everyone GRABS Worf and hauls him toward the side, where a long, narrow plank is being pushed out over the water.

RIKER
(continuing)
Lower the Badge of Office!

A crewman on a yardarm lowers a rope which has an ornate 19th century naval officers HAT at the end of it -- complete with plume. He dangles the hat ten feet above the end of the plank.

CREWMEMBERS
You can do it, Worf! Don't look down! Good luck!... etc.

Picard and Riker watch with amusement as Worf is hustled up onto the plank.

RIKER
(confident)
He'll never make it. No one has.

Worf doesn't need any prodding -- he holds his head high and walks slowly toward the hat, ignoring the taunts and jeers of the crowd.

CREWMEMBERS
That's a long drop to the water...
I bet that water's freezing...
etc.

Worf ignores them, keeps going -- the plank is getting narrower as he goes. BEVERLY is standing nearby.

BEVERLY
Geordi, did you remember to engage the Holodeck safety program? I don't know if Klingons can swim...

GEORDI
(playfully)
I'm not sure.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

Worf has now reached the end of the plank. The hat is a few feet above him, well beyond reach. He takes a breath, then makes a spectacular LEAP and GRABS the hat with one hand. He LANDS hard on the plank with both feet, the board flexing and groaning. A tense beat as he struggles to keep his balance... then he turns to the crowd and pops the hat onto his head with a defiant and proud expression. He's made it. The crowd CHEERS in approval. Riker applauds too, but can't help but look a little disappointed.

PICARD

If there's one thing I've learned over the years -- it's never underestimate a Klingon.

RIKER

(to computer)

Computer -- remove plank.

The plank suddenly VANISHES beneath Worf's feet. Worf FALLS into the SEA with a huge SPLASH. Everyone LAUGHS and CHEERS again. Picard gives Riker a knowing look.

PICARD

Number One... it's retract plank, not remove plank.

RIKER

(lightly)

Oh... of course, sir. Sorry.

Reveal DATA, who is standing near the side rail, looking a little confused at the reaction.

DATA

(to Beverly)

Doctor, I must confess I am uncertain as to why someone falling into freezing water is amusing.

BEVERLY

It's all in good fun, Data.

Data looks at her blankly.

DATA

I do not understand.

BEVERLY

Try to get in the spirit of things. Learn to be a little more spontaneous.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (4)

39

Data thinks a moment, then he PUSHES Beverly over the rail. Beverly PLUMMETS into the ocean. Data looks around -- no one is laughing. They all look a little surprised.

GEORDI

Data... that wasn't funny.

Data is puzzled by the reaction of the crowd... he's more confused than ever.

40 PICARD AND RIKER

40

are standing on the quarterdeck as a very wet Beverly comes up on deck.

PICARD

Well, now that we're all aboard...

(beat, then smiles)

Number One, bring the ship before the wind.

(savoring the moment)

Let's see what's out there.

RIKER

Aye, aye sir.

(to Troi)

Take the wheel, Commander.

Troi then takes the ship's wheel.

RIKER

(shouts)

All hands make sail! Topgallants and courses! Stand by the braces!

The crew springs into action... rushing to their places aloft and on deck... grabbing ropes and lines... starting to unfurl the sails... trimming the yardarms... getting the ship ready to sail.

41 PICARD AND RIKER

41

Picard is drinking in the scene with a look of great satisfaction and contentment.

PICARD

"I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky."

(to Riker)

Imagine what it was like, Wil. No engines... no computers... just the wind, the sea and the stars to guide you.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

RIKER
Bad food, brutal discipline...
(beat)
No women.

But Picard won't let Riker rain on his parade -- he's thoroughly enjoying himself.

COM VOICE
Bridge to Captain Picard.

PICARD
Picard here.

COM VOICE
There is a personal message for
you from Earth.

PICARD
(annoyed)
Put it through down here.
(to Riker)
It was freedom, Wil... no ties...
and the best thing about a life at
sea was that they couldn't reach
you.

Picard walks toward the bow, he's very upbeat, very content and happy to be here.

PICARD
(to Crewmen)
Look alive there!
(continuing, to com)
Computer, arch.

42 ANGLE (VFX-P)

42

A U-shaped ARCH with several computer panels visible APPEARS on the forecastle. It's a strange sight to see a piece of the 24th century on the deck of this ship. Picard goes to the arch and activates one of the monitors and waits for the transmission to appear.

43 NEW ANGLE (VFX-P)

43

A text message APPEARS and he starts to read it. After a moment, he reacts with shock and dismay to something on the screen.

44 ON TROI 44

whose attention has been drawn to Picard, at the arch. She reacts with concern at the expression on his face.

TROI
(to crewmember)
Here. Take the wheel.

Troi moves toward the bow.

45 ON PICARD (VFX-P) 45

whose face is now ashen with shock. Clearly he has just read something on the screen which is very disturbing.

He stares into middle distance for a moment. Troi moves to him.

TROI
(quiet)
Captain, are you all right?

PICARD
Yes. Fine. If you'll excuse me...

He turns OFF the screen.

PICARD
(continuing)
Computer, exit.

46 ANGLE (VFX-P) 46

The Holodeck DOORS APPEAR within the Arch. Picard is clearly distracted as he EXITS to the Corridor. Troi looks after him with concern.

47 NEW ANGLE 47

Favoring Riker. He takes a couple of steps toward Worf.

RIKER
(to Worf)
Set the royals and the studding sails, Mister Worf.

Worf looks at him blankly for a moment.

WORF
The Royal... studs...?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

RIKER
(smiles, points aloft)
You see the top yardarm, now look
to the --

Suddenly a com voice interrupts.

COM VOICE
Bridge to Commander Riker.

RIKER
Riker here.

COM VOICE
We're picking up a distress call
from the Amargosa observatory,
sir. They say they're under
attack.

RIKER
(to all)
Red Alert! All hands to
Battlestations! Captain Picard to
the Bridge!

Everyone on the ship reacts, and there is a general
rush to the bow of the ship...

CUT TO:

48 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE-D (VFX-I)

48

The great ship at impulse. We FOLLOW it and then see
ahead of the ship a small SOLAR OBSERVATORY with a
complex optical array. The observatory bears scorch
marks and other signs of a recent battle. (In the b.g.
a YELLOW SUN can be seen.)

49 INT. BRIDGE (VFX-I)

49

Riker, Troi, Worf and Data at their stations. They
didn't have time to change, so they are all still
dressed in their costumes from the ceremony. The ship
is at RED ALERT. The image of the burnt-out
observatory is on the VIEWSCREEN.

RIKER
It looks like we're too late...

WORF
(off console)
There are no other ships in the
system.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

Picard now ENTERS. Everyone looks at him with a little curiosity -- it's not like the Captain to arrive late on the Bridge during a crisis. Picard seems distracted, preoccupied as he moves toward his chair. After an awkward moment, Riker finally fills Picard in.

RIKER

We're approaching Amargosa, Captain. It looks like the Observatory took quite a beating.

PICARD

(curt)
Survivors?

DATA

Sensors show five life signs aboard the station, Captain.

RIKER

The station complement was nineteen.

A grim beat. Picard gets up and starts heading for the Ready Room -- his attitude is dismissive, almost irritated that this has interrupted some deeper concern of his.

PICARD

Stand down from Red Alert.
(to Riker)
Number One, begin an investigation. I'll be in my Ready Room.

Troi and Riker exchange a surprised look.

RIKER

Sir?

PICARD

(hard)
Make it so.

RIKER

But Captain, I thought you would --

PICARD

Do it.

Picard EXITS. An awkward beat. What's wrong with the Captain? But they have their orders. As Riker and Worf head for the EXIT...

CUT TO:

50 INT. OBSERVATORY - OPS CENTER (VFX-P)

50

The station is a SMOKING RUIN -- consoles flickering, lights dim, damage everywhere. Only a few minutes have passed since they were attacked. Riker, Worf, Beverly and TWO SECURITY GUARDS MATERIALIZE. They're all back in uniform, holding phasers and palm beacons; Worf has a tricorder and Beverly has a medical kit. The room is cramped, there are fallen bulkheads and blown-out consoles. The debris makes it difficult to get a clear view of the room.

WORF

These blast patterns are consistent with type-three disruptors.

RIKER

Well, that narrows it to Klingon, Breen or Romulan.

Beverly follows her tricorder readings.

BEVERLY

I'm picking up lifesigns... about twenty meters ahead.

WORF

That rules out Klingons.

Riker gives him a look.

WORF

(continuing)

They would not have left anyone alive.

BEVERLY

Over here...

They pick their way carefully through the carnage of the station... and come to the body of a Starfleet Science Officer. He's taken a disruptor blast to the back, and there is a nasty-looking scorch mark on his uniform. Beverly immediately takes some devices out of her medical kit and begins to treat him.

RIKER

Worf, you're with me. Paskall, you and Mendez search the upper deck.

The Security Guards climb a nearby ladder while Riker and Worf head down a dimly-lit corridor. Riker stops at two bodies in the hall, checks them over -- but they're dead. There is a sudden banging from the far corner of the room. Worf and Riker quickly move to a collapsed bulkhead.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

WORF

Under here...

They both grab hold of a large metal plate, pull it aside and begin to dig through the debris. Finally, a HAND can be seen grasping about from within the pile of rubble. Riker and Worf work faster. Worf grabs the man's hand.

WORF

(continuing)

It's all right... do not struggle.

Worf holds the man's hand as Riker shoves away a final console. And we reveal the head and torso of Doctor Soran, one of the survivors from the Lakul (and last seen in Sickbay aboard the Enterprise-B). Soran has not aged at all over the years but he does have a permanent scar on his face from the earlier wound. He blinks a few times, seems a little dazed.

RIKER

I'm Commander William Riker of the Starship Enterprise.

SORAN

Soran... Doctor Tolian Soran...

Soran puts a hand to his head, still trying to get his bearings.

RIKER

Who attacked you, Doctor?

SORAN

I'm not sure... it happened so fast...

SECURITY OFFICER

(calls out)

Commander -- you'd better take a look at this.

Riker and Worf move to the ladder as Beverly begins to scan Soran...

51 NEW ANGLE - UPPER DECK

51

Riker and Worf move over to two Security Guards, who are kneeling over a dead body which is obscured from view. One Guard turns over the body, revealing a ROMULAN SOLDIER. Worf looks at him in disgust.

WORF

Romulan.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: 51

Riker and Worf exchange a look. OFF their reactions...

CUT TO:

52 INT. DATA'S QUARTERS 52

Data is sitting in a chair, petting SPOT THE CAT. Geordi is standing next to him.

DATA

Is she still angry?

GEORDI

No... but I'd stay out of Sickbay for a while if I were you. Whatever possessed you to push her in the water?

DATA

I was attempting to... get in the spirit of things. I thought it would be amusing.

Data frowns... troubled by this recent experience. He puts Spot down and moves to a bulkhead. He activates a control panel and a small compartment slides OPEN, revealing a small COMPUTER CHIP which is suspended in a glass and metallic framework. Data looks at the chip for a beat, and Geordi moves to him in curiosity.

GEORDI

Data... are you thinking about actually using that thing?

DATA

I have considered it for many months. And in light of the incident with Doctor Crusher, I believe this may be the appropriate time.

GEORDI

I thought you were afraid it would overload your neural net.

DATA

That is true. However, I believe my growth as an artificial lifeform has reached an impasse. For thirty-four years I have endeavored to become more "human" -- to grow beyond my original programming.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

DATA (Cont'd)
And yet I am still unable to grasp
such a basic concept as humor.
(re: chip)
This emotion chip may be the only
answer.

Geordi considers for a moment, looks at the chip...
reluctantly has to agree.

GEORDI
All right...

Data sits down and Geordi moves to stand behind him.

GEORDI
But at the first sign of trouble,
I'm going to deactivate it.
Agreed?

DATA
Agreed.

Geordi works on Data's head for a moment, and then
OPENS a panel on Data's head, revealing the blinking
circuitry within.

CUT TO:

53 INT. READY ROOM

53

Riker is reporting to Picard, who has his back turned
and is staring out the window. Picard seems distracted
during the scene, his mind clearly elsewhere as Riker
finishes his report.

RIKER
We found two dead Romulans aboard
the station. We're analyzing
their equipment to see if we can
determine what ship they came
from.

Picard nods absently.

PICARD
There's still no indication of why
they attacked the station?

RIKER
They practically tore the place
apart... accessed the central
computer... turned the cargo bay
inside out... they were obviously
looking for something.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

PICARD

Hmm...

(beat)

Inform Starfleet Command. This could indicate a new Romulan threat in this sector.

RIKER

You want me to contact Starfleet?

PICARD

Is there a problem?

RIKER

No, sir.

PICARD

Thank you, Number One.

Picard keeps his back turned, looking out the window. Riker hesitates, awkward.

RIKER

There is something else, Captain. One of the scientists... a Doctor Soran... has insisted on speaking with you.

(beat)

I told him you were busy, sir, but he said it was absolutely imperative that he speak with you right away.

PICARD

Understood. That will be all.

RIKER

Sir... is there anything wrong?

PICARD

No. Thank you.

A beat, then Riker turns and EXITS. OFF Picard's unreadable face...

CUT TO:

54 INT. TEN FORWARD

54

The room is bustling with patrons and activity. Data ENTERS with an odd look on his face... his body language subtly altered. He is looking at the world through new eyes. Geordi is following him closely, watching his every move. They move to the bar.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

Guinan comes over -- she has not aged at all since the Enterprise-B. She sets down a exotic-looking container full of dark liquid.

GUINAN

(to Data, Geordi)

You two just volunteered to be my first victims.

(re: liquid)

This is a new concoction I picked up on Forcas Three. Trust me, you're going to love it.

She pours two glasses of the liquid. Data takes one and sniffs it, then takes a drink. Geordi watches him closely. Data frowns.

GEORDI

Well...?

DATA

I believe the beverage has provoked an emotional response.

GEORDI

Really? What do you feel?

DATA

(struggling)

I... I am uncertain. I have little experience with emotions. I am unable to articulate the sensation.

GUINAN

Emotions?

GEORDI

I'll explain later...

Data finishes the drink... concentrates, tries to make sense of the rush of feelings. His expression is one of disgust.

GUINAN

(to Geordi)

I think he hates it.

DATA

(excited)

Yes. That is it. I hate it.

GEORDI

Data, I think the chip is working...

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

Data takes another drink and looks at Geordi with a big smile on his face.

DATA

Yes. I hate this! It is revolting!

Beat.

GUINAN

Another round?

DATA

Please.

In the b.g. we see Picard ENTER Ten Forward.

55 FOLLOW PICARD

55

as he walks through Ten Forward and heads toward a table by the windows. Soran is sitting at the table, staring out at the stars, lost in thought. His observatory uniform is distinctive, and sets him apart from everyone else in the room. Picard walks up to the table.

PICARD

Doctor Soran...?

SORAN

Yes, yes, Captain -- thank you for coming.

The men shake hands, and Picard sits down. Soran is an imposing physical presence, but at the moment he seems very much the eccentric scientist consumed with his work. Picard waves away a waiter.

PICARD

Nothing for me.

(brusque, to Soran)

I understand there's something urgent you need to discuss with me.

SORAN

Yes. I need to return to the observatory immediately. I must continue a critical experiment I was running on the Amargosa Star.

Picard's reaction is a little impatient -- this doesn't sound that imperative to him.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

PICARD

Doctor... we're still conducting an investigation into the attack. Once we've completed our work, we'll be happy to allow you and your fellow scientists back aboard the observatory. Until then --

SORAN

The timing is very important on my experiment -- if it is not completed within the next twelve hours, years of research will be lost.

PICARD

We're doing the best we can. Now if you'll excuse me...

Picard moves to stand, but Soran reaches out and gently but firmly grabs him by the arm. The unexpected physical contact and change of intensity in Soran's face stops Picard in his tracks.

SORAN

(cryptically)

They say, time is the fire in which we burn... and right now, Captain, my time is running out.

(beat)

We leave so many things unfinished in our lives -- I'm sure you can understand.

For some reason, Soran's words have struck a deep chord within Picard.

He looks away from Soran's compelling gaze, and thinks for a long moment. When he finally speaks, his voice is barely above a whisper.

PICARD

I'll see what I can do...

Picard walks away without a word, before Soran can thank him. Soran looks after him with relief, then pulls out an ANTIQUE POCKET WATCH and opens it. He looks at the watch for a long moment... then snaps it closed and heads for the opposite exit from the one Picard took. FOLLOW Soran across Ten Forward... until he suddenly stops in shock at something he sees...

56 SORAN'S POV

56

of Guinan, who is now back at the bar.

57 RESUME SORAN 57

A dark look crosses his face -- he is disturbed by the sight of Guinan. He quickly turns and EXITS.

58 ON GUINAN 58

she begins to sense something, as though someone is watching her. She turns, looks in the direction where Soran was just standing. But there's no one there now. She shakes off the feeling and goes back to work.

CUT TO:

59 INT. ENGINEERING 59

A short time later. A Romulan tricorder is connected to some diagnostic equipment near a console. Worf is talking to Riker.

Worf activates a MONITOR, which shows a complex diagram of sensor information.

WORF

One of the dead Romulans had a tricorder. We analyzed its sensor logs and found they were scanning for signature particles of a compound called trilithium.

RIKER

Trilithium?

WORF

An experimental compound the Romulans have been working on. In theory, a trilithium-based explosive would be thousands of times more powerful than an anti-matter weapon. But they never found a way to stabilize it.

RIKER

Why were they looking for it on a Federation observatory? It doesn't make any sense.

Riker considers.

RIKER

(continuing)

Have Geordi and Data go over with the next Away Team... tell them to scan the observatory for trilithium.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

WORF
Aye, sir.

CUT TO:

60 INT. OBSERVATORY OPS

60

The station is still a wreck. Geordi and Data are scanning the room with tricorders.

GEORDI
(off tricorder)
There's no sign of any trilitium
in here...

Geordi continues to scan... then suddenly Data lets out a quiet GIGGLE. Geordi stops and turns to look at him. Data giggles louder.

DATA
(laughing, to himself)
I get it. I get it.

GEORDI
You get what?

Data laughs again.

DATA
When you said to Commander
Riker...
(imitate Geordi's voice)
"The clown can stay, but the
Ferengi in the gorilla suit has to
go."

Geordi looks blankly at him for a moment.

GEORDI
What?

DATA
During the Farpoint mission. We
were on the Bridge and you told a
joke. That was the punchline.

GEORDI
The Farpoint mission? Data, that
was seven years ago.

DATA
I know. I just got it.
(laughs)
It was very funny.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

GEORDI

Thanks.

Geordi indicates a Corridor. They EXIT in that direction...

61 INT. OBSERVATORY CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

61

A short Corridor connecting the Ops Center with other compartments. Geordi suddenly stops in front of what appears to be a standard bulkhead.

GEORDI

Wait a minute... there's a hidden doorway here. I can see the joint of the metal with my VISOR.

Geordi runs his finger in a vertical line along what appears to be a smooth bulkhead.

DATA

(off tricorder)

There appears to be a dampening field in operation. I cannot scan beyond the bulkhead.

Geordi puts his tricorder away and begins looking for a way to open the door.

GEORDI

I don't see a control panel... or an access port.

DATA

(off tricorder)

It appears to be magnetically sealed.

Data steps forward and OPENS a small panel on his wrist and makes a quick adjustment to the circuitry within.

DATA

I believe I can reverse the polarity by attenuating my axial servo.

Data completes his adjustment and then moves his wrist over the door panel.

DATA

(joking)

"Open sesame."

There is a HUMMING sound followed by a loud CLICK. The door SLIDES OPEN.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

DATA
 (smiles)
 You could say I have a... magnetic
 personality.

Geordi reacts to the bad pun with a grimace. They EXIT
 to...

62 INT. OBSERVATORY PROBE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

62

A small room with several PROBES stacked in holding
 racks. Geordi and Data scan.

GEORDI
 I'm still not picking up anything.
 Someone went to a lot of trouble
 to shield this room.

They put their tricorders away and begin looking around
 the room. Data continues to snicker and giggle as he
 tries not to laugh at jokes his mind conjures up.
 Geordi begins inspecting the probes... finally stops
 at one probe which has SEVERAL ODD DEVICES attached to
 the side.

GEORDI
 Data, take a look at this.
 (Data comes over)
 You ever seen a solar probe with
 this kind of configuration?

Data uses the tricorder as if it were a puppet as he
 opens and closes it like a mouth.

DATA
 (making tricorder
 "talk")
 "No, Geordi. I have not."
 (turns tricorder toward
 himself)
 "Have you?"
 (answering to tricorder)
 No I have not. It is most
 unusual.

Data giggles and Geordi reacts with the irritation of
 someone listening to a deeply bad comedian.

GEORDI
 Just help me get this panel open.

Data helps Geordi as they try to open a panel on the
 casing of the probe. They OPEN the panel and Geordi
 looks inside... he reacts to something.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

GEORDI
(continuing)
Whoa... my VISOR's picking up
something in the theta band... it
could be a trilithium signature.

Data suddenly starts LAUGHING. Geordi turns in
irritation.

GEORDI
Data, this isn't the time...

DATA
(laughing)
I am sorry... but I cannot stop
myself... I think something is
wrong...

63 ANGLE (VFX-P)

63

Data's laughter escalates into hysteria... then Data
begins to JERK and SHAKE and goes into a bizarre
"emotional seizure". A rush of EMOTIONS race across
his face... anger, passion, shock... a kaleidoscopic
blur or reactions contort his features. Then it stops
and he FALLS to the ground.

GEORDI
Data!

Geordi rushes to him. Data has a look of surprise on
his face as he blinks a few times. He sits up.

GEORDI
Data, are you all right?

DATA
I believe the emotional chip has
overloaded my positronic relays.

GEORDI
We better get you back to the
ship.
(hits combadge)
La Forge to Enterprise.

There's no response. Geordi frowns for a beat, then we
hear Soran's voice.

SORAN'S VOICE
Is there a problem, gentlemen?

64 INCLUDE SORAN

64

standing in the room. Geordi didn't hear him come in.

GEORDI

Oh... Doctor... yeah as a matter of fact, there is. There's a dampening field in here blocking our com signal.

(re: Data)

Will you give me a hand?

Over the above dialogue, Soran glances over at the solar probe Geordi was inspecting. He notes the opened panel and a disturbed look crosses his face.

Soran looks back at Geordi.

SORAN

I'd be happy to.

Soran moves toward them... and then without warning, he PUNCHES Geordi in the face, KNOCKING the VISOR across the room. He whirls around and points the phaser at Data, who suddenly looks fearful.

DATA

Please do not hurt me.

CUT TO:

65 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS (VFX-P)

65

Picard is sitting at a desk, staring at an OPEN PHOTO ALBUM. The album has been opened to a page showing Picard's brother, his wife, and their young boy in France. There is a cup of tea nearby on the desk, but Picard ignores it, he is completely absorbed by the image in the album. Classical MUSIC is playing softly in the b.g. The door CHIMES. Picard doesn't react right away. The door CHIMES again.

PICARD

Come.

The door OPENS and Troi ENTERS. She is cautious here... Troi knows something is wrong with Picard, but like any good therapist, she's not going to force the issue... she lets him take the lead.

PICARD

Counselor. What can I do for you?

TROI

Actually... I'm here to see if there's anything I can do for you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

TROI (Cont'd)
You've seemed a little...
distracted lately.

Although Picard tries to keep it casual, there is definitely something lurking just beneath the surface.

PICARD
(casual)
Oh... just... family matters.
(beat, then glances down
at a photo)
You've never met my brother and
his wife have you?

Troi moves closer and examines the album.

TROI
No.

PICARD
Robert can be quite impossible...
pompous, arrogant, always has to
have the last word... but he's
mellowed somewhat in his later
years...
(beat)
I was planning to spend some time
on Earth next month... I thought
we could all go to San
Francisco... Rene's always wanted
to see Starfleet Academy.

TROI
(looks at boy in
picture)
Rene? Your nephew?

Picard nods... smiles fondly... but again, we begin to sense an inner tension building.

PICARD
Yes. He's so... unlike his
father... imaginative... a
dreamer. He almost reminds me of
myself at that age.

He laughs softly... but there's a hollow, empty quality to the laugh and there is no joy in his eyes. Troi moves to him quietly... faces him directly.

TROI
(quiet)
Captain... what's happened?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

Picard takes a moment... but can't look away from her. He tries to keep his voice steady... but for the first time we can see the depth of the pain he's feeling.

PICARD

Robert... and Rene... they're dead... they were burned to death... in a fire.

Troi reacts... Picard moves away from her and stares out the window.

TROI

I'm so sorry.

PICARD

It's all right... these things happen... we all have our... time. And theirs had come.

Troi takes a moment, then moves to him again.

TROI

No, it's not all right. And the sooner you realize that, the sooner you can begin to come to terms with what's happened...

PICARD

I know that.

(beat)

But right now, it's not me I'm concerned with... it's my nephew. I just can't stop thinking about him... about all the experiences he'll never have... going to the Academy... falling in love... children of his own... it's all gone.

TROI

I had no idea he meant so much to you.

PICARD

In a way, he was as close as I ever came to having a child of my own.

Troi eyes an open photo album on the table, reaches over and flips through the pages for a moment. There are many photos inside... from many periods in time... including one of Picard's brother standing next to his young son. This is the Picard family album.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (3)

65

TROI

Your family history is very important to you, isn't it?

PICARD

(nods)

Ever since I was a little boy, I remember hearing about the family line. The Picards that fought at Trafalgar... the Picards that settled the first Martian colony. When my brother married and had a son...

Picard hesitates -- this is difficult for him.

TROI

...You felt it was no longer your responsibility to carry on the family line.

PICARD

(nods)

My brother had shouldered that burden... allowing me to pursue my own selfish needs...

TROI

There's nothing selfish about pursuing your own life... your own career.

Picard moves to the window, stares outside. A shadow crosses his face. He's getting to the heart of the matter.

PICARD

You know, Counselor... for some time now, I've been aware that there are fewer days ahead than there are behind...

(beat)

But I always took comfort in the fact that when I was gone, my family would continue. But now...

Picard moves back to the photo album, opens it to the last page, and then flips through the remaining pages -- they are blank. He's suddenly filled with rage at what's happened. He flings the cup of tea across the room in anger.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (4)

65

PICARD
(continuing)
But now... the idea of death has
a terrible sense of finality to
it.

He looks at her.

PICARD
(continuing)
There'll be no more Picards.

A quiet beat as Troi considers him.

TROI
Captain, perhaps we --

Suddenly, a BLINDING BURST OF LIGHT from outside the windows washes into the room. Troi and Picard rush to the window and shield their eyes against the glare.

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Senior officers report to the
Bridge! All hands to duty
stations!

CUT TO:

66 INT. BRIDGE (VFX-I)

66

Picard and Troi ENTER from a Turbolift. Riker and Worf at their stations. The star is on the Viewscreen, getting DARKER by the second... more flaming debris being ejected into space. (NOTE: ship is not at RED ALERT.)

PICARD
Report.

RIKER
A quantum implosion has occurred
within the Amargosa star. All
nuclear fusion is breaking down.

PICARD
How is that possible?

WORF
Sensor records show the
observatory launched a solar probe
into the sun a few moments ago.

RIKER
The star's going to collapse in a
matter of minutes.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

Something beeps on his console.

WORF

Sir. The implosion has produced
a level twelve shock wave.

TROI

(shocked)

Level twelve? That'll destroy
everything in this system.

TRANSPORTER COM VOICE

Transporter Room to Bridge. I
can't locate Commander La Forge or
Mister Data, sir.

RIKER

(to Worf)

Did they return to the ship?

WORF

(works)

No, sir. They are not aboard.

PICARD

How long until the shock wave hits
the observatory?

WORF

Four minutes forty seconds.

Picard looks at Riker, who then quickly heads for the
Turbolift.

RIKER

Mister Worf.

Riker and Worf EXIT.

67 EXT. SPACE - THE SUN (VFX-I)

67

The star is almost entirely DARK. Coming out from the
star is a HUGE SHOCK WAVE - a rapidly growing sphere of
energy.

68 INT. OBSERVATORY PROBE ROOM (VFX-P)

68

Soran is standing at a console watching a graphic
depiction of the star's collapse on a monitor when the
door suddenly OPENS. Soran whirls around and FIRES his
disruptor at Riker and Worf. They dive for cover just
outside the room. (NOTE: The probe Geordi examined
earlier is now gone.)

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

RIKER
(to Worf)
What the hell's he doing?

Worf dodges another disruptor blast and sees Geordi lying unconscious on the deck. Data is nowhere to be seen.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Enterprise to Commander Riker, you have two minutes left.

RIKER
(yells to Soran)
Soran, did you hear that? There's a level twelve shock wave coming. We've got to get out of here!

Soran's only answer is another disruptor blast.

69 INT. BRIDGE

69

As before. ENSIGN HAYES is at Tactical. An ALARM suddenly BEEPS on the Tactical console.

HAYES
(urgent)
Sir. A Klingon Bird of Prey is decloaking off the port bow.

Shocked reactions.

PICARD
What?

70 EXT. SPACE (VFX-I)

70

as an old-style Klingon Bird of Prey DECLOAKS near the Observatory.

71 INT. OBSERVATORY PROBE ROOM (VFX-P)

71

Soran is continuing to SHOOT at Riker and Worf. Riker suddenly notices something offcamera.

72 RIKER'S POV

72

Data is huddled in a corner of the room, cowering in fear.

73 NEW ANGLE (VFX-P) 73

The firefight continues.

RIKER

Data! See if you can get to
Geordi!

Data looks up at him with a terrified look on his face.

DATA

I... cannot, sir. I believe I
am... afraid.

Suddenly Soran's communicator BEEPS. Soran reaches down and grabs the unconscious Geordi by the collar and the two of them DEMATERIALIZE. (Soran has the VISOR in his hand.) Riker, Data and Worf react.

74 EXT. SPACE - THE KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 74

The Bird of Prey CLOAKS and vanishes.

75 INT. BRIDGE 75

As before.

TRANSPORTER COM VOICE

Transporter Room to Bridge. I
have the Away Team aboard, sir.

PICARD

(to Con)
Helm, warp one, engage.

76 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE & OBSERVATORY (VFX-I) 76

The Enterprise WARPS away just as the shock wave reaches the observatory and VAPORIZES it in a fiery EXPLOSION.

CUT TO:

77 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE 77

ON A MONITOR

where we can see a graphic depiction of the darkening star and shock wave. MOVE TO REVEAL:

We are inside an old Klingon ship -- it's beaten up and patched in several places, obviously not a first-line model.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

Watching the Viewscreen are LURSA and B'ETOR, two powerful-looking Klingon women... they are sisters... aggressive... seductive... and very dangerous. Several N.D. MALE KLINGONS man the various stations.

The sisters stare at the image of the destroyed sun in awe.

B'ETOR
Toh-pak-cha... (Glorious...)

LURSA
HoS qorDu... (A great power...)

Soran now ENTERS the Bridge. His expression is dark and angry. He is clearly not a prisoner here and he strides up to the sisters.

B'ETOR
(excited, to Soran)
You've done it, Soran.

But without warning, Soran HITS B'Etor squarely in the jaw, knocking her back over a console. Several Klingons leap to their feet, drawing their weapons... but B'Etor holds up a hand as she gets to one knee.

B'ETOR
Wait!

She dabs at a trickle of blood at the corner of her mouth... her expression is angry and threatening.

B'ETOR
(to Soran, an edge)
I hope for your sake that you are initiating a mating ritual.

SORAN
You got careless. The Romulans came looking for their missing trilithium.

B'ETOR
Impossible. We left no survivors on their outpost.

B'Etor has now gotten to her feet in the b.g.

SORAN
They knew it was aboard the observatory. If the Enterprise hadn't intervened, they would have found it.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (2)

77

LURSA

But they didn't find it... and now
we have a weapon of unlimited
power.

SORAN

I have the weapon, Lursa. And if
you ever want me to give it to
you, I advise you to be a little
more careful in the future.

B'Etor grabs Soran and holds a wicked-looking knife to
his throat.

B'ETOR

Perhaps we are tired of waiting.

Soran is unfazed by this threat.

SORAN

Without my research... the
trilithium is worthless... as are
your plans to reconquer the
Klingon Empire.

Lursa reaches out and calmly pushes her sister's knife
away.

SORAN

Set course for the Veridian
system. Maximum warp.

LURSA

(to Helm)
Bosh-ta-JaH Veridian. (Set course
for Veridian.)

A Klingon GUARD ENTERS dragging the unconscious Geordi.

KLINGON GUARD

(re: Geordi)
What shall I do with this?

Soran moves toward Geordi, a grim look on his face.

SORAN

Bring him with me. I need some
answers from Mister La Forge.

Soran EXITS.

CUT TO:

78 INT. CORRIDOR

78

Riker and Worf are on the move down the Corridor.

WORF

I have spoken to the Klingon High Council, sir. They identified the Bird of Prey as belonging to the Duras sisters.

RIKER

(surprised)

Lursa and B'Etor...? This doesn't make any sense. A renowned stellar physicist somehow uses a trilitium probe to destroy a star... kidnaps Geordi... and escapes with a pair of Klingon renegades... Why? What the hell's going on?

They EXIT to...

79 INT. SICKBAY

79

Worf and Riker ENTER. Beverly is closing a panel on the back of Data's head. He is sitting on a biobed, scanning himself with a tricorder.

RIKER

How is he?

BEVERLY

It looks like a power surge fused the emotional chip into his neural net.

WORF

Will that be a danger to him?

BEVERLY

I don't think so, the chip still seems to be working. I'd feel better if I could take a closer look, but I can't remove it without completely dismantling his cerebral conduit.

RIKER

(to Data)

Looks like you're stuck with emotions for a while. How do you feel?

DATA

I am quite... preoccupied with concern about Geordi.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

RIKER
We all are, Data. But we're going
to get him back.

DATA
I hope so, sir.

Data's expression is still one of concern. Beverly
pulls Riker aside.

BEVERLY
Wil, I checked into Doctor Soran's
background...

Beverly activates the wall monitor and a picture of
Doctor Soran along with some biographical information
appears.

BEVERLY
(continuing)
He's an El-Aurian... over three
hundred years old. He lost his
entire family when the Borg
destroyed his world. Soran
escaped with a handful of other
refugees aboard a ship called the
Lakul. The ship was destroyed by
some kind of energy ribbon, but
Soran and forty-six others were
rescued by the Enterprise-B.

RIKER
(reacts)
That was the mission where James
Kirk was killed.

BEVERLY
(works the controls)
I checked the passenger manifest
of the Lakul... guess who else was
on board?

She hits a control and suddenly Guinan's face appears
on the screen. Riker reacts to the image...

CUT TO:

80 INT. GUINAN'S QUARTERS

80

CLOSE ON GUINAN as she looks up, surprised.

GUINAN
Soran? That's a name I haven't
heard in a long time.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

MOVE TO REVEAL Guinan's Quarters, which are unlike any of the others on the Enterprise. None of the standard furniture, consoles, or decoration are present. The floor is made of tile, not carpet... the walls are draped in exotic fabric. The lighting is moody and subdued.

Picard is standing before Guinan, who is sitting cross-legged on the floor. They talk to each other with an easy familiarity... two old friends who know each other well.

PICARD

Do you remember him?

GUINAN

Oh yes...

Guinan stands and begins to move about the room... she's clearly troubled by the memories. She hesitates, looks off into the middle-distance for a few moments. Picard moves to her.

PICARD

Guinan. It's important that you tell me what you know. We think Soran's developed a weapon... a terrible weapon. It might give him enough power to --

GUINAN

Soran doesn't care about power, or weapons. All he cares about is getting back to the nexus.

PICARD

What's the "nexus"?

Guinan moves to a table and begins to shift around some exotic-looking alien artifacts... distracting herself... this is difficult for her to discuss. She makes the decision to plunge ahead.

GUINAN

The energy ribbon that destroyed the Lakul isn't just some random phenomenon travelling through space... it's a doorway. It leads to another place... the nexus. It doesn't exist in our universe... and it doesn't play by the same rules either. It's a place I've tried very hard to forget...

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED: (2)

80

PICARD
What happened to you?

She turns to him and her face is filled with some kind of awe and joy at the memory.

GUINAN
It was like being inside... joy.
As if joy was a real thing that I
could wrap around myself. I've
never been so content...

A long beat as Picard absorbs her words.

PICARD
But then you were beamed away...

Guinan shows a rare burst of anger.

GUINAN
I was pulled away. I didn't want
to leave. None of us did. All I
could think about was getting
back... I didn't care what I had
to do.

Guinan moves to a window and looks out at the stars.

GUINAN
(continuing)
Eventually I learned to live with
it... but it changed me.

PICARD
Your "sixth sense"...

Beat.

PICARD
(continuing)
And what about Soran?

GUINAN
Soran may still be obsessed with
getting back. And if he is, he'll
do anything to find that doorway
again.

PICARD
But why destroy a star...?
(beat)
Thank you, Guinan.

He heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED: (3)

80

GUINAN

Let someone else do it, Jean-Luc.

Picard stops, looks at her.

GUINAN

(continuing)

Don't get near the ribbon. If you go into that nexus, you're not going to care about Soran or the Enterprise or me. All you're going to care about is how it feels to be there.

(beat)

And you're never going to come back.

Picard weighs her words... sees the warning in her eyes... and carefully backs away and EXITS.

CUT TO:

81 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - QUARTERS (VFX-P)

81

A dimly-lit room somewhere in the bowels of the Klingon ship. Like every other room on this decrepit ship, the room looks well-worn and ill-maintained. Soran is seated behind a table, holding the VISOR. A PADD and Soran's pocketwatch sit on the table. Geordi is sitting in a chair across from him -- his shirt has been removed. He looks very tense.

SORAN

(re: VISOR)

A remarkable piece of equipment... but a little inelegant, wouldn't you say?

(beat)

Have you ever considered a prosthesis that would make you look a little more... normal?

GEORDI

What's normal?

SORAN

Normal is what everyone else is... and what you are not.

GEORDI

What do you want?

Soran takes a moment.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

SORAN

As you may or may not be aware, I am an El-Aurian. Some people call us a race of "Listeners". We listen.

(beat)

Right now, Mister La Forge, you have my undivided attention. I want to listen to everything you know about trilithium... and me.

Geordi thinks.

GEORDI

Trilithium is an experimental compound developed by the Romulans. I think it's a derivative of --

Soran picks up a PADD from the desk and activates it. Suddenly something small and with sharp edges can be seen MOVING just underneath Geordi's skin near his chest. Geordi moves his hand to the spot, but then the protrusion is suddenly gone.

SORAN

I don't want a science lecture. You were on that observatory looking for trilithium... why?

GEORDI

I was ordered to by the Captain.

On the PADD in Soran's hand, we can now see an interior graphic of Geordi's body sitting in the chair. The graphic is interactive, moving as Geordi moves. A BLINKING DOT represents the movement of the probe inside his body. Right now, the dot is in the middle of his chest.

SORAN

Let's try to move beyond the usual prisoner-interrogator banter, shall we? You have information, and I need it.

(beat)

Did the Captain explain his orders to you? Did he say why you were searching for trilithium?

GEORDI

No.

SORAN

What about... Guinan? What has she told you about me?

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

GEORDI
Guinan? I don't know what you're
talking about...

On the PADD, we now see the dot has moved to a position
next to Geordi's heart. Soran looks up at Geordi.

SORAN
My instincts tell me you're lying.
And I know that can't be easy for
you...
(off PADD)
I can see you have a good heart.

Soran taps a control on the PADD. Suddenly Geordi
grabs his chest in pain. Soran watches Geordi for a
few seconds, then taps the PADD again. Geordi gasps
and starts to breathe.

SORAN
Oh... I forgot to tell you. While
you were unconscious, I injected
a nano-probe into your
bloodstream. It's been navigating
your cardiovascular system... and
right now I've attached it to your
left ventricle.
(smiles)
A little trick I picked up from
the Borg.

GEORDI
(gasping)
Yeah... they're full of great
ideas...

SORAN
I just stopped your heart for five
seconds. It felt like an
eternity, didn't it? Did you know
that you can stop the human heart
for up to six minutes before the
onset of brain damage?

GEORDI
No... I didn't know that...

SORAN
We learn something new about
ourselves every day.
(beat)
Now. Maybe I didn't make myself
clear. It is very important that
you tell me exactly what Captain
Picard knows.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (3)

81

GEORDI

I told you everything... you might
as well just kill me right now...

Soran's features soften and he smiles slightly. For a moment, he looks genuinely compassionate -- and it's a disturbing contrast to his usual dark intensity.

SORAN

I'm not a killer, Mister La Forge.
(beat, then)
Let's try thirty seconds.

Soran taps a control on the PADD. Geordi gasps and strains against an unimaginable pain.

Soran picks up his pocketwatch and opens the cover... sits back in his chair, watching the seconds tick away...

CUT TO:

82 INT. STELLAR CARTOGRAPHY (VFX-P)

82

A room filled with exotic-looking devices, sensors, and computers which handle the enormous task of tracking the ship's position in space.

The monitors around the room display various diagrams of the ENERGY RIBBON (as seen in the beginning of the movie.)

Data is sitting at a computer console which has a great deal of complex information on the screen. Picard is standing next to him. Throughout the following, Data seems distracted and preoccupied.

DATA

According to our information, the ribbon is a conflux of temporal energy which travels through our galaxy every thirty-nine point one years. It will pass through this sector in approximately forty-two hours.

Picard reacts at this grim confirmation. Picard moves about the room... he's frustrated... tired... but determined to find out what's going on.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

PICARD

Then Guinan was right.

(beat)

She said Soran was trying to get back to the ribbon... if that's true, then there must be some connection with the Amargosa star.

(beat)

Give me a list of anything which has been affected by the star's destruction, no matter how insignificant..

Data does not respond -- he's lost in thought.

PICARD

Data.

Data snaps out of it.

DATA

Sorry, sir.

(works console)

It will take the computer a few moments to compile the information.

The computer begins to work. Data sighs -- his expression becomes downcast and gloomy. He sits down and puts his head in his hands. Picard finally has to say something.

PICARD

Are you all right?

DATA

No, sir. I am finding it difficult to concentrate... I believe I am overwhelmed with feelings of... remorse and regret concerning my actions on the Observatory.

PICARD

What do you mean?

DATA

I wanted to save Geordi... I tried... but I experienced something I did not expect.

(beat)

Fear. I was afraid, sir.

83 ANGLE (VFX-P)

83

The computer finishes its calculations and the console BEEPS. Data works the console. Information appears on screen.

DATA

(continuing)

According to our current information, the destruction of the Amargosa star has had the following effects in this sector: gamma emissions have increased by point zero five percent... the starship Bozeman was forced to make a course correction... a research project on Gorik Four was halted due to increased neutrino particles... ambient magnetic fields have decreased by --

PICARD

Wait. The Bozeman... why did it change course?

DATA

(matter of fact)

The destruction of the Amargosa star has altered the gravitational forces throughout the sector. Any ship passing through this region will have to make a minor course correction.

Picard is starting to get an idea... he's on to something here. He moves to a large table in the center of the room.

PICARD

(musing)

A minor course correction...

(beat)

Where is the ribbon now?

84 ANGLE (VFX-P)

84

Data moves to the table to work... after a few beats, an elaborate map of the galaxy springs up on the ceiling of the room. A BLINKING DOT shows the position of the ribbon.

DATA

(continuing, re: dot)

This is its current position.

PICARD

Can you project its course?

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

Data hesitates... still overcome with despair and obsessed with his own emotional turmoil.

DATA

Sir... I... I cannot continue with this investigation.
(off his look)
I wish to be deactivated until Doctor Crusher can remove the emotion chip.

Picard reacts.

PICARD

Are you having some kind of... malfunction?

DATA

No, sir. I simply do not have the ability to control these emotions.

Data's struggle taps into some of Picard's own recent emotional problems.

PICARD

Data, I have nothing but sympathy for what you're going through. But I need your full attention on the task at --

Data grows angry.

DATA

You do not understand, sir. I no longer want these feelings. Deactivating me is the only viable solution.

Picard finally has to lay down the law.

PICARD

Data, part of having emotions is learning how to integrate them into your life... how to deal with them, no matter what the circumstance.

DATA

But sir --

PICARD

(firm)
And I will not allow you to be deactivated.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: (2)

84

PICARD (Cont'd)
You are an officer aboard this
ship and right now you have a duty
to perform.
(beat)
That's an order, Commander.

This snaps Data back -- Picard's words are definitely
having an effect.

DATA
Yes, sir. I will try.

PICARD
(softens)
Courage can be an emotion too,
Data.
(beat)
Now... can you project the course
of the ribbon?

DATA
I believe so.

85 ANGLE (VFX-P)

85

Data works the console. A RED LINE moves to form an
arc through the starfield. Picard examines the display
for a moment and nods... he's excited, on to
something...

PICARD
Where was the Amargosa star?

Data works and a SINGLE STAR appears not far from the
red line.

PICARD
(re: star)
Now... you said when the Amargosa
star was destroyed it altered the
gravitational forces in this
sector... did the computer take
that into account when it
projected the ribbon's course?

DATA
(thinks, surprised)
No, sir. I will make the
appropriate adjustments.

86 ANGLE (VFX-P)

86

Data works and the single star suddenly DARKENS, begins to BLINK on and off, and then disappears. As a result the red line representing the course of the ribbon SHIFTS to the right -- it has changed course. Picard is beginning to realize what's going on.

PICARD

That's what Soran's doing... he's changing the ribbon's course.

(beat)

But why? Why try to alter its path... why not simply fly into it with a ship?

Data thinks for a moment.

DATA

Our records show that every ship which has approached the ribbon has either been destroyed or severely damaged.

Picard thinks about this... then has a flash of insight.

PICARD

He can't go to the ribbon... so he's trying to make the ribbon come to him.

(beat)

Data, is it going to pass near any M-class planets?

DATA

(works)

Yes, sir. There are two in the Veridian System.

87 ANGLE (VFX-P)

87

The display ZOOMS IN on a star very close to the ribbon's path. We now see a SOLAR SYSTEM with a single STAR and FOUR PLANETS. The RED LINE moves directly through the system -- it passes very close to the third planet. Picard eyes that planet and points to it.

PICARD

It's very close to Veridian Three... but not close enough...

Picard's mind is going a mile a minute. He suddenly has a horrible realization.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

PICARD
(continuing)
Data, what would happen to the
ribbon's path if he destroyed the
Veridian star itself?

88 ANGLE (VFX-P)

88

Data works. On the display, the Veridian star suddenly
DARKENS and BLINKS. The RED LINE shifts slightly until
it makes an exact INTERSECTION WITH THE THIRD PLANET.
They both react to this sight... they're both aware of
just how serious this is.

PICARD
(continuing)
That's where he's going.

DATA
It should be noted, sir, that the
collapse of the Veridian star
would produce a shock wave similar
to the one we observed at
Amargosa.

PICARD
(grim)
And destroy every planet in the
system.

Data eyes the graphic with a sense of dread.

DATA
Veridian Three is uninhabited...
but Veridian Four supports a pre-
Industrial humanoid society.

PICARD
Population?

DATA
Approximately two hundred thirty
million.

A grim beat.

PICARD
(to com)
Picard to Bridge.

WORF'S COM VOICE
Worf here, sir.

Picard heads for the Exit, a sense of urgency and
determination in his every move.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

PICARD
Set a course for the Veridian
System, maximum warp.

Picard and Data EXIT Engineering.

89 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (VFX-I)

89

as it goes into warp.

CUT TO:

90 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE

90

Lursa and B'Etor in command as Soran ENTERS.

LURSA
Did you get anything from the
human?

SORAN
No. His heart just isn't in it.

KLINGON HELM
(off console)
We have entered orbit of Veridian
Three.

SORAN
Prepare to transport me to the
surface.

B'ETOR
Wait. When do we get our payment?

Soran hands B'Etor a small computer CHIP.

SORAN
This contains all the information
you'll need to build a trilitium
weapon. It's been coded. Once
I'm safely to the surface, I'll
transmit the decryption sequence
to you... not before.

KLINGON HELM
(urgent)
Mistress -- a Federation starship
is entering the system!

LURSA
What? On viewer.

91 ANGLE (VFX-P)

91

The Helm works. The Viewscreen now shows the Enterprise at impulse entering the system. Reactions.

KLINGON HELM
They are hailing us.

B'ETOR
Du'cha. (On speakers.)

The Helm works. We hear PICARD'S COM VOICE.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Klingon vessel. We know what you're doing, and we will destroy any probe launched toward the Veridian star. We demand that you return our Chief Engineer and leave this system immediately.

Soran's expression darkens. He checks his watch.

SORAN
There's no time for this.
Eliminate them.

B'ETOR
(reacts)
That is a Galaxy Class Starship.
We are no match for them.

Soran thinks for a moment... then he gets an idea. He pulls Geordi's VISOR out of a pocket. He eyes it with intent.

SORAN
I think it's time we gave Mister La Forge his sight back.

OFF Lursa and B'Etor's curiosity...

CUT TO:

92 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (VFX-I)

92

nearing Veridian Three. The planet's STAR is visible.

93 INT. BRIDGE

93

Picard is pacing. Riker, Data, Worf, Troi, N.D.s at their stations. Data's mood has improved slightly, but he's still worried about Geordi.

RIKER
Maybe they're not out there.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

PICARD

They're just trying to decide whether a twenty year-old Klingon Bird of Prey is any match for the Federation flagship.

TROI

Or perhaps they're on the surface...

Worf turns to Picard.

WORF

Sir, according to my calculations, a solar probe launched from either the Klingon ship or the planet's surface will take eleven seconds to reach the sun.

(beat)

However, since we do not know the exact point of origin, it will take us between eight and fifteen seconds to lock our weapons on to it.

They exchange a grim look.

RIKER

(quiet, to Picard)

That's a pretty big margin of error.

PICARD

Too big. How long until the ribbon arrives?

DATA

Approximately forty-seven minutes, sir.

PICARD

(disturbed)

I have to find a way to get to Soran...

An ALARM goes off on Worf's console.

WORF

(off console)

Captain, Klingon vessel decloaking directly ahead.

94 ANGLE (VFX-I)

94

On the Viewscreen, the Bird of Prey DECLOAKS.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

WORF
(continuing)
They are hailing.

PICARD
On screen.

95 ANGLE (VFX-P)

95

On the Viewscreen, Lursa and B'Etor APPEAR.

LURSA
Captain. What an unexpected
pleasure.

PICARD
Lursa, I want to talk to Soran.

LURSA
I'm afraid the Doctor is no longer
aboard our ship.

PICARD
Then I'll beam down to his
location. Just give us his
coordinates.

B'ETOR
The Doctor values his privacy. He
would be quite... upset if an
armed Away Team interrupted him.

PICARD
Very well... I'll beam to your
ship and you can transport me to
Soran...

RIKER
(urgent)
Sir, you can't trust them. For
all we know, they killed Geordi
and they'll kill you too.

Lursa and B'Etor exchange a glance.

LURSA
(innocent)
We did not harm your Engineer.
He's been... our guest.

RIKER
Then return him.

B'ETOR
In exchange for what?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

DATA

Me, sir.

Picard ignores him.

PICARD

Me... if you let me speak to Soran.

The two sisters appear to consider this for a moment.

B'ETOR

(to Lursa)

The Captain would make a much more valuable hostage.

LURSA

(to Picard)

We'll consider it a prisoner exchange.

PICARD

Agreed.

The transmission ENDS. Picard heads for the Turbolift.

PICARD

(continuing)

Number One, you have the Bridge.
Have Doctor Crusher meet me in
Transporter Room Three.

As Picard EXITS...

CUT TO:

96 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (VFX-P)

96

Picard stands on the platform. Beverly and NURSE OGAWA stand nearby. The Transporter CHIEF works his console.

CHIEF

Receiving the coordinates,
Captain.

PICARD

Energize.

Picard DEMATERIALIZES -- and at the same instant, Geordi MATERIALIZES. Beverly and Ogawa rush to his aide, pull out their tricorders and scan him. Geordi is conscious, and he's wearing his VISOR.

CUT TO:

97 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY (VFX-P)

97

A large plateau, ringed with trees and underbrush. A single ROCKFACE juts upward, forming a backdrop for the plateau. Against the rockface, a large SCAFFOLDING has been erected -- planks and beams forming a complex structure -- ladders connect each level. It leads to a narrow ledge a dozen meters above.

Picard MATERIALIZES on the plateau. (NOTE: Picard's combadge is gone and he is unarmed.) A moment as he looks around... strange animals and birds can be heard.

He turns and sees Soran standing nearby, calmly looking at his pocket watch. Soran puts the watch away.

SORAN

You must think I'm quite the madman.

PICARD

The thought had crossed my mind...

SORAN

The only possible reason you're here is because you're not entirely confident you can shoot down my probe after all. So you've come to dissuade me from my horrific plan.

(beat)

Good luck.

Soran turns his back on Picard and walks away.

98 ANGLE (VFX-P)

98

Picard takes a step to follow him and then is JOLTED backward by a large FORCEFIELD which briefly flashes into view. The field completely surrounds the plateau, enclosing Soran and the scaffolding, with Picard on the outside. OFF Picard's surprise...

CUT TO:

99 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE (VFX-P)

99

The Klingon Navigator is working his console.

KLINGON HELM

I have established the link.

LURSA

Put it on screen.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

The Viewscreen shows STATIC for a few seconds, then clears to a distorted view of a CEILING on the ENTERPRISE -- this is GEORDI'S POV. (NOTE: The POV is slightly fritzed, but free of the usual VISOR effects.)

LURSA
(continuing)
It's working...

B'ETOR
Where is he?

Suddenly, Beverly's face looms large in the picture, as if she's leaning over Geordi. She smiles and starts talking. We can see her lips move, but we can't hear what she's saying.

BEVERLY
(silent)
Don't worry, there's been no permanent damage. There's only been a little arterial scarring....

Lursa and B'Etor pull back in surprise at the image.

B'ETOR
(continuing)
Human females are so repulsive.

CUT TO:

100 INT. SICKBAY - CONTINUOUS

100

Beverly is leaning over Geordi, who is on a bio-bed. Mid-conversation.

BEVERLY
(continuing)
...and some myocardial degeneration. I've removed the nano-probe and I think you're going to be fine, but I want to run some more tests.

GEORDI
Thanks, Doc.

Beverly moves off and Geordi sits up on the bed and sees Data standing nearby for the first time. Data looks concerned and remorseful.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

DATA

I am sorry I let you down, Geordi.
I have not been behaving like
myself lately.

Geordi knows what he's talking about -- gives him a
sympathetic look.

GEORDI

No, you haven't... you've been
behaving like a human.

Data reacts to this. OFF his thoughtful expression...

CUT TO:

101 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

101

Picard is walking the perimeter of the invisible
forcefield, looking for some way in. Soran is
concentrating on his PADD as Picard tries to engage him
on some level.

PICARD

You don't need to do this,
Soran... I'm sure we could find
another way to get you into this
nexus.

102 ANGLE (VFX-P)

102

Soran gets up and works his control PADD. Suddenly a
PROBE LAUNCHER DECLOAKS in the middle of the plateau.
The launcher is a cylindrical apparatus the size of a
small car.

Soran goes to the launcher, steps onto it and begins
working the control panel.

SORAN

(calm, distracted)

I've spent eighty years looking
for another way, Captain. This is
the only one.

(beat)

Of course, you could always come
with me. You fancy yourself an
explorer. Here's a chance to
explore something no human has
ever experienced.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

PICARD

Not if it means killing over two
hundred million people.

(beat, then with
meaning)

I wonder... did your wife Leandra
know that she married a man who
was capable of mass murder?

This has touched a nerve within Soran... something dark
and ugly flickers across his face.

PICARD

(continuing, pressing
on)

When you tucked your children into
bed... do you suppose they ever
suspected that their father would
one day kill millions as casually
as he kissed them goodnight?

Soran looks up at Picard... and for a moment we can see
that Picard has really gotten to him here... then he
finally smiles a smile that doesn't quite reach his
eyes.

SORAN

Nice try.

CUT TO:

103 INT. GEORDI'S BATHROOM - GEORDI'S POV

103

Geordi is taking a bath. We can see his legs and feet
sticking out of the water in front of him... he stands
up.

MOVE TO REVEAL:

104 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE (VFX-P)

104

Lursa and B'Etor are still watching Geordi's POV on the
Viewscreen. They are bored and irritable.

B'ETOR

I thought he was the Chief
Engineer.

LURSA

He is.

B'ETOR

Then when is he going to
Engineering?

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

The POV shows Geordi's view as he stops in front of a mirror... wipes away the steam and reveals his own reflection. Lursa and B'Etor gnash their teeth in frustration...

CUT TO:

105 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

105

Riker, Worf, and N.D.s as seen before.

RIKER

(to Worf)

Any luck, Mister Worf?

WORF

No, sir. I am still unable to locate the Captain.

Data ENTERS from the Turbolift and heads for his station. He seems upbeat, happy... he's clearly feeling much better now.

RIKER

Data, the sensors can't penetrate the planet's ionosphere -- there's too much interference. Can you find another way to scan for lifeforms?

Data smiles, delighted at the request.

DATA

I would be happy to, sir. I just love to scan for lifeforms.

As Data works, he breaks into a merry little song.

DATA

(continuing, sings)

"Lifeforms... tiny little lifeforms... where are the lifeforms..." etc.

Riker and Worf exchange a look.

CUT TO:

106 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

106

Soran is working intently on the Launcher's Control Panel. Picard is still walking the perimeter of the forcefield... he's also still trying to engage Soran, find some way to get to him.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

PICARD

What you're about to do, Soran, is no different from when the Borg destroyed your world. They killed millions, too. Including your wife... children.

This has touched a nerve within Soran... something dark and ugly flickers across his face.

SORAN

You're right. And there was a time when I wouldn't have hurt anyone. Then the Borg came... and they showed me that if there's one constant in this universe, it's death.

Soran fixes Picard with a penetrating look.

SORAN

(continuing)

Aren't you beginning to feel time gaining on you? It's like a predator. It's stalking you. You can try to outrun it with doctors... new technologies... but in the end, time is going to hunt you down... and make the kill.

This strikes home with Picard's own recent concerns... he struggles for a moment.

PICARD

We're all... mortal, Soran. It's one of the truths of our existence.

SORAN

What if I told you I found a new truth...

PICARD

The nexus.

SORAN

Time has no meaning there. The predator has no teeth.

Soran glances up at the sky expectantly, then turns away from Picard and goes back to work on the Launcher. OFF Picard's disturbed expression...

CUT TO:

107 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE (VFX-P) 107

B'Etor watching the Viewscreen, impatient. The POV shows Geordi's view of walking down a CORRIDOR. Lursa walks over to join her.

LURSA
Where is he now?

B'ETOR
I don't know... he bathed... now he is roaming the ship... He must be the only Engineer in Starfleet who does not go to Engineering!

CUT TO:

108 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY (VFX-P) 108

Picard continues to walk around the perimeter of the forcefield. He sees something on the ground -- a GNARLED ROOT from a large nearby tree. The root is poking out of the ground, leaving a small arch through which daylight can be seen. Picard's mind begins racing... he glances at Soran and then picks up a pebble and while keeping his eye on the root, he tosses the pebble into the air, where it HITS the forcefield.

-- The forcefield FLASHES ON briefly and Picard can see that the bottom border of the field follows the contour of the root. But it does not extend underneath the arch.

-- Soran turns at the sound of the crackling field.

SORAN
Careful, Captain. That's a fifty gigawatt forcefield. I wouldn't want to see you get hurt.

PICARD
Thank you.

Soran returns to working on the Launcher... but Picard looks back down at the root... then he walks away, planning his next move.

CUT TO:

109 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE (VFX-P) 109

Lursa and B'Etor are watching the Viewscreen of Geordi's POV with irritated expressions. On the monitor, Geordi rounds a corner and enters Engineering.

The sisters lean forward eagerly.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: 109

B'ETOR
Finally!

110 INT. ENGINEERING 110

Geordi is talking to an Engineer named FARRELL, N.D.s working in b.g. Mid-conversation.

FARRELL
I'd like to run a level three diagnostic on the port plasma relays. I think one of the generators is fluctuating.

GEORDI
Okay, let's do it.

They both move to consoles...

111 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY - BRIDGE (VFX-P) 111

As before. On the screen we can now see several of the monitors in Engineering. On the left side of the screen is the large cut-a-way view of the Enterprise. Lursa suddenly reacts to something on the screen.

LURSA
That's it!
(to B'Etor)
Replay from time index four-two-nine.

B'Etor works. The image on their monitor RUNS BACKWARD for a moment and then FREEZES. On the screen we can now see several of the monitors in Engineering. On the left side of the screen is the large cut-a-way view of the Enterprise. Lursa touches the diagram.

LURSA
(continuing)
Magnify this section and enhance.

B'Etor works. The picture ZOOMS IN on the cut-a-way graphic and SHARPENS in FOCUS. There are several blocks of numbers and text visible. Lursa studies the image.

LURSA
(continuing)
Their shields are operating on a modulation of two-five-seven point four...

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED: 111

The sisters exchange an excited glance, then move toward the command area.

B'ETOR
(calls out)
Adjust our torpedo frequency to
match -- two-five-seven point
four!

The two sisters smile eagerly.

112 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 112

DATA
(to Riker)
Sir, I am detecting an anomalous
subspace reading in Main
Engineering. It may be --

WHAM! The ship is ROCKED HARD. ALARMS go off on the Bridge. The ship goes to RED ALERT. (NOTE: The ship is at RED ALERT until scene 139 when the ship loses power.)

113 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 113

The Klingon ship is FIRING FOUR TORPEDOES at the Enterprise. The torpedoes PASS DIRECTLY THROUGH the ship's SHIELDS and hit directly on the hull.

114 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 114

WHAM! Another HIT.

WORF
(shocked)
They have found a way to penetrate
our shields.

RIKER
Lock phasers and return fire!

115 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE & KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 115

The Enterprise FIRES at the Bird of Prey... but the phaser shots are stopped by the Klingon SHIELDS, which FLASH ON when they're hit.

The Bird of Prey returns FIRE. The shot carves a jagged TEAR in the Enterprise's hull.

116 INT. BRIDGE 116

As before. The ship is jolted again... the Con console EXPLODES and the Con Officer is killed.

RIKER
(to Troi)
Deanna, take the helm. Get us out
of orbit.

Troi rushes to the Con and works...

117 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE & KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 117

The Enterprise turns and leaves orbit, but the Klingon ship is right on top of them... FIRING at the defenseless starship.

118 INT. BRIDGE 118

A JOLT.

DATA
Hull breach on decks thirty-one
through thirty-five.

Another JOLT. The Bridge lights FLICKER. The situation is desperate.

RIKER
(urgent, to Worf)
Worf, that's an old Klingon ship.
What do we know about it? Are
there any weaknesses?

The ship is JOLTED. They all hold on.

WORF
It is a Class D-twelve Bird of
Prey. They were retired from
service because of defective
plasma coils.

RIKER
Plasma coils... is there any way
we can use that to our advantage?

WORF
I do not see how. The plasma coil
is part of their cloaking
device...

119 INT. ENGINEERING 119

There is a sudden EXPLOSION on the upper level. Geordi and the other Engineers rush to deal with it.

GEORDI

Get a stabilizer on that conduit.

120 INT. BRIDGE 120

Riker suddenly gets an inspiration as the Bridge is ROCKED.

RIKER

(to Data)

Data, wouldn't a defective plasma coil be susceptible to some kind of... ionic pulse?

DATA

(considers)

Perhaps...

(suddenly enthusiastic)

Yes! If we sent a low level ionic pulse, it might reset the coil and trigger their cloaking device. Excellent idea, sir.

WORF

(onto the idea)

As their cloak begins to engage, their shields will drop.

RIKER

Right. And they'll be vulnerable for at least two seconds.

(to Data)

Data, lock onto that plasma coil.

DATA

(confident)

No problem.

Data goes to a bulkhead and begins pulling out wires and re-routing circuits.

CUT TO:

121 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY 121

The sisters in command, eager to destroy the Enterprise. The ship is ROCKED slightly.

KLINGON HELM

Minor damage to the port nacelle. Our shields are holding.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED: 121

B'ETOR
(smiles)
Fire at will.

CUT TO:

122 INT. BRIDGE 122

The ship is ROCKED. Data is still re-routing conduits and checking monitors on the bulkhead.

RIKER
Worf, prepare a spread of photon torpedoes. We'll have to hit them the instant they begin to cloak.

WORF
Aye, sir.

RIKER
We're only going to get one shot at this. Target their primary reactor. With any luck, their warp core should implode.

Worf works.

123 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE & KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 123

The Enterprise ROLLS and TURNS back toward the planet, tries to get away from the Klingon ship. But the Bird of Prey follows its every move.

124 INT. BRIDGE 124

DATA
I have accessed their coil frequency... initiating ionic pulse...

The ship is HIT again. An aft CONSOLE EXPLODES.

RIKER
Make it quick!

125 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY 125

Lursa and B'Etor in command... savoring their imminent victory.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED: 125

LURSA
(to Navigator)
Target their Bridge.

B'ETOR
Full disruptors.

The Navigator suddenly reacts to something on his console.

KLINGON HELM
We are cloaking!

B'ETOR
What?

KLINGON HELM
Mistress -- our shields are down!

126 EXT. SPACE - THE KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 126

The ship BEGINS SHIMMERING -- engaging its cloak.

127 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 127

RIKER
Fire!

Worf works.

128 INT. KLINGON BIRD OF PREY (VFX-I) 128

Lursa and B'Etor react to the sight on the Viewscreen as the spread of torpedoes heads directly for them. The two sisters exchange a look. The ship is suddenly ROCKED HARD and we can see the beginning of an EXPLOSION...

129 EXT. SPACE - THE KLINGON SHIP (VFX-I) 129

The ship IMPLODES, completely destroyed... pieces of the shattered vessel float past the camera.

130 INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE 130

Everyone reacts to the blinding light from the screen.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

DATA
 (excited)
 YES!!

CUT TO:

131 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY (VFX-P)

131

Picard has made his way back to the gnarled root. He stands a few feet away... a couple of pebbles in his hand.

He glances at Soran, who's absorbed with his work on the launcher.

Picard then surreptitiously TOSSES a pebble toward the root. It misses and BOUNCES off the FORCEFIELD. Soran looks over his shoulder at Picard, who sits down on a rock. Soran returns to his work.

Picard tosses a second pebble -- this one also hits the forcefield. Soran turns, with a vaguely irritated look.

SORAN
 (as if to a child)
 Don't you have anything better to do?

Picard doesn't respond. Soran goes back to work.

Picard waits a moment, then takes aim and TOSSES another pebble toward the root. This time, the pebble bounces UNDERNEATH the arch and rolls onto the plateau -- inside the forcefield. Picard keeps his expression neutral, but he's found a way in.

CUT TO:

132 INT. ENGINEERING

132

The room is a disaster. Wreckage from destroyed consoles and debris are scattered throughout the room. Geordi is desperately working with Engineers near the warp core, which is running faster and faster.

GEORDI
 (to com)
 La Forge to Bridge. I've got a problem down here. The magnetic interlocks have been ruptured. I need to get the --

The warp core starts to spew white-hot GAS.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

GEORDI
(continuing)
Coolant leak! Everybody out!

The emergency isolation door comes DOWN and people start rushing out of Engineering. Geordi heads for the Corridor.

GEORDI
(on the move, to com)
Bridge. We've got a new problem.
We're about five minutes from a
warp core breach. There's nothing
I can do.

133 INT. BRIDGE 133

Riker is faced with a no-win situation. He makes the decision.

RIKER
(to Troi)
Deanna, evacuate everyone into the
saucer section.
(to Data)
Mister Data, prepare to separate
the ship.

Troi and Data work and Riker moves to the Captain's chair. He presses a button on the armchair console... a unique and urgent ALARM is heard throughout the ship.

SERIES OF SHOTS as the ALARM SOUNDS:

134 INT. CORRIDOR 134

Crew members and civilians begin to come out into the corridor and move down it with belongings. They move faster and faster.

135 INT. ENGINEERING 135

Geordi, Farrell and the other Engineers just manage to get out as the door drops down.

136 INT. SCHOOLROOM/CORRIDOR 136

Kids emerge from art class with teachers. Parents rush down the corridor and take some kids with them. But, some children, including a LITTLE GIRL with a TEDDY BEAR are left with the teachers. Geordi and Farrell rush by and pick up the kids.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED: 136

The Little Girl drops her bear and she begins to cry as Geordi carries her down the corridor.

GEORDI
(to adults)
Come on, come on, let's go! etc.

137 INT SICKBAY/CORRIDOR 137

Beverly and Ogawa rush to move two wounded patients out of Sickbay. There are too many people in the corridor for stretchers, so some patients must be helped along.

BEVERLY
Let's go, we have to clear this deck! Hurry! etc.

138 INT. JEFFERIES TUBE 138

People scramble into the bottom of the tube from corridors. An Engineer opens the tube from above and people scramble out.

139 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY (VFX-P) 139

Soran is finishing his work on the launcher. On one of the monitors on the control panel, we can now see alien graphics and numbers ticking by -- obviously a countdown in progress. Soran finishes and turns off the control panel. He steps down and looks over at Picard, who is standing near the forcefield.

SORAN
Now, if you'll excuse me Captain,
I have an appointment with
eternity and I don't want to be
late.

Soran turns and begins to climb up the scaffolding toward the top of the rockface. Picard watches him intently for a few moments... then quickly springs into action...

140 INT. JEFFERIES TUBE 140

People scramble through the Tube and out into a Corridor. Geordi is the last man through the hatch. He turns and manually SHUTS the hatch behind him.

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: 140

GEORDI
(hits combadge)
That's it, Bridge -- we're all
out!

141 INT. BRIDGE 141

DATA
One minute to warp core breach.

RIKER
(to Data)
Begin separation sequence.
(to Troi)
Full impulse power once we're
clear.

Data works.

142 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (VFX-I) 142

LOOKING FORWARD from behind the REAR of the massive
ship. A CRACK appears as the separation process
begins...

143 INT. BRIDGE 143

Everyone is watching the VIEWSCREEN with anticipation.

DATA
Separation complete. Ten seconds
to warp core breach.

TROI
Engaging impulse engines.

144 EXT. SPACE - THE SAUCER SECTION (VFX-I) 144

Moves away from the battle section... but before it can
completely escape, the battle section EXPLODES -- the
force of the explosion HITS the saucer section,
knocking it toward the planet.

145 INT. BRIDGE (VFX-I) 145

Everyone is knocked to their feet.

RIKER
Report.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: 145

TROI
Helm controls are off-line!

They all look at the Viewscreen... the planet is rushing toward them.

146 CLOSE ON DATA 146

as he reacts to the terrifying image.

DATA
Oh, shit.

CUT TO:

147 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY (VFX-P) 147

Picard has dropped to the ground and is on his back -- he's trying to wriggle underneath the root. It's not easy... he knows there's not much room between the ground and the invisible field. He just gets his head and shoulders underneath when he accidentally TOUCHES the field and it CRACKLES violently around him -- Picard is jolted by the shock.

148 SORAN (VFX-P) 148

turns at the sound of the field, sees Picard, and then draws his weapon. Soran quickly FIRES at Picard.

149 THE GROUND (VFX-P) 149

is BLASTED APART, creating a cloud of dirt and smoke, obscuring Picard and the whole area momentarily.

-- Soran jumps down one level on the scaffolding, his disruptor still in his hand, ready just in case Picard somehow survived. Soran peers through the cloud of dust and debris...

-- The dust from the explosion finally CLEARS... but Picard is gone along with several feet of the ground where he was crawling.

150 SORAN (VFX-I) 150

glances up at the sky and sees the distant ENERGY RIBBON just coming into view. There's no time to look for Picard.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 150

-- Soran begins to climb the scaffolding.

CUT TO:

151 EXT. SPACE - THE SAUCER SECTION (VFX-I) 151

PLUMMETS into the planet's atmosphere.

152 INT. BRIDGE 152

The ship is shaking and rolling VIOLENTLY. Everyone hanging on for dear life.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

153 INT. BEDROOM/QUARTERS #ONE 153

Beverly and Ogawa bring their patients in and get them settled.

154 INT. CORRIDOR/QUARTERS #TWO 154

Geordi and Farrell direct Teachers and children into the living room. TWO parents rush up, grab their two kids and head off down the Corridor. Geordi settles the rest of the kids and parents next to him in the living room.

GEORDI

It'll be all right... just hang on
and don't let go... it's okay...
etc.

155 INT. SCIENCE LAB 155

Two Scientists rush around the lab and desperately try to secure a complex experiment on a table.

156 INT. QUARTERS #THREE 156

A family finds a safe spot in some empty quarters and they huddle together.

157 INT. BRIDGE (VFX-I) 157

The ground is getting closer on the Viewscreen.

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: 157

DATA
(off console)
I have rerouted auxiliary power to
the lateral thrusters...
attempting to level our descent...

RIKER
(to com)
All hands brace for impact!

158 EXT. PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE - THE SAUCER SECTION 158
(VFX-I)

The leading edge of the huge saucer TILTS UPWARD slightly... and then it HITS the surface... the saucer begins to PLOW THROUGH the dense rain forest: As the ship continues to tear through the jungle, we INTERCUT the following sequences:

159 INT. BRIDGE 159

The Bridge crew is flung about. Worf is thrown over the Tactical console... Riker is knocked out of his chair... Troi is nearly sent into the Viewscreen, but Data grabs her before she can get injured. There are explosions... fire... smoke... everyone struggling to hang on.

160 INT. QUARTERS #TWO 160

Geordi, Farrell, kids and teachers huddle together. Furniture crashing around them... the kids are crying... the teddy bear girl crying in Geordi's arms... the floor buckles under them and they struggle to hang on... furniture crashes into walls.

161 INT. SCIENCE LAB 161

The experiment is smashed and broken as the ship lurches... the scientists struggle to stay out of the way.

162 INT. QUARTERS #THREE 162

The family huddles together as the windows are blown in.

- 163 INT. BEDROOM/QUARTERS #ONE 163
Beverly, Ogawa, and the patients are bounced around by the violent motion of the ship. Some of the furniture is shaken loose.
- 164 INT. READY ROOM 164
The window is blown in... the desk collapses... and Picard's photo album is blown against a wall.
- 165 EXT. SAUCER SECTION (VFX-I) 165
Outside the ship, we see a huge WALL of metal CRASHING through the jungle, uprooting trees... dirt flying... birds flying out of the way... an enormous scene of destruction as it tears through the foliage...
- 166 INT. BRIDGE 166
The ship continues to jump and shake... every light on the ship, including RED ALERT, GOES OUT in the crash. Finally, it comes to a STOP. There is a long quiet beat... then people begin to stir in the darkened room.
- 167 ANGLE ON RIKER 167
who is slumped on the deck... he catches his breath, lifts his face and looks up into... SUNLIGHT. He shields his eyes and looks up at the ceiling and reacts...
- 168 RIKER'S POV (VFX-P) 168
The sun is shining in through the shattered overhead window on the top of the Bridge. There is a fluttering sound as a couple of BIRDS perch on the rim of the window.
- 169 EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - THE ENTERPRISE (WIDE SHOT) 169
(VFX-I)
The saucer has come to a stop in the middle of a RAIN FOREST. The passage of the saucer has gouged a long trail through the forest behind the ship. Off this startling sight...

CUT TO:

170 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY 170

Soran is climbing up the scaffolding. He gets a couple of levels up, and then suddenly a BOOT kicks him in the face. Picard has made it inside the field.

A quick fight ensues, during which Picard is knocked a few levels down on the scaffolding. He LANDS hard -- happens to look up into the sky. He sees something --

171 PICARD'S POV - THE SKY (VFX-I) 171

The ENERGY RIBBON can be seen in the distant sky -- a bizarre snake of color streaking across the deep blue sky. Time is almost up.

172 RESUME ACTION (VFX-I) 172

-- Picard avoids a vicious kick from Soran, glances down at the probe launcher, realizes he's got one chance. He rolls to his feet, runs toward the probe launcher.

-- There is a THUNDEROUS ROAR as the launcher FIRES THE PROBE into the sky.

-- The plateau is suddenly quiet as the probe streaks toward the distant SUN and disappears from view. Picard gets to his knees, stares after the probe, shocked. He's failed.

-- They watch the sun for a silent moment, waiting...

173 THE SUN (VFX-I) 173

begins to DARKEN and COLLAPSE, as seen before.

174 RESUME PLATEAU 174

the scene DARKENS as the sun goes out... and NIGHT FALLS on the planet.

Soran, a look of profound elation on his face, makes his way to the top of the scaffolding and looks into the sky.

175 PICARD (VFX-I) 175

gets to his feet and stares at the onrushing Ribbon, the wind whipping up on the plateau. He backs away at the sight, coming to a stop with his back against the scaffolding. There's nowhere to run...

176 NEW ANGLE - THE PLATEAU (VFX-I) 176

as the RIBBON OF ENERGY TEARS ACROSS THE SCENE IN A TERRIFYING TORRENT OF LIGHT AND SOUND. THE SCENE IS WASHED OUT BY A BLINDING FLOOD OF RED LIGHT... Then suddenly the Ribbon is GONE... and so are Picard and Scran. The plateau is strangely and utterly SILENT after the passage of the Ribbon... even the birds have stopped chirping in the trees.

177 EXT. SPACE - VERIDIAN THREE 177

As the ENERGY RIBBON rushes past the camera, a HUGE SHOCKWAVE from the destroyed star heads toward the planet...

178 EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - THE ENTERPRISE (WIDE SHOT) 178

The saucer section now has people standing on the hull, watching as the SHOCKWAVE roars across the landscape, finally ANNIHILATING the entire saucer and everything around it...

179 EXT. SPACE - VERIDIAN THREE 179

The entire planet EXPLODES in a blast of fiery debris...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

180 CLOSE ON PICARD'S FACE 180

Blindfolded. He's being led through a darkened HALLWAY. Offscreen hands tug and pull at him, leading him forward down the hall. Picard is confused, tries to resist but can't... the hands keep pulling at him...

PICARD

What's going on? Where am I?

Two hands reach into frame and remove the blindfold...

181 PICARD'S POV 181

The blindfold drops, revealing a blurry and surreal kaleidoscope of COLORS and SHAPES...

182 PICARD 182

as he blinks and tries to focus...

183 PICARD'S POV 183

As the image comes into focus and we realize we're looking at an enormous, gaily decorated CHRISTMAS TREE sparkling with hundreds of lights.

184 TIGHT ON PICARD 184

as he tries to make sense of what's happened... when suddenly a flurry of movement and sound RUSHES into his awareness. STAY CLOSE on Picard as SIX CHILDREN suddenly TACKLE him onto a couch.

CHILDREN

Surprise!!

185 PICARD'S POV 185

of the faces of six beautiful CHILDREN with faces glowing. They pile on top of him, showering him with love, affection kisses.

CHILDREN

Merry Christmas! Were you scared?
Isn't the tree beautiful? I
helped decorate it. etc.

186 TIGHT ON PICARD 186

His disorientation giving way to a smile. He can't help but be moved and drawn in by the blanket of love he finds himself underneath.

PICARD

Wait... wait. Not all at once...

A woman's VOICE --

WOMAN'S VOICE

(sweetly)

Come on, children, that's enough --
give your father some breathing
room.

The children disentangle themselves from Picard and head off to some unseen destination. Picard sits up, blinks, still trying to orient himself... looks in the direction of the woman's voice and is surprised to see:

187 A LOVELY WOMAN 187

in her forties, standing there with a gentle smile.

WOMAN
(knowingly)
A cup of Earl Grey?

Picard smiles back at her. He's not sure why, but he already feels an intimate bond with this woman. And his response comes naturally, easily.

PICARD
Yes... yes, that would be perfect.

The woman smiles and walks off. After a moment, Picard stands and looks around the room, and for the first time we REVEAL:

188 THE SETTING 188

A 24th century FRENCH LIVING ROOM. It is beautifully decorated with lights, ornaments, holly... brightly wrapped presents are clustered beneath the tree, which the six children are excitedly ripping open. It's a radiant scene of almost surreal beauty...

BOY'S VOICE
This one's for you...

Picard turns at the voice, and we see a look of shock and wonder cross his features.

189 RENE 189

Picard's nephew, about eight years-old, is handing Picard a small GIFT.

RENE
Merry Christmas, Uncle.

PICARD
Rene...

Picard takes the present, sets it down, and then reaches out a hand and touches the boy's face... then puts a hand on his shoulder.

PICARD
I thought...
(beat, smiles)
It's... good to see you.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Rene -- come help me set the table.

(CONTINUED)

- 189 CONTINUED: 189
- Rene gives Picard a final smile and then moves off. A look of utter contentment and joy slowly brightens Picard's features. He's at home... with his family... and all is right with the world. For reasons he cannot name and does not even want to understand at the moment, he is very, very happy.
- 190 CLOSE ON PICARD 190
- as he stands and walks through his house. The CAMERA seems to FLOAT around him, circling him as he absorbs the sounds... smells... and swirling images of Christmas at his home. He's like a man walking through a dream. Finally, he comes to the Christmas tree and stares at the various decorations and sparkling lights... until one of the ornaments catches his eye...
- 191 PICARD'S POV 191
- of a large ORNAMENT which radiates a SHIMMERING LIGHT EFFECT that expands outward into the glass sphere -- an effect reminiscent of a shockwave emanating from a star.
- 192 RESUME PICARD 192
- as he reacts. The ornament touches a nerve within him. It's reminded him of something he's nearly forgotten -- a discordant tone in an otherwise wondrous and magical scene.
- He turns and goes to a nearby window... pulls back the curtain and looks outside. It's snowing, and the image soothes him for a moment. Then he reacts to something...
- 193 PICARD'S POV 193
- There is another CHRISTMAS TREE out on the front lawn, which has been decorated with lights and ornaments. And again one of the ornaments is a bulb with a strange radiating LIGHT EFFECT, as we saw on the first Christmas tree.
- 194 PICARD 194
- frowns for a moment. The spell is broken.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

PICARD

No... this isn't right... this
can't be real...

GUINAN'S VOICE

It's as real as you want it to be.

Picard turns at the voice and we --

195 GUINAN (VFX-P)

195

standing before him. She is wearing the same outfit
seen in the beginning of the movie on the Enterprise-B.
As they talk, the children and the woman continue to
move about their business as if Picard and Guinan
aren't there.

Picard is stunned.

PICARD

Guinan... what's going on? Where
am I?

GUINAN

You're in the nexus.

Picard looks around.

PICARD

This... is the nexus?

GUINAN

For you. This is where you wanted
to be...

PICARD

But I never had a wife, children,
a home like this...

GUINAN

Enjoy them, Jean-Luc...

Picard tries to make sense of it -- he focuses on
Guinan.

PICARD

Guinan, what are you doing here?
I thought you were on the
Enterprise.

GUINAN

I am on the Enterprise... I am
also here.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

195

GUINAN (Cont'd)
(off his puzzled look)
Think of me as... an "echo" of the
person you know... a part of her
she left behind...

PICARD
Left behind...?

GUINAN
When the Enterprise-B beamed us
off the Lakul, we were partially
in the nexus. The transporters
locked onto us... but somehow
everyone left a part of themselves
behind.

PICARD
Soran...?

GUINAN
All of us.

PICARD
Where is he now?

GUINAN
Wherever he wanted to be...

Guinan smiles at him.

THOMAS' VOICE
Papa, help me build my castle!

Picard glances over at the boy, who is building a play
castle out of the 24th century equivalent of "Lego".
For a moment, Picard is tempted to drift back to the
warm embrace of the fantasy...

PICARD
(to Thomas)
In a few minutes...

Picard looks around at the children... the lure to stay
here becoming more powerful.

PICARD
(continuing, awed, to
Guinan)
These are my children... my
children...

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (2)

195

GUINAN

(smiles)

Yeah. They're great, aren't they?
You can go back and see them
born... go forward and see your
grandchildren... time has no
meaning here.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Dinner's ready! Let's go!

There's a general rush toward the adjacent dining room.
The youngest boy looks at Picard, goes over to him and
takes his hand.

MATTHEW

Papa... are you coming?

Picard looks down into the face of his child. His
heart swells, the temptation to stay here and live this
out is profound. Almost in a trance, he takes a few
steps with the child toward the dining room... His eye
is caught again by the unusual ornament on the tree.
He stops, looks between the boy and the tree for a
moment... torn between the two images... and then in
one of the most difficult moments of his life, he bends
down to the child...

PICARD

Go on... go on without me...

The boy looks at him quizzically for a moment, then
obeys his father and dashes off toward the dining room
to join the others. Picard straightens up and tries to
steel his voice.

PICARD

Guinan... can I leave the nexus?

GUINAN

Why would you want to leave?

PICARD

(insistent)

Can I?

GUINAN

Yes... where would you go?

PICARD

I don't understand.

GUINAN

I told you time has no meaning
here. If you leave, you can go
anywhere... any time.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (3)

195

Picard realizes the opportunity before him.

PICARD

I know exactly where I want to go... and when. Back to that mountaintop on Veridian Three... before Soran put out the star. I have to stop him.

GUINAN

What makes you think things will be any different this time?

PICARD

You're right... I'll need help.

(beat)

Guinan, will you come back with me? Together, we could --

GUINAN

I can't leave. I'm already there, remember?

Picard looks crestfallen for a moment. Guinan gives him an enigmatic smile.

GUINAN

(continuing)

But I know just the guy.

Suddenly there's the cry of a HAWK from offscreen. Picard turns at the sound --

196 EXT. KIRK'S HOME - DAY

196

Picard finds himself standing outside a rustic, but architecturally striking house with spectacular views in the Canadian Rockies. A hawk is circling overhead, making the crying sound that Picard heard. The air is cold, frigid -- Picard can see his breath. Picard is just starting to adjust to this sudden change in location when he hears the sound of wood being CHOPPED from around the corner of the house. Picard moves to look around the corner and sees --

James T. Kirk. He's still in his uniform and looks exactly as he did the last time we saw him on the Enterprise-B at the beginning of the movie. He is vigorously chopping wood with an axe. He's enjoying himself, lost in the sheer pleasure of the manual labor. He's never felt this good in his life. There's no trace of back pain or any other ailment. Picard recognizes the famous Captain -- as would any 24th Century Starfleet Officer.

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED:

196

PICARD

James Kirk...

Kirk pauses, looks up at the strange man before him. His expression is wondrous, almost child-like. Like in Picard's Christmas sequence, Kirk is immersed in the sensual feeling of the nexus. It's like a dream that's over-powered him.

KIRK

Beautiful day, isn't it?

PICARD

Yes... yes, it is.

Kirk points to a nearby log on the woodpile.

KIRK

Do you mind?

It takes Picard a beat before he realizes that Kirk wants him to put the log on the chopping block for him.

PICARD

Oh.

Picard places the log on the block and Kirk gives it a vigorous chop with the axe.

PICARD

(continuing)

Captain, do you realize what --

But Kirk interrupts as he sees something o.c.

KIRK

Wait a second. I think something's burning.

Picard follows his look to see SMOKE billowing out of one of the windows of the house. Kirk rushes into the house, and Picard follows...

197 INT. KIRK'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

197

Kirk rushes in. The kitchen's decor is 19th century with a few 23rd century touches -- copper pans and an antique stove mixed comfortably with computer consoles and Starfleet paraphernalia. Picard hesitates in the doorway -- a little unsure about rushing into some stranger's house.

Kirk yanks a burning frying pan of food off the stove. It's very hot -- he quickly sets it down near the sink, waves the smoke away with his hand.

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED:

197

KIRK

Looks like someone was cooking
eggs...

(to Picard)

Come on in, it's all right. This
is my house -- or at least it used
to be, I sold it years ago.

Picard comes in and tries to orient Kirk to what's
going on.

PICARD

I'm Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the
starship Enterprise.

Before Kirk can react to this remark, an antique CLOCK
on a shelf CHIMES as it strikes the hour. Kirk moves
to the shelf and looks at the clock in surprise and
wonder -- he is entranced by this experience, beginning
to connect with things and memories from his past.

KIRK

This clock... I gave this clock to
Bones...

PICARD

(pressing on)

I'm from what you would consider
the future... the twenty-fourth
century.

Kirk hears what Picard is saying, but like Picard in
his fantasy, he is more interested in the sights and
sounds around him. A DOG BARKS from o.c. They both
look as a large dog bounds into the room and greets
Kirk with enthusiasm.

KIRK

(affectionately)

Jake! Jake, you miserable old
mutt... how can you be here?

(to Picard)

He's been dead seven years.

Kirk is still looking around the kitchen when suddenly
we hear a WOMAN'S VOICE from somewhere upstairs that
stops Kirk in his tracks. As she speaks, we can see
the shock on Kirk's face.

ANTONIA'S VOICE

Come on Jim, I'm starving. How
long are you going to be rattling
around in that kitchen?

A beat.

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED: (2)

197

KIRK
(amazed)
That's Antonia...

Kirk looks at the food on the stove. He's beginning to realize something.

KIRK
(continuing)
Wait a minute...

Kirk glances at Picard.

KIRK
The future.... what are you talking about? This is the past...

Kirk moves to a drawer and opens it. Inside is a HORSESHOE with a tiny red bow tied to it. This confirms things for Kirk. He picks up the horseshoe.

KIRK
(continuing, realizing)
This is nine years ago... the day I told her I was going back to Starfleet...

Kirk is swept up in the moment, overwhelmed by memories, sensations, feelings. He goes back to the frying pan and looks at the contents with a sudden burst of recognition.

KIRK
These were Ktarian eggs -- her favorite... I was cooking them to soften the blow...
(re: horseshoe)
And I gave her this.

Picard steps in.

PICARD
I know how real this must seem to you. But it's not. This isn't really your house. We've both been caught up in some sort of temporal nexus.

But Kirk's mind is clearly elsewhere... he's being swept away by the emotion of the moment... realizing the opportunity he suddenly has.

KIRK
Dill weed.

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED: (3)

197

Kirk indicates a shelf, as if asking Picard to go to it.

KIRK
(continuing)
There's a bottle of dill weed on
the second shelf to the left,
right behind the nutmeg.

Kirk moves to the stove and tosses out the ruined eggs. He cracks open two new eggs on the skillet and begins preparing a breakfast. Picard waits for a moment, then goes to the shelf and grabs the dill weed and hands it to Kirk.

PICARD
How long have you been here?

Kirk takes the bottle and uses it to season the eggs.

KIRK
I don't know. I was on the
Enterprise-B... in the deflector
control room... keep stirring
these will you?

Kirk moves to a cabinet and begins putting plates on a breakfast tray. Picard is getting a little impatient, but stirs the eggs anyway.

KIRK
(continuing)
The bulkhead in front of me
disappeared... then I was out
there chopping wood.
(back to stove)
Thanks.

Kirk takes the pan of eggs back from Picard.

PICARD
History records that you died
saving the Enterprise-B from an
energy ribbon eighty years ago...

But Picard's words mean almost nothing to Kirk. He is thoroughly enjoying himself, and Picard is almost a distraction. Kirk begins serving the eggs onto the plates and grabs a small vase of flowers to put on the tray.

KIRK
(amused)
So you're telling me this is the
twenty-fourth century... and I'm
dead?

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED: (4)

197

PICARD

Not exactly. As I said, this is some kind of...

KIRK

Temporal nexus... yeah, I heard you.

(frowns at tray)

Something's missing...

Then he remembers and turns to look at a nearby toaster -- as if on cue, two slices of toast pop out. Kirk grins and puts the toast on the plates. Kirk picks up the tray and heads for the door.

PICARD

Captain, I need your help. I want you to leave the nexus with me.

Kirk goes out the kitchen and Picard follows....

198 INT. KIRK'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

198

Kirk and Picard both on the move. Kirk heading for a staircase.

PICARD

(continuing)

We have to go back to a planet called Veridian Three and stop a man from destroying a star. There are millions of lives at stake.

Kirk tries to keep it light, hoping this man will go away.

KIRK

You said history considers me dead. Who am I to argue with history?

PICARD

You're a Starfleet Officer and you have a duty to --

KIRK

(hard)

I don't need to be lectured by you. I was out saving the galaxy when your grandfather was still in diapers. And frankly, I think the galaxy owes me one.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

198 CONTINUED:

198

KIRK (Cont'd)

(beat)

I was like you once... so worried about duty and obligations that I couldn't see anything past this uniform. And in the end, what did it get me? An empty house. Not this time.

Kirk brushes past Picard and stops at the foot of the stairs.

KIRK

(looking up the stairs)

I'm going to walk up these stairs, march into that bedroom and tell Antonia that I want to marry her.

Kirk begins to climb the stairs.

KIRK

(continuing)

This time things are going to be different.

He goes through a BEDROOM DOOR and closes it behind him. Picard glances around the room in frustration, then gets a determined look on his face and marches up the stairs after Kirk, grasps the doorknob, opens it and steps through the door --

199 INT. BARN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

199

Picard suddenly finds himself standing in the doorway of a wooden barn. Straw on the floor... farm implements on the walls... sunlight streaming in through the slats. There are stalls in the barn with a few horses visible.

Kirk is standing a short distance away -- he looks surprised, as well... and he is no longer holding the tray of food.

PICARD

(re: barn)

This doesn't look like your bedroom.

Kirk looks around for a moment, the pieces starting to fall into place. He smiles with a growing realization...

KIRK

No... no, it's not. It's better.

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED:

199

PICARD

Better?

KIRK

This is my uncle's barn in Iowa...

He points to a horse with a saddle on it.

KIRK

(re: horse)

I took that horse out for a ride
seven years ago... on a spring
day.

Kirk moves to the barn door and opens it revealing a
beautiful spring day.

KIRK

(continuing)

Just like this. If I'm right,
this is the day I met Antonia.

He turns to Picard.

KIRK

(continuing)

This nexus of yours is very
clever. I can start all over
again -- do things right from day
one.

Kirk grabs the horse, swings up onto the saddle and
RIDES out of the barn, filled with excitement. Picard
watches him for a moment, then looks at one of the
other horses in the barn... he makes a decision and
then moves toward a saddle hanging on the wall...

CUT TO:

200 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY (VFX-P)

200

Kirk is riding his horse hard over the countryside --
across a stream... through a thicket of trees... and
finally out onto a rolling plain. There is a large
RAVINE up ahead. Kirk sees it and smiles tightly. He
spurs his horse faster toward the ravine... the horse
is tearing along... comes up to the edge of the
precipice and makes a daring LEAP to the other side.

Horse and rider land together and Kirk spurs the horse
on. But as he rides, we begin to see a change come
over him -- a look of doubt crosses his face.
Something's not right. He slows the horse to a trot...
and then to a complete stop.

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED:

200

He sits there for a moment and frowns... turns and looks back at the ravine, which is now a fair distance away. Something about that jump is nagging at him...

He turns his horse around and then digs in his heels. The horse breaks into a gallop, racing back toward the ravine.

Kirk grips the reins tight in his hands and then the horse makes the LEAP across yet again.

This time when Kirk lands, he brings his horse to an immediate stop. We can see on his face that something is very wrong. He turns and stares at the ravine with a mixture of shock and sadness on his face...

In the distance, Picard can be seen approaching on a horse of his own. He stops next to Kirk. There is a long quiet moment as the two men sit there side by side. Kirk is introspective as he sorts through his feelings...

KIRK

(re: ravine)

I must have made this jump fifty times... and every time, it scared the hell out of me. But not this time...

(beat)

Because... it's not real.

A quiet beat. Kirk turns and looks toward a particular hill in the distance, shading his eyes against the bright sun. Picard follows his gaze and we can now see the distant figure of a WOMAN walking her horse.

PICARD

(re: woman)

Antonia?

KIRK

(nods)

She's not real either, is she? Nothing here is... nothing here matters...

All euphoria is now gone from Kirk -- it's a moment of self-revelation. He glances around.

KIRK

(continuing)

It's kinda like... orbital skydiving. Exciting for a few minutes... but in the end, you haven't really done anything... you haven't made a difference...

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED: (2)

200

Kirk takes a beat, then looks at Picard. And in a way, he's truly seeing him for the first time.

KIRK
(continuing)
Captain of the Enterprise, huh?

PICARD
That's right.

KIRK
Close to retirement?

PICARD
I hadn't planned on it.

There is a passion and a fervor in Kirk that we haven't seen until now.

KIRK
Well, let me tell you something --
don't. Don't let them promote
you... don't let them transfer
you... don't let anything take you
off the Bridge of that ship...
(beat)
Because while you're there... you
can make a difference.

The two Captains face each other for a moment. Picard hears what Kirk is saying but also knows that's not the whole story. Picard gives him a direct look, and there is something in Picard's eyes -- a glint of resolve and determination.

PICARD
You don't need to be on the Bridge
of a starship. Come with me.
Help me stop Soran.
(beat)
Make a difference again.

A long silent beat as Kirk considers Picard. And slowly, unexpectedly, a smile spreads across his face.

KIRK
How can I argue with the Captain
of the Enterprise?
(beat)
What was the name of that
planet... Veridian Three?

PICARD
That's right.

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED: (3)

200

KIRK

I take it the odds are against us,
and the situation is grim?

PICARD

You could say that.

KIRK

(musing)

Of course, if Spock were here,
he'd say I was being an
irrational, illogical human for
wanting to go on a mission like
that...

And for the first time we can see the twinkle in his
eye that tells us Jim Kirk is back.

KIRK

Sounds like fun.

The two men turn and walk away from Antonia...

CUT TO:

201 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - BRIDGE - DAY

201

Soran steps onto the metal bridge... he takes out his
pocket watch and looks down at it. And just as before,
two legs step onto the bridge in front of him. But
this time, instead of finding Picard standing there, we
REVEAL --

202 KIRK

202

standing at the opposite end of the Bridge.

SORAN

Who the hell are you?

PICARD'S VOICE

He's James Kirk.

Soran whirls and sees Picard standing on the bridge
behind him.

PICARD

Don't you read history?

Soran's trapped between the two Captains. He makes a
split-second decision and LEAPS over the side of the
bridge, vanishing from view.

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

Kirk and Picard rush to the railing and look down in time to see Soran roll to a stop at the bottom of the ravine and then take off running around the side of the mountain. Picard looks up at the sky -- no sign of the energy ribbon yet, but he knows it's coming.

PICARD

The ribbon will be here any minute. I've got to get to the launcher.

KIRK

I'll take care of Soran.

They split off into different directions. The action is quick and fast-paced as the two men race against time...

203 KIRK

203

searches the treacherous terrain for Soran... approaches a ledge over a steep drop-off. Suddenly a disruptor is SLAMMED against Kirk's head. IT'S SORAN!

SORAN

Actually, I am familiar with history, Captain. And if I'm not mistaken... you're dead.

Soran gets ready to kill Kirk, who braces himself for the shot. Just then A PAIR OF BOOTS SLAM into Soran's head. IT'S PICARD! Quick action:

204 SORAN

204

is knocked over the nearby cliff.

205 ANGLE

205

As Soren plummets, he grabs hold of a ROPE and stops his fall, slamming against the rockface.

206 ANGLE

206

Unaware of this, Kirk helps Picard to his feet.

KIRK

I thought you were heading for the launcher.

(CONTINUED)

- 206 CONTINUED: 206
- PICARD
I changed my mind. Captain's
prerogative.
- They head for the launcher together...
- 207 ANGLE 207
- Down on the rope, Soran sees the two men -- he knows where they're going and he's got to stop them. With great effort, he manages to get the LAUNCHER CONTROL PAD out of his pocket.
- Soran works the control pad, and in the distance...
- 208 NOTE 208
- We will re-shoot the first Picard/Soran encounter on the bridge so that Soran will not be holding the control pad. This means that the audience will not see the control pad until this moment when Soran takes it out of a pocket.
- 209 ANGLE 209
- We see the launcher CLOAK and disappear.
- 210 KIRK AND PICARD 210
- pull up short at the sight of the now invisible launcher. What the hell...?
- 211 SORAN 211
- down on the rope, smiles in victory, but suddenly the rope GIVES WAY and he begins to FALL. The rope jerks to a stop and Soran slams against the rockface, jarring the control pad from his grasp and he DROPS IT.
- 212 KIRK AND PICARD 212
- who can now see Soran from their vantage point, watch as the vital pad caroms down the mountainside...
- 213 ANGLE - THE PAD 213
- bouncing and clanging until it finally lands on a METAL BRIDGE which spans a deep chasm.

- 214 SORAN 214
suddenly HEAR a distance CRACK of what sounds like THUNDER. Picard and Kirk look up in the sky...
- 215 THE RIBBON 215
is approaching in the far distance...
- 216 SORAN 216
begins to get a foothold on the rockface...
- 217 RESUME 217
PICARD
(urgent)
We need that control pad.
- 218 NEW ANGLE 218
Kirk and Picard race down the mountain toward the bridge... as they arrive at the bridge. They look up at the rope where Soran was hanging...
- 219 ANGLE 219
but the rope is now empty -- Soran is gone.
- 220 KIRK AND PICARD 220
Our two heroes step onto the bridge... when a suddenly a DISRUPTOR BLAST comes flying up from somewhere below, barely missing them. They turn and head back for the safety of the rockface. Another disruptor blast SLAMS into the bridge, ALMOST CUTTING IT IN TWO.
- 221 ANOTHER ANGLE 221
The bridge starts to COLLAPSE. Kirk and Picard scramble back to safety just as the bridge LURCHES to a stop -- the Bridge is still partially intact, but just barely and it looks like it won't hold much longer...
- 222 KIRK AND PICARD 222
standing on the rockface, looking at the shattered bridge.

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED: 222

KIRK
So... is it too late to go back to
the Nexus?

PICARD
I'm afraid so.

KIRK
Just checking.

223 SORAN 223

is standing on a ledge looking up at the bridge, but he
no longer has a clear shot at them. A CRACK of THUNDER
echoes across the canyon. He glances up at the sky...

224 THE RIBBON 224

coming closer...

225 SORAN 225

quickly heads back up the mountain...

226 PICARD AND KIRK 226

Are looking up at the Ribbon.

PICARD
Not much time.

Picard glances back down at the wrecked bridge and
suddenly sees something.

PICARD
There.

Kirk follows his gaze and sees...

227 ANGLE 227

The control pad resting precariously on the other span
of the bridge.

228 RESUME 228

KIRK
You go for the launcher. I'll get
the control pad.

(CONTINUED)

228 CONTINUED: 228

PICARD

You'll never make it by yourself.
We've got to work together.

KIRK

We are working together. Trust
me. Go!

They exchange a look.

PICARD

Good luck, Captain.

KIRK

Call me Jim.

Picard heads down the mountainside. Kirk begins edging
carefully out onto the wrecked bridge toward the
control pad.

EVERYTHING HAPPENS AT ONCE:

229 SORAN 229

climbs the mountain, heading for his lifelong goal...

230 THE RIBBON 230

almost on top of them now...

231 PICARD 231

scrambles toward the launcher -- he only has a few
seconds left...

232 THE BRIDGE 232

Kirk steps out onto the precarious bridge. It's
clearly too unsteady to hold him. He makes a fateful
decision, knowing exactly what the consequences will
be. He smiles to himself slightly... and then throws
himself out toward the control pad.

233 KIRK 233

slams onto the far span... grabs the control pad... the
bridge begins to collapse beneath him... Kirk activates
the pad...

234 PICARD 234

Just as he comes running up to the launcher, it
DECLOAKS...

235 SORAN 235

whirls at the sound, stops climbing...

236 KIRK 236

FALLS into the chasm with the wreckage of the bridge!

237 PICARD 237

gets up on the launcher. He begins frantically trying
to work the control panel. A beat, then --

SORAN'S VOICE

Get off the launcher, Captain.
Now.

Picard turns and sees Soran standing behind him, aiming
the disruptor at him. Picard backs off, looks
defeated. Soran climbs up on the launcher. Picard
turns and heads offcamera.

238 SORAN 238

looks down at the panel. The "ticking clock" schematic
is approaching critical mass.

Soran's look of confusion becomes one of shock.

SORAN

Picar -- !!

239 ANGLE 239

BOOM!! SORAN AND THE LAUNCHER EXPLODE IN A TITANIC
BLAST OF FIRE AND DEBRIS -- TAKING OUT THE ENTIRE SIDE
OF THE MOUNTAIN.

240 NEW ANGLE - BOTTOM OF THE RAVINE 240

Picard comes rushing around a corner to find Kirk lying
amid the wreckage of the bridge... badly injured,
barely conscious. Picard tosses aside a few metal
beams... then cradles the dying man's head in his lap.
Kirk's eyes flick open, and he takes a ragged breath.

(CONTINUED)

240 CONTINUED:

240

KIRK

Did we do it? Did we make a
difference.

Picard looks up into the sky and sees the Ribbon now
disappearing off into the distance.

PICARD

Yes. We did it.

Kirk coughs again.

PICARD

Try to hang on.

Kirk looks up at the sky. The sunlight is warm on his
face. A quiet moment, then with a last smile...

KIRK

It was fun.

Kirk dies.

HOLD the scene for a long moment...

DISSOLVE TO:

241 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - SUNSET

241

CLOSE ON PICARD'S HAND

as he places a stone on a large pile of other stones.
MOVE TO REVEAL that Picard is placing the final few
rocks on Kirk's grave.

He reaches into a pocket and pulls out Kirk's command
insignia pin. He carefully places it on the grave...
and stands there silently for a few moments.

A distant WHINE of engines can be heard. Picard looks
up into the sky...

242 PICARD'S POV (VFX-I)

242

An Enterprise SHUTTLECRAFT is flying through the sky
toward the mountaintop.

243 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - SUNSET

243

The shuttle has just landed, and the door OPENS as
Picard enters the clearing. Worf, Geordi, and N.D.
Security Guards jump out to meet him.

(CONTINUED)

243 CONTINUED:

243

WORF

Captain, are you all right?

PICARD

Yes.

GEORDI

What about Doctor Soran?

PICARD

You needn't worry about the Doctor anymore.

Picard moves toward the shuttle... then stops as he notices that the shuttle is damaged. Picard turns and notices for the first time that Geordi has a bandage on his face and Worf's uniform is torn.

PICARD

Was there a problem with the Klingons?

Worf and Geordi exchange a look.

GEORDI

You could say that...

CUT TO:

244 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - THE ENTERPRISE (WIDE SHOT)
(VFX-I)

244

as seen before.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 48650.1.
The Starship Farragut has arrived in orbit, and has begun to beam up the Enterprise survivors for transport back to Earth.

CUT TO:

245 INT. ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR - DAY

245

A hive of activity -- Crewmembers moving about, carrying personal effects, equipment, etc. Some wounded people being carried on stretchers...

the Corridor is lit by emergency beacons and a HATCH has been opened at one end of the Corridor leading to the exterior of the ship. Daylight and jungle can be seen outside.

(CONTINUED)

245 CONTINUED:

245

PICARD (V.O.)
(continuing)
Our casualties were light... but
unfortunately the Enterprise
herself cannot be salvaged.

MOVE ALONG the Corridor to find Beverly helping an
injured crewmember into the arms of a waiting Medical
N.D. Ogawa walks up to her.

OGAWA
That should be the last of the
wounded, Doctor.

Beverly nods -- she looks exhausted.

BEVERLY
Two hundred thirty-two patients in
under two days...

Two Medical N.D.s walk past, carrying an empty
stretcher. Beverly glances at them.

BEVERLY
(calls out, to N.D.s)
Save that stretcher...

OGAWA
Is there another patient?

BEVERLY
No -- that one's for me.

CUT TO:

246 INT. CARGO BAY

246

Data and Troi are looking through rubble in a different
section of the ship with tricorders.

They are searching for something as they talk. Mid-
conversation.

DATA
It has been difficult, but I
believe I have the situation under
control.

TROI
So you've decided not to remove
the emotion chip?

(CONTINUED)

246 CONTINUED:

246

DATA

For now. At first I was not prepared for the unpredictable nature of emotions... but after experiencing two hundred sixty-one distinct emotional states, I believe I have learned to control my feelings... they will no longer control me.

TROI

Well, Data, I hope that --

Her tricorder suddenly BEEPS. Troi reacts to something on the tricorder.

TROI

(continuing)

Over here! I think I've found something.

Data moves to her, with a hopeful and excited look.

TROI

(off tricorder)

One life sign, very faint.

Data hands his tricorder to Troi and then begins to PULL the debris aside with Android strength.

247 ANGLE ON DEBRIS

247

As Data pulls aside a large piece of plating, revealing SPOT THE CAT sitting in the wreckage. She looks at Data and gives a plaintive MEOW.

DATA

(relieved)

Spot.

He picks up the cat and holds it close, stroking its fur. The cat purrs happily.

DATA

I am very happy to find you, Spot.

Troi smiles.

TROI

Another family reunited.

Data turns, revealing that there are tears in his eyes. Troi is surprised and touched at the sight.

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED:

247

TROI
(continuing)
Data... are you all right?

DATA
I am not sure, Counselor. I am
happy to see Spot... and yet I am
crying. The chip must be
malfunctioning.

Troi puts a gentle hand on him.

TROI
No, Data... I think it's working
perfectly.

Data looks up at her and smiles through his tears. OFF
the image of Data cuddling his cat.

CUT TO:

248 INT. READY ROOM - DAY

248

Picard and Riker are sifting through the rubble of what
once was the Ready Room, looking for something...

Riker sees something in the rubble.

RIKER
Is this it?

Riker holds up the family photo album seen earlier.

PICARD
(relieved)
Yes, Number One. Thank you.

He takes the album... brushes off the dust and flips
through the pages for a moment. Riker looks around the
wrecked room.

RIKER
I'm going to miss this ship. She
went before her time.

Picard has been rejuvenated by his experience... given
a new perspective on the issues of life and death.

PICARD
It's not how many years you've
lived, Wil... but how you've lived
them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

248 CONTINUED:

248

PICARD (Cont'd)

(beat)

Someone once told me that time is a predator that stalks us all our lives. But maybe time is also a companion... who goes with us on our journey, and reminds us to cherish the moments of our lives... because they will never come again.

(beat)

We are after all... only mortal.

A quiet moment... Riker finally smiles.

RIKER

Speak for yourself, sir. I kinda planned on living forever.

Picard smiles back at him and the two men EXIT to...

249 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - DAY (VFX-P)

249

Riker and Picard ENTER from the Ready Room. They look around the wrecked Bridge for a moment. Riker glances at the Captain's chair.

RIKER

I always thought I'd have a crack at this chair one day.

PICARD

You may still... somehow, I doubt this will be the last ship to carry the name Enterprise.

A beat, then Picard hits his combadge.

PICARD

(continuing, to com)

Picard to Farragut. Two to beam up.

The two men DEMATERIALIZE.

FADE TO BLACK.

ROLL CREDITS

THE END