

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Allegiance"
#40273-166

Written by
Richard Manning & Hans Beimler

Directed by
Rick Kolbe

THE WRITING CREDITS MAY NOT BE FINAL AND SHOULD NOT BE USED
FOR PUBLICITY OR ADVERTISING PURPOSES WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING
WITH THE TELEVISION LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

Copyright 1990 Paramount Pictures Corporation. All Rights
Reserved. This script is not for publication or
reproduction. No one is authorized to dispose of same. If
lost or destroyed, please notify the Script Department.

FINAL DRAFT

JANUARY 15, 1990

STAR TREK: "Allegiance" - 1/15/90 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Allegiance"

CAST

PICARD	FALSE PICARD
RIKER	HARO
DATA	THOLL
BEVERLY	ESOQQ
TROI	ALIEN #1
GEORDI	ALIEN #2
WORF	
WESLEY	

Non-Speaking
SUPERNUMERARIES

STAR TREK: "Allegiance" 1/15/90 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Allegiance"

SETS

INTERIORS

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE
READY ROOM
SICKBAY
TEN FORWARD
CORRIDOR
CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS
RIKER'S QUARTERS
DATA'S QUARTERS

HOLDING BAY

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Allegiance"
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (STOCK OPTICAL)

in orbit around a blue-green planet.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 43714.1.
We have finally succeeded in
eradicating the plague on Cor
Caroli Five, and are now
preparing to leave orbit and
proceed to our next mission --

2 OMITTED

3 INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

PICARD is relaxing on a recliner-type chair, reading
an antique leather-bound book. An empty brandy snifter
is nearby. CLASSICAL MUSIC plays softly.

PICARD (V.O.)

-- a rendezvous with the USS
Hood to assist their terraforming
efforts on Browder Four.

After a moment, Picard lays the book over his chest and
closes his eyes.

Almost immediately, a body-length metallic slab
MATERIALIZES directly over the sleeping Picard. The
slab emits a BEAM which scans the captain from head to
toe. Once the scan is complete, the beam stops and
Picard DEMATERIALIZES in a new, ALIEN TRANSPORTER
EFFECT.

4 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER, WORF, DATA, and supernumeraries are at their
posts. Data reacts to something on his console.

4 CONTINUED:

DATA

Commander, ship's sensors detect an abnormal energy reading in the captain's quarters.

RIKER

Type?

DATA

Undetermined.

RIKER

(to com)

Riker to Captain Picard.

No answer; after a beat, Riker turns to Worf who is already on the move toward the turbolift.

WORF

Security team to captain's quarters --

5 INT. HOLDING BAY

CLOSE on Picard as he slowly awakens and looks around -- and is stunned to see he's no longer on the Enterprise. Instead, he's in a large square, empty, windowless, rather featureless room. One door -- which is solidly shut.

Each corner of the room contains a "bunk" (a small padded area slightly raised from floor level); in the center of the room is a "feeder" (a simple dispenser filled with what looks like hockey pucks). Picard's on one "bunk," another is vacant. The remaining two are occupied by unconscious -- or possibly dead -- humanoids: MITENA HARO (a "Bolian" -- young, female Starfleet cadet) and KOVA THOLL (a "Mizarian" -- middle-aged male civilian).

6 ON PICARD

as he gets to his feet, taps his insignia:

PICARD

Picard to Enterprise.

No response; not even the beep to indicate the communicator's working. Picard suspects it's futile, but tries again;

6 CONTINUED:

PICARD (cont'd)
Anyone receiving this
transmission, please respond.

Nothing. Picard scowls.

7 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Worf and security team are at the captain's door. Worf
touches the CHIME. No response.

WORF
Security override. Priority one.

but before he can finish the door OPENS to reveal
Picard -- actually a perfect replica of Picard --
staring back at Worf and the security team.

FALSE PICARD
Is something the matter,
Lieutenant?

On Worf's relieved and embarrassed expression:

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 INT. HOLDING BAY

Picard crosses to the motionless Haro, kneels at her side, touches her carotid artery to check for pulse. Haro stirs, awakens -- realizes someone's close, and panics, reflexively swinging an arm at the stranger. Picard's ready for it, blocks the blow by seizing Haro's wrist, whispers to calm her:

PICARD

It's all right. I'm not going to hurt you.

HARO

Who -- ?

Haro slowly relaxes. Picard lets her go; she sits up, notices Picard's rank.

HARO (cont'd)

Captain...

PICARD

(nods)

Jean-Luc Picard of the Enterprise.

HARO

Captain Picard! We've studied your missions at the Academy...

Haro realizes she's being less than professional, straightens up:

HARO (cont'd)

Mitena Haro, first year cadet, Starfleet Academy.

Picard nods acknowledgement, but before he can respond:

THOLL (O.S.)

Perhaps you can explain what this is all about.

9 NEW ANGLE

Tholl is sitting up, regarding Picard with a mixture of suspicion and disdain.

9 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Unfortunately, I can't, Mister...

THOLL

Tholl. Kova Tholl, of Mizar Two.

PICARD

Well, Mister Tholl, all I know is that I've been brought here against my will.

(gestures)

Wherever "here" is...

HARO

The same thing happened to me, sir. I was alone, studying... and I fainted. When I came to...

(gestures)

That was about three days ago.

PICARD

(to Tholl)

And you, sir?

THOLL

I've been here twelve days, possibly more. I had been meditating privately -- and for no reason whatever, I lost consciousness.

PICARD

What can you tell me about our captors?

THOLL

Nothing. They've never shown themselves.

10 ON PICARD

as he moves around, inspecting the walls. Haro follows Picard, keeping a respectful distance.

PICARD

Four sleeping areas... that implies we'll be joined by another captive...

Picard stops at the feeder, pulls out a "hockey puck" -- it's a dark, translucent disk of solid but malleable material, sort of a gigantic gumdrop. Not very appealing. Picard pulls off a small hunk, examines it.

PICARD

Food?

THOLL

(making a face)

It's edible... but I wouldn't call it food.

11 NEW ANGLE

as Picard moves to the door, examines it. Next to the door is a small panel flush with the wall -- a key panel? It appears to be -- it's divided into a grid of sub-panels, each with an alien symbol upon it. Picard presses one; it lights up briefly and makes a short, annoying BEEP SOUND. He tries another -- same result.

THOLL

I wouldn't touch that.

PICARD

Why not?

11 CONTINUED:

THOLL

If it's the door lock, the combination is too complex to hit at random -- I tried it, and was punished.

PICARD

Punished -- how?

THOLL

Severe pain... some sort of energy beam.

(shudders at the memory)

I won't get near that panel again...

Picard leaves the panel alone for the moment, inspects the door itself. Haro steps up -- and a little of her insecurity and fear show through:

11 CONTINUED: (2)

HARO

The Enterprise will find us, won't it, sir? As soon as they discover you're missing, they'll start to search... Won't they?

Picard realizes Haro needs a dose of morale-building:

PICARD

Of course they will. They'll do everything they can. In the meantime, we keep our heads...
(wryly indicating the room)
... and enjoy the hospitality.

Haro takes courage from Picard's words, manages a smile.

HARO

Yes, sir.

12
thru OMITTED
14

15 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Riker, Data, WESLEY, Worf, supernumeraries. False Picard ENTERS from the turbolift.

WORF

Sir, the Hood has arrived at the rendezvous point. They are expecting us in thirty-six hours.

FALSE PICARD

Thank you, Lieutenant.
(a beat)
Mister Data. The nearest pulsar is in the Lonka cluster, is it not?

DATA

Correct, sir.

Everyone is a bit surprised: why has the captain brought this up? Unfortunately for them, he's keeping his reasons to himself.

15 CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

And what do we know about that
pulsar?

15 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

A great deal, sir. It is a rotating neutron star of approximately four point three five six solar masses.

False Picard considers this for a moment, then:

FALSE PICARD

Mister Crusher -- how long would it take us to get there?

WESLEY

At warp seven... thirty-four minutes.

False Picard takes another moment to consider this.

FALSE PICARD

Mister Crusher -- make it so.

WESLEY

Sir?

Wesley is a bit surprised.

FALSE PICARD

Set course for the Lonka pulsar. Warp two.

WESLEY

Aye, sir.

Wesley hesitates before adding:

WESLEY (cont'd)

Sir, at warp two -- we'll arrive at the pulsar in thirty-one hours...

FALSE PICARD

Thank you, Ensign. Engage.

The stars on the viewscreen STREAK into warp. Riker is slightly puzzled; he half-expects the captain to elaborate or explain the change in plans. After a beat, it's clear no explanation is forthcoming.

RIKER

Captain, are we delaying our rendezvous with the Hood?

15 CONTINUED: (3)

FALSE PICARD

We may have to.

15 CONTINUED: (4)

That's all False Picard offers. Riker takes it from there:

RIKER

Mister Worf, contact the Hood and inform them of our delay.

WORF

Aye, Commander.

FALSE PICARD

Belay that.

(firm, not angry)

There'll be no further communications off this ship without my prior authorization.

False Picard turns to Riker.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

Commander -- I'd like a word with you.

False Picard gets up and heads for the Ready Room. Riker is right behind.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

(to Data)

Mister Data -- you have the bridge.

DATA

Aye, sir.

False Picard and Riker EXIT.

15A ON WESLEY

glancing over towards Data.

WESLEY

Data -- any guesses as to what this is all about?

DATA

I see no point in randomly selecting alternative motivations for the captain's actions considering that not enough information has been offered to make any one "guess" superior to another.

15A CONTINUED:

WESLEY

In other words, you don't know
either.

Wesley returns his attention to his console.

15B INT. READY ROOM (OPTICAL)

False Picard is leaning on his desk; Riker stands
before him.

FALSE PICARD

Number One... You know I like to
keep you well informed as to the
nature of our missions.

RIKER

Yes, sir.

FALSE PICARD

And if I don't inform you --
there's a reason.

Riker nods.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

I don't like keeping you in the
dark, Commander... but for the
next few days I won't be able to
be as communicative as usual.
It may make things difficult for
you...

RIKER

Don't worry about me, sir. I can
handle it.

FALSE PICARD

And the crew?

RIKER

You can count on us all, sir.

False Picard eyes Riker carefully. Riker has complete
faith in the captain.

FALSE PICARD

I appreciate that, Number One.

CUT TO:

16 OMITTED

17 INT. HOLDING BAY

Picard, Haro, Tholl. Picard is again examining the keypad next to the door. He thinks it over, starts pushing just one of the panels in a repeating sequence of numbers -- 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13. Haro looks on with interest, Tholl with ill-concealed skepticism.

THOLL

Picard -- what are you doing?

PICARD

Attempting to show our captors that we possess intelligence.

THOLL

You don't think they know that already? They can hear us talking...

PICARD

They may not realize we are communicating through language.

HARO

Captain Picard's letting them know that we comprehend mathematics... by tapping out the first six prime numbers.

Tholl gives Haro a look -- "you think I'm stupid?"

THOLL

I know what he's doing. I'm trying to understand why.

PICARD

To get their attention.

THOLL

Oh, you may get their attention, all right... and they'll give you a dose of agony for using the keypad.

PICARD

I'll take the chance. It's imperative that we communicate with our abductors... find out what they want.

17 CONTINUED:

THOLL

Obviously, they want us.

PICARD

Obviously. But why? What made our captors choose us? What makes us special?

Picard looks from Tholl to Haro. Haro's at a loss.
Her -- "special?"

HARO

I couldn't say, Captain. I'm certainly not special -- I'm just one cadet.

PICARD

(points out)

You're a Bolian. There are very few Bolians in Starfleet.

HARO

I am one of three in the Academy. The other two have academic records much better than mine...

PICARD

What's your best area of study?

HARO

Impulse propulsion systems. I'm really good with field coils...

PICARD

Good enough to be useful to our abductors?

HARO

(it's a new thought)

I don't know. Maybe.

(a beat)

But if they needed an engineer, sir, why didn't they take a "real" one? Why pick a Starfleet cadet?

PICARD

That, I can't answer.

(a beat)

The Bolians are maintaining an uneasy truce with the Moropa, are they not?

17 CONTINUED: (2)

HARO

That's right.

(looks around)

But this doesn't look like Moropa technology... and, even assuming the Moropa wanted me, why would they want either of you?

18 NEW ANGLE

as Picard turns to Tholl, who anticipates his question.

THOLL

I've never even heard of the Moropa. My race has no enemies.

PICARD

(surprised)

None? In the last three hundred years of Mizarian history, your planet has been conquered six times!

THOLL

And we've survived by not resisting. Mizarians value peace above confrontation.

PICARD

Then you have no idea who might have done this.

THOLL

No. I don't know of anyone who bears malice toward my race.

PICARD

Or against you personally?

THOLL

You can't mean to suggest that someone with a personal grudge against me has gone to all this trouble...

PICARD

I'm not suggesting anything. I'm merely trying to come up with an explanation for your abduction.

18 CONTINUED:

THOLL

I'm sorry, Picard -- I can't give you one. I am neither important enough to hold for ransom nor radical enough to be dangerous. I'm a simple public servant... assistant to the regent of Pozaron, our third-largest city.

PICARD

Nonetheless, Mister Tholl --

Picard stops as an odd SOUND catches everyone's attention. They turn to see:

19 ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE EMPTY BUNK (OPTICAL)

as a FORM begins to APPEAR (ALIEN TRANSPORTER EFFECT).

PICARD

It would seem a new arrival is imminent...

The FORM COALESCES -- revealing ESOQQ (of the Chalnoth race) -- a large, hairy, nasty-looking brute of an alien. Bad-tempered... and if his sharp teeth are any indication, a meat-eater.

20 NEW ANGLE

as Esoqq looks around with surprise -- plainly he has no idea what's happening to him. He sees the three others in the room -- and his face contorts with rage. He draws a weapon -- a mean-looking dagger or blade of some sort.

PICARD

Stop! We mean you no harm...

Picard spreads his hands in a gesture of peace. Esoqq warily takes a step back -- and assumes an attack posture. Picard motions for Tholl and Haro to stand absolutely still. On the tense standoff, we --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

21 INT. HOLDING BAY

Esoqq holds the knife threateningly. Tholl and Haro remain motionless as Picard tries to calm Esoqq:

PICARD

We are prisoners, like yourself!
We are not the enemy!

The command in Picard's voice is compelling. Gradually, Esoqq lowers the knife, eyes Picard darkly.

ESOQQ

Who has done this?

PICARD

We don't know. We were brought here the same way you were. Our captors refuse to show themselves.

Esoqq, unsure whether to believe Picard or not, looks as if he may attack at any second.

ESOQQ

I don't trust you...

PICARD

You must trust us. We wish only to return to our worlds. Were you abducted from Chalna?

ESOQQ

(surprised)
You know my planet?

21 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Yes. I visited there twelve
years ago.

A long beat as it hangs in the balance. Then Esoqq
makes up his mind, sheathes his knife. Haro closes
her eyes, relieved. Picard merely nods acceptance.

22 INT. DATA'S QUARTERS

The poker game is on; Riker, Geordi, Worf, Troi, and
Data are seated at the table, enjoying the game as well
as the drinks and snacks. Troi has the largest pile of
chips. Riker tosses chips into the pot.

RIKER

Your five... and twenty more.

GEORDI

Ouch.

TROI

If it's too rich, fold.

GEORDI

I'm thinking, I'm thinking...

WORF

Think less, play more.

Geordi looks at his cards again. Riker, looking at
Geordi, makes a CLUCKING sound -- "chicken!"

RIKER

I say he folds.

DATA

I believe you are incorrect,
Commander.

22 CONTINUED:

DATA (Cont'd)

In situations where more than two players have asked for three cards and the minimum raise was ten, Geordi has stayed in the game seventy-three percent of the time.

RIKER

I still say he folds.

They all look at Geordi: "Well?" Geordi puts in his chips.

GEORDI

I don't want to hurt my average.

As everyone CHUCKLES, the CHIME SOUNDS.

DATA

Enter.

The doors OPEN and the False Picard ENTERS. The CHUCKLES die down -- everyone's surprised to see the captain.

FALSE PICARD

Counselor, gentlemen. Forgive the intrusion... I was just passing by.

DATA

You are always welcome, Captain.

FALSE PICARD

Don't let me interrupt... please continue.

The mood of the table has shifted somewhat with the captain's presence. The play continues but the frivolity and banter are muted.

RIKER

Bet is twenty-five to you, Lieutenant.

Worf scowls at his cards, locks eyes with Riker.

WORF

You are bluffing.

Riker's expression is unreadable. Worf gives in:

22 CONTINUED: (2)

WORF (cont'd)

So was I.

Worf folds. Riker turns to Troi, but before he can speak:

FALSE PICARD

I was wondering, Mister La Forge... what's our engine efficiency status?

GEORDI

Operating at ninety-three percent, sir.

False Picard considers this information, then:

FALSE PICARD

That's good, but I'd like to increase that efficiency to ninety-five percent.

22 CONTINUED: (3)

GEORDI

I'll get on it right away, sir.

FALSE PICARD

It wasn't an order, Mister La Forge. You can get to it later.

An awkward moment -- Geordi's not quite sure if the captain is kidding.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

I don't wish to disrupt your recreation.

Geordi decides the captain is just being considerate.

GEORDI

No problem, sir.
(regarding the game)
Lady Luck left me long ago.

Geordi tosses in his hand, EXITS.

TROI

Would you care to join us, sir?
We have an opening.

FALSE PICARD

I'd rather just observe, if you don't mind.

RIKER

Of course not.
(to Troi)
Your bet, Counselor.

All eyes go to Troi, who matches the bet. Data does also.

RIKER

Pair of threes.

22 CONTINUED: (4)

TROI
Flush. Queen high.

DATA
That beats my three fours.

As Troi takes the pile of chips:

FALSE PICARD
Well played, Counselor.
(a beat)
May I have a word with you?

TROI
Certainly, sir.

As Worf shuffles and deals, Troi gets up and follows
False Picard.

FALSE PICARD
Forgive me, gentlemen. I'll
return your player in a moment.

RIKER
(in fun)
Take your time, sir... she's won
almost every hand.

False Picard smiles and EXITS with Troi.

23 OMITTED

23A INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DATA'S QUARTERS

False Picard and Troi stand outside Data's quarters.

23A CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

I wanted to ask you about the crew... how are they reacting to our sudden change in course?

TROI

I've sensed no unusual reaction, Captain.

Troi is curious about the captain's question; there hardly seems a reason to be concerned.

TROI (cont'd)

After all -- such a change is hardly out of the ordinary.

FALSE PICARD

Aren't they curious or concerned as to why?

TROI

Curious, yes -- concerned, no. They trust you.

FALSE PICARD

And how far do you think that trust goes?

That's an odd question from Picard. Troi is taken aback.

TROI

Sir?

False Picard realizes he's pushing it. He backs off:

23A CONTINUED: (2)

FALSE PICARD

I know... the crew has always had
full confidence in me.

(a beat)

But if that were to change...

TROI

I'd inform you, sir... of course.

False Picard nods, then prepares to exit.

FALSE PICARD

Thank you, Counselor.

The captain EXITS. We hold on Counselor Troi, left to
ponder her thoughts.

CUT TO:

24 INT. HOLDING BAY

Picard, Haro, Tholl, Esoqq.

ESOQQ

My given name is Esoqq.

PICARD

Has it a meaning?

ESOQQ

Yes... it means "fighter."

THOLL

(with disdain)

I'll bet half the names in the
Chalnoth language mean "fighter."

24 CONTINUED:

Esoqq looks disparagingly at Tholl.

ESOQQ
Mizarians. Your names all mean
"surrender."

THOLL
(taking umbrage)
We are a peaceful race, a race
of thinkers --

ESOQQ
A race of cowards.
(looks to Haro)
And you? I don't know your
people.

Haro doesn't know how to deal with Esoqq, looks nervously to Picard for guidance. Picard nods to her -- go ahead and answer.

HARO
I am Mitena Haro, of Bolarus Nine.
(then adds)
I'm a Bolian.

THOLL
(dry)
Yes, that would follow.

ESOQQ
(re Haro)
Who would want to imprison a
child?

HARO
I'm not a "child" --

PICARD
(intervenes)
Esoqq -- I've been trying to
determine if we have a common
enemy... someone who'd have reason
to confine us here.

Esoqq gives it thought.

24 CONTINUED: (2)

ESOQQ

There are Chalnoth who would kill me if they could... but kidnap? There is no reason.

PICARD

You have many enemies?

ESOQQ

None of consequence. I've slain all the ones who mattered.

Haro can't help a GASP. Esoqq hears it.

ESOQQ (cont'd)

That shocks you, Bolian?

HARO

A little...

Esoqq looks to Tholl -- "and you?"

THOLL

I'm not surprised... I've heard about your race. You're uncivilized -- you have no laws, no system of government --

ESOQQ

The Chalnoth have no use for laws or governments! We are strong -- we obey no one.

THOLL

You live in anarchy, murdering one another -- that mentality may get us all killed.

ESOQQ

(dangerous)

And you may be the first...

Esoqq's heating up again. Picard steps in:

PICARD

Both of you -- this is getting us nowhere.

24 CONTINUED: (3)

THOLL

Neither is asking us useless questions, Picard.

(a thought)

But if you must pursue the topic, answer this: who are your enemies? The Federation's in conflict with half the galaxy.

Haro jumps to the Federation's defense:

HARO

That's not true --

Picard signals Haro to calm down and let Tholl speak.

THOLL

Isn't it? How long have you and the Romulans been adversaries?

PICARD

(unruffled)

Quite a while, Mister Tholl. And I'm perfectly willing to entertain the hypothesis that our captors are Romulans.

(a beat)

But what would Romulans want with you?

THOLL

My brainpower, perhaps. It's well known that my species possesses superior intelligence... and I am considered among the smartest of my people.

HARO

(sotto; with disgust)

And the least modest.

24A OMITTED

25 ANGLE ON ESOQQ

stepping up to one of the food dispensers and glaring at it.

ESOQQ
What is this?

PICARD
Food.

Esoqq pulls a "hockey puck" from the dispenser.

ESOQQ
The only food?

PICARD
It would seem so.

Esoqq tastes it -- spits it out, and whirls angrily upon Picard.

ESOQQ
Poison!

THOLL
(with a dread
foreboding)
Then there's nothing here for
you to eat?

ESOQQ
(looking at Tholl)
You.

25 CONTINUED:

THOLL

(shrinking back)

Don't even think that! Picard
-- you won't let him...

PICARD

Esoqq -- how long can you go
without food?

ESOQQ

Three days. Perhaps four.

PICARD

No longer?

ESOQQ

(with determination)

No longer.

Haro and Tholl are seriously worried. Picard is grim.
Now the clock's ticking...

26 INT. SICKBAY

False Picard is concluding the physical examination
being conducted by Beverly.

BEVERLY

All tests indicate the same result
-- you're in great shape.

FALSE PICARD

I've never felt better.

BEVERLY

I see.

(a beat)

Then why did you come in? Your
annual physical wasn't due for
another month.

26 CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

You usually have to remind me,
then badger me, and finally order
me to report. For once, I thought
I'd save you the trouble.

Beverly doesn't quite buy it; her logical conclusion is
that there is something wrong that Picard isn't telling
her. With genuine concern and openness, Beverly looks
False Picard in the eye:

BEVERLY

Jean-Luc -- be honest with your
doctor. Were there any symptoms
or warning signs you haven't told
me about?

FALSE PICARD

(equally open)

As far as I know, I'm in perfect
health.

Beverly accepts that, smiles.

BEVERLY

Well, then... return to your post.

False Picard smiles back at Beverly's jest, prepares to
exit. Casually:

FALSE PICARD

Will you dine with me tonight?

Beverly takes this as no big deal -- just friends
dining together.

BEVERLY

In Ten-Forward?

FALSE PICARD

How about my quarters? More
intimate.

This puts a different complexion on things.

26 CONTINUED: (2)

BEVERLY

You're full of surprises today,
Jean-Luc.

False Picard heads for the door.

FALSE PICARD

I take that to be a yes.

He EXITS. Hold on Beverly's expression -- the captain
is definitely a complicated man.

CUT TO:

27 INT. HOLDING BAY

Picard, Haro, and Esoqq are examining the door and the
inert locking panel next to it. Tholl looks on from
his "bunk."

THOLL

Picard -- is it wise to attempt
an escape?

PICARD

It's imperative.

THOLL

Why? So far, our captors haven't
mistreated us.

HARO

We've been kidnapped, locked in
a room -- you don't think that's
mistreatment?

THOLL

They haven't hurt us, have they?
I think we should just be patient
until we find out what they want.

PICARD

We can no longer afford to be
patient. If we don't act soon,
Esoqq will starve...

"... or eat us" is the unspoken alternative.

27 CONTINUED:

THOLL

If we antagonize them, they may decide we're more trouble than we're worth... kill us, and go capture another four.

PICARD

I agree we're taking a risk. But I see no alternative.

THOLL

Well, I refuse to help.

PICARD

As you wish, Mister Tholl.
(eyeing the wall)
We must open this panel.

ESOQQ

(inspects it)
Not very sturdy...

Esoqq looks to Picard, who nods.

PICARD

Haro -- stand back.

Esoqq hauls off and SMASHES the panel with one blow.

28 ON THE PANEL

Behind the smashed panel is a mass of circuitry and wave guides. Haro inspects it.

HARO

The design is simple... crossciruiting the door mechanism should be easy.

Haro looks to Picard for instructions. Picard reflexively replies:

PICARD

Make it so.

HARO

Yes, sir.

29 ON HARO (OPTICAL)

making progress.

HARO

I think I've got it...

The DOOR HUMS to life and very slowly opens about one inch. Then, quickly and suddenly, it closes -- and glowing BEAMS spring from a spot above the door and strike Picard, Haro, and Esoqq.

Whatever the BEAMS are, they're intensely painful. Picard, Haro, and Esoqq drop to the ground.

30 NEW ANGLE

Tholl, clear of the beams and unhurt, gets to his feet, concerned but helpless.

THOLL

I warned you...

On the dazed Picard, Haro, and Esoqq --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

31 INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

False Picard, dressed in formal evening attire, sits across a table from Beverly -- looking lovelier than ever in her evening dress. Soft MUSIC and candlelight set the atmosphere. The captain and Beverly have finished their meal and are enjoying the last few sips of a dessert champagne. Beverly smiles.

BEVERLY

Out with it, Jean-Luc.

FALSE PICARD

Out with what?

BEVERLY

Whatever's been on your mind all evening long.

FALSE PICARD

Has it been that apparent?

Beverly nods. False Picard smiles.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

You know me well, don't you?

BEVERLY

After all this time, I ought to.

False Picard gazes at the candles for a beat, then turns to Beverly:

FALSE PICARD

I have been preoccupied. I've been thinking about us... and the choices I've made.

BEVERLY

We've both made choices...

FALSE PICARD

And I've been wondering if they've been the right ones.

(a beat)

Sometimes I feel we've allowed our positions to isolate us...

31 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

(nods understanding)

Our positions necessitate a degree
of professional detachment...

FALSE PICARD

But there's a danger in becoming
too detached... in never allowing
ourselves to get closer.

BEVERLY

(direct)

Is that what you want, Jean-Luc?
To get closer?

FALSE PICARD

You're a very attractive woman.

BEVERLY

And you're a very attractive man.
But we both know it's not as
simple as that.

FALSE PICARD

Would it be simpler if I weren't
your commanding officer?

BEVERLY

Simpler, perhaps, but... that's not
the only issue.

(beat)

Right now, I guess, I'm comfortable
with our relationship the way it is.

False Picard nods, understanding her position.

FALSE PICARD

Then I'll respect that.

Beverly smiles -- "you're a good friend." False Picard
smiles back.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

Would you care to dance?

Beverly holds out her hand.

BEVERLY

All right.

32 NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

as False Picard leads Beverly to the middle of the room. He takes Beverly in his arms and they begin a slow dance. After a beat:

FALSE PICARD

I don't know if I've ever told
you... but I'm glad you're back
on the Enterprise. I missed
our... friendship.

BEVERLY

So did I...

33 CLOSER (OPTICAL)

as the captain holds her near... His arm curls around hers... They get closer... cheek-to-cheek. As they dance, the mood changes -- the sexual tension becomes undeniable. False Picard's arm tightens around her waist...

33 CONTINUED:

They continue to dance... the captain and Beverly look at one another -- their lips almost touching... and then False Picard kisses her. Immediately, Beverly pulls away.

BEVERLY

Jean-Luc, if I didn't know you better... I'd think you were playing games with me.

FALSE PICARD

Are you sorry you came here tonight?

BEVERLY

I didn't say that.

FALSE PICARD

Good. Because I'm delighted you did. But perhaps we should call it a night.

And with that, the captain leads Beverly to the door; it OPENS.

Beverly is momentarily bewildered -- she didn't expect to be ushered out.

FALSE PICARD

Good night.

She EXITS and the door CLOSES.

34 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Beverly stands in the corridor, confused. For a moment she hesitates, considers ringing the bell... then changes her mind, EXITS down the corridor.

35 INT. HOLDING BAY

Picard, Haro, and Esoqq are back on their feet. Esoqq glares accusingly at Tholl, who's watching from several feet away.

THOLL

I warned you not to provoke our captors. The next beams might be lethal.

Esoqq's kept staring at Tholl throughout.

ESOQQ

Not to you. You moved far from the door...

THOLL

Of course I did! Being stunned once was enough.

ESOQQ

You claim you were hit by the stun beam... before the rest of us arrived. You could be lying. Maybe our enemy is watching us... from inside.

THOLL

(indignant)

You accuse me of collaborating with our abductors?

ESOQQ

Collaboration is what your species does best!

35 CONTINUED:

HARO
(dawning suspicion)
You did try to talk us out of
attempting to escape...

ESOQQ
For all we know, you may be our
captor.

THOLL
Impossible. I'm a Mizarian. My
people are not aggressive --

ESOQQ
How can we be sure you're a
Mizarian? What if you're an
impostor?

36 ANGLE ON ESOQQ

Getting steadily angrier, Esoqq advances toward Tholl.
Even Haro is looking at Tholl with new eyes. Tholl's
getting desperate:

THOLL
This is nonsense! What if you're
an impostor?
(to Picard and Haro)
Esoqq was the last one to
appear... and he is the only one
with a weapon...

ESOQQ
Which I may still use...

PICARD
Tholl -- our captors have
transporters and stun beams. I
hardly think they'd try to keep
us at bay with a knife.

Tholl looks about for a new scapegoat:

THOLL
(re Haro)
Then maybe she's an impostor.
She could have triggered the stun
beams deliberately.

HARO
I was hit, too...

36 CONTINUED:

THOLL

To forestall suspicion! You were
very quick to volunteer...

PICARD

Tholl -- I asked her to open
the door.

36 CONTINUED: (2)

THOLL

You mean ordered her. You've been giving orders from the moment you got here... trying to make everyone do what you want.

37 ON PICARD

frowning at Tholl's wild accusations.

PICARD

What I want is for all of us to escape.

ESOQQ

Why should we believe you?

HARO

Captain Picard's put his life at stake for others many times... the primitive culture on Mintaka Three, the Wogneer creatures in the Ordek Nebula...

Haro looks to Picard to provide another example.

PICARD

Cor Caroli Five...

HARO

Right -- helping to cure the Phyrox Plague.

ESOQQ

And how do we know this is the heroic Captain Picard? We have no proof of his identity...

Haro, despite herself, takes a second look at Picard: is it possible? Might he be a double?

THOLL

You've wasted our time with failed attempts to communicate with them or escape. Is that your task -- to keep us busy so we're off-guard?

37 CONTINUED:

ESOQQ

What have you to say, Picard?

Tholl, Esoqq, and even Haro are all staring at Picard, waiting for an answer. As Picard looks from one accusing face to another --

CUT TO:

38

thru OMITTED

39

39A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (STOCK OPTICAL)

as it slows from warp to impulse.

RIKER (V.O.)

First officer's log, supplemental.
Although we're still two hundred million kilometers from the Lonka pulsar, the Captain has ordered us to slow to one-half impulse.

40 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Medium busy. Geordi and Worf are having a drink at the bar.

RIKER (V.O.)

He has offered no explanation.

PAN TO Riker and Troi at a table, deep in conversation.

RIKER

I don't understand why we're going to this pulsar. And creeping up on it at half impulse makes even less sense...

TROI

The captain's given unusual orders before...

RIKER

I know... but this time it's different. He's different. I can't put my finger on it... but I'm worried.

40 CONTINUED:

Troi looks out the window for a moment; she isn't sure whether she should confide her worries. Finally:

TROI
The captain does seem... detached
from his emotions.

False Picard ENTERS, moves toward the bar, nods greeting to Geordi, Worf, and supernumeraries.

FALSE PICARD
Mister La Forge -- we are
operating at ninety-six percent
engine efficiency. Well done.

GEORDI
Thank you, sir.

To the crowd --

FALSE PICARD
When we arrive at the pulsar, I'm
going to need everyone at their
best. I know I can count on you
all.

False Picard looks to Worf for response.

WORF
Of course, Captain.

FALSE PICARD
Excellent.
(to the bartender)
An ale for me, please...
(re: Geordi and Worf)
... and for my officers...
(then, expansive)
In fact, ales for everyone.

40A ANGLE ON RIKER AND TROI

exchanging a look of incredulity.

40B ON THE BAR

as the ales are delivered. False Picard picks up his
drink, raises it high.

40B CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

Here's to the finest crew in
Starfleet.

The others raise their glasses, join the toast. False
Picard takes a slug of ale.

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

You know, back when I was in the
Academy, we would follow each
toast with a song.

WORF

An unusual tradition.

FALSE PICARD

Let's see if I can remember
one...

No one is quite sure how to react -- least of all when
the captain starts SINGING:

FALSE PICARD (cont'd)

(Insert old English or Irish
drinking song -- i.e., "Garry
Owen")

The captain SINGS a few bars, then motions for others
to join in. A captain's suggestion is almost an order,
so Worf, Geordi, and others start SINGING.

41 ANGLE ON RIKER AND TROI

looking incredulously at the captain leading the
SINGING. Geordi subtly detaches himself from the
group at the bar, crosses to Riker.

GEORDI

Commander... What's the captain
up to?

Riker shakes his head in amazement.

RIKER

That's not the captain I know...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

42 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS

Starting on Data entering... reacts as he sees, and we reveal, Riker, Troi, Worf, Geordi and Beverly are gathered in Riker's living quarters. And implicitly we understand that this is a secret meeting, that the participants are uncomfortable being here...

RIKER

... We have a mission that has no apparent purpose... by itself, I can accept that, all of us can... because the captain says it is important and we trust him... Then he runs the crew through efficiency drills for the first time in my tour of duty... but if he says we need them, we need them... because we trust the captain. But we also have a captain singing drinking songs with his men...

GEORDI

... a captain who's come to the poker game for the first time...

TROI

And he was very odd with me afterwards... he asked me to warn him if the crew started to lose confidence in him...

RIKER

(to Troi)

Any signs of mental stress or trauma?

She shakes her head, no.

BEVERLY

He came in for a physical without a word from me...

WORF

Anything unusual, doctor?

42 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

(shakes her head)

He was in perfect health... every test result identical to his last physical... that's kind of unusual in itself, actually...

RIKER

It's almost as though he wanted to establish that there was nothing wrong with him.

BEVERLY

There was one... other... thing...

A little embarrassed, off their looks --

BEVERLY

He asked me to his cabin for dinner... I think he tried to seduce me.

Reactions.

RIKER

Which brings us to a most serious possibility -- is there an outside influence at work here...

TROI

I can detect no evidence of telepathic coercion.

DATA

Commander, there is one other fact we have not considered. The abnormal energy reading in the captain's quarters that was never explained.

More reactions.

WORF

It is not enough evidence to justify mutiny.

RIKER

Worf -- nobody has suggested removing the captain from command.

42 CONTINUED: (2)

WORF

Nobody has yet.

BEVERLY

And nobody will -- unless we have solid evidence that the captain is unfit for duty.

RIKER

Right now, all we have are suspicions... not enough to act upon. The next move is his.

On Riker's frustration:

CUT TO:

43
thru OMITTED
45

45A INT. HOLDING BAY

Tholl, Esoqq, and Haro are confronting Picard.

THOLL

Well, Picard? Prove to us you're not the enemy.

PICARD

I can't.

45A CONTINUED:

The simplicity of that statement catches the group by surprise. Picard calmly elaborates:

PICARD (cont'd)
You're right, Tholl. Any of
us could be the enemy. And
there's no way to prove we aren't.

A beat as Picard lets that sink in. Everyone's now looking suspiciously at everyone else.

PICARD (cont'd)
But unless we set aside our mutual
fears and trust one another, we
have no hope of escape.

HARO
(after a beat)
Sir... how can we trust each
other?

THOLL
She's right. There may be an
enemy among us.

PICARD
And what if there is, Mister
Tholl? Shall we continue accusing
one another until hostility leads
to violence? Shall we allow our
suspicions to destroy us?

45B NEW ANGLE

as Tholl, Esoqq, and Haro sheepishly weigh Picard's words. Picard doesn't wait for an answer, turns his attention to the hole in the wall.

45B CONTINUED:

PICARD

Let's see if we can deactivate
that stun mechanism...

Haro moves to Picard's side; they examine the circuitry
within the bulkhead.

46 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in high orbit around the pulsar.

47 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

False Picard, Riker, Data, Wesley, and Worf watch the
pulsar which fills the viewscreen.

WESLEY

Orbiting the pulsar at fifty
million kilometers, sir.

DATA

The pulsar is exactly as our
records indicate. There appear to
be no anomalies or significant
changes since the last scan by a
Federation ship.

FALSE PICARD

Helm -- take us in to twenty
million kilometers.

WESLEY

Aye, sir.

RIKER

Mister Worf, divert enough power
to the shields to offset the
increased radiation and magnetic
fields.

DATA

Sir, at twenty million kilometers
our shields will be effective for
only eighteen minutes --

FALSE PICARD

(interrupts)

Noted, Mister Data.

47 CONTINUED:

False Picard falls silent, stares at the viewscreen.
Riker studies False Picard, makes up his mind:

RIKER

Captain, may I have a word with
you?

False Picard considers Riker's request for a moment,
then moves toward the Ready Room.

47 CONTINUED: (2)

FALSE PICARD
You have the bridge, Mister Data.

DATA
Aye, sir.

Riker looks over to Worf, then follows the captain into the Ready Room.

48 INT. READY ROOM

False Picard waits for Riker to speak first.

RIKER
What is our mission?

FALSE PICARD
I'm under no obligation to tell you that.

RIKER
If you don't -- you force me to take command of this vessel.

FALSE PICARD
On what grounds?

RIKER
You're endangering this ship... for no reason.

FALSE PICARD
No reason you're aware of.

RIKER
That's not good enough. Your behavior has been erratic --

FALSE PICARD
Erratic enough to justify mutiny? Do you honestly believe you have sufficient evidence to convince a board of inquiry?

RIKER
No, I don't. But I can't let you risk the lives of the crew.

False Picard moves closer to Riker.

48 CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

Number One... has it occurred to you that you might be the one with the problem? I realize you've been under stress, and I'm willing to let the matter drop if you report to Sickbay for a full examination. Otherwise... I'll have to relieve you from duty.

(a beat)

Think about it.

False Picard EXITS. Riker stares after him impassively.

CUT TO:

49
thru OMITTED
56

5656A INT. HOLDING BAY (OPTICAL)

Picard and Haro examine the circuitry in the bulkhead as Esoqq looks on. Tholl also watches, from a few feet away. Picard indicates a thick cable inside the bulkhead.

PICARD

That would appear to be the power lead to the stun device.

HARO

It may be "live." Cutting it could be dangerous.

Picard almost smiles, as if he knows something no one else does.

PICARD

I don't think it will be. Esoqq -- your knife, please.

Picard holds out his hand. Esoqq warily moves away.

PICARD (cont'd)

You assured me you'd cooperate.

Slowly, not liking it, Esoqq hands over his knife.

56A CONTINUED:

Picard carefully sticks his hand through the opening and cuts the cable with Esoqq's knife. A sharp ARCING sound and a FLASH OF LIGHT -- that's all. Picard nods as if he expected exactly that, hands the knife back.

Haro reaches into the bulkhead, manipulates circuitry as before. The door opens half an inch -- and stops. Haro's further efforts produce no results.

HARO

I may have overloaded it, sir.

Picard crosses to the door, wedges his fingers into the crack. He, Haro, and Esoqq strain to pull the door open. It doesn't budge.

PICARD

Mister Tholl...

THOLL

Picard, I still think this is a mistake --

But Tholl crosses to the door, wordlessly adds his muscle to the effort. Still nothing.

Then, without warning, the door slides open as if it had never been jammed. Everyone's surprised... and even more surprised to see what the open door reveals:

56B ON THE DOORWAY

Behind the open door is a solid, blank wall.

Tholl, Esoqq, and Haro are astounded, then turn accusingly to Picard:

THOLL

Now what? We're no better off than when we started!

Picard betrays no reaction.

CUT TO:

57 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

As before. The pulsar's intense pulsating light bathes the area intermittently, adding to the tension. False Picard stands near his chair. Riker ENTERS from the Ready Room. False Picard watches Riker -- will Riker leave the bridge, or not?

DATA

Captain -- number four shield has failed. Increasing power to number three shield to compensate.

FALSE PICARD

Helm -- move us closer. Ten million kilometers.

The looks on everyone's faces confirm that they don't believe the captain knows what he's doing.

DATA

Sir -- at that distance, the ship will not withstand the magnetic fields and radiation.

FALSE PICARD

Take us in, Mister Crusher.

RIKER

Belay that order.

FALSE PICARD

You're relieved of duty, Commander.

(to Worf)

Confine Mister Riker to his quarters.

No one moves. A tense moment: all eyes are on Riker.

58 OMITTED

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

58A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

orbiting the pulsar.

59 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

FALSE PICARD

Mister Worf, I gave you an order.

A moment of hesitation. Riker looks at Worf:

RIKER

Maintain your position,
Lieutenant.

False Picard turns to face Riker. A beat of tension as False Picard and Riker stare at one another and wonder who the crew will follow.

FALSE PICARD

You're destroying yourself and
anyone who is foolish enough to
listen to you. Starfleet will
never sanction this.

RIKER

I'll take that chance.

FALSE PICARD

You're making a terrible mistake,
Will. Listen to me... as your
captain... as your friend...

RIKER

You've shown none of the concerns
that Captain Picard would show...
the safety of this ship, the
welfare of its crew...

False Picard stares at Riker, then:

59 CONTINUED:

FALSE PICARD

Mister Worf -- remove Commander
Riker from the bridge.

RIKER

Mister Crusher -- take us away
from the pulsar, heading
one-eight-five mark three-two,
full impulse.

This is it -- the moment... Which way is the crew going
to go? After a long beat, it's clear Worf isn't going
to move. Wesley works his console.

WESLEY

Full impulse -- aye, Commander.

It's clear the crew is on Riker's side.

RIKER

Engage.

False Picard says nothing, merely stares at Riker and
the bridge crew. They ignore him.

CUT TO:

60 OMITTED

60A INT. HOLDING BAY

as Picard gazes thoughtfully at the second door their
efforts have revealed. Tholl, Esoqq, and Haro look
to Picard for reaction, get none.

THOLL

I hope you're satisfied, Picard.
You've accomplished nothing.

ESOQQ

(to Tholl)

The sound of your voice is
beginning to anger me.

Picard looks at Tholl and Esoqq for a beat, then turns
to address Haro:

60A CONTINUED:

PICARD

I think this charade has gone far enough, don't you?

Esoqq and Tholl have no idea what Picard is talking about. Haro is also at a loss.

HARO

I don't understand...

PICARD

Yes, you do. This isn't a holding cell; it's a laboratory maze -- and we're the white rats. A carefully concocted test... an experiment to see how we'd react under pressure.

ESOQQ

How do you know?

PICARD

It's the only explanation. Look at the four of us... we do have something in common: we all react differently to authority.

(to Esoqq)

You, the anarchist, reject authority in any form...

(to Tholl)

... you, the collaborator, defer to whoever's in control...

(re himself)

... I, a Starfleet Captain, am trained to command...

(to Haro)

... and you, a cadet, have sworn to obey a superior officer's authority.

(a beat)

Our captors put us here and devised obstacles for us to overcome. We were given food Esoqq couldn't eat -- to make him a threat. We were given a door that wouldn't open -- until all four of us cooperated. And each time we succeeded, we were dealt a reversal -- to set us against each other again.

(to Haro)

While you observed our reactions.

60A CONTINUED: (2)

HARO

Sir, I've been trying to help --

PICARD

I found it unlikely that a first-year cadet would know of the Enterprise's visit to Mintaka Three... so I tested you. Starfleet has classified the Cor Caroli Five plague "secret." No cadet would have knowledge of the incident.

HARO

(helpless)

Captain --

60A CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD

You may as well drop the pretense.
I refuse to play along any further
-- I'm quitting the game. As far
as I'm concerned, this experiment
is over.

61 ANGLE ON HARO (OPTICAL)

regarding Picard carefully... and reaching a decision.

HARO

You are correct, Captain Picard.

And Haro METAMORPHOSES into THREE IDENTICAL ALIEN
CREATURES (a species we've never seen before). Esoqq
and Tholl are flabbergasted.

ALIEN #1

To further our knowledge of alien
interaction, we borrowed you,
Tholl, and Esoqq, and replaced
you with replicas.

ESOQQ

Replicas?

ALIEN #2

Our transporter is able to
replicate living matter --
including the brain's many
trillion dendritic connections
where memory is stored.

THOLL

You mean there's a copy of me on
Mizar Two?

PICARD

(nods grimly)

And an impostor running my ship.

ALIEN #2

No longer. Commander Riker has
taken charge of the Enterprise.

ALIEN #1

Our species is telepathically
linked; we are all in continual
contact.

61 CONTINUED:

ALIEN #2

Much more efficient than your
primitive vocal communications.

61 CONTINUED: (2)

ALIEN #1

We would like to pursue this study... but, of course, your awareness of it would taint the results.

ALIEN #2

We will therefore return you to your places of origin.

Picard, Tholl, and Esoqq are each joined by one alien -- and everyone VANISHES in the same ALIEN TRANSPORTER EFFECT we saw when Esoqq materialized.

62 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

False Picard, Riker, Data, Wesley, Worf as before. Alien #1 and the real Picard MATERIALIZE (ALIEN TRANSPORTER EFFECT) on the bridge.

RIKER

Captain!

Riker and Worf start to approach Alien #1, Worf drawing his phaser. Picard stops them:

PICARD

Hold your positions. Take no action.

Alien #1 joins False Picard -- and False Picard METAMORPHOSES into Alien #4. Surreptitiously, Picard signals Riker with a look. Riker nods, almost imperceptibly. Picard addresses the twin aliens:

PICARD (cont'd)

Why did you choose to study the concepts of authority and leadership?

While the aliens' attentions are focused on Picard, Riker catches Data's eye. Data nods, works his console.

62 CONTINUED:

ALIEN #4

Because our species has no such
concepts.

62 CONTINUED: (2)

ALIEN #1

As we are all identical,
distinctions among ourselves are
meaningless. Hence we have no
leaders -- no followers.

Riker catches Worf's eye; they exchange a meaningful
look. The aliens, busy chatting with Picard, don't
notice.

ALIEN #4

We wanted to examine the nature
of command. Under what conditions
will authority be obeyed -- or
disobeyed?

ALIEN #1

Our replicas of Tholl and Esoqq
explored this issue on Mizar Two
and on Chalna... just as our
Picard replica did on the
Enterprise.

Data works his panel, turns, nods to Worf, who then
works his panel.

ALIEN #4

Your responses were most
intriguing.

PICARD

You had no right to put us through
this just to satisfy your
curiosity.

62 CONTINUED: (3)

In b.g., Worf nods to Riker -- all is ready. Riker
silently acknowledges.

ALIEN #1

Why not?

PICARD

Because kidnapping is immoral.
The lives of other races must be
respected.

62 CONTINUED: (4)

ALIEN #4

This concept of morality is a very interesting human characteristic. We shall have to study it sometime. Until then, Picard --

PICARD

(turning to Riker)

Number One?

RIKER

Now, Mister Worf.

Worf taps his console -- and a cylindrical FORCEFIELD appears around the two aliens.

63 NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

The aliens look puzzled -- "you think this will hold us?" Their puzzlement turns to apprehension when they try to move outside of the forcefield -- and can't.

ALIEN #1

What is this?

ALIEN #4

Why do you hold us?

PICARD

Because there's something more you can learn from us. With an alert crew, even our "primitive vocal communications" are unnecessary. Commander Riker understood I wished to hold you here...

(indicates Data)

... he had Mister Data scan you and pass the information to our security officer...

(indicates Worf)

... who devised a forcefield that would entrap you.

63 CONTINUED:

ALIEN #4

But why?

PICARD

I've decided to perform an experiment of my own. I want to see how you react to being imprisoned.

ALIEN #4

Captain -- our species cannot bear captivity.

ALIEN #1

We were merely curious. We meant no harm.

ALIEN #4

We did not, after all, injure you in any way.

63 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Captivity is an injury, regardless
of how it's justified.

Picard lets them sweat for another beat, then nods to
Worf. The FORCEFIELD VANISHES.

PICARD (cont'd)

And now that you've had a taste
of captivity, perhaps you'll
reconsider the morality of
inflicting it upon others.

(shrugs)

In any event, we now know about
your race -- and we know how to
imprison you. Bear that in mind.

(a beat)

Now get off my ship.

A beat later, the two relieved aliens DEMATERIALIZE
(the ALIEN TRANSPORTER EFFECT).

64 ON PICARD

crossing to the command chair and settling comfortably
in.

PICARD

Mister Crusher. Set course for
our rendezvous with the Hood...
Warp eight.

Everyone's delighted to have the real captain back.

WESLEY

Aye aye, sir.

(a beat)

It's good to have you back.

64 CONTINUED:

Smiles of agreement from the rest of the bridge crew. Picard permits himself the tiniest of smiles in acknowledgement, turns to Riker:

PICARD
Status, Number One?

RIKER
Ship and crew functioning normally, Captain.

PICARD
Then my doppelganger caused no serious damage.
(a beat)
Was the replica convincing?

RIKER
Very convincing, sir -- but not perfect.

PICARD
Not perfect in what way?

RIKER
Well, sir...
(a beat)
... for one, I simply cannot believe you're that good a singer.

PICARD
A singer?

Riker can't hide his grin. Picard looks at him suspiciously, decides not to pursue it for the moment. In b.g. Beverly ENTERS.

PICARD (cont'd)
I look forward to reading your report, Commander. At least, I think I do.

Picard notices that Beverly's on the bridge. They nod in greeting:

BEVERLY
Captain.

PICARD
Doctor...

Their eyes meet for a moment.

64 CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY
Course laid in, Captain.

PICARD
Engage.

65 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

turning to its new heading... and blasting into warp.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END