

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Encounter at Farpoint"

FINAL DRAFT  
April 13, 1987

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - STARSHIP (OPTICAL)

The U.S.S. Enterprise NCC 1701-D traveling at warp speed through space.

PICARD V.O.

Captain's log, stardate 42353.7. Our destination is planet Cygnus IV, beyond which lies the great unexplored mass of the galaxy.

OTHER INTRODUCTORY ANGLES (OPTICAL)

on the gigantic new Enterprise NCC 1701-D.

PICARD V.O.

My orders are to examine Farpoint, a starbase built there by the inhabitants of that world. Meanwhile ...

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Huge, with a giant wall diagram showing the immensity of this Galaxy Class starship.

PICARD V.O.

(continuing) ... I am becoming better acquainted with my new command, this Galaxy Class U.S.S. Enterprise.

CLOSER ON VESSEL DIAGRAM

Showing the details and size of this enormous starship.

PICARD V.O.

I am still somewhat in awe of its size and complexity.

INT. LOUNGE DECK

With its huge windows revealing the immense span of the Starship's outer surface.

CONTINUED:

PICARD V.O.

(continuing) ... my crew we are short in several key positions, most notably ...

INT. BRIDGE - WIDE ANGLE

PICARD, TROI, and DATA seated in the command area. Starfleet LIEUTENANT WORF, a young Klingon, is at the "Ops" station and a SUPERNUMERARY is at "Conn".

PICARD V.O.

(continuing) ... a first officer, but I am informed that a highly experienced man, one Commander William Riker, will be waiting to join our ship when we reach our Cygnus IV destination.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD AND DATA

As Picard turns to Data:

PICARD

You will agree, Data, that Starfleet's instructions are difficult?

DATA

Difficult ... how so? Simply solve the mystery of Farpoint Station.

PICARD

(smiles)

As simple as that.

TROI

Farpoint Station. Even the name sounds mysterious.

PICARD

The problem, Data, is that another life form built that base. How do I negotiate a friendly agreement for Starfleet to use it while at the same time snoop around finding how and why they built it?

CONTINUED:

DATA

Inquiry ... the word snoop ... ?

PICARD

Data, how can you be programmed as a virtual encyclopedia of human information without knowing a simple word like snoop?

DATA

Possibility ... a kind of human behavior I was not designed to emulate?

It is all Troi can do to keep from smiling.

PICARD

It means 'to spy, to sneak' ...

DATA

(interrupting; delighted)  
Ah! To seek covertly, to go stealthily, to slink, slither ...

PICARD

(wanting to cut it off)  
Exactly, yes ...

DATA

... to glide, creep, skulk, pussyfoot, gumshoe ... Data trails off his words, finally becoming aware of

the annoyance registering on Picard's face. Troi cannot keep back the smile now ... then suddenly her face is contorted in pain.

TROI

Captain ... I'm sensing a ... a powerful mind ...

Interrupted by the sound of a BRIDGE ALARM.

WIDER ANGLE

All checking their consoles, puzzled at readings they're getting.

WORF  
 Something strange on the detector  
 circuits ...

CONTINUED:

OVERLAPPED by an ever more compelling SECOND BRIDGE ALARM (similar to the old naval HONKING SOUND) begins to sound. At the same time, the main viewer FLICKERS and an unusual SHINING, SPARKLING GRID SHAPE APPEARS stretching across the whole of the galaxy ahead of them.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND GRID (OPTICAL)

Emphasizing the incredibly SHINING GRID which the Enterprise is approaching. Seemingly impossibly large, yet in some ways as delicate as a spiderweb, it is composed of interlocking geometrical shapes.

INT. BRIDGE - VARIOUS ANGLES

Data is looking up from his command position console, showing as much alarm as we'll ever see on his face.

DATA  
 It registers as solid, Captain...

TROI  
 Or an incredibly powerful  
 forcefield. But if we collide with  
 either ...

PICARD  
 (to Conn)  
 Go to Condition Yellow. And shut  
 off that damned noise.

Conn turns OFF honking sound. Picard is taking time to check all readings but we're now coming very close to the strange grid.

WORF  
 Shields and deflectors, up, sir.  
 Milking the drama of approaching  
 collision. Then, conversationally:

PICARD  
 Reverse power, full stop.

CONN

Controls to full stop, sir. The strange shimmering GRID on the viewer is now very close to us as Enterprise movement stops.

CONN

Now reading full stop, sir.

CONTINUED:

Overlapped by something akin to a ROLLING THUNDER STORM accompanied by a BRILLIANT AND SUSTAINED FLASH OF LIGHT ON THE BRIDGE to the side of Picard. The light burst physically shakes all bridge crew for an instant, then RESOLVES ITSELF INTO A HUMAN SIZE FIGURE standing at that point on the bridge. As the bridge crew's eyes adjust, it does indeed appear to be a human ... but one dressed and posturing as an Elizabethan era sea captain complete with Sir Walter Raleigh type "court dress", complete with neck ruffles, lace, leg stockings, ceremonial sword, etc. Now and later, we shall know this life form as "Q".

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

as "Q" (Elizabethan) makes a formal bow (of that same era) to Picard. At which the turbolift doors snap open and TWO SECURITY CREW members start to ENTER, led by Security and Weapons Officer NATASHA YAR. However, "Q" merely gives a nod in that direction and a miniature of the space grid outside APPEARS AT THE TURBOLIFT ENTRANCE, barring the security team's entrance and CLOSES THE TURBOLIFT DOORS. Then "Q" turns toward Picard.

"Q" (ELIZABETHAN)

You are notified that your kind has infiltrated the galaxy too far already. You are directed to return to your own solar system immediately.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE OPS AND CONN

We will see Conn stealthily, carefully reaching to the small phaser on his belt.

PICARD

That's quite a directive. Would you mind identifying what you are?

"Q" (ELIZABETHAN)

We call ourselves "the Q". Or you may call me that;

(MORE)

"Q" (ELI ZABETHAN) (cont'd)  
 it's all much the same thing.  
 (indicating costume)  
 And I have presented myself to you  
 as a fellow ship captain so that  
 you will better understand me.  
 (indicates)  
 Go back from where you...

#### ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Interrupted by Conn drawing his phaser. But "Q" barely nods toward Conn at which a FLUTTERING ELECTRIC BLUE WAVE envelopes that bridge crewman, and we HEAR THE BRIEF BEGINNINGS OF A SCREAM as Conn falls with the SOUND of a frozen hard object striking the deck. Picard comes to his feet, ignoring "Q" as:

"Q" (ELI ZABETHAN)  
 Stay where you are!

#### EMPHASIZING PICARD

Who is clearly very angry as he kneels at the prone form of Conn who appears to have been instantly frozen solid. Troi hurries INTO SHOT kneeling too. There is even white evaporation vapor rising up from the body.

PICARD  
 Data, call medics!

TROI  
 He's frozen. Can you feel the cold?

Picard grabs up Conn's phaser from the deck (reversing it, wisely), stands and puts it under "Q's" nose.

PICARD  
 He would not have injured you!  
 (indicates phaser)  
 Do you understand this; the stun setting?

"Q" (ELI ZABETHAN)  
 Knowing humans as you do, Captain,  
 would you want to be captured  
 helpless by them?  
 (moves closer)  
 Now, go back or you will certainly die!

FADE OUT:

## PART ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. U. S. S. ENTERPRISE AND GRID (OPTICAL)

Appropriate THEME MUSIC with spaceship hanging motionless, still facing the mysterious SHIMMERING GRID that stretches in front of it from galaxy horizon to horizon.

INTO. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING CONN'S FORM

In the b.g. on a floating stretcher Conn is being taken to the turbolift, advanced medical emergency aids are attached to his body.

PICARD  
Is he still alive?

MEDIC  
For now. We'll do our best, sir.

EMPHASIZING "Q" (OPTICAL)

Ignoring the previous, intent instead on inspecting his Elizabethan costume as Picard comes up to him.

"Q" (ELIZABETHAN)  
Your little centuries go by so rapidly, Captain. Perhaps you'll understand this better. The Visitor moves his hand slightly. We hear the same ROLLING THUNDER SOUND. Another BLINDING LIGHT FLASH

and his body remains the same humanoid face and figure as with the Elizabethan dress, but now the green officer's uniform of the U.S. Marine Corps. Over his jacket pocket three rows of medals and his narrow garrison cap shows the bars of a Captain.

"Q" (MARINE CAPTAIN)  
Actually, the issue at stake is patriotism. You must return to your world and put an end to the communists. All it takes is a few good men.

PICARD  
What? That nonsense is centuries behind us!

CONTINUED:

"Q" (MARINE CAPTAIN)  
But you can't deny Captain, that  
you're still a dangerous, savage  
child-race.

PICARD  
Most certainly I deny it. I agree  
that we still were when ...  
(indicating)  
... humans wore costumes like that  
four hundred years ago...

"Q" (MARINE CAPTAIN)  
At which time you slaughtered  
millions in silly arguments about  
how to divide the resources of your  
little world. And four hundred  
years before that you were  
murdering each other in quarrels  
over tribal god-images. And since  
there have been no indications that  
humans will ever change

.....

PICARD  
But even as far back as... !  
(indicates)  
... that costume, we had begun to  
make rapid progress.

"Q" (MARINE CAPTAIN)  
Oh? Shall we review your "rapid  
progress"?

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

The "Q" visitor moves a hand again to create THE SAME SOUNDS  
and the SAME BLINDING FLASH, producing the same human image  
but this time unshaven and with an UGLY AUTOMATION LOOK AND  
IN THE UNIFORM OF A MILITARY OFFICER FROM THE MID 21st  
CENTURY WARS. Q's voice sounds a bit drugged now as he eyes  
his new costume.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)  
(interrupting)  
Rapid progress to where humans  
learned to control their military  
with drugs.

ANGLE INCLUDING OPS POSITION

As Worf gets a message and turns toward Picard.

CONTINUED:

WORF

Sir, sickbay reports that  
Lieutenant Graham's condition is  
better.

All have turned toward Worf, showing relief.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)

Concern for one's comrade. How  
touching.

WORF

(indicates "Q")

And now, sir, a personal request.  
Permission to clean up the bridge?

Picard shakes head, stares Worf down when he seems about to  
protest. Meanwhile Tasha has come to her feet too:

TASHA

Lieutenant Worf is right, sir. As  
Security Chief I can't just stand  
here and ....

PICARD

Yes, you can, Tasha.

During this, "Q" has withdrawn a slender tube attached to his  
21st Century uniform, makes an adjustment which lets a round  
pill roll into his mouth and bites down on it with a "POP"  
SOUND.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)

Ah, yes... better!

(deep breath, feeling it)

Then later, on finally reaching  
deep space, humans of course found  
enemies to fight out there too. And  
to broaden those struggles....

(indicating Worf and

Tasha)

.... you again found allies to  
permit still more murdering and all  
over again the same old story.

CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

(interrupting; angry)

No! The most dangerous 'same old story' is the one we're meeting now! Those who go on misinformation, half-information, self-righteous life forms who are eager not to learn but to prosecute, to judge anything they don't understand or can't tolerate.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)

What an interesting idea. Prosecute and judge? CAMERA CENTERS ON "Q" as he absorbs what Picard has said. He takes a step or two, turns. And suppose it turns out we understand you humans only too well?

PICARD

We've no fear of what the true facts about us will reveal.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)

The facts about you? Splendid, splendid! You are a veritable fountain of good ideas.

(smiling; pleasant)

There are preparations to make, Captain, but when I return... "Q" gives a 21st Century salute to Picard.

"Q" (21ST CENTURY)

(continuing)

... we will proceed exactly as you suggest!

A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT and the alien visitor is gone.

WIDE ANGLE ON BRIDGE

It takes a moment to accept the fact "Q" is really gone then Worf turns to Picard.

CONTINUED:

WORF

Sir... respectfully submit our only choice is to fight.

(MORE)

WORF (cont'd)  
If we Klingons understand anything,  
it is the meaning of that kind of  
talk.

TASHA  
My sentiments too, sir. Fight or  
try to escape.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD

Turning to Troi:

PICARD  
Sense anything, Commander?

TROI  
(shakes head)  
Its mind is much too powerful, sir.  
And frightening. Concur we avoid  
further contact if possible!

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD

Clearly he has to come up with something. He reflects for a  
moment more, then makes up his mind, turns to Troi.

PICARD  
From this point, no station aboard,  
repeat no station, for any reason  
will make use of signals,  
transmission or intercom.  
(crossing quickly to Ops  
and Conn)  
We'll try to take them by surprise.  
(to Worf)  
Inform engineering to make ready  
for maximum acceleration. We'll  
find out what this Galaxy Class can  
do.

WORF  
Aye, sir.

As Worf stands and hurries off, Picard turns to Data.

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
Records search, Data. Results of  
detaching the Saucer Section at  
high warp speeds. Data quickly  
draws on his memory.

DATA  
Inadvisable at any warp speed, sir.

PICARD  
Search theoretical.

DATA  
(thinking; then)  
It is possible, sir. But absolutely  
no error margin. Picard nods and  
stands, RAISES VOICE:

PICARD  
Attention bridge crew!

#### VARIOUS ANGLES

Picard waits until all are turned toward him.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Using print-out only, notify all  
decks to prepare for maximum  
acceleration. Maximum, you're  
entitled to know, means we'll be  
pushing our engines well past  
safety limits. Our hope is to  
surprise whatever that is out  
there, try to outrun it.  
(looks around, then)  
Our only other option would be to  
put tail between our legs and  
return to Earth as they demand.

#### INT. ENGINE ROOM - TRAVELING WITH WORF

As he takes us into WIDE CAMERA ANGLE, aiming both for a  
feeling of the starship's huge size and enormous power.

#### ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Worf nodding at a reading which an Engineer shows him, then  
EXITING to return to the bridge. Meanwhile, engineering  
personnel work at their controls and a LOW PITCHED WHINE  
quickly works itself up into a DEAFENING HIGH PITCHED SHRIEK  
while ENERGY DISPLAYS APPEAR AT MAIN ENGINE CONNECTIONS.

#### EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

Showing both the Enterprise and the mysterious grid.

INT. BRIDGE - ANGLES INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER

Worf enters bridge from turbolift, crossing to his position.

WORF  
Engine room ready, sir.

Picard stands behind Data who is at the Conn position.

TROI  
The board shows 'green', Captain.  
All go!

Picard moving back to his command position as:

PI CARD  
Stand by...  
(takes his seat, checks  
bridge, then)

ENGAGE!

The entire bridge SHUDDERS under a SCREAM OF POWER as we

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Suddenly into maximum warp, the energy release momentarily DISTORTING BOTH THE ALIEN GRID AND THE STARS IN SIGHT AROUND IT. When the EFFECT is over, the starship has turned, seeming to almost brush against the mysterious grid, and is then racing away from it.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING GRID (OPTICAL)

With Enterprise in b.g. at warp speed, escaping. Then the 'grid' suddenly shrinks in size, growing brighter as it coalesces together INTO THE SHAPE OF A BRIGHTLY COLORED SPINNING SHAPE which now races after the Enterprise.

INT. BRIDGE - VARIOUS ANGLES

The faces of the bridge crew reflect the fact that Enterprise is at very high warp speed and continuing to accelerate into even higher warp.

WORF  
Velocity warp nine point two.

DATA  
Heading, 351 Mark 11, sir.

PI CARD  
Steady on that.

TASHA  
The hostile is now giving chase,  
sir. Accelerating fast.

WOLF  
We're now at Warp nine point three,  
sir. Which takes us past the red  
line, sir.

PI CARD  
Continue accelerating.  
(to Troi)  
Counselor, at this point I'm open  
even to guesses about what we've  
just met.

TROI  
(considers, then)  
It... it felt like something beyond  
what we'd consider a 'life form'.

PI CARD  
'Beyond'?

TROI  
Very, very advanced, sir. Or...  
(considers)  
Or certainly, very, very different!

CONTINUED:

WOLF  
(with emphasis now)  
Sir, we're at warp nine point four.

TASHA  
Hostile is now beginning to  
overtake us, sir.

PI CARD  
Are you sure?

DATA  
Hostile's velocity is already warp  
nine point six, sir. Shall I put  
them on main viewer?

PI CARD  
(nods)  
Reverse angle on viewer.

ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER

VIEWER IMAGE SHIMMERS into reverse view, which is much the same as the forward view except for ONE BLINKING POINT OF LIGHT AT IMAGE CENTER.

DATA

Magnifying viewer image. ANOTHER VIEWER SHIMMER with the CENTER POINT OF LIGHT BECOMING THE SPINNING COALESCENCE seen earlier. It's still far away, tiny in size, but will grow in size during later SCENES.

VARIOUS ANGLES

as needed.

TASHA

Hostile's velocity now at nine point seven, sir.

PICARD

Ops, inform Engineering we need more!

DATA

Engine room attempting to comply, sir. But they caution us...

CONTINUED:

PICARD

(interrupting; to Data)  
Go to yellow alert! Data hits a control and the Yellow Alert ALARM SOUNDS FIVE TIMES. Then Picard turns to Tasha.

PICARD

(to Tasha)  
Arm photon torpedoes, Weapons Station. Place them on ready status.

TASHA

Torpedoes to ready, sir.

Picard is aware of the concerned glances received from Troi and Data.

## WIDE ANGLE

The entire bridge suddenly SHUDDERS HARD and it brings startled looks to the faces of some of the bridge crew. Then the motion eases.

WORF

That was a design tremor, sir. A warning.

TASHA

Hostile now at warp nine point eight, sir.

WORF

Our velocity is only nine point five, sir.

DATA

Projection, sir. We may be able to match the hostile's nine point eight, sir. But at extreme risk.

TASHA

Now reading the hostile at warp nine point nine, sir. Picard stands, raising his voice to carry throughout the bridge.

CONTINUED:

PICARD

Attention bridge. Print-out message, urgent, to all decks.  
(selecting the right words)

All stations on all decks, make ready to detach ship's saucer section.

Some of the bridge crew is startled but all are soon putting their consoles in order for the move. Picard turns to Worf at 'conn' position.

PICARD

(continuing)

You will command the saucer section, Lieutenant. Worf comes to his feet in protest.

WORF

I am a Klingon, sir. For me to seek  
escape while my captain goes into  
battle....

PI CARD

(interrupts hard)  
You are a Starfleet officer,  
Lieutenant.

WORF

(hesitates, takes seat)  
Aye, sir.

PI CARD

(to bridge again)  
Note in ship's log that at this  
startime, I am transferring command  
to the Battle Bridge.  
(to Data)  
Make the signal, Data.

Data touches a control and we HEAR (still preserved from  
surface ship days) the BUGLE CALL "BEAT TO QUARTERS" which  
continues REPEATING as all bridge crew members (except Worf)  
begin leaving their posts. While SUPERNUMERARIES arrive on  
the turbolifts, our bridge crew begins exiting the bridge.

FADE OUT.

PART TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Still at high warp. We cannot see the image of the following  
"hostile" (which is not magnified in this

ANGLE).

PI CARD V.O.

Captain's Log, stardate 42354.1. Preparing to detach saucer  
section.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

As the turbolift doors snap open, Picard and the others ENTER  
the smaller, sparse and functional Battle Bridge.

PICARD V.O.

... so that families and the majority of the ship's company...

INT. MONTAGE OF SAUCER SETS

Families, children, science technicians, etc., moving into safe areas.

PICARD V.O.

(continuing) ... can seek relative safety while our vessel's stardrive, containing our Battle Bridge...

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - VARIOUS ANGLES

Acquainting us with the smaller and more severe battle bridge, its configuration and positions. Picard is speaking the balance of his log entry to the microphone at his command position.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
... and main armaments, will turn back and confront the mystery that is threatening us.  
(turning to Tasha)  
Lieutenant, your torpedoes must detonate close enough to the hostile to blind it at the moment we separate.

CONTINUED:

TASHA  
Understood, sir.

PICARD  
Worf, this is the Captain....

INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING LT. WORF

The young Klingon at the Captain's command station now.

WORF  
Yes Captain?

PICARD'S INTERCOM VOICE  
Begin countdown....  
(touches panel control)  
Mark!

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Traveling through space for a moment, then photon torpedoes blasting out of the starship's aft tubes. The torpedo pattern disappears into the distance behind the vessel.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

All intent on what is happening as:

TROI

All decks acknowledging, sir.

DATA

Starship separation.... six, five,  
four, three, two, one....

EXT. ENTERPRISE - ANGLES ON SEPARATION MECHANISM (OPTICAL))

As we see the largest of the assemblies begin to move, yawning open. Other mechanisms are doing their jobs too.... and THE MONOLITHIC STARSHIP DIVIDES INTO ITS TWO SECTIONS.... STARDRIVE AND SAUCER MOVING APART.

PICARD V.O.

Ship's log, exact moment of separation, stardate 42354.22. As the Stardrive Section gets safely clear of the saucer, it begins turning, doubling back to face the "Q" menace. And now in the direction of that threat, we begin to see PHOTON EXPLOSIONS in the far, far distance.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER

On which we see a tiny but SOMEWHAT LARGER IMAGE OF THE HOSTILE VESSEL in front of which the last few PHOTON DETONATIONS HAPPEN AND FADE AWAY.

TASHA

All torpedoes have detonated, sir.

PICARD

(to Data)

Reverse power and hold this position.

DATA

(gives a surprised look)  
Reverse power...decelerating.

TROI

That will bring them here in just minutes, sir.

TASHA

Will we make a fight of it,  
Captain? If we can at least damage  
their ship. . . .

PICARD

(indicating viewer)

Lieutenant. . . are you recommending  
we fight a life form that can do  
all those things?

(as Tasha hesitates)

I'd like to hear your advice.

TASHA

I. . . spoke before I thought, sir.  
We should look for some way to  
distract them from going after the  
saucer.

DATA

All forward motion stopped, sir.

PICARD

(to Troi)

Commander, signal the following in  
all languages and on all  
frequencies: we surrender. State  
that we are not asking for any  
terms or conditions.

TROI

Aye, sir. All language forms and  
frequencies.

ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER

Where the IMAGE OF THE HOSTILE is rapidly growing in size.

EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the HOSTILE IMAGE rushes down on the starship, THE  
COALESCENT SHAPE OPENING UP INTO SOMETHING LIKE THE  
SHIMMERING GRID WE'VE SEEN, but now as if to enclose (and  
perhaps crush) the starship. A FURY OF SOUNDS like

CLANKING-SCREAMS OF METAL BEING STRESSED BEYOND ITS

LIMITS.

## INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - VARIOUS ANGLES

As the bridge and the entire Stardrive Section is SHAKEN ALMOST ANGRILY as the same CACOPHONY OF CLANKING-SCREAMS continues. All bridge crew cling to their seats until the SHAKING AND SOUNDS REACH A PEAK. As when "Q" first appeared, FLASHES OF LIGHT BLIND US and become:

## INT. "Q" COURTROOM - EMPHASIZING PICARD, DATA, TROI, TASHA

It is an immense courtroom meant to reflect strength and power. (We'll discover that it dates back to the mid-21st Century post-atomic crisis era.) Both decor and legal procedures reflect the time when a desperate humanity, still wounded and bleeding from nuclear war, sought answers to its pain and problems through the merciless strength of a new form of dictatorial government representing neither capitalism nor communism. Our four starship people are in old, ragged and stained uniforms which 'demean' them as criminals. In comparison with the gleaming steel and glass of the rest of the courtroom, the Prisoner's Dock at which our people sit is made of rough-hewn, hard and ugly wooden benches. Suddenly, our Starfleet group is CAUGHT IN A HARSH GLARING SPOTLIGHT. Data, looking around with great curiosity, is the first to speak:

DATA

Historically intriguing, Captain.  
Very, very accurate.

PICARD

(nods)

Mid-21st Century, the post-atomic  
horror....

Interrupted by the SOUND OF A BELL, and CUT TO:

## ANGLE INCLUDING MANDARIN-BAI LI FF

Important, the MANDARIN-BAI LI FF is not a fun figure. Despite the Asian robe and accent, he is an important authority figure--and his expression and actions underscore this. He carries a slim, portable view screen, the face of which contains scrolled information he will occasionally refer to. Now, as he nods to a Court Functionary who uses an ancient, oriental bell, DOLEFULLY CLANGING to gain attention.

MANDARIN-BAI LI FF

All present, make respectful  
attention to honored Judge!

## ANGLE EMPHASIZING SPECTATORS

Some still arriving, chattering in excitement, having to be intimidated into silence by a 21st CENTURY SOLDIER, heavily armed. Picard waves in a way indicating Data, Tasha and Troi should not stand.

TROI  
(quietly to Picard)  
Careful, sir. This is not an illusion or a dream.

PICARD  
But these courts happened in our past....

TROI  
I don't understand either, but this is real. I can feel that!

## OTHER ANGLES AS NEEDED

A 21st Century MILITARY OFFICER moving to our Starfleet group, leveling his automatic weapon toward them.

FUTURE MILITARY OFFICER  
Get to your feet, criminals! Our people ignore him too. "Mandarin-Bailiff" is CLANGING THE BELL again. Data sees something, indicates:

DATA  
At least we are acquainted with the judge, Captain.

## ANGLE ON JUDGE

The "judge's bench" (an appropriate 21st Century design on Chapman camera-crane) comes floating into the courtroom. Seated in it is "Q" (JUDGE), an arrangement which gives "his Honor" physical access to every part and corner of this courtroom. As he floats serenely over spectators' heads, suddenly there's the RATATATTAT of an automatic weapon.

## ANGLE INCLUDING MILITARY OFFICER

Just completing FIRING a warning burst at the feet of Picard.

MILITARY OFFICER  
(screaming angrily)  
Attention! On your feet, attention!

But Tasha pivoting in fast, taking the weapon and throwing the Officer crashing to the floor. Judge's "bench" (Camera Crane) brings "Q" INTO SCENE fast.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 You are out of order! But he's  
 speaking to the downed military  
 officer, not to Tasha. Which turns  
 out to be a sentence of death --  
 carried out by a pair of Soldiers  
 who step in,

raising their automatic weapons, FIRING at the Officer lying on the floor. Spectators break into APPLAUSE as the Officer slumps and lies unmoving.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (continuing)  
 The prisoners will not be harmed...  
 (a glance at Picard)  
 Until they are found guilty, of  
 course.

Still hovering over the fallen officer, "Q" indicates the body.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (continuing)  
 Dispose of that.

Picard has taken the automatic weapon from Tasha.

CONTINUED:

PI CARD  
 Can we assume you mean this will be  
 a fair trial?

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Yes, absolutely equitable. Picard  
 hands the weapon to "Bailliff". "Q"  
 (JUDGE) swings his "bench" to  
 CENTER FRONT of the courtroom.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (continuing to Mandarin-  
 bailliff)  
 Proceed.

MANDARIN-BAI LI FF  
 (refers to his portable  
 viewscreen)  
 (MORE)

MANDARIN-BAILIFF (cont'd)  
 Before this gracious court now  
 appear these humans to answer for  
 the multiple and grievous  
 savageries of their species.  
 Judge's "bench" swings "Q" (JUDGE)  
 in literally nose-to-nose with  
 Picard.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 How plead you, criminal?

DATA  
 If I may, Captain...  
 (gets a nod)  
 Objection, your honor. In the year  
 2016, the new United Nations  
 declared that no Earth citizen  
 could be made to answer for the  
 crimes of their race or forbearers.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Objection denied!

Followed by CLANGING OF BAILIFF'S BELL and CHEERS FROM THE  
 SPECTATORS.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING "Q" AND PICARD

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (continuing)  
 This is a court of the year 2049,  
 by which time more 'rapid progress'  
 had caused all 'United Earth'  
 nonsense to be abolished.

CONTINUED:

At which point Tasha comes to her feet very angry.

PICARD  
 Tasha, no...

TASHA  
 I must...  
 (to "Q")  
 ... because I grew up on a world  
 that allowed things like this  
 court. And it was people like these  
 that saved me from it. I say that  
 this so-called court should get  
 down on its knees to what Starfleet  
 is, what it represents...

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

And "Q" (JUDGE) flies INTO SCENE, gesturing toward Tasha as he did earlier to Conn on the bridge... resulting in the same FLUTTERING ELECTRIC BLUE WAVE THAT ENVELOPES HER. As Tasha goes rigid, frozen, Data supports her, lowers her form gently to the floor as:

TROI  
(shouting to "Q")  
You barbarian! That girl....

"Q" gestures and the same FLUTTERING ELECTRIC BLUE WAVE ENVELOPS HER TOO. Picard leaps in, keeps her frozen, rigid form from crashing down.

MANDARIN-BAILEFF  
Criminals keep silence!

ANGLE ON PICARD

bending over Tasha, then to "Q":

PICARD  
You've got a lot to learn about  
humans if you think you can torture  
us or frighten us into silence.  
(to Data)  
Are they still alive?

DATA  
Uncertain. Lieutenant Graham was  
when our medics thawed him out.

CONTINUED:

"Q" (JUDGE) glides in closer on his "bench".

"Q" (JUDGE)  
You will answer the charges!

PICARD  
Or what? Or this, or worse? Or  
death? I suggest you take a better  
look at human history. Spectators  
have begun GRUMBLING over Picard's  
failure to answer "Q".

"Q" (JUDGE)  
You are charged, criminals. How  
plead you?

PI CARD

Just a moment ago, you promised  
"the prisoners will not be harmed."  
We plead nothing so long as you  
break your own rules. LOUDER  
GRUMBLING from the Spectators now.

"Q" (JUDGE)

I suggest you center your attention  
on the trial, Captain. It may be  
your only hope.

PI CARD

And I suggest you now may be having  
second thoughts about this trial!  
You're considering that if you  
conduct it fairly, which was your  
promise, you may lose.

"Q" (JUDGE)

(Laughs)  
Lose?

PI CARD

Yes, even though you're judge, and  
prosecutor....

"Q" (JUDGE)

(nods)  
And jury.

CONTINUED: (2)

PI CARD

(considers it; nods)  
Accepted... so long as you keep to  
your agreement.  
(indicates Troi and Tasha)  
And assaulting prisoners is hardly  
a fair trial.

OPTICAL ANGLE ON "Q" (OPTICAL)

Seems to be considering it. Then he looks downward,  
indicates.

"Q" (JUDGE)

This is a merciful court.

"Q" waves his hand DOWNWARD TO WARD TROI AND TASHA AND A  
RIPPLE OF LIGHT plays over the two women, UNFREEZING THEM.

ANOTHER ANGLE "Q" (JUDGE)  
 The court very disorderly now with  
 some spectators standing on their  
 benches SHOUTING as an annoyed "Q"  
 brings his "bench" up hovering over  
 the heads of everyone.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (greatly AMPLIFIED)

SILENCE! The order is so LOUDLY AMPLIFIED that it comes near  
 to shaking the entire courtroom structure. The spectators  
 bite off their words and sink frightened into their seats. We  
 notice "Q" throwing a glance toward Picard to see if the  
 Captain is properly impressed. Then the "bench" is lowered to  
 allow "Q" to face Picard again.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (continued)  
 Continuing these proceedings, I  
 must caution you that legal  
 trickery is not permitted. This is  
 a court of fact!

CONTINUED:

PI CARD  
 (same words; same time)  
 ... court of fact!  
 (nods)  
 We humans know our past, even when  
 we're ashamed of it. I recognize  
 this court system as the one which  
 agreed with Shakespeare's  
 suggestion -- "Kill all the  
 lawyers".

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (nods)  
 Which humans did.

PI CARD  
 Which led to the rule: "Guilty  
 until proven innocent".

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Of course. Bringing the innocent to  
 trial would be unfair.  
 (leaning in; voice  
 amplified)

YOU WILL NOW ANSWER TO THE

GRIEVOUS SAVAGERY CHARGE AGAINST  
HUMANITY.

PICARD  
We'll be happy to answer specific charges. "Grievous savagery" could mean anything.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(interrupting)  
Obviously it means causing harm to fellow creatures!

PICARD  
Such as you did when you froze a member of our bridge crew? Will you be joining us in the dock here?

"Q" (JUDGE)  
You fool. Are you certain you want a full disclosure of human ugliness?  
(to Mandarin-Bailiff)  
So be it! Present the charges.  
Mandarin-Bailiff refers to his portable view screen, then steps forward and presents it for Picard's examination.

CONTINUED: (2)

MANDARIN-BAILIFF  
Criminal, you will read the charges to the court.

Picard takes the parchment, glances through some amount of it. Then he looks up.

PICARD  
I see no charges against us, your honor.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(pounds "bench top")  
Criminal, you are out of order!

Soldiers move in, unslinging automatic weapons, of which the barrels of two of them are now placed against Troi's and Data's heads.

FADE OUT.

## PART THREE

FADE IN:

INT. "Q" COURTROOM - WIDE ANGLE

Action continuing from where it ended. The gun barrels are now pressing even closer to Troi and Data's heads as:

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Soldiers...  
 (indicates guns)  
 ... you will press those triggers  
 if this criminal answers with any  
 word other than "guilty"...

CLOSER ANGLE

The Soldiers CLICKING FIRING ACTION TO FULL COCK. "Q" turns to Picard.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Criminal, how plead you? Picard  
 takes his time, looking to his  
 people, the

Soldiers holding the guns at their heads, then to "Q". He seems to be taking too much time, and one of them shifts his weight, the other begins grasping his weapon even more firmly. Then:

PI CARD  
 Guilty...

Picard's people can't help but show relief and even the soldiers lighten up their stance and their grip on the weapons, until:

PI CARD  
 (continuing)  
 ... provisionally so.

Surprised by this "add on", the Soldiers begin bringing their guns in close again, looking for guidance to "Q" who looks like he could decide either way. After considering it for a moment:

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 The Court will hear the provision.

CONTINUED:

PICARD

We question whether this court is abiding by its own trial instructions. Do I have permission to have Commander Data repeat the record?

"Q" (JUDGE)

If this is legal trickery...

PICARD

Your own words, your Honor.  
(to Data)

Exactly what followed his Honor's statement that the prisoner would not be harmed?

EMPHASIZING DATA

Taking a moment to consult his memory, then:

DATA

Yes, sir. The Captain has asked the question...

(in Picard's VOICE)

"Can we assume this will be a fair trial?"

(in Data VOICE)

And in reply, the judge stated...

OTHER ANGLES

as Data goes on.

DATA

(continuing in "Q"'s  
VOICE)

"Yes, absolutely equitable."

"Q" (JUDGE)

Unacceptable testimony, entirely unacceptable... !

CONTINUED:

PICARD

If your Honor please, there is a simple way to clear up this disagreement.

(waits until he has "Q"'s  
attention)

(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
 We agree there is evidence to support the court's contention that humans have been murderous and dangerous.

(moves in closer to "Q")  
 I say "have been" ... and therefore we will respectfully submit to a test of whether this is presently true of humans.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (suddenly alert)  
 I see, I see.  
 (an idea forming)  
 And you petition the Court to accept you and your comrades as proof of what humanity has become.

PICARD  
 There should be many ways we can be tested. We have a long mission ahead of us...

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 Another brilliant suggestion, Captain. But your test hardly requires a 'long mission'.  
 (laughs)  
 Your immediate destination offers more challenge than you can possibly imagine. Yes, yes, this Farpoint station will be an excellent test of human worth. Picard, like the others, is now becoming just a bit concerned. What does lie ahead of them on Farpoint Station?

ANGLE INCLUDING MANDARIN-BAILIFF

with "Q" nodding to him as the Bailiff stands, raising his voice.

MANDARIN-BAILIFF  
 Stand respectfully. All present, respectfully stand!

WIDE ANGLE

Spectators standing. Picard and his people coming to their feet too.

EMPHASIZING "Q" AND PRISONERS (OPTICAL)

as "Q" moves his bench into position.

"Q" (JUDGE)

This trial is adjourned to allow  
the criminals to be tested. The  
Mandarin-bailiff LOUDLY CLANGS HIS  
BELL.

MANDARIN-BAI LI FF

This honorable court is adjourned!

There is a smile coming onto the face of "Q" as he turns to  
Picard.

"Q" (JUDGE)

Captain, you may find you are not  
nearly clever enough to deal with  
what lies ahead for you. It may  
have been better to accept sentence  
here.

"Q" WAVES TOWARD THEM, PRODUCING THE BLINDING LIGHT

EFFECT we've seen before -- and the EFFECT BECOMES:

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

Picard and the others now in their normal garb and at their  
regular stations, all beginning to register their realization  
of where they now are.

ANGLES EMPHASIZING DATA, TROI, AND TASHA

Reacting to where they now find themselves. Data turns to the  
Ops position.

DATA

Uh... what is present course, Ops?  
The OPS OFFICER looks at Data,  
surprised.

OPS

(to Data)

It's exactly what the Captain  
ordered, sir. Direct heading to  
Farpoint Station.

CONTINUED:

Data has reviewed his console readings during this, turns to  
Picard:

DATA

Confirm we are on that heading,  
sir.

OPS

(to Data)

Know anything about Farpoint? It  
sounds like a fairly dull place.

PI CARD

Actually, Ops, I've heard just the  
opposite.

Pi card, Data, Troi and Tasha exchange looks, then settle  
back.

EXT. SPACE - LONG SHOT - PLANET (OPTICAL)

moving in on a yellowish ball of a planet glowing against the  
black backdrop of starry space in the reflected light of its  
sun. There is some cloud layer. At this distance, the  
planet's land masses are vague and indistinct.

RIKER'S VOICE

Personal log, Commander William  
Riker, Star Date 42354.4, at  
Farpoint Station.

CLOSER - ON THE PLANETS AND THE USS HOOD (OPTICAL)

An older class starship (the USS Hood) lies in geosynchronous  
orbit above the planet.

RIKER'S VOICE

... U.S.S. Hood has dropped me off  
at Farpoint Station where I await  
the arrival of the new U.S.S.  
Enterprise...

CLOSER - ON THE OLD CITY/STATION (SPEC. FX)

AN AERIAL VIEW of the small, obviously old Bandi city  
connected to the modern sprawling spaceport/station, both set  
in the middle of a harsh and forbidding landscape. This is  
Farpoint Station. CAMERA PUSHES IN on the Old City portion.

CONTINUED:

RIKER'S VOICE

... to which I have been assigned  
as first officer. Meanwhile...

INT. OLD CITY CORRIDOR - PANNING RIKER

Commander William T. Riker approaching the door leading to the office at Farpoint's Administrator.

RIKER'S VOICE

... I have been asked to visit the office of Farpoint Station's Administrator.

INT. ZORN'S OFFICE - OLD CITY - DAY - ANGLE ON RIKER AND ZORN  
69

Riker ENTERING, crossing to an elegant, unusually shaped desk where ZORN, the station Groppler (administrator) rises and (unused to handshaking) at first offers the wrong hand, then gets the procedure straightened out with MUMBLED APOLOGIES. As with all the Bandi, Zorn is tall, skinny, rather grey-looking -- appears to be sixtyish (as do all the Bandi, including the young ones.)

ZORN

I thought you might like to know, Commander Riker, that we've still no word from your vessel. But, I trust we have made your waiting comfortable?

RIKER

Luxurious is more like it. Would it seem ungrateful if I ask for some information?

ZORN

Anything!

RIKER

Fascinating how in the midst of an old city like this, you've built a completely modern tritanium and duraglass space station. Your energy supply must be as abundant as I've heard.

CONTINUED:

ZORN

Geothermal energy is the one great blessing of this planet. I'll have all the details of that sent to your quarters.

RIKER

Thank you. But it still seems incredible how you've built this station so rapidly and so... so perfectly suited to our needs. Pushes a desk top bowl of fruit toward Riker.

ZORN

Would your care for an Earth delicacy, Commander?

RIKER

Well, if there's an apple there...

There isn't and we can SEE that this disappoints Zorn.

RIKER

(Looking up; continues)  
It doesn't matter... what I was saying was...  
(sees something out of SCENE)  
Well, I'll be damned!

CAMERA PANS RIKER

as he steps to the far end of Zorn's desk where ANGLE REVEALS a second bowl of fruit. Riker picks an apple from it.

ZORN

Ah... ah yes, there was another selection here...

RIKER

(perplexed)  
Zorn, I would have sworn it wasn't here a moment ago.

ZORN

And does your failure to notice it make it unwelcome?  
(smiles)  
The same with Farpoint Station, Commander.

CONTINUED:

ZORN (CONT'D)

We hope a few easily answered questions about it won't make Starfleet appreciate it less.

Riker eyes Zorn thoughtfully, then takes a bite out of the apple. He chews, then:

RIKER  
I'm sure it won't, sir.  
(raises apple up)  
And this is delicious. Thank you.  
(crossing to door)  
Good morning, Groppler Zorn. He is  
EXITING even as Zorn levers himself  
out of his own chair.

ZORN  
Good morning.

The door closes behind Riker, and Zorn turns around angrily.

ZORN  
(continuing)  
You've been told not to do that.  
Why can't you understand? It will  
arouse their suspicions.

As he speaks, CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS TO REVEAL clearly that there is no one else in the room, nor does he appear to be speaking into any sort of communication device. He seems to be talking to the walls.

ZORN  
(continuing)  
... and if that happens, we will  
have to punish you. We will, I  
promise you. We must! No reply that  
we can hear. Is this man mad?

CUT TO:

INT. FARPOINT FOYER

In considerable contrast to Zorn's old city office we just left, this structure has a "starbase" look with its dazzling tritanium and glass construction. The few people in sight are Starfleet personnel. ENTERING FOREGROUND are DR. BEVERLY CRUSHER and her fifteen-year-old son WESLEY.

CONTINUED:

Like most other humans of this century, she doesn't look her age. Although forty years old, she looks hardly more than thirty. Her attractiveness is underscored by a naturally provocative walk -- the woman can't help it. This is counter-balanced by her quick intelligence and her professional knowledge and skill as a physician.

Her son, Wes, has that same quick intelligence, multiplied by four. That lively brain is ensconced in the body of a perfectly normal boy with moderate good looks, a cheerful personality, but with considerable maturity for someone his age.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Riker ENTERS SCENE behind them and hurries to catch up. He calls:

RIKER  
Doctor Crusher...

WESLEY  
Mother, it's Commander Riker.

Beverly slows, lets Riker walk along with them. We see that despite her attractive face and form, she is naturally dignified and a bit reserved with new acquaintances like Riker.

RIKER  
And hello to you, Wesley. Enjoying  
Farpoint Station?

WESLEY  
(happily)  
Yes, sir.

Riker smiles at the boy. It's clear he approves of this polite and likeable kid. Then he becomes aware that Beverly has not answered his greeting and is waiting.

RIKER  
Saw you and thought I'd join your  
stroll, if I may.

BEVERLY  
Actually, we're about to do some  
shopping.

Riker throws her a look. Is she rejecting the offer of his company?

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
I've been meaning to visit the mall  
myself. If I'm welcome?

BEVERLY  
Of course.

She moves toward an exit door. Wes has been looking from one to the other of them, interested in what they've said... and not said.

INT. FARPOINT SHOPPING MALL - DAY

The ANGLE suggests a covered, airy mall with flowers and trees -- many of them Earth types but with a scattering of alien vegetation too. It is a spacious walkway with a number of pleasant shops and booths. In b.g. we SEE Bandi natives of this world, a tall and greyish life form, quiet and overly polite. Beverly, Wesley and Riker move down a line of shops.

CLOSER - BEVERLY, WESLEY, RIKER

as they walk, Wes continuing to eye the two adults. Then:

WESLEY

If you're wondering about Mom,  
Mister Riker, she's isn't actually  
unfriendly. She's just shy around  
men she doesn't know. Beverly is  
startled; Riker amused.

BEVERLY

Wesley...!  
(swallows her annoyance;  
to Riker)  
I believe that means he would like  
us to be friends.

RIKER

(grins)  
I'm willing, Doctor.  
(more serious)  
And although we're not officially  
part of the Enterprise yet, I  
thought there might be something  
useful we could do while we wait.

CONTINUED:

Beverly stops at a table in front of a shop selling exotic materials. The modest selections of cloth are lined up on the table, some draped for best effect. Beverly looks over them critically, feeling weight and texture. The Bandi SHOPKEEPER has stayed at the rear of the booth.

BEVERLY

"Useful"? How and what, Commander?

RIKER

Investigating some things I've noticed here, Doctor. The last was a piece of fruit... Beverly has frowned over a particularly pretty piece of material which she holds up for the shopkeeper to see.

BEVERLY

Would this be available in emerald green?

The Bandi Merchant smiles, nods and takes the bolt of cloth INTO A SMALL CLOSED OFF AREA BEHIND. Wes watches the merchant go as Beverly turns to look at Riker appraisingly.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

I'm sure, Commander, there are reasons for a first officer to want to demonstrate his energy and alertness to a new captain. But since my duty and interests are outside the command structure...

The Bandi Merchant comes quickly with the bolt of cloth -- now emerald green -- interrupts Beverly by holding it up for her approval.

RIKER

Isn't it nice he happened to have the right color?

Beverly glances sharply at Riker, suppressing a somewhat chagrined look.

CONTINUED: (2)

BEVERLY

(to Merchant)

Thank you. I'll take the entire bolt. Charge it to Beverly Crusher, Chief Medical Officer, USS Enterprise.

The Merchant nods, ticks the information off on a flat little gadget that dangles from his belt, hands her the bolt of cloth.

ANOTHER ANGLE - DOLLYING WITH BEVERLY, RIKER, WESLEY

as they walk away, Riker enjoying the look that's come onto her face over this incident.

RIKER

Let's see, where were we?

BEVERLY

I was accusing you of inventing work in order to curry favor with your new captain. I apologize.

WESLEY

Finding the exact right color took him only about twelve seconds, Mom.

They stop a little distance off and look back toward the shop.

BEVERLY

Maybe this is something Jean-Luc Picard will want looked into.

RIKER

Jean-Luc? You know Captain Picard?

WESLEY

(proudly)

When I was little, he brought my father's body home to us.

Riker is startled but Beverly only smiles, fondly pats her son's head.

CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Yes, Wes, long, long ago.

(to Riker)

Shall we continue the walk? I'd like to know you better, Mister Riker.

CUT TO:

INT. FARPOINT LOUNGE - DAY - ON GEORDI AND MARKHAM

LT. GEORDI LaFORGE and ENSIGN SAWYER MARKHAM are in the small, comfortable lounge area. Markham is a likeable young man, enthusiastic, energetic. He is still inclined to shoot from the hip rather than consider before speaking, but he is a capable (and very new) graduate of the Academy. We SEE Geordi at first only from behind, and we may routinely register the fact he is black.

MARKHAM

Where is she? They say she's never late -- not since the old burrhog took over the captain's chair.

RIKER'S VOICE

You wouldn't be talking about the Enterprise, would you, Ensign Markham?

WIDER ANGLE

The two young men turn around sharply to find Riker has come up behind them. The most important thing we notice about Geordi is that he wears a strange flattish device (like futuristic goggles) over his eyes. Although he is technically blind, his head always turns toward the person speaking to him because he can, in fact, see as well or better than anyone through the use of the visual prosthesis. As they realize that Riker is a senior officer, both young men straighten to attention.

GEORDI /MARKHAM

Sir. Yes, sir.

Riker smiles at the ingrained and traditional response of the recent Academy graduate.

RIKER

You can stand at ease, gentlemen.  
We're not on the Enterprise yet.

CONTINUED:

MARKHAM

You know we're assigned to her, sir.

RIKER

(extending his hand)  
Riker. I'm slated to be First Officer.  
(they shake hands)  
I read the service records on all new personnel on the trip out. Excellent academic record at Starfleet Academy, Mister Markham.

MARKHAM

Thank you, sir.

RIKER

And you, Mister LaForge. Captain Dreyer praised your performance on the Hood. Why did you request transfer to the Enterprise?

GEORDI

Who wouldn't, sir? The biggest, newest, fastest starship in the fleet --

RIKER

Commanded by the best burrhog in the fleet. Right, Mister Markham?

MARKHAM

(sheepishly)  
Yes, sir.

RIKER

(grins)  
I've already forgotten who used those words.

GEORDI

Shouldn't we have heard something from her by now, sir? A BANDI WOMAN approaches:

BANDI WOMAN

Commander Riker?

RIKER

Yes?

CONTINUED: (2)

BANDI WOMAN

The Enterprise has been picked up on our monitors, sir. I should tell you, sir, it is only the Stardrive Section. All three crewman are surprised to hear this.

RIKER

(to Woman)  
What about the Saucer Module?

BANDI WOMAN

We've received no explanation, sir. But the captain signals that you're to beam up immediately.

GEORDI  
(to Markham)  
Our new captain doesn't waste time.

RIKER  
A good rule for all of us to  
follow, gentlemen.

Riker touches his communicator. His VOICE now 'treated' to indicate he is transmitting. (This will be standard communicator format.)

RIKER  
(continuing)  
Enterprise, this is Commander Riker  
on Farpoint. Standing by to beam  
up.

TRANSPORTER EFFECT (OPTICAL)

FADE OUT.

PART FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise stardrive module in orbit of the Farpoint planet.

INT. STARDRIVE TRANSPORTER ROOM - ANGLE ON PLATFORM  
(OPTICAL)

As Riker BEAMS IN. Lieutenant Tasha Yar of Security is there, waiting until Riker is fully materialized, then:

TASHA  
Lieutenant Yar of Security, sir.  
Captain Picard will see you on the  
Battle Bridge.

Riker was prepared to shake hands but Tasha is already leading the way toward the turbolift.

INT. TURBOLIFT

As Riker follows her inside, she speaks quietly toward the controls:

TASHA  
Battle bridge.

The doors snap closed and the lift moves. Riker looks Tasha over, waiting, then:

RIKER  
With the saucer gone, can I assume  
something interesting happened on  
your way here?

TASHA  
I'll let the captain explain, sir.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - ANGLE ON PICARD

He is seated in the command chair with Data and a couple of other crewpersons at their stations.

DATA  
We are cleared into the standard  
parking orbit, sir.

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
(nods)  
Make it so.

The bridge turbolift doors open, Riker ENTERS the bridge after Tasha, follows her to Picard.

TASHA  
Commander Riker, sir.

RIKER  
Riker, W.T., reporting as ordered,  
sir.

Picard takes his time, looking Riker over and then offering his hand.

PICARD  
I really didn't expect to welcome  
you to half a starship, Riker.  
(to Tasha)  
Is the viewer ready?

TASHA  
All set up, sir.

PICARD  
(to Riker)  
We'll first bring you up to date on  
a little...  
(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
 "adventure" we had on our way here,  
 Commander. Then we'll talk.

TASHA  
 (to Riker)  
 This way, sir.

True, Picard does not waste time. Tasha is already leading Riker toward a viewer at the aft section of the Battle Bridge.

ANGLE ON AFT VIEWER

as Tasha motions Riker to the seat, turns the VIEWER ON. The VIEWER SHOWS A SHOT FROM EARLIER WHEN "Q" (ELIZABETHAN) HAD APPEARED AND IS TALKING TO Picard. The VOICES ARE FAINT and Riker leans in, riveting attention to the bridge record.

ANGLE ON PICARD AND DATA

as the android officer turns toward the captain.

CONTINUED:

DATA  
 (interrupting)  
 Message from the Saucer Module. It  
 will arrive here in fifty-one  
 minutes, sir.

PICARD  
 Inform them we'll hook up as soon  
 as they arrive.

Picard stands, crosses past Tasha on his way to the turbolift.

PICARD  
 (to Tasha)  
 Bring him to my Ready Room when  
 he's done there.

Picard EXITS via turbolift.

ANGLE ON RIKER

Where VIEWER SHOWS ANGLE ON THE "Q" GRIDWORK STRETCHES OVER THE HEAVENS, THEN SHOT OF "Q" (21st CENTURY). Riker TURNS AWAY FROM VIEWER TOWARD CAMERA as he looks at the crewpersons on the bridge. He speaks to no one in particular.

RIKER  
 He calls that "a little adventure"?

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE READY ROOM

Pi card at a viewer going over a rather complex screen of formulas. A KNOCK at the door, he turns the viewer off.

PI CARD

Come.

Riker ENTERS, crosses to where the captain indicates he's to sit. He does so, looking at Pi card. Then:

RIKER

Wow!

PI CARD

(Laughs, nods)  
Exactly.

CONTINUED:

RIKER

This "Q", sir... is he crazy? I mean, seriously?

PI CARD

Seriously, does it really matter how we judge them? We're dealing with something that can juggle starships as if they were pebbles.

RIKER

It's a rather astonishing "little adventure" you've had, Captain.

PI CARD

(snaps)  
The issue isn't what we call it, Commander. The important thing is we can be dead certain... accent on dead... that "Q" wasn't joking. We're alive only because we were placed on "probation", a very serious kind of "probation".

Over which we have heard a CHIME SOUND.

PI CARD

(continuing)  
Go.

DATA'S VOICE

The Saucer Module is now entering orbit with us, sir.

PI CARD  
Acknowledged. Commander Riker will  
conduct a manual docking. Picard  
out.

RIKER  
Sir?

PI CARD  
You've reported in, haven't you?  
You are qualified?

RIKER  
Yes, sir.

PI CARD  
Then I meant now, Mister Riker.  
Riker jumps to his feet, EXITS.  
CAMERA PANS to Picard

whose expression now relaxes. He's not too unhappy with what  
he's seen of his new first officer so far.

EXT. SPACE - SAUCER SECTION, BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

As before, the Saucer Section is above and ahead of the  
battle section. The battle section is SLOWLY moving ahead  
toward the Saucer Section for link-up.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - FULL SHOT

Riker at the conn, concentrating. Tasha and Data are studying  
him, privately evaluating this new man.

DATA  
You say you will be doing this  
manually, sir? No automation?

RIKER  
As ordered.

EMPHASIZING RIKER

He's making a couple of calculations, glancing up at the  
viewscreen.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The rear end of the saucer is moving closer, but it is still  
high.

EMPHASIZING RIKER

RIKER  
(to Data at Conn)  
Two percent rise. Up angle  
adjustment three degrees. Maintain  
docking speed.

Ops and conn positions AD LIB repeats of Riker's orders.

EXT. SPACE - SAUCER AND BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

The battle section is seen rising, angling forward slightly, still moving slowly toward the saucer.

INT. BATTLE BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING RIKER

glancing at the O.S. viewscreen, works his console again.

RIKER  
Level her out. Maintain docking  
speed. Docking crew, prepare for  
reconnection.

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON SAUCER AND BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

The two are level now, quite close together, the battle section still moving slowly forward.

INT. BRIDGE - ANGLE ON RIKER

Riker looks up at the viewscreen again.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The saucer looms in the viewscreen -- everything is level, the docking section is dead ahead -- we are still moving forward.

CLOSE ON RIKER

He makes a couple of quick entries on his console.

RIKER  
All stop. Her inertia should do the  
job now.

EXT. SPACE - SAUCER AND BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

The two glide together smoothly.

INT. BRIDGE - WIDE SHOT

Riker hits a couple more tabs on his panel as:

RIKER  
Rejoin Lock-up... now.

EXT. SPACE - FINAL HOOK-UP (OPTICAL)

The reverse of disconnecting SHOTS we saw earlier -- huge STARDRIVE SECTION and SAUCER MODULE MECHANISMS MAKING FINAL HOOK-UP.

EXT. ENTERPRISE IN ORBIT (OPTICAL)

The docking complete.

INT. TURBOLIFT

Riker with Data, Tasha, and others. The time this takes is indicative of the size of this new Enterprise.

CONTINUED:

RIKER (V.O.)  
Enterprise log, First Officer  
entry. Ship's modules rejoined,  
stardate 42354.71 with command now  
transferred back to the main  
bridge.

Riker looks up to see Tasha is watching him. Then:

TASHA  
Neatly done, sir.

RIKER  
I don't imagine many mistakes  
happen under Captain Picard.

TASHA  
No sir, they don't.

INT. BRIDGE

As the turbolift arrives. Lt. Worf crosses toward it, intercepts Riker.

WORF  
I'm Lieutenant Worf, sir. Captain  
Picard requests you come  
immediately to his quarters.  
(MORE)

WORF (cont'd)  
 Having had little more than a  
 glance at this main bridge, Riker  
 turns and re-enters the turbolift.

INT. PICARD'S CABIN

Much larger and more comfortable than the small battle Ready Room we were in earlier. Picard is there, turning as he hears a KNOCK:

PICARD  
 Come!

Riker ENTERS.

PICARD  
 (continuing)  
 A fairly routine maneuver but you  
 handled it quite well.

RIKER  
 Thank you, sir. I hope I show some  
 promise.

CONTINUED:

An exchange of looks between the two. Clearly, Riker is annoyed by this "faint praise" kind of welcome. Picard leads the way to a setting for coffee.

PICARD  
 Some coffee.

RIKER  
 No thank you, sir.

PICARD  
 (pours himself a cup)  
 And now I have a kind of "what sort  
 of second-in-command have I  
 inherited?" question.

RIKER  
 Yes sir, I thought you might.

There's nothing disrespectful in Riker's tone of voice, but he does leave an impression that he's not to be walked on either.

PICARD  
 I noticed in your envelope that  
 Captain DeSoto thinks very highly  
 of you.

(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
One curious thing, however, you  
refused to let him beam down to  
Altair IV?

RIKER  
In my opinion, sir, Altair IV was  
too dangerous to risk exposing the  
captain.

PICARD  
I see. A captain's rank means  
nothing to you.

RIKER  
Rather the reverse, sir. A  
captain's life means a great deal  
to me.

PICARD  
Let me postulate something here,  
Mister Riker. Isn't it just  
possible that you don't get to be a  
starship captain without knowing  
when it's safe to beam down or not?  
Isn't it a little presumptuous for  
a first officer to second guess his  
captain's judgment?

CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER  
Permission to speak candidly, sir?

PICARD  
Always.

RIKER  
You've been a first officer  
yourself. You know that assuming  
that responsibility must, by  
definition, include the safety of  
the captain. I have no problem with  
following the rules you lay down.  
But under no circumstances will I  
compromise your safety. If you have  
a problem with that, sir, you can  
put me back on the Hood before she  
leaves.

PICARD  
You don't intend to back off that  
position?

RIKER  
No, sir, I can't.

Picard takes another beat to study him carefully, then:

PICARD  
One further thing... a special  
favor I have to ask of you.

RIKER  
Anything, sir.

PICARD  
Using the same kind of strength you  
showed with Captain DeSoto, I'd  
appreciate it if you can keep me  
from making an ass of myself with  
children.

RIKER  
Sir?

PICARD  
I'm not a family man, Riker, and  
yet, Starfleet has given me a ship  
with children aboard.

RIKER  
(nods)  
Yes, sir. And families...

CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD  
And I don't feel comfortable with  
children. But, since a captain  
needs an image of "geniality"  
toward the little monsters, you're  
to see that's exactly what I  
project.

RIKER  
Aye, sir.

For the first time, Picard smiles, extending his hand. We see  
he's surprisingly warm when he wants to be. Riker takes  
Picard's hand for a firm and friendly handshake.

PICARD  
Welcome to the Enterprise, Mister  
Riker.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE

as Riker steps out of the turbolift. He stops, takes in the size of his compared to the Battle Bridge. The Klingon Lieutenant is at the conn position. He turns, seeing Riker:

WORF

Yes sir, Commander? Riker crosses in, shakes hands.

RIKER

Thank you, Lieutenant. Is Commander Data on duty?

WORF

Commander Data is on a special assignment, sir. He's using our shuttlecraft to transfer an admiral over to the Hood.

RIKER

An admiral?

WORF

He's been aboard all day, sir, checking over medical layout.

RIKER

Why the shuttlecraft? Can he just beam over?

CONTINUED:

WORF

I suppose he could, sir. But the admiral's a rather remarkable man.

INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR - ANGLE AT INTERSECTION

DATA'S VOICE

But, sir, the transporter could have you on the Hood in a matter of seconds, Admiral. Data and the admiral ENTER SCENE at the intersection.

The admiral is very old with an almost transparent look.

ADMIRAL

Have you got some reason to want my atoms scattered all over space?

DATA

No sir. But at your age, sir, I thought you shouldn't have to put up with the time and trouble of a shuttlecraft. The admiral stops. Facing Data, he draws himself up as straight as he can. His voice is crotchety and trembly -- and fiercely stubborn.

ADMIRAL

My age? Hold it right there, boy, what about my age?

DATA

Sorry, sir. If that subject troubles you...

ADMIRAL

Troubles me? What's so damned troubling about not having died? How old do you think I am?

DATA

One hundred forty-seven years, Admiral. According to Starfleet records.

ADMIRAL

Explain how you remember that so exactly.

DATA

I remember every fact I am exposed to, sir.

CONTINUED:

The admiral peers at him closely, scowling.

ADMIRAL

I don't see any points on your ears, boy, but you sound like a Vulcan.

DATA

No, sir. I am an android.

ADMIRAL

(snorts)  
Almost as bad.

DATA  
 (at a loss, but still  
 respectful)  
 I thought it was generally  
 accepted, sir, that Vulcans are an  
 advanced and most honorable race.

The admiral stares at him a moment, his severe blue eyes  
 gentling and his feisty scowl fading. He pats Data's sleeve  
 and nods slightly.

ADMIRAL  
 They are, boy. They are. And also  
 damned annoying at times.

DATA  
 Yes, sir.

As they move away, Data gently assisting the old man:

ADMIRAL  
 This is a new ship, boy, but she's  
 got the right name. Remember that.

DATA  
 I will, sir.

ADMIRAL  
 You treat her like a lady.  
 (beat, quietly)  
 She'll always bring you home...

FADE OUT.

PART FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

Both the Enterprise and the Hood in orbit close together.  
 CAMERA ANGLE shows how much LARGER the Enterprise is.

INT. SICKBAY

Beverly is wearing medical "blue" -- or whatever color  
 Science personnel are going to be assigned. She steps toward  
 a LARGE VIEWSCREEN which comes on, showing readouts  
 indicative of the status of the ship's medical facilities.

BEVERLY  
Show me the results of Captain  
Picard's most recent physical  
examination.

The screen promptly BEGINS TO FLASH UP PRINTED INFORMATION,  
followed by X-Ray type shots, etc. Beverly studies it for  
awhile.

PI CARD' S VOICE  
Already at work, Doctor?

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Beverly turns to find Captain Picard ENTERING. She nods in  
answer to his question.

BEVERLY  
Yes, on a subject that's very  
important to this mission, Captain.  
(unhurriedly to computer)  
Screen off.

The screen GOES DARK.

PI CARD  
I wanted to say "welcome aboard."

CLOSER ANGLE - BEVERLY AND PICARD

As if they're appraising each other, then:

CONTINUED:

BEVERLY  
Thank you, Captain.

PI CARD  
And I thought I should talk to you  
very personally about your  
assignment here.

CLOSER TWO SHOT

As Beverly nods, waits for him to continue.

PI CARD  
(continuing)  
I wanted you to know I protested  
your posting to the Enterprise.

BEVERLY  
Oh? Do you consider me unqualified?

PI CARD

Hardly. Your service record shows you exactly the kind of CMO I'd want.

BEVERLY

Then you must object to me personally. Has it to do with our last meeting?

PI CARD

I'm trying to be considerate of your feelings, Doctor Crusher. For you to serve with a commanding officer who would continually remind you of such a terrible personal tragedy...

BEVERLY

(annoyed; snaps)

If I had any objections to serving with you, I wouldn't have requested this assignment, Captain.

PI CARD

You requested this posting? He turns to exit. Beverly stirs, and her next words stop him.

CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Captain. My feelings about my husband's death will have no effect on the way I serve you, this vessel, or this mission. Picard gives it a moment's thought, extends his hand.

PI CARD

Then, welcome aboard, Doctor. I'm pleased to have you here. Beverly allows only a perfunctory handshake.

BEVERLY

Thank you. And now, if I can return to my duties...

It is clear that Picard wanted to say more but she has neatly blocked any further conversation.

PI CARD  
 (uncomfortably)  
 Well... as I said, "welcome  
 Aboard".

She doesn't respond further and he has no choice but to turn and exit.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND HOOD IN ORBIT (OPTICAL)

Again, EMPHASIZING the considerable difference in the sizes of the two starships as we SEE that the USS Hood is PULLING AWAY, LEAVING ORBIT.

INT. BRIDGE - ANGLE ON RIKER

He is standing before the huge viewscreen. Behind him is the young Klingon, Worf, at the conn position with the rest of the bridge stations only nominally manned. Set in geosynchronous orbit over the planet, the Enterprise requires minimal monitoring at this time.

ANGLE ON TURBOLIFT DOORS

They OPEN, and Picard steps out onto the bridge.

PI CARD  
 Have you signaled the Hood, Mister  
 Riker?

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
 (nods)  
 Your exact message.  
 (in French)  
 Bon voyage mon ami e. Aye, sir.

ANOTHER ANGLE - TO INCLUDE MAIN VIEWER

as Picard smiles and steps toward it.

PI CARD  
 And what was my answer, computer?  
 MAIN VIEWER FLICKERS, then startles us with an ugly FLASH OF LIGHT that becomes an IMAGE OF "Q" (JUDGE) who is in LIMBO, but looking directly at Picard. His VOICE BOOMS LOUDLY, annoyed in tone:

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 DO YOU EXPECT ME TO WAIT PATIENTLY

THROUGH ALL THIS NONSENSE? OR

DID YOU THINK I WAS GONE?

Picard is as startled as Riker. The young Klingon, Worf, comes tumbling out of the conn position, drawing his phaser and placing himself protectively between Picard and the threatening "Q" image.

PI CARD

Do you intend to blast a hole through the viewer, Lieutenant? Worf apologetically puts his phaser away, lets Picard wave him aside.

PI CARD

(continuing)

If the purpose of this is to test human worth, your honor, you must let us proceed in a normal human way.

"Q" (JUDGE)

YOU ARE DILATORY! YOU HAVE

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS! ANY FURTHER

DELAY AND YOU RISK SUMMARY

JUDGEMENT AGAINST YOU, CAPTAIN.

A FLASH OF LIGHT and the main viewer returns to an image of the planet below.

ANOTHER ANGLE

WORF

Sorry, sir...

RIKER

No criticism. You reacted fast...

PI CARD

... but in a completely useless way.

WORF

I'll learn to do better, sir.

PI CARD

Of course you will. We've a long voyage ahead of us.

(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
 Picard dismisses Worf with a  
 flicker of a smile which takes the  
 sting out of what he just said.

RIKER  
 (lowers voice)  
 Hope you're right, sir. About the  
 long voyage ahead.

Picard looks to main viewer as if checking that "Q" is truly  
 gone.

PICARD  
 I hope so too.

RIKER  
 What do we do, sir? With them  
 monitoring every move, every  
 word...

PICARD  
 S.O.P., Mister Riker.

RIKER  
 Standard Operating Procedures?

PICARD  
 (nods)  
 We do exactly what we'd do if this  
 "Q" never existed. If we're going  
 to be damned, let's be damned for  
 what we really are. Riker is  
 suddenly very pleased with this  
 captain. He nods emphatically.

FADE OUT.

PART SIX

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

U.S.S. Enterprise in orbit of planet Cygnus IV.

PICARD V.O.

Captain's Log, stardate 42372.5. Of the twenty-four hours "Q"  
 allotted us to prove ourselves...

INT. BRIDGE - ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER

Minimum bridge crew on duty.

PI CARD V.O.

... eleven have now passed without incident. And yet I cannot forget "Q's" prediction that we will face here some critical test of human worth.

INT. BRIDGE READY ROOM

Pi card and Riker comparing notes.

RIKER

This planet's interior heat results in abundant geothermal energy, sir. But it's about all this world does offer.

PI CARD

And it's your belief that this is what made it possible for them to construct this base to Starfleet standards?

RIKER

Yes sir. We have to assume that they've been trading their surplus energy for the construction materials used here. According to our ship's scans, many of the materials used are not found on this world.

CONTINUED:

PI CARD

(smiles)

Perhaps it's like those incidents you describe in your report as "almost magical" attempts to please us.

RIKER

Those events did happen, sir.

PI CARD

And in time we'll discover the explanation. Meanwhile, none of it suggests anything threatening. If only every life form had as much desire to please Starfleet.

(stands)

Ready to beam down? I'm looking forward to meeting this Groppler Zorn.

Picard is leading Riker to the cabin door.

RIKER  
I'm convinced there's more to it  
than just "pleasing us", sir.

PICARD  
(as they exit)  
Like something "Q" is doing to  
trick us?

INT. BRIDGE

As Picard and Riker enter from the adjoining Ready Room. Troi is just arriving in the turbolift and Picard calls to her.

PICARD  
Over here, Counselor!  
(to Riker)  
I've asked her to join us in this  
meeting.  
(indicating)  
May I introduce our new first  
officer, Commander William Riker.  
Mister Riker, our ship's counselor,  
Deanna Troi.

TWO SHOT - RIKER AND TROI

He's obviously stunned to find her here, although she isn't at all surprised.

TROI'S VOICE  
(carrying her thoughts)  
Do you remember what I taught you,  
Izmadi? Can you still sense my  
thoughts?

Then, she holds out her hand formally.

TROI  
A pleasure, Commander.

RIKER  
(nervously)  
I, ah... Likewise, Counselor.

ANGLE INCLUDING PICARD

Studying the two of them with some curiosity now.

PI CARD  
(to Riker)  
Have the two of you met before?

RIKER  
We... we have, sir.

PI CARD  
Excellent. I consider it important  
that my key officers know each  
other's abilities.

TROI  
We do, sir; we do. Meanwhile,  
Picard has indicated the turbolift  
and is leading them toward it.

EMPHASIZING TROI

As she looks back toward Riker serenely.

TROI'S VOICE  
(her thoughts)  
I, too, would never say goodbye,  
Izmaadi.

EXT. FARPOINT STATION (OPTICAL)

ESTABLISHING SHOT as:

PI CARD'S VOICE  
My crew and I need a bit more  
information...

INT. ZORN'S OFFICE

Where Zorn sits behind his desk, his posture and attitude  
indicating some nervousness. Seated facing him are Picard,  
Riker, and Troi. We see that Zorn's attention is on Troi.

PI CARD  
(continuing)  
... before we make our  
recommendations to Starfleet.

ZORN  
No objections to that, but...  
(eying Troi again)  
... but I'm puzzled over your  
bringing a Betazoid to this. If her  
purpose here is to probe my  
thoughts, sir...

TROI

I can sense only strong emotions,  
Groppler. I am only half Betazoid;  
my father was a Starfleet officer.

ZORN

I have nothing to hide, of course.

PICARD

Good, since we admire what we've  
seen of your construction  
techniques. Starfleet may be  
interested in your constructing  
starbases elsewhere too.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING TROI

As her expression begins to indicate an awareness of  
something distressing, something painful. During which:

ZORN

Unfortunately, Captain, we are not  
interested in building other  
facilities.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD AND RIKER

This stumps Picard for a moment, during which:

RIKER

If I may, Captain...

(gets a nod)

Then a trade, Groppler? Some things  
you need in return for the loan of  
architects and engineers who can  
demonstrate your techniques.

EMPHASIZING ZORN

ZORN

We Bandi do not wish to leave our  
home world. If Starfleet cannot  
accept that small weakness, then we  
will be forced, unhappily, to seek  
an alliance with someone like the  
Ferengi, or... Zorn interrupted by  
a small GROAN coming from Troi. Her  
eyes are now closed over a strong  
distress she's sensing.

VARIOUS OTHER ANGLES

As appropriate.

PICARD  
Counselor... ? What is it?

TROI  
(glancing toward Zorn)  
Do you want it described here, sir?

PICARD  
Yes! No secrets here if we're all  
to be friends.  
(to Zorn)  
Agreed, Groppler?

ZORN  
We ourselves have nothing to hide,  
but...

CONTINUED:

TROI  
(another GROAN, grimacing)  
Pain... pain, loneliness, terrible  
loneliness, despair...  
(indicates Zorn)  
I'm not sensing him, sir. Or any of  
his people... but it's something  
very close to this location.

PICARD  
(to Zorn, demandingly)  
The source of this? Do you have any  
idea?

ZORN  
No!  
(stands)  
No, absolutely not. And I find  
nothing helpful or productive in  
any of this!

PICARD  
(stands, to Zorn)  
That's it? No other comment?

ZORN  
What do you expect from us? We  
offer a base designed to your  
needs, luxurious even by human  
standards...

Riker and Troi come to their feet too as Picard interrupts.

PI CARD  
 ... while refusing to answer even  
 our simplest questions about it.  
 (to Riker)  
 We'll adjourn for now...  
 (to Zorn)  
 ... while we all reconsider our  
 positions.

The three CROSS toward the exit.

ZORN  
 Captain, the Ferengi would be very  
 interested in a base like this.

PI CARD  
 Fine. I hope they find you as tasty  
 as their other past associates.

Pi card and his people EXIT.

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

The U.S.S. Enterprise still in orbit over Cygnus IV.

INT. HOLODECK CORRIDOR

Riker moving as if seeking someone. He intercepts a YOUNG  
 ENSIGN who is passing and the junior officer sees Riker's  
 emblem of rank and snaps to attention.

RIKER  
 Ensign, can you help me find  
 Commander Data? I was told he's  
 somewhere on this deck.

YOUNG ENSIGN  
 This way, sir.

ANGLE AT CORRIDOR WALL

As the Ensign steps to a black surface of the corridor wall.

YOUNG ENSIGN  
 You must be new to these galaxy  
 class starships, sir.  
 (puts hand on the black  
 surface, saying)  
 Tell me the location of Commander  
 Data.

At the touch and the words "Tell me" the black surface comes  
 alive with light patterns showing appropriate information.

COMPUTER VOICE  
 Lieutenant Commander Data... now  
 located in Holodeck area 4-J.

YOUNG ENSIGN  
 (indicating readout)  
 And as you see, sir, it's pointing  
 you that way.

RIKER  
 Go that way? How far?

YOUNG ENSIGN  
 (smiles)  
 You'll know, sir.

Riker AD LIBS a thanks, goes in the indicated direction.

PANNING RIKER

Moving off in the indicated direction. Then the black surface  
 there comes alive with a FLASHING DIRECTION SIGNAL.

COMPUTER VOICE  
 This way, please. The next hatchway  
 on your right.

RIKER  
 (responding automatically)  
 Thank you...

COMPUTER VOICE  
 You're more than welcome, Commander  
 Riker.

Which startles him a bit but he walks on and turns right at a  
 sophisticated looking Holodeck Hatchway.

EXT. PARKLAND

The Parkland hidden at this moment by a WILD SECTION OF  
 CORRIDOR WALL AND HATCHWAY which, when the hatch is opened,  
 will REVEAL PARKLAND.

COMPUTER VOICE  
 (continuing without delay)  
 And if you care to enter,  
 Commander...

RIKER  
 (snaps; interrupting)  
 I do.

Immediately, the hatch slides open and we SEE THE PARKLAND (LOCATION). It looks (and is) real, including land contours, trees, and even a small stream nearby. Beyond that the Parkland stretches off for what appears to be miles and miles away to the horizon.

ANGLE BACK TOWARD HATCHWAY

As Riker ENTERS through it and stands inspecting the Parkland scene with genuine appreciation and then HEARS SOMEONE WHISTLING A MELODY, but doing it rather badly and laboriously.

ANGLE PAST RIKER INTO PARKLAND

As he MOVES AWAY, seeking the source of the WHISTLING which will begin to grow LOUDER now.

ANGLE AT STREAM

As Riker crosses, stepping from rock to rock. He makes a misstep, almost falls, then recovers and gets across. He looks back at the stone which caused it.

CLOSER ON RIKER

As he walks, the WHISTLING is nearby now. He stops, calls:

RIKER  
Hello!

The WHISTLING has continued without pause, Riker cocks his ear, corrects his direction slightly.

EXT. WOODLAND GLEN

Riker ENTERS SHOT through shrubbery, sees something and stops.

ANGLE ON DATA

Lying there, cushioned by deep grass. He's totally absorbed in certain melody notes he's attempting -- and keeps missing.

PANNING RIKER

Moving onto TWO SHOT where he stops, and WHISTLES the same melody, hitting the correct notes. A startled Data looks up blankly, then comes quickly to his feet, but Riker waves him back down, sits beside him.

DATA  
 Marvelous how easily humans do  
 that, sir. I still need much  
 practice.

Riker, acting uncomfortable, avoids the subject. He  
 hesitates, then:

RIKER  
 There are some puzzles down on the  
 planet that Captain Picard wants  
 answered. He suggests I put you on  
 the away team I'll be using.

CONTINUED:

DATA  
 I shall endeavor to give  
 satisfaction, sir.

Riker hesitates, wanting to say something but not sure how to  
 begin.

RIKER  
 Uh, yes. And when the captain  
 suggested you I, uh, looked up your  
 record...  
 (hesitates)

DATA  
 Yes sir, a wise procedure always.

RIKER  
 Your rank of Lieutenant commander,  
 I assume now must be honorary.

DATA  
 No, sir. Starfleet Class of '78;  
 honors in quantum mathematics and  
 exobiology.

RIKER  
 But your files... they say you're  
 a...

DATA  
 (waits, then)  
 Machine? Correct, sir. Does that  
 trouble you?

RIKER  
 (hesitates)  
 To be honest... yes, a little.

DATA  
Understood, sir. Prejudice is very human.

RIKER  
Now that troubles me. Do you consider yourself superior to us?

DATA  
I am superior in many ways. But I would gladly give it up to be human.

RIKER  
(studies Data, then)  
Nice to meet you, Pinocchio,

CONTINUED: (2)

Data seems confused by this.

RIKER  
(continuing; explains)  
A joke.

DATA  
(straight-faced)  
Ah! Intriguing.

RIKER  
(big grin)  
You're going to be an interesting companion, Mister Data.

FADE OUT.

PART SEVEN

FADE IN:

EXT. PARKLAND - RIKER AND DATA

We HEAR A VOICE (Wesley) and Riker gets to his feet, looks off in that direction.

DATA  
This pattern is quite popular, sir. Perhaps because it duplicates Earth so well, Coming here, (apologetically) makes me feel as if I'm human too.

RIKER  
(taking it all in)  
I didn't believe these could be so  
real.

DATA  
Much of it is real, sir. If the  
transporters can convert our bodies  
to an energy beam, then back to the  
original pattern again...

RIKER  
Yes, of course.  
(indicates)  
And all these have much simpler  
patterns.

EXT. PARKLAND AT STREAM

Data leading the way, then indicates.

DATA  
The rear wall.

RIKER  
(peers)  
I can't see it.

DATA  
You will.

PANNING RIKER TOWARD US

He's squinting hard now. Then he stops, reacts at something  
he can now make out.

RIKER  
Incredible!

INT. STAGE HOLODECK - ANGLE PAST RIKER (OPTICAL)

As he hurries toward where we can now SEE the holodeck wall  
(REAR PROJECTION SCREEN) on which we can now SEE that the  
PARKLAND soil, rocks and vegetation blend with the PROJECTED  
IMAGE there. Astonished, Riker backs away from this,  
squinting again.

EXT. REAL PARKLAND - RIKER'S P.O.V.

Where, of course, the wall blend is no longer visible.

WESLEY'S VOICE  
(calling)  
Mister Riker, isn't this great?

MEDIUM ON RIKER

Turning, then grinning, waving.

RIKER'S P.O.V. - THE ROCK CROSSING AT STREAM

Where Wes Crusher is hurrying toward us, bouncing from rock to rock.

WESLEY  
This is one of the simpler  
patterns, Mister Riker. They've got  
thousands more, some you just can't  
believe.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE RIKER AND DATA

Moving down the stream.

RIKER  
Careful, that next rock is loose...  
!

WIDER ANGLE  
As that rock moves underfoot,  
tumbling Wes into the stream.

PANNING DATA IN, demonstrating his enormous strength as he easily lifts Wesley completely out of the water. An amazed Wesley looks at Data.

WESLEY  
Wow!

EXT. PARKLAND - ANGLE ON WILD HATCHWAY AND CORRIDOR SECTION

As the hatchway smoothly SLIDES OPEN AGAIN. Through it is REVEALED THE PARKLAND, through which Riker, Data and a very wet Wesley make their way to the HATCHWAY. As they MOVE THROUGH HATCHWAY, the bulkhead BEGINS CLOSING.

INT. HOLODECK CORRIDOR - ANGLE ON CAPTAIN PICARD

The Captain walking with a Senior Officer when he sees Riker and the others. He motions the Senior Officer to continue on by himself, stops and waits.

VARIOUS ANGLES - AS APPROPRIATE

As Riker, Data and Wes move INTO SHOT with Picard. Wes is instantly aware that his soaked clothing is dripping water onto the starship deck. He'd like to remove himself but knows that Picard has already seen his puddle forming on the deck.

RIKER  
Mister Data has agreed to join my  
away team, Captain.

PICARD  
(with another glance  
toward Wes's puddle)  
Very good.

WES  
Sir, maybe I should get something  
to wipe this water up.

PICARD  
(coolly)  
Good idea.

Picard turns and EXITS.

INT. SICKBAY - BEVERLY AND WESLEY

Wesley is wiping himself dry now. He is enthusiastically trying to explain his adventures.

WESLEY  
-- and there's a low gravity  
gymnasium, too. It would be hard to  
get bored on this ship.

CLOSER TWO SHOT - BEVERLY AND WESLEY

As he wipes, he's been turning something over in his mind.

WESLEY  
Mom. . .  
(beat)  
could you get me a look at the  
bridge?

BEVERLY  
That's against the captain's  
standing orders.

WESLEY  
Are you afraid of the captain, too?

BEVERLY  
I certainly am not!

WESLEY  
But Captain Picard is a pain, isn't he?

BEVERLY  
Your father liked him very much.  
Great explorers are often lonely,  
... no chance to have a family...

WESLEY  
Just a look, at the bridge, Mom.  
From the turbolift when the doors  
open. I wouldn't get off. I  
promise.

BEVERLY  
You're looking for trouble, Wes.

He shuts up. Beverly looks at him and can't ignore the very  
real want in his eyes.

BEVERLY  
(continuing)  
Let's see what we can do. On Wes's  
delighted grin:

CUT TO:

EXT. FARPOINT STATION/CITY - DAY - EMPHASIZING STATION  
TO ESTABLISH our location.

INT. STATION SHOPPING AREA - DAY - ON AWAY TEAM

Which is made up of Riker, Data, Troi, Tasha and Geordi.  
There are a number of people in the mall area, some in  
identifiable Enterprise-type uniforms. The others are in  
various civilian clothes. They are taking in the Bandi shops,  
booths, food and drink offered by Bandi vendors.

TASHA  
Recommend that someone could begin  
by examining the underside of the  
station, sir.

TROI  
Our sensors do show some passages  
down there, sir. Perhaps you and

I?

Troi glances at Riker with just a shade of archness, perhaps the lift of an eyebrow. Riker glances away, troubled.

RIKER

Tasha, you and the Counselor. Troi and Tasha move off. Riker turns to Geordi.

RIKER

Let's us start with the topside. Have you noticed anything unusual? Riker and the others move out of scene, examining everything they pass.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANOTHER STATION AREA

ON GEORDI as he looks around the area, moving slowly and carefully scanning. Then he shakes his head.

GEORDI

Well, I can't see through solid matter, sir, but the material so far looks very ordinary.

DATA

Confirmed by the construction records, sir. Almost exactly the same material that Starfleet uses. Riker reaches to his insignia, to switch on his communicator.

CONTINUED:

RIKER

Riker to Tasha, Troi, come in! We milk the next few moments, Riker growing

apprehensive. Then, finally, with Riker showing relief:

TASHA'S VOICE

(from communicator)

We were about to call you, Team Leader. We've found something interesting.

## INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY

Not at all what one would expect of a "service tunnel", if this is indeed that. These are smooth, rounded, glistening walls whose GLOW lights up the entire passageway. (We'll see something similar later on a mystery vessel). Tasha is activating her communicator.

TASHA

We're in a passageway directly under the station sir. But the tunnel walls here are made from something we've never seen before.

RIKER'S VOICE

And Troi, have you sensed anything there?

Troi appears reluctant as she activates her communicator.

TROI

Sir, I've avoided opening my mind. Whatever I sensed in the Groppler's office became very painful.

RIKER

I'm sorry, Counselor, but you must. We need more information. Troi complies... then her face contorts in agony and a SMALL SCREAM ESCAPES. She sinks to her knees, Tasha hurrying in to support her.

TROI

(continuing)

No, no, such pain. It's so close to us here... pain, pain...

CONTINUED:

RIKER'S VOICE

(overlapping)

Hang on, I'm coming... Enterprise, lock us onto her signal! Tasha has her arm around Troi, whispering words of comfort.

## ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

After a moment, the familiar TRANSPORTER SOUND BEGINS. Riker, Data, and Geordi BEAM IN, SOLIDIFY. Then Riker hurries over to Troi while Data and Geordi examine their surroundings with great curiosity.

ANGLE ON TROI

Riker helping her very tenderly:

RIKER  
I'm sorry. Close your mind from the  
pain...

TROI  
It's also unhappiness... terrible  
despair...

RIKER  
Who?

TROI  
I don't know! No lifeform anything  
like us.

Riker is looking around at the glowing walls.

RIKER  
What in the hell kind of place is  
this?  
(turning)  
Geordi, what do you see?

Geordi has been inspecting the wall closely. He shakes his  
head.

GEORDI  
It's of no material I recognize,  
sir. Or have even heard of.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As before, in geosynchronous orbit.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE - ANGLE ON PICARD

in the captain's chair. The bridge is nominally manned at  
this time. We will see Worf at the ops panel. Picard glances  
around as the SOUND OF THE TURBOLIFT DOORS OPENING COMES  
OVER, and he freezes.

PICARD'S P.O.V. - BEVERLY AND WESLEY

standing just inside the turbolift door. Beverly is  
uncomfortable; Wes is all eyes, taking in as much as he  
possibly can in this one limited look at his dream place.  
Beverly starts to step out, gesturing to Wes to stay in the  
turbolift.

BEVERLY  
Permission to report to the  
captain...

WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING PICARD, BEVERLY

PICARD  
(coolly)  
Children are not allowed on the  
bridge, Doctor.

BEVERLY  
Captain, my son is not on the  
bridge. He merely accompanied me on  
the turbolift.

PICARD  
Your son?

BEVERLY  
His name's Wesley. You last saw him  
years ago when... She trails her  
words; Picard understands.

PICARD  
Oh, back then.

He glances from Beverly to Wesley, clears his throat.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Well -- as long as he's here...

WIDER - INCLUDING WESLEY, BEVERLY, PICARD

Wesley looks to Picard hopefully. Beverly waits, then Picard shrugs, tries to sound friendly.

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
I knew your father, Wesley. Want a  
look around?

Wesley is out like a shot.

PICARD  
(continuing; quickly)  
But don't touch anything! Wesley is in  
awe. To him, this is the equivalent  
of a devout Catholic stepping into  
the nave of St. Peter's Basilica.  
(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
The turbolift is on the level of  
the

"horseshoe", so the command positions are spread below him. Picard moves down to the captain's chair level, Wes moving with him. He is careful to put his feet down just right so he doesn't even scuff the floor. Picard watches, steps aside to gesture toward the command chair.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Try it out.  
(as Wes does so)  
The panel on your right is for log  
entries, library-computer access  
and retrieval, viewscreen control,  
intercoms, and so on.

WESLEY  
(nodding; pointing)  
Yes sir. And here, the backup conn  
and ops panels, plus armament and  
shield controls.

Picard looks closely at Wes, perplexed.

PICARD  
The forward viewscreen is  
controlled by the ops position...

WESLEY  
Yes sir, which uses high  
resolution, multi-spectral imaging  
sensor systems...

PICARD  
How the hell do you know that, boy?

Before Beverly or Wes can reply, a VERY DISTINCTIVE SIGNAL  
SOUNDS (Captain's comm signal) and Wes, closest to the  
control, transfers the signal into audio as:

CONTINUED: (2)

WES  
Perimeter alert, Captain!

Wesley is instantly embarrassed; Beverly is mortified; Picard  
is angry.

WES  
BEVERLY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean  
Wes! You shouldn't to...  
have touched anything...

PICARD

Off the bridge! Both of you. Worf  
has come to his feet, not sure  
whether or not he

should respond to the call. Beverly is hustling Wesley toward  
the turbolift.

WORF

You have a perimeter alert,  
Captain.

BEVERLY

(to Picard)

As my son tried to tell you!

She EXITS into the turbolift, the doors CLOSING behind her  
and Wesley. Picard, slamming his fist into his other palm,  
jumps for his command chair as:

PICARD

Picard. Go ahead.

SECURITY VOICE

Ship's sensors have detected the  
presence of a vessel approaching  
this planet. No ship is scheduled  
to arrive at this time.

PICARD

Have Mister Riker, and his team  
beamed back up! Security, could  
that be the Hood returning here?

SECURITY VOICE

The vessel does not match the  
Hood's configuration or I.D.  
signal.

PICARD

Put it on main viewer!

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

Instantly, the image of a ship is flashed on the screen. It  
appears big, dark, ominous -- even at far range -- and it is  
approaching very swiftly.

ANGLE ON PICARD AND WORF

PICARD  
Identification?

SECURITY VOICE  
Vessel unknown, configuration  
unknown, sir.

PICARD  
Hail it!

WORF  
(works his panel)  
We've been trying, sir. No  
response.

PICARD  
Raise all shields, phasers at  
ready.

WORF  
(works panel)  
Shields up, sir. Phasers ready.  
(turns to Picard)  
Could this be that "Q" you  
mentioned, sir?

CLOSE ON PICARD

staring at the viewscreen.

PICARD  
I almost hope so, Lieutenant. We  
face too many "unknowns" already.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The ship is closer now -- looks menacing -- and still coming  
fast.

FADE OUT.

PART EIGHT

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise in orbit.

INT. BRIDGE - WIDE ANGLE

All bridge positions are filled now, everyone watching the viewscreen intently.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The mystery vessel approaching closer.

PICARD AND Worf

PICARD

Continue universal greeting on all frequencies. Get me Groppler Zorn.

There is a BEEP, a pause, then:

ZORN'S VOICE

This is Zorn, Captain.

INT. ZORN'S OFFICE - DAY - ON ZORN

He is seated at the desk, speaks into a small portable communicator grid shaped to fit the palm of his hand.

PICARD'S VOICE

There is an unidentified vessel moving into orbit with us. Do you know who it is?

INTERCUT BETWEEN ZORN AND PICARD AS NEEDED.

ZORN

There are no ships scheduled to arrive until --

PICARD

I asked if you know who it is, Groppler. You mentioned the Ferengi Alliance to me.

CONTINUED:

ZORN

(very nervous)

But we have had no dealings with them. It was only a... a thought.

PICARD

Are you very, very certain of that, Groppler?

ZORN

I promise you we were making an empty threat, Captain. I wanted your cooperation. Forgive me --

WORF

Definitely entering an orbital trajectory, sir.

SECURITY POSITION

It measures half again our size, Captain.

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON MYSTERY VESSEL/ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The mystery vessel approaches and settles into geosynchronous orbit. It is positioned slightly above and to the side of the Enterprise -- and it is a great deal larger than the Enterprise. Suddenly, A GLOWING PULSE OF LIGHT throbs out from the mystery vessel toward the Enterprise.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE - FULL SHOT

The LIGHT GLOWS OVER EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE ON THE BRIDGE. They are startled by it, but no one is hurt. As the GLOW FADES AWAY:

PICARD

All stations, give any damage reports.

The others are looking at each other, shaking their heads. No problems.

WORF

I would guess we were being scanned, sir.

INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY

Troi is leaning against the strange, smooth and shining tunnel wall as if still feeling pain. Riker, obviously still concerned for Troi, is examining the strange tunnel walls with the tricorder while Geordi moves his "eyes" inches away from the surface to examine it closely. Data is testing his communicator and we'll HEAR him trying to get a signal back from the Enterprise.

TASHA

(to Troi)

Pain again?

RIKER  
(turning; sharply)  
Troi, you've been at it enough!

TROI  
No, I feel close to an answer of  
some kind.

DATA  
(interrupting)  
Commander, something down here is  
shielding our communicators.

TROI  
(comes to her feet)  
Yes, that's exactly the feeling  
I've been reading. As if someone  
doesn't want us to be in touch with  
our ship.

RIKER  
Come on...  
(leads the way)  
... let's get to the surface.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND MYSTERY VESSEL (OPTICAL)

The mystery vessel clearly larger than the Enterprise and  
moving near it in orbit.

INT. BRIDGE - INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

On which is featured an IMAGE OF MYSTERY VESSEL.

OPERATIONS POSITION  
There is no computer record of any  
such vessel, sir. Not even close.

CONTINUED:

SECURITY POSITION  
Still no response, sir. We've done  
everything but threaten them.

PICARD  
Sensor scans, Mister Worf.

WORF  
Our sensor signals seem to just  
bounce off.  
(bites off words;  
indicates to viewer)  
Something's happening, sir...

FULL ON MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

As a beam of something STRIKES DOWNWARD TOWARD THE PLANET SURFACE. (It doesn't look exactly like the Enterprise phasers but is the same sort of thing.)

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON MYSTERY VESSEL (OPTICAL)

As another phaser-like BEAM STRIKES DOWN AT THE PLANET.

INT. BRIDGE

Excitement.

ANGLE ON OPS POSITION

WORF

They're firing on Farpoint, sir...  
!

PICARD

(toward Security position)  
Bring phasers and photon torpedoes  
to ready!

WORF

No, hold it, sir. They're hitting  
the Bandi city, not Farpoint  
Station.

INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY

Riker and his team racing to where the rounded, smooth and shining walls of the tunnel begin to give way to a more ordinary looking rectangular corridor of mixed stone and tile walls.

ANOTHER ANGLE - INCLUDING STAIRWAY AHEAD

Riker pulling to a halt in order to examine with curiosity the blend where the unknown type tunnel walls give way to stone and tile construction similar to what we've seen in the old Bandi city. Ahead is a stone block stairway leading up to that old city. Geordi has hurried in, peering closely at the more familiar kind of wall surface.

TROI

(indicates ahead)  
Those stairs are where Tasha and I  
entered down here, sir.

GEORDI

At this point, it becomes ordinary stone and tile, sir.

(turns, puzzled)

Matching what's above. Followed by a LONG RUMBLING EXPLOSION ("PHASER HIT" type) WITH THE LONG FLASH OF IT REFLECTING DOWN THE STAIRWAY FROM THE UPPER LEVEL AHEAD. As this SOUND FADES, then we HEAR A FAINT DISTANT SCREAM which dies away too.

TASHA

My God! Was that a phaser blast?

DATA

Negative. But something similar. Again, the SAME KIND OF EXPLOSION SOUND followed by similar LIGHT FLICKERS from the stairway ahead. Riker turns to Troi:

RIKER

You, Tasha, and Geordi will beam up to the ship from here. Now!

(to Data)

Come on, I want to see exactly what's happening.

Riker starts off to the stairway, Data following.

TROI

Don't. If you should be hurt...

A stern look comes over Riker's face as he turns quickly to her:

RIKER

You have your orders, Counselor! Carry them out!

CONTINUED:

TROI

Yes sir, I'm sorry, sir.

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Riker and Data begin climbing the stairway, leaving the CAMERA CENTERED ON TROI, TASHA AND GEORDI. Troi has already reached for her communicator control.

TROI  
Enterprise, three to beam up.

After a moment, the familiar TRANSPORTER SOUND, followed by TRANSPORTER EFFECT ON THE THREE DISSOLVING INTO THE LIGHT SPARKLE. Then, they're gone.

INT. COVERED VILLAGE SQUARE (OPTICAL)

OLD CITY IN IN B.G. where FIRE RAGES in a smashed structure in that part of the old city we can see. In CLOSER FOREGROUND is an entrance to the underground passageway, this entry guarded by thick, hand-worked metal door, locked. This village square is a connecting point between the Old City and Farpoint Station. A short distance in the OFF-CAMERA DIRECTION lies Farpoint Mall.

THE METAL DOORS (OPTICAL)

We HEAR a hand phaser HUM as a GLOW FLICKERS OVER THE METAL DOORS which now spring open and a CLASHING OF METAL SOUND. Riker and Data ENTER SCENE through those door, phasers in hand.

CLOSER - RIKER AND DATA

As Riker touches his communicator control.

RIKER  
Enterprise, Riker. Come in.

INTERRUPTED BY THE CLOSER SOUND OF A PHASER-LIKE BOLT FROM THE

MYSTERY VESSEL. Also from closer, THE LIGHT OF THE BLAST REFLECTS ON THEIR FACES and they whirl to see:

ANGLE INTO OLD CITY

Where a building is being BLASTED INTO STONES AND DUST.

INT. ZORN'S OFFICE - OLD CITY

Filled with the dust and SOUNDS of a nearby BLAST. Zorn is working frantically with his communicator.

ZORN  
Enterprise, Enterprise, help us!  
Come in, please...

INT. BRIDGE - WIDE ANGLE (OPTICAL)

On MAIN VIEWER THE IMAGE OF THE mystery vessel which as we watch will FIRE ANOTHER PHASER-LIKE BOLT DOWN TOWARD THE PLANET. The bridge crew are anxiously poised on the edge of their seats, waiting for Picard's next order.

ZORN'S VOICE  
... what shall we do? Help us,  
please.

PI CARD  
(overlapping)  
Tune him down!  
(into transmitter)  
Commander Riker, go ahead. Where  
are you?

ANOTHER ANGLE - INCLUDING TURBOLIFT

As the doors SNAP OPEN TO REVEAL TROI, TASHA, AND GEORDI who hurry onto the bridge, take their regular positions (Geordi relieving Ops). Meanwhile:

RIKER'S VOICE  
With Data, on the edge of the old  
city, Captain. It's being hit hard.  
Who's doing this?

PI CARD  
And Farpoint Station? Any damage  
there?

INT. COVERED VILLAGE SQUARE - FARPOINT MALL IN B.G.

No indication that Farpoint Station has been damaged at all. Riker, standing with Data, is using his communicator.

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
Negative on damage to Farpoint,  
sir. Whoever they are, it seems  
they're carefully avoiding hitting  
the station.

PI CARD'S VOICE  
It's from an unidentified vessel  
that's entered orbit with us here.  
No ID, no answer to our signals...

During which there's another BLAST SOUND with the same kind of LIGHT FLICKERS.

ANGLE INCLUDING OLD CITY

As Riker whirls again in that direction, interrupting Picard:

RIKER  
They're hitting the Bandi city  
hard, sir. Many casualties very  
probable.

INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING PICARD

Everything as we last left it.

PICARD  
(into transmitter)  
Understand, Commander. Would you  
object to a clearly illegal  
kidnapping assignment?

RIKER'S VOICE  
No objection; anything you order,  
sir.

PICARD  
Zorn may have the answers we need.  
Get Groppler Zorn and bring him  
here!

RIKER'S VOICE  
Aye, sir!

ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

Picard looks at the IMAGE of the huge mystery vessel still in  
orbit nearby. Picard turns to Troi:

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
They're forcing a difficult  
decision on me, Counselor.

TROI  
(nods)  
But, I doubt protecting the Bandi  
would violate the Prime Directive.  
True, they are not actual allies...

PICARD  
But we are in the midst of  
diplomatic discussions with them.  
(turns to Tasha)  
(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
Lock phasers on that vessel,  
Lieutenant.

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

In b.g., Tasha touching panel controls.

TASHA  
Phasers locked on, Captain.  
Anything further INTERRUPTED BY  
OPTICAL EFFECT, the BLINDING LIGHT  
FLASH we've seen before and FADING  
TO

REVEAL "Q", wearing the Judge's costume from the earlier  
courtroom sequence. He is standing in front of Picard.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
Typical, so typical. Savage  
Lifeforms never follow even their  
own rules.

FADE OUT.

PART NINE

FADE IN:

EXT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING PICARD AND "Q"

Rather than being nervous over the arrival of "Q" (JUDGE),  
Picard has become coldly angry.

PICARD  
Get off my bridge!

ANOTHER ANGLE

"Q" stepping toward Picard, smiling sadly.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
Also interesting, that order about  
phasers.

TASHA  
(ignoring "Q"; to Picard)  
Still standing by on phasers,  
Captain.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(turning to Picard)  
Please don't let me interfere. Use  
your weapons.

PI CARD

You're the one who has a lot to learn, "Q". With no idea of who's on that vessel, my order was a routine safety precaution.

"Q" (JUDGE)

(breaking into LAUGHTER)

Really? No idea of what it represents? The meaning of that vessel is as plain as...

(then taps his nose)

... as plain as the noses on your ugly little primate faces.

CONTINUED:

LOUDER LAUGHTER.

"Q" (JUDGE)

(trying to control it)

And if you were truly civilized, Captain, wouldn't you be doing something about the casualties happening down there?

In answer, Picard touches the communications control on his uniform.

PI CARD

Captain to CMO, are you reading any of this?

INT. SICKBAY - ANGLE EMPHASIZING BEVERLY

But she's with a half dozen MEDICAL ASSISTANTS very busy preparing medical supplies, bringing portable medical equipment, etc.

BEVERLY

Medical teams already preparing to beam down, Captain.

PI CARD'S VOICE

(relieved)

Compliments on that, Doctor!

INT. BRIDGE

Picard turning back to "Q".

PI CARD  
Any questions? Starfleet people are  
trained to render aid and  
assistance whenever...

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(interrupting)  
But not trained in clear thinking.

PI CARD  
Let's consider your thoughts. You  
call us "savages" and yet you knew  
those people down there would be  
killed. You're the one whose  
conduct is uncivilized.

WORF  
Sir, they're firing on the planet  
again.

ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

Where we SEE the mystery vessel beginning to FIRE BLASTS down  
at the planet again.

PI CARD  
Forcefields full on.  
(to Worf)  
Go to thrusters! Position us  
between that vessel and the planet.

WORF  
Aye, sir, thruster power to...

Worf trails his words, perplexed. His panel is fading,  
GOING DARK.

WORF  
(continuing)  
We have no ship control, sir. It's  
gone!

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ZORN'S OFFICE - DAY - RIKER AND DATA

They are headed toward Zorn's office door when the BLUE BOLT  
HITS beside the door, flooding the scene with a FLASH OF BLUE  
LIGHT. The corridor rocks, and the ceiling comes down  
partially. Riker and Data are flung down by the explosion. A  
beat, and then Data stirs, sits up. Riker is slower, but is  
managing to haul himself upright.

DATA  
Are you undamaged?

RIKER  
Yes. You?

Data's eyes glaze slightly as he seems to go into a sort of "trance" that lasts just a few seconds. Then:

DATA  
All systems operating.

ANGLE INCLUDING ZORN'S OFFICE DOOR

It is hanging by its hinges, and debris-dust is drifting out of it. Riker and Data move quickly to and through the open door.

INT. ZORN'S OFFICE - DAY - FULL SHOT

As Riker and Data ENTER. The office has been badly damaged, especially near the door. O.S. THE SOUND OF ANOTHER BOLT EXPLODING echoes. The room shakes under the impact. There is a MUFFLED SOB near the desk.

CLOSER ANGLE - NEAR DESK

Zorn is cowering under his elegant desk, shaking and sobbing in fear.

ZORN  
Please. You can make it stop. Drive it away.

RIKER  
Drive who away, Groppler? Zorn reacts as if he knows he's said too much.

ZORN  
I don't know.

DATA  
Unlikely, sir.  
(to Zorn)  
Our records show that you supervised all Bandi contact with other worlds...

ZORN  
We haven't done anything wrong!

RIKER  
Then if we can learn nothing from  
you, perhaps we'll leave.

ZORN  
(frightened)  
No! No, don't leave, I'll try to  
explain some of...

EMPHASIZING ZORN (OPTICAL)

A kind of TRANSPORTER SOUND is heard, and then a TRANSPORTER EFFECT, somewhat different from the Starfleet variety, centers on Zorn. He begins SCREAMING as he FADES FROM VIEW.

ANGLE ON RIKER

As he keys his communicator.

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
First officer to Enterprise.

PICARD'S VOICE  
Go ahead, Riker.

RIKER  
We've lost Zorn, sir. Something  
like a transporter beam, it  
snatched him out of here.

INT. BRIDGE

"Q" still in the captain's seat, listening to:

RIKER'S VOICE  
Question, sir, could it have been  
the "Q" character you met earlier.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(Laughs)  
None of you know who it is? You're  
running out of time, Captain.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD AND TROI

She's frowning, trying to 'feel' something.

TROI  
Captain... Suddenly I'm sensing  
something else. It's satisfaction,  
enormous satisfaction.

PICARD  
From the same source as before?

TROI  
No, that was on the planet.  
(i ndi cates)  
Thi s seems to be from here.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

And the image of the mystery vessel .

CONTINUED:

"Q" (JUDGE)  
(to Troi )  
Excel l ent, Counsel or!  
(i ndi cates Picard)  
He' s such a dullard, i sn' t he!

INTERCOM VOICE  
Captain from Transporter Room.  
First officer and Mister Data now  
beaming aboard.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
Excel l ent al so!  
(to Picard)  
Perhaps with more of these l i t t l e  
mi nds hel pi ng, you' l l . . .

EMPHASIZING PICARD

As he whi r l s suddenl y on "Q".

PICARD  
(i nterrupti ng)  
That i s enough, damn i t!

"Q" (JUDGE)  
We have an agreement; have you  
forgotten. . . ?

In b.g., the turbolift doors SNAP OPEN but unnoticed by Picard and "Q" as they continue their argument. Riker and Data appear, move onto bridge as:

PICARD  
We have an agreement which you are  
at this moment breaking by taking  
over our vessel , i nterferi ng wi th  
my deci si ons!  
(steps up nose-to-nose)  
(MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)  
 You are not welcome on my bridge.  
 Now, either leave or finish us. One  
 of the two!

"Q" stands, during which we have the impression that everyone  
 is holding his breath. Then:

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 (gently)  
 Temper, temper, mon capitaine. I am  
 merely trying to assist a pitiful  
 species. Perhaps I'll leave if  
 Mister Riker provides me with some  
 amusement.

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
 (to Riker)  
 Do nothing that he asks!

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 But I ask so little. And it is so  
 necessary if you are to solve all  
 this.  
 (turns; indicates vessel  
 image in Main Viewer)  
 Beam over there with your... what  
 is it called... your "away team"?  
 (to Picard)  
 You should already know what you'll  
 find there. But perhaps it was too  
 adult a puzzle for you.

RIKER  
 Captain, with all respect, I  
 intended to suggest beaming over  
 there.

EMPHASIZING "Q" (OPTICAL)

Amused at all this. He turns from Riker to look at Picard.

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 You show promise, my good fellow.

PICARD  
 But you don't. You should have long  
 ago realized that, humanity is NOT  
 a criminal race!

"Q" (JUDGE)  
 YOU MUST STILL PROVE THAT! A  
 familiar BLINDING FLASH, and then  
 "Q" is gone.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD AND RIKER

Realizing "Q" is gone, turning to look at each other. Riker checks a reading on his panel.

RIKER  
 Of the 24 hours "Q" gave us, we  
 have less than one left, sir.

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
 (nods)  
 But I had a feeling you impressed  
 him, Number One. That's hopeful.

RIKER  
 Thank you, Captain, That's the  
 first time you've called me "Number  
 One".

PICARD  
 (small smile)  
 I believe I'll enjoy getting to  
 know you, Bill. If we live long  
 enough.

FADE OUT.

PART TEN

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND MYSTERY VESSEL (OPTICAL)

In orbit over the planet.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Riker's away team moving onto the transporter platform. With him are Data, Troi, and Tasha. They carry the usual away team equipment which they're now checking.

RIKER  
 Phasers on stun.

Everyone checks hand phasers. AD-LIB answers of "checked", "on stun," etc. Riker turns to Transporter Chief.

RIKER  
Energize.

INT. MYSTERY SHIP TUNNEL - WIDE ANGLE (OPTICAL)

TRANSPORTER SOUND, then the BEAMING EFFECT. Then, fully MATERIALIZED, Riker and the others look around to orient themselves.

DATA  
Most interesting, sir.

TASHA  
Much the same construction as the underground tunnel we saw. Which describes it perfectly. The same rounded shape and GLOWING WALL of unknown composition. The "tunnel" is deserted; NO SHIP SOUNDS of any kind.

TASHA  
(continuing)  
But no sound of power; no equipment. How does this ship run?

Riker nods a direction. Tasha takes the point as they move out. Clearly, these are exceptionally well trained people. Data is already using his tricorder to check the walls. He obviously gets nothing, shakes his head. Troi suddenly staggers, GROANS.

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
Troi, what is it?!  
(waits anxiously)  
Is it the same as you felt down there?

TROI  
No, this is... different. It feels much more powerful... full of anger... hate...

TASHA  
Toward us?

TROI  
No. It's directed down toward the old Bandi city.

DATA

Most intriguing again. The place  
that this vessel was firing upon...  
(abruptly stops; to Riker)  
Sorry, sir, I seem to be commenting  
on everything.

RIKER

(small smile)  
Good. Don't stop it, my friend.

EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

Enterprise and the mystery vessel still in orbit.

INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING PICARD

Geordi and Worf at their positions. Picard is in the command  
seat, antsy.

RIKER'S VOICE

Enterprise, Riker. This is turning  
out to be a very long tunnel or  
corridor, sir. Still no sign of  
mechanism or circuitry...

INT. NARROW MYSTERY SHIP TUNNEL - RIKER AND GROUP

Still led and followed by the security people, they're now  
moving along fairly rapidly although this tunnel is narrower  
here. Otherwise, its look hasn't changed.

RIKER

(continuing)  
... or controls, readouts, nothing  
at all like any vessel I've seen  
before.

TROI

(interrupting)  
Groppler Zorn, sir... in great  
fear...  
(motions)  
Just ahead.

INT. TUNNEL CONNECTION

Troi and the team arriving, standing puzzled at what seems to  
be only a sharp turn where we SEE a strange indentation in  
the tunnel wall there. Troi, intent on this, steps closer,  
pushes her body against the indentation.

TROI  
It's definitely Zorn, Commander.  
Here!

RIKER  
(stepping in)  
Careful...

But the tunnel wall is soft here -- it gives perceptibly, as Troi pushes harder and then PLOP... she disappears through it. (NOTE: Or the 'wall' opens to let her through and then closes behind her.)

RIKER  
Troi!!!

Then he pushes, disappears through the same wall.

INT. ZORN'S "CELL"

Riker sliding through the pliable opening in the tunnel wall, joining Troi who is standing there aghast at what is suspended in the center of this area.

ANGLE AT FORCE FIELD (OPTICAL)

Zorn is held suspended off the deck in the center of a cylindrical forcefield. The force field edges GLITTER SOFTLY to outline the shape of it.

ANGLE ON THE AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

As the other team members come through the 'wall' too, stand, reacting at the sight of Zorn.

ANGLE AT FORCE FIELD (OPTICAL)

The FORCEFIELD SPARKLES, CLICKS, causing Zorn to writhe and twitch. He SCREAMS.

ZORN  
No! Please! No more! Please, no  
more...

ANGLE ON AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

They move forward toward him, and are brought up sharply by the leading edge of the force field. Data has already started to scan with his tricorder. Riker calls to Zorn.

RIKER  
(continuing)  
Zorn. Can you hear me?  
(MORE)

RIKER (cont'd)  
Zorn manages to lift his head, and  
WE SEE his pain-filled face, his  
features twisted into a grimace of  
intense agony.

ZORN  
Make it stop the pain. Please...

TROI  
Has the alien communicated... ?  
(breaks off; then to  
Riker)  
That's it, sir! It's just one alien  
that I'm sensing here.

ZORN  
(another GROAN)  
Please! I don't understand what it  
wants.

TROI  
(studying Zorn; then)  
Not true. He does know.

CONTINUED:

Data interrupts by holding his tricorder so that Riker can see the readings he's gathered. Riker registers at seeing something unique as Data pulls out his phaser, Riker does the same and both of them concentrate on making some exact setting on their phasers.

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

As Data and Riker raise their phasers toward Zorn.

ZORN  
(in terror)  
No, no, please don't!

Data and Riker trigger their phasers and we SEE a SORT OF COLORED GLOW on the FORCEFIELD HOLDING Zorn, the GLOW SPREADING OVER THE ENTIRE FORCEFIELD. Then, suddenly the FORCEFIELD DISAPPEARS, GLOW AND ALL, and Zorn tumbles out onto the floor free of restraint.

EMPHASIZING "LIVE" PART OF CELL WALL (EFFECTS)

Where the wall seems to be "alive", undulating. Beyond it, Tasha is assisting Zorn to his feet, supporting him. Meanwhile, Troi looks around Zorn's "cell", sensing something troubling. Riker has turned on his communicator:

RIKER  
Away team to Enterprise...

A TENDRIL OF PLASMA EMERGES FROM THIS PART OF THE WALL,  
swaying and moving toward Troi.

DATA  
(interrupting; warning)  
Troi... !

But the TENDRIL is already wrapping around her. Data tries to pull the TENDRIL from Troi, succeeds only in getting a NEW TENDRIL wrapped around himself.

ANOTHER ANGLE (EFFECTS)

The floor of the area suddenly going soft, away team members sinking into it while still ANOTHER SECTION OF WALL FOLDS ITSELF OVER TASHA. (What we're seeing is this part of the mystery "vessel" becoming a living thing.)

CONTINUED:

RIKER  
Enterprise, come in. Beam us...

Interrupted as his feet are YANKED OUT FROM UNDER HIM.

DATA  
Enterprise, we need help...  
Interrupted by the NEW TENDRIL  
WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND

HIS HEAD.

INT. BRIDGE

Picard speaking anxiously toward his command panel as we HEAR Riker's MUFFLED SOUNDS OF DISTRESS.

PICARD  
Transporter chief, yank them back!  
Now!

WORF  
Captain... !

ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

Toward which Lieutenant Worf is pointing. On it the IMAGE of the mystery vessel is BEGINNING TO CHANGE IN SHAPE.

The firm, hard edges of the spaceship are giving way to something softer, very mysterious in nature.

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

In which we SEE a familiar BLINDING FLASH and "Q" appears, now wearing the uniform of a STARFLEET CAPTAIN.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
Your time is up, Captain.

PI CARD  
Get off my bridge!  
(into command panel)  
Transporter Chief, do you have  
their coordinates?

ANOTHER ANGLE (EFFECTS)

"Q" stepping to the command position.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
He can't hear you, Captain.

CONTINUED:

"Q" gestures upward, at which Picard is suddenly lifted into the air and then to the side of "Q"'s hand motion in that direction.

PI CARD  
"Q", I've people in trouble over  
there... !

As Picard hovers above, "Q" steps up and sits in Picard's command position. Bridge personnel are coming to their feet angrily, then hesitate as:

PI CARD  
(continuing)  
Everyone, at ease! That's an order!  
(to "Q")  
My people are in trouble, "Q". Help  
them; I'll do whatever you say...

As "Q" gives another hand signal downward, the Captain is gently deposited onto the deck.

WIDE PORTION OF BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

As the same strange transporter SOUND that accompanied Zorn's "kidnapping" is heard and the same STRANGE TRANSPORTER EFFECT APPEARS, this time MATERIALIZING FIVE IMAGES -- Riker, Data, Troi, Tasha, and Groppler Zorn.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING PICARD

Very surprised, looking from his away team to "Q".

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
You'll do whatever I say?

PICARD  
(hesitates; nods)  
It seems I did make that bargain.

TROI  
The agreement isn't valid, sir. It  
wasn't "Q" that saved us.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
(quickly; indicating  
viewer)  
Save yourselves! It may attack you  
now.

ANGLE INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

On which the changed IMAGE of the mystery "vessel" seems to  
be floating in closer to the Enterprise.

RIKER  
It was that which sent us back,  
Captain.

TROI  
Yes sir. It's not a vessel, sir.  
It's alive somehow...

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
She lies! Destroy it while you have  
a chance.  
(to Tasha)  
Make phasers and photon torpedoes  
ready... !

PICARD  
No! Do nothing he suggests!

ZORN  
But that thing was killing my  
people, Captain...

PICARD  
True, but why? Was there a reason?

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
It is an unknown, Captain! Isn't that enough?

PICARD  
If you had earned that uniform you're wearing, you'd know that the unknown is what brings us out here!

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
Wasted effort, considering the human intelligence.

PICARD  
Let's test that...  
(to Zorn)  
... starting with the tunnels you have under Farpoint, Groppler.

RIKER  
Identical to the ones on that space vessel lifeform, over there. Why was it punishing you, Groppler?

CONTINUED:

PICARD  
In return for pain you caused to some other creature?

ZORN  
We did nothing wrong! It was injured, we helped it...

PICARD  
(interrupting; to Zorn)  
Thank you, that was the missing part.  
(turns)  
Tasha, rig phasers to deliver an energy beam.

TASHA  
(puzzled)  
Aye, sir.

Tasha steps to her panel, makes settings on controls there.

RIKER

Yes, Captain, I understand now. It has to be conceivable that somewhere in the galaxy there could exist creatures able to convert energy into matter...

PICARD

(nodding)

And into specific patterns of matter. Much as our transporters do.

TASHA

(indicating)

On the viewer, Captain!

ANGLE EMPHASIZING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

Where the vessel/creature IMAGE is SOFTENING FURTHER INTO AN AMORPHOUS, COLORFUL AND LOVELY SHAPE. Picard turns to the Groppler, demanding:

PICARD

Zorn, you captured something like that, didn't you?

On main viewer, the IMAGE NOW SHOWS LOVELY FEATHERY TENDRILS, and it is BEGINNING TO MOVE DOWN TOWARD THE PLANET. Zorn reacts to this, shows panic.

CONTINUED:

ZORN

Warn my people, please! Leave Farpoint Station immediately!

"Q" (STARFLEET)

He's lied to you, Captain. Shouldn't you let his people die?

PICARD

(nods to Ops)

Transmit the message. "Leave Farpoint immediately".

TROI

Then it was a pair of creatures I was sensing. One down there in grief and pain, the other up here, filled with anger...

DATA  
 (nodding)  
 And firing not on the new space  
 station, but on the old Bandi city.

PI CARD  
 (to "Q")  
 Attacking those who captured  
 it's...  
 (to Troi)  
 ... it's mate?

TASHA  
 Energy beam ready, sir.

PI CARD  
 (to Tasha)  
 Lock it in on Farpoint Station.

"Q" stands in an annoyed manner, indicates the captain's  
 position to Picard.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
 I see now it was too simple a  
 puzzle. But generosity has always  
 been my weakness.

As "Q" moves aside, Picard takes his position, turning to  
 Tasha.

PI CARD  
 Let it have whatever it can absorb.  
 Energize!

EXT SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit, as a THICK, PALE BLUE ENERGY BEAM AIMS DOWNWARD.

EXT. FARPOINT STATION (OPTICAL)

HIGH DOWNWARD SHOT SHOWING THE ENERGY BEAM terminating and  
 being absorbed into Farpoint Station.

INT. BRIDGE - INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

Picard and others watching the energy beam terminating at  
 Farpoint Station.

TASHA  
 Now getting feedback on the beam,  
 sir.

PICARD  
 Discontinue it.  
 (to Zorn)  
 Groppler Zorn, there'll soon be no  
 Farpoint Station if I'm right about  
 this.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
 A lucky guess!

ZORN  
 I know we deserve this loss, but  
 please believe me, we meant not to  
 harm the creature, but to use it.

TROI  
 Sir, a feeling of great joy. And  
 gratitude.

EXT. FARPOINT STATION (OPTICAL)

The city/station miniature -- the Farpoint Station part of it  
 GROWING SOFT, SHIMMERING, SLOWLY BECOMES A CREATURE OF  
 GOSSAMER, FEATHERY LIGHTNESS -- now gracefully rising up from  
 its captivity.

ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Where what was once the "mystery vessel" but now an  
 increasingly beautiful COLORFUL, FEATHERY TENDRIL SHAPE is  
 descending closer and closer to what was once the Farpoint  
 Station part of city/station (miniature).

CONTINUED:

THE TWO CREATURES (OPTICAL)  
 The smaller one rising up toward  
 its mate. They touch

-- delicate matter/energy tendrils twining -- and then  
 together they move upwards out of sight.

EXT SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the two creatures rise up past it.

INT. BRIDGE - INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

On which the two creatures are rising upward OUT OF IMAGE  
 FRAME.

TROI  
Great joy and gratitude... from  
both of them.

ANGLE EMPHASIZING "Q" (OPTICAL)

As Picard turns on him.

PICARD  
And why? Because it furnishes  
entertainment to you! You use other  
lifeforms for recreation.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
If so, you've not provided the  
best...

PICARD  
Get off my ship, you smug  
hypocrite.

"Q" (STARFLEET)  
Why not? We can also meet another  
time, another place.

PICARD  
That's doesn't frighten us at all!  
You accuse us of "grievous  
savagery"? No, the one proven  
guilty of that crime is you!

CONTINUED:

ANOTHER BLINDING FLASH AND "Q" DISAPPEARS. It takes a moment  
to realize that he is gone. Then:

RIKER  
I trust this isn't the usual way  
our missions will go, sir.

Picard screws up his face in mock consideration of this, then  
nods.

PICARD  
On no, Number One, I'm sure they'll  
be much more interesting.

FADE OUT.

THE END