

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Future Imperfect"
#40274-182

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FINAL DRAFT

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STAR TREK: "Future Imperfect" - 9/13/90 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Future Imperfect"
CAST

PICARD	JEAN-LUC/ETHAN/ALIEN
RIKER	TOMALAK
DATA	MINUET
BEVERLY	
TROI	
GEORDI	
WORF	Non-Speaking
	ROMULAN GUARDS
N.D. NURSE	ROMULAN TECHNICIAN

TRANSPORTER CHIEF HUBBLE
N.D. TRANSPORTER CHIEF (FEMALE)

Non-Speaking
SUPERNUMERARIES
FERENGI ENSIGN
KLINGON WOMAN

STAR TREK: "Future Imperfect" - 9/13/90 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Future Imperfect"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
 MAIN BRIDGE
 CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
 OBSERVATION LOUNGE
 TEN FORWARD
 CORRIDORS
 SICKBAY
 TRANSPORTER ROOM
 RIKER'S QUARTERS
 JEAN-LUC'S ROOM

ONIAS THREE
 ALIEN CHAMBER
 TUNNELS
 SECRET ROOM
 HOLDING CELL
 ROMULAN HOLODECK/ANTEROOM

ROMULAN WARBLIND
 CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

ONIAS THREE

ROMULAN WARBLIND

STAR TREK: "Future Imperfect" - 9/13/90 - PRONUNCIATION

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Future Imperfect"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

TOMALAK	TOM-uh-lack
ONIAS	OH-nye-is
DECIUS	DEE-see-us
MIRIDIAN	MER-id-dee-un

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Future Imperfect"
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Cruising at impulse power.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 44286.5.
The Enterprise is conducting a
security survey of the Onias
Sector near the Neutral Zone.
Despite being close to Romulan
territory, our mission has been
quiet and uneventful.

2 INT. TEN FORWARD

Begin close on the mouth of a trombone... then reveal
RIKER playing the horn to an appreciative audience made
up of GEORDI, TROI and several CREWMEMBERS. Riker
finishes his recital with a flourish... and a flat
note. As Riker grins good-naturedly, everyone laughs
and applauds.

GEORDI

Alright, Commander... you've got
until your next birthday to get
that right.

As everyone laughs, Troi asides to Riker...

TROI

Many things improve with age...
maybe your trombone playing will
be one of them.

Then WORF and BEVERLY approach from the bar area. Worf
carries a large birthday cake covered with lit candles.

BEVERLY

It's candle time, birthday boy.

Worf places the cake on a table. Riker blows out the
candles to more applause. Then Troi approaches him.

2 CONTINUED:

TROI

What did you wish for, Will?

RIKER

Music lessons.

More laughter as we go to...

3 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

DATA is at Ops and various SUPERNUMERARIES are at the other positions as PICARD steps out of the Ready Room.

PICARD

Mister Data, we'd better hurry or we'll miss Commander Riker's party.

DATA

Yes, sir.

Data stands, moves to join him...

DATA

I find it interesting how humans place so much importance on celebrating the day of their birth... a day one cannot possibly remember...

Picard smiles... but as they begin to move toward the Turbolift, a SUPERNUMERARY at an aft science station stops them with...

SUPERNUMERARY

Captain... I am detecting some unusual fluctuations in subspace frequencies.

Picard frowns.

PICARD

We had better take a look, Mister Data.

The Supernumerary steps aside and Data takes his place at the science station with Picard flanking him.

3 CONTINUED:

DATA

It appears we are being probed.

Picard leans over him.

PICARD

Source?

DATA

The third planet of the Alpha Onias system. Our reports list it as presently uninhabited. Perhaps the reports were incorrect.

PICARD

Or perhaps the rumors of a secret Romulan base in this sector are true.

They exchange looks, then...

PICARD

(to com)

Picard to Commander Riker.

4 INT. TEN FORWARD

Riker and his guests. Reacting.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

(continuing)

I apologize for interrupting your celebration, but I need an Away Team.

5 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the great ship moves into a synchronous orbit over a dull, gray planet. Alpha Onias Three.

5A INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Data is at Ops, flanked by Picard and Riker. Worf is at tactical, Geordi at the engineering station. They are studying an image of Alpha Onias Three on the viewscreen before them.

5A CONTINUED:

DATA

Although Alpha Onias Three is a Class M planet, our survey teams have listed it as barren and inhospitable.

RIKER

Any life signs?

DATA

No, sir... but we have traced some residual energy readings... to a cavern two kilometers beneath the surface.

Riker and Picard exchange a look.

WORF

Romulans?

DATA

It is possible. But I cannot be certain.

Riker digests this. Then...

PICARD

I suppose you'll just have to go down there and find out.

As he heads toward the aft Turbolift...

RIKER

Worf, Geordi... you're with me.

Then Picard stops him with...

PICARD

(half apologetic)
Number One... Happy Birthday.

Riker acknowledges this with a smile. Then as he, Worf, and Geordi step into the Turbolift...

6 INT. CAVERN - ONIAS THREE (MATTE/OPTICAL)

Riker, Geordi, and Worf MATERIALIZE in the dark, mist-filled cavern.

6 CONTINUED:

They light their palm beacons, sending dramatic beams sweeping through the hazy air. Then Geordi scans with his tricorder.

GEORDI
I'm detecting high levels of
volcanic gases... sulphur dioxide,
methane, hydrogen sulphide...

RIKER
Toxic?

GEORDI
We're okay for now... But I
wouldn't want to spend my vacation
here.

RIKER
What about energy readings?

Worf frowns at his own tricorder.

WORF
Magnetic clutter is increasing.
I cannot make an accurate
determination.

GEORDI
Same here. I'm getting some very
confused readings...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
(breaking up, through
static)
Bridge to Riker. Report. Please
acknowledge.

RIKER
(keys insignia)
This is Riker.

7 OMITTED

8 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard stands by Data at Ops while Troi observes.

8 CONTINUED:

RIKER'S COM VOICE
(breaking up, through
static)
We're having trouble reading you.

PICARD
And we are having similar
difficulties reading you, Number
One. I am advising you...

9 INT. CAVERN

Riker and his Team listen to the garbled transmission.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
... and your team to transport
up... At once...

Geordi reacts to his tricorder, turns, scans...

GEORDI
Good advice, Commander. We've
got a sudden build-up of gases
here... especially methane.

He indicates a roiling, swirling cloud of lethal
looking vapor which now blocks the far end of the
cavern. Riker reacts, keys his insignia...

RIKER
Transporter Room, take us up.

10 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

TRANSPORTER CHIEF HUBBLE struggles with the
Transporter Scan.

HUBBLE
I can't get a solid lock on you,
sir. Too much interference.

11 INT. CAVERN - ON AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

Gas boils up around them. The Away Team is coughing.
Geordi drops to his knees. Worf moves to assist him.
The BEAM OUT BEGINS, STOPS, then TRIES TO START again.

12 OMITTED

13 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As a tense Picard steps forward...

PICARD
Transporter Room... What's
happening? Report!

14 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Hubble fine-tunes her equipment, then energizes...

HUBBLE
I'm trying again, sir.

15 INT. CAVERN

Geordi and Worf are both on the floor. Motionless.
Riker is the last to fall.

CUT TO:

16 INT. RIKER'S SICKBAY ROOM

And a bright light on the Sickbay ceiling... Camera
tilts down to reveal an N.D.NURSE as she ENTERS and
reacts to an unseen patient.

N.D. NURSE
Doctor Crusher... He's awake.

Beverly ENTERS -- An older Beverly whose hair is now
styled differently and streaked with gray. We do not
see Riker's face as she leans over him.

RIKER
Beverly?

BEVERLY
(pleased smile)
You remember me... that's good.
What else can you remember,
Captain?

RIKER
(confused)
Captain?

And that's when we get a good look at Sickbay -- a
Sickbay which is subtly different. Riker reacts as
he looks up at --

16A ANGLE - THE DIAGNOSTIC DEVICE ABOVE HIS BED

With a highly reflective surface. We see Riker's face for the first time. His hair and beard are streaked with gray.

16B RIKER

stunned, sits up, allowing us to see this older, grayer William T. Riker full screen... and...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

17 INT. SICKBAY (OPTICAL)

Beverly stands at the food slot.

BEVERLY
(to food slot)
Water. Three Celsius.

The water MATERIALIZES. As she brings this to Riker...

BEVERLY
How do you feel?

RIKER
Confused.

BEVERLY
(small smile)
Understandable... considering
what's happened.

Riker stands, starts to pace.

RIKER
What has happened... to this
Sickbay... to you... to me?

BEVERLY
Sit down, Captain.

RIKER
I am not "Captain." I'm
Commander... Commander Will
Riker. What's going on here?

BEVERLY
Sit... Please.

Her calmness reaches him. He sits again... faces her.

BEVERLY
What is the last thing you
remember clearly?

17 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Alpha Onias Three. The Enterprise
had been probed... Geordi, Worf,
and I transported down to track
the source.

17 CONTINUED: (2)

BEVERLY

But all you found was toxic gas.
They barely got the three of you
out in time.

(a careful beat)

Will... that happened sixteen
years ago.

As much as he's seen and experienced in all his years
in Starfleet, Riker is still rocked to his core.

RIKER

That's not possible!

BEVERLY

With an Altarian virus, anything
is possible. In fact, we expected
this.

Riker shows some steel.

RIKER

Could you be more specific?

BEVERLY

That day on Onias Three you were
infected with a strain of Altarian
encephalitis. A retrovirus that
incorporates its DNA directly into
the cells of its host. It can
lie dormant for years, then
suddenly become active, as it did
in your case ten days ago.

(a beat)

You've been in a coma,
delirious... Your fever finally
broke this morning...

RIKER

But what happened to my memory?

Beverly crosses to a wall monitor and taps it. A
graphic display of living brain cells comes up.

BEVERLY

This is a scan of your brain
tissue. When the encephalitis
became active... it caused
widespread synapse degradation,
interrupting the consolidation
of memory...

17 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER
(get to the point)
Doctor.

Beverly pauses. In no hurry to give him the bad news.

BEVERLY
Will... this virus invariably
destroys all memory back to the
moment of the original infection.
In your case, all the way back
to Alpha Onias Three.

Riker is reeling. But he fights back... denying...

RIKER
I can't believe this... it's a
dream... or...

Beverly crosses to Riker, takes his hand in hers.

BEVERLY
Feel my hand... flesh and bone.
This is not a dream... and you
are Captain William T. Riker...
in command of the Enterprise.

Riker relaxes slightly. He can't negate the reality of
all this... at least not yet.

RIKER
(almost afraid to ask)
The Enterprise... for how long?

BEVERLY
Nine years.

Riker absorbs this latest blow. Then regains his
balance, and comes right back at Beverly...

RIKER
If I've lost my memory... how do
I find it again?

BEVERLY
Memory is formed out of
association. Smells, sounds, and
images in the present could
possibly trigger them.

17 CONTINUED: (4)

RIKER
(seeing it)
Like the way a song can remind
you of... old friends...

BEVERLY
Exactly. In associational
therapy, we expose the patient
to familiar surroundings. This
could stimulate the brain's neural
synapses into regenerating.

Riker heads to the door, determined.

RIKER
Then let's get started. There's
nothing more familiar to me than
the Enterprise. If anything's
going to bring back...

But Beverly stops him with...

BEVERLY
Will... I said your memory could
return. In many of these cases...
the damage is permanent.

Off Riker's reaction...

18 INT. CORRIDOR

As Riker walks down the corridor with Beverly, he
reacts to the changes sixteen years have wrought upon
the Enterprise and her crew. (GENERAL NOTE: Throughout
the ship, the changes are extremely subtle.)

RIKER
What about Geordi and Worf? Were
they infected, too?

BEVERLY
Thankfully, no. Geordi appears
to have been immune and the virus
has no effect on Klingons.

A striking looking KLINGON WOMAN in a Starfleet uniform
walks by. As she strides off, Riker stares after her.

RIKER
Speaking of Klingons...

18 CONTINUED:

Beverly manages a smile.

BEVERLY

There have been a lot of changes
on the Enterprise in the last
sixteen years.

They enter the Turbolift.

19 INT. TURBOLIFT

As the doors close...

BEVERLY

Which is why we should begin the
associational therapy in your
quarters. Personal recollections
are always the most vivid.

(to Computer)

Deck Eight.

The lift starts to move, then Riker speaks up.

RIKER

Belay that.

As the Turbolift stops, Riker explains to Beverly.

RIKER

My life is on the Bridge, always
has been. If anything's going
to jog my memory...

(to computer)

Main Bridge.

The Turbolift doesn't move. As Riker frowns...

COMPUTER VOICE

Repeat command.

RIKER

I said, Main Bridge.

The Turbolift suddenly begins moving once more. Riker
looks a question at Beverly, who responds...

BEVERLY

The computer has been slow all
morning. A processing
accelerator is down.

(MORE)

19 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY (Cont'd)
Commander La Forge is running a
Level-1 diagnostic to isolate
the problem.

Before Riker can respond to this, the doors open.

20 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker steps out from the aft Turbolift, followed by Beverly. The first crewman they encounter is an older GEORDI standing at the aft engineering station... his back to them. Riker is delighted...

RIKER
Geordi...

Geordi turns around, bringing still another shock with him. His VISOR is gone, replaced by normal eyes.

GEORDI
Good to see you up and about
again, sir.

Riker can't help staring...

RIKER
Geordi... your eyes... what
happened to your VISOR... ?

GEORDI
My VISOR? I...
(catches self)
Sorry, sir. Doctor Crusher warned
us... you might not remember.
(starts again)
I don't need my VISOR, Captain...
not since I got these cloned
implants...

Geordi's voice trails off. Riker just nods, then moves on, past the SUPERNUMERARY at tactical and down the ramp... to see WORF at Ops. The Klingon turns to display a livid battle scar on his cheek.

WORF
(acknowledging Riker)
Captain.

20 CONTINUED:

A FERENGI ENSIGN is at the Conn. He also turns, smiles a toothy grin at Riker. Riker manages a stunned nod to both aliens, then enters the Command Area. DATA (the only crew member who is unchanged) sits in the center chair. He rises at Riker's approach.

DATA

Welcome back, Captain. We did not expect to see you on the Bridge so soon.

RIKER

Commander Data... You are my First Officer?

A beat. Then Data asks carefully...

DATA

You remember, sir?

RIKER

(after a pause)

No, Data. Not a single day of the last sixteen years.

Reactions all around. The crews' collective concern is obvious. Then Worf speaks up...

WORF

Warbird Uncloaking.

That gets everyone's attention.

DATA

On screen.

21 ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER - ROMULAN WARSHIP (OPTICAL)

A Romulan Warbird uncloaks as it cruises into view.

22 BACK TO RIKER

A beat - As Riker looks about and reacts. None of his staff are responding properly to this enemy in their midst. Lost sixteen years or not, he takes command.

RIKER

Shields up. Go to Red Alert.

22 CONTINUED:

And then he realizes that everyone is staring at him with shock and amazement.

DATA

Captain... we have been expecting the Decius. There is no need for alarm.

Riker slowly sits in the center chair. He shows an amazing presence of mind, considering.

RIKER

Cancel Red Alert.
(to Data)
Clearly, I need to be... briefed.

Before Data can reply, Worf speaks up...

WORF

The Decius is hailing us, Captain. The Admiral wishes to speak to you.

RIKER

On screen.

23 INCLUDING MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

A still trim, but older PICARD stands in the Warbird's Ready Room. An older TROI stands beside him.

PICARD

Will!

RIKER

(what's one more surprise?)
Admiral... Picard. Deanna.

TROI

How are you feeling?

RIKER

I've felt better.

PICARD

Not surprising. Altarian Viruses can be a nasty business.

23 CONTINUED:

RIKER
That's... an understatement...
I can't even...

PICARD
(interrupting)
We can discuss this... after we
transport over. Picard out.

The viewer goes black. As Riker exchanges a look with Beverly...

23A INT. TURBOLIFT

Beverly and Riker ENTER. A brief moment, then...

RIKER
Transporter Room Six.

As the Turbolift begins to move, Beverly studies him.

BEVERLY
How are you holding up?

RIKER
(after a deep breath)
I could get used to the idea of
a Ferengi Ensign... but Admiral
Picard... on a Romulan Warbird?
What is that all about?

Beverly answers carefully.

BEVERLY
I think I should leave the
explanations to the Admiral.

Riker ponders this as...

23B INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

As Riker and Beverly ENTER, an N.D. MALE TRANSPORTER
CHIEF manipulates the controls on the Tranporter Scan.

RIKER
Whenever you're ready, Chief.

23C ANGLE INCLUDING TRANSPORTER STAGE (OPTICAL)

Picard and Troi MATERIALIZE, then smile as they step off the pad to join Beverly and Riker.

PICARD

Captain Riker... it's good to see you have recovered.

RIKER

(quietly)

I'm not exactly sure you can call it a recovery, sir.

Troi and Picard realize their worst fears have been realized.

TROI

Then there was... a memory loss.

Picard turns to Beverly.

PICARD

How much?

BEVERLY

(after a beat)

Everything... since Alpha Onias Three.

And off Picard and Troi's reactions...

24 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Picard stands by the window, looking out at the starfield beyond. He's in a state of shock.

PICARD

To lose sixteen years...

He turns to Riker, who sits in the Captain's chair. Not comfortably. Troi stands near by.

PICARD

(continuing)

... that is almost beyond belief.

RIKER

(quiet)

I'm having trouble believing it myself, Admiral.

24 CONTINUED:

TROI
(to Riker)
It must be overwhelming to have
so much of your life...
missing...

PICARD
And it couldn't have happened at
a worse time. A few more days
of relatively simple negotiations,
and the treaty will be signed.

An impatient Riker cuts in...

RIKER
What negotiations? What treaty?

Picard sits at the table, near Riker.

24 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Sorry. I'll start at the beginning, which was four years ago. A Romulan battle cruiser strayed into Federation space. Its warp coils had collapsed, and its life support was failing.

TROI

You saved them, Will. You and the Enterprise.

PICARD

This impressed the Romulans, to say the least. After years of distrust and conflict, they started to talk. You have been our key spokesman...

Then to Riker's inquiring look.

PICARD

... in securing an alliance with the Romulans.

Riker is stunned... but manages to keep his balance.

RIKER

How far have these negotiations progressed?

PICARD

The preliminaries are over. All we need do now is escort the Romulan Ambassador to the final session.

TROI

Where you will help complete the negotiations and sign the treaty.

Riker digests all of this. Comes to a conclusion.

RIKER

Captain, excuse me, sir, I mean Admiral... I am in no condition to negotiate with the Romulans or anyone else.

24 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Will... you are of sound mind and body. If you were properly briefed, you could still fulfill your duties.

RIKER

With a sixteen year gap in my head?

Riker rises to his feet, walks to the window. Picard exchanges a look with Troi, then crosses to Riker.

PICARD

I know this has all been... a terrible shock... but we do need you.

RIKER

(with difficulty)

Sir, I'm not sure I'm... fit to resume command...

PICARD

(gently)

I appreciate your candor and your concern. But despite your... affliction... there is still no one better equipped to deal with these Romulans than you.

A beat. And Riker reluctantly gives in.

RIKER

When do we leave?

PICARD

(relieved)

As soon as the Ambassador transports over from the Decius. I'll make the arrangements.

(intently)

We will get through this. As we have many times before.

Picard EXITS. Then Riker turns to the window. As he watches the Romulan Warbird drift into view...

RIKER

I hope so.

Troi approaches Riker.

24 CONTINUED: (3)

TROI

Let me take you to your quarters.

Riker gives Troi an exhausted look. Nods.

RIKER

Good idea... I've had enough
surprises for one day.

25 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS

The door slides open and Riker and Troi ENTER. Riker surveys a room adorned with mementoes gathered in those sixteen missing years... decorations for bravery... alien art works... furniture he has never seen before. He reacts to all of this, exchanges a look with Troi...

Then they hear a trombone playing off key in the next room. Riker goes into...

26 INT. JEAN-LUC'S ROOM

Riker walks in and discovers a ten year old boy playing the trombone. Then the boy turns. And smiles.

JEAN-LUC

Hi, Dad.

And off Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

27 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS

Troi and a stunned Riker watch as Jean-Luc reaches under seat cushions, checks behind chairs, searching for something. The eager boy is in mid-story...

JEAN-LUC

... and then Mister Greenburg asked me about the Fornax Disaster, and I knew the Enterprise had saved all the colonists. But I didn't know...

(off the track)

Here it is!

He pulls a school PADD out from under a pile of clutter on a table, takes it to Riker.

JEAN-LUC

(back on track)

... But I didn't know the exact Stardate their sun went nova. If you tell me, I'll write it down. That way I won't forget.

Riker stares at the PADD, then at the son he doesn't know. And the boy realizes it. His energy and excitement vanish, to be replaced by a quiet grief.

JEAN-LUC

You don't remember me... do you?

RIKER

(what else can he say?)

I'm... sorry.

There's an awkward silence, which Troi breaks.

TROI

I need to talk to your father, Jean-Luc. Could you leave us alone... for just a moment?

And as Jean-Luc returns to his room, Riker faces Troi:

RIKER

Why didn't you warn me?

27 CONTINUED:

TROI

Beverly hoped that meeting
Jean-Luc like this might have
an impact... help you remember.

RIKER

It had an impact alright...
(shakes his head)

TROI

Give it time.

Riker is still getting used to this amazing concept.

RIKER

(reflective)
Jean-Luc.

TROI

(droll)
The Admiral was very pleased when
you chose that name. He is a
wonderful boy.

RIKER

(the next big question)
Deanna... where's his mother?

A beat. Troi has difficulty telling him.

TROI

She died two years ago... a
shuttle accident. I'm sorry,
Will.

Riker doesn't know how to react to this. At this point
his wife is nothing more than a name to him.

RIKER

I have absolutely no recollection
of her... what was she like?

TROI

'Min' was very beautiful, of
course. And strong, intelligent,
patient...

RIKER

She had to be patient, if she was
married to me.

A small smile from Troi.

27 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI

She was an excellent Captain's wife, and a very good ship's counselor.

(to Riker's look)

She took over after I left.

Riker reacts to that.

RIKER

I can't imagine you leaving the Enterprise.

TROI

Admiral Picard offered me a position at Starfleet Command. It was a tremendous opportunity... I couldn't refuse.

A quiet moment. Then...

TROI

Will... What's important is that today, right now, you have a son who needs you. Spend time with him... you may find part of what you've lost.

Troi EXITS. Riker ponders her words for a moment. Then he winces to the sound of someone running through the scales on a trombone. Badly.

28 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS - JEAN-LUC'S ROOM

Riker ENTERS and finds Jean-Luc sitting on a bed, playing the trombone... Jean-Luc stops playing and smiles up at him. Riker can't help smiling back.

JEAN-LUC

Pretty bad, huh?

RIKER

I've heard better.

JEAN-LUC

I've been practicing... but I still can't get a good tone.

28 CONTINUED:

RIKER

You're putting too much pressure
on the mouthpiece. Relax. Just
use the muscles you need.

JEAN-LUC

(holds out trombone)
Show me again.

Riker sits beside Jean-Luc, takes the trombone. Shows
him how to hold it.

RIKER

Okay. Left hand like this. Right
hand... like this.

Riker runs through the scales. Jean-Luc smiles. Riker
segues into a melody... the same melody he played in
the opening. He finishes with a flourish -- and a flat
note again. Jean-Luc laughs. Riker frowns.

RIKER

After sixteen years... you'd
think I could get that right...

Jean-Luc takes back the trombone.

JEAN-LUC

Come on, Dad... you always make
that mistake.

Jean-Luc starts playing again. And Riker thinks about
what the boy just said. Then he makes a decision,
which takes him back into...

29 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS - MAIN ROOM (OPTICAL)

We can hear the trombone playing as Riker ENTERS. He
goes to the desk, ponders the computer screen, decides
to ask a key question...

RIKER

Computer. Summarize service
record. Riker, William T.,
Captain. Beginning with... the
Fornax Disaster.

Nothing appears. That strange time lag again. Then...

COMPUTER VOICE

Please restate question.

29 CONTINUED:

RIKER
Service record. Riker, William
T.

Another long pause... Riker loses patience...

RIKER
Damn it.

Then he looks up to see...

29A ANGLE - JEAN-LUC (OPTICAL)

watching him from the door of his room.

JEAN-LUC
(what's wrong)
Dad... ?

RIKER
That computer time lag. I can't
believe Geordi's still running
his diagnostic...

And then a rush of data suddenly scrolls across the
desk screen.

JEAN-LUC
Is that what you wanted?

Riker frowns at the desk screen, his instincts
screaming that something is very wrong here. And
then...

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Picard to Captain Riker. The
Romulan Ambassador is ready to
transport over from the Decius.

Riker keys his insignia.

RIKER
On my way.
(to the boy)
I've got to go, Jean-Luc.

29A CONTINUED:

JEAN-LUC

Sure.

(after a pause)

Dad...

29A CONTINUED: (2)

Riker stops at the door as...

JEAN-LUC

Everything's going to be fine.

Riker isn't so certain. But he manages a smile before he leaves.

29B INT. CORRIDOR TO TRANSPORTER ROOM

Riker, Troi, Picard walking.

PICARD

(gently)

Troi tells me you met Jean-Luc.
How is my namesake holding up to
all this?

RIKER

Better than I am.

TROI

We did our best to prepare him.

RIKER

(sighs)

I'm trying to catch up with all
this. I've still got a long way
to go. A long way.

PICARD

Just follow my lead with the
Ambassador. You'll do fine.

30 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

As they ENTER. An N.D. MALE TRANSPORTER CHIEF stands
at the console.

N.D. TRANSPORTER CHIEF

The Decius reports the Ambassador
is waiting to transport.

Picard glances at Riker, ready?

RIKER

Beam him aboard, chief.

30 CONTINUED:

N.D. TRANSPORTER CHIEF
(to com)
Enterprise to Decius... stand by
for transport.

As he manipulates the Transport Scan...

31 ANGLE ON TRANSPORTER PLATFORM - (OPTICAL)

A uniformed Romulan MATERIALIZES. It's TOMALAK, the arrogant Commander who confronted the Enterprise at Galorndon Core and Nelvana Three... Fourteen years ago.

TOMALAK
Admiral Picard, Captain Riker...
it's good to see you again.

A stunned Riker responds with a polite nod as Picard approaches the Romulan.

PICARD
Ambassador Tomalak... Welcome
aboard the Enterprise.

Tomalak steps off the Transporter pad, smiles ingratiatingly at Picard.

TOMALAK
Thank you, Admiral. It is an
honor to be the first Romulan to
freely walk about a Federation
Starship.

As Picard escorts Tomalak out, Riker hangs back a moment with Troi.

31 CONTINUED:

RIKER

(what is this?)

Ambassador... Tomalak? At Nelvana Three, he threatened to take the hull of the Enterprise home as a war trophy!

TROI

That was a long time ago. Many things have changed. Including Tomalak.

And off Riker's doubting look...

32 INT. CORRIDOR

Picard, Riker, and Troi walk with Tomalak. The Romulan is cheerful and charming. Riker is tense and watchful.

TOMALAK

As soon as we arrive at your Outpost Twenty-Three, the final negotiations should go quickly.

Riker reacts to this, looks to Picard and Troi... But they seem oblivious to his concern.

PICARD

I agree, Ambassador. All of the difficult issues have been resolved.

TOMALAK

(with a cordial smile)

After much debate. Your Captain Riker is the kind of negotiator even the Ferengi should avoid.

PICARD

But we have come to an agreement both sides can live with. Thanks largely to Captain Riker.

They pause by the Turbolift. Tomalak smiles at Riker.

TOMALAK

And we are grateful, Captain. The new alliance will greatly benefit my people.

Riker chooses his words carefully.

32 CONTINUED:

RIKER

As I hope it will benefit mine.

TOMALAK

(smoothly)

It will, Captain. It will.

Riker is not sure about this at all. The Turbolift door opens and they all enter.

32A INT. TURBOLIFT

Riker, Troi, Picard, and Tomalak ENTER.

RIKER

Main Bridge.

The Turbolift starts to move. Tomalak eyes Riker and seems to pick up on the other man's uneasiness.

TOMALAK

The virus you contracted, Captain.
You have fully recovered?

The question throws Riker for just a moment. Which is long enough for Picard to step in...

PICARD

(smoothly)

I assure you Captain Riker is quite well. He's looking forward to attending the final negotiations... as planned.

Tomalak smiles.

TOMALAK

Excellent.

(to Riker)

The signing of this treaty will be an historic occasion. You, of all people, deserve to be there.

Riker is still not convinced. His response is cool but polite.

RIKER

Thank you... Ambassador.

The door opens, and they EXIT.

33 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Riker, Troi, and the Romulan ENTER. Tomalak takes a long look about the Bridge, impressed.

TOMALAK

So... this is the Bridge of the Enterprise.

He approaches tactical and peers over the startled supernumerary's shoulder.

TOMALAK

And this, I assume, is your Tactical position. Impressive.

Riker has had enough. He turns to Picard and Troi.

RIKER

Admiral, Deanna... I need a moment with you...

(to Data)

... Commander Data, if you will, please accompany the Ambassador on his... tour.

DATA

Certainly, sir.

RIKER

(to Tomalak)

Excuse us, Ambassador.

Tomalak nods, then continues his perusal of tactical as Data moves up beside him. As Riker, Picard, and Troi head for the Ready Room...

DATA

You may find this of interest, Ambassador...

(MORE)

33 CONTINUED:

DATA (Cont'd)
(points at tactical
board)

... These newly refined sensors
are capable of pinpointing the
power emissions of...

34 INT. READY ROOM

A tense Riker faces the others.

RIKER

Are you telling me you trust
Tomalak?

PICARD

I trust the process we have built
with the Romulans over the past
four years. They have nothing
to gain by betrayal.

RIKER

Are you sure? You yourself have
said it's always like a chess game
with the Romulans. Move and
counter-move, guile and deceit
--

TROI

(gently cutting in)

I sense no such dishonesty in
Tomalak. He is sincere in his
desire for peace. He wants this
alliance. There is no cause for
concern.

Riker is not convinced.

RIKER

No cause for concern? We're
talking about revealing the
location of Outpost Twenty-Three,
the key to all our Neutral Zone
defenses.

PICARD

Pardon my bluntness, Captain, but
your information is out of date.
The strategic importance of
Outpost Twenty-Three is minimal.
And has been for years.

34 CONTINUED:

Riker still isn't sure. But before he can say more...

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE
Doctor Crusher to Riker. Are
you there, Captain?

RIKER
(keys insignia)
What is it, Doctor?

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE
Your son has been injured. He's
been taken to Sickbay. You
better come down here right away.

And off Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

35 INT. SICKBAY

Riker walks in to find Jean-Luc sitting on a diagnostic bed while Beverly tends to his arm. The boy wears a Parrises Squares outfit. The N.D. Nurse stands by.

JEAN-LUC

Dad!

Riker is as concerned as any father would be.

RIKER

Are you alright?

JEAN-LUC

I'm fine.

Then the boy winces as Beverly runs an instrument over his wrist. Riker reacts...

RIKER

(to Beverly)

What happened?

BEVERLY

It's broken... But we'll have it all taken care of in a minute.

She finishes treating Jean-Luc's arm. He tentatively moves his arm, grins with relief.

BEVERLY

Now just take it easy on that arm for a while.

RIKER

(to Jean-Luc)

How did you do this?

JEAN-LUC

(shame faced)

I was in the gym... playing Parrises Squares... I fell off the ramp...

35 CONTINUED:

RIKER
(appalled)
Parrises Squares... at your
age... ? You could have broken
your neck!

JEAN-LUC
(downcast)
I'm sorry... I didn't mean to...

Beverly gives Riker a look, then faces the Nurse.

BEVERLY
Continue the compression
attenuator for two more minutes.

N.D. NURSE
Yes, Doctor.

BEVERLY
(to Riker)
Can I talk to you for a moment?

RIKER
(to Jean-Luc)
I'll be right back.

Riker allows Beverly to lead him aside.

BEVERLY
Will... how old were you when you
started playing Parrises Squares?

RIKER
(thinks, sighs)
Alright... I was probably younger
than he is...

Riker looks over at Jean-Luc and the Nurse tending to
him.

RIKER
It's just that... For all
practical purposes, this is my
first day as a father... my son
almost kills himself...

BEVERLY
He didn't almost kill himself...
he just broke a wrist... like a
lot of other boys who fall down.

35 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER
(acknowledges his
over-reaction)
You're right... But it's...
difficult.

BEVERLY
Difficult for you? What about
Jean-Luc? Can you imagine how
he must feel?
(beat)
You've lost sixteen years, but
Jean-Luc has lost a lot more...
his mother... and now his father.

Riker reacts to that... then turns from Beverly and
approaches Jean-Luc. The Nurse smiles at Riker...

NURSE
Good as new, Captain. You can
take him home.

RIKER
Thanks.

The Nurse moves off, leaving Riker alone with Jean-Luc.

RIKER
How's the arm?

JEAN-LUC
It's fine.
(beat)
Dad, I'm really sorry... I know
you've got more important
things...

RIKER
Nothing as important as this, son.

It's the first time he's called Jean-Luc "son," and the
boy catches it. And off Jean-Luc's pleased reaction...

35A INT. TURBOLIFT

Riker and Jean-Luc ENTER.

JEAN-LUC
Deck Eight.

35A CONTINUED:

The Turbolift begins to move. Riker studies Jean-Luc for a beat. Then...

RIKER

Halt.

Jean-Luc gives him a questioning look.

RIKER

I know this must be... very hard for you.

The boy smiles.

JEAN-LUC

It's okay, Dad.

RIKER

(takes a deep breath)
Okay's not good enough.

Riker pauses, looking for the words.

RIKER

When I was your age... my own father... he wasn't there for me. And I needed him. I really... needed him.

(softly)

I always wondered what kind of father I'd be. I never felt quite ready. Maybe the idea even scared me a little.

JEAN-LUC

Scared... you?

RIKER

Yeah.

(beat, smiles)

But I must have gotten over it, huh? You're here.

Jean-Luc laughs... Riker laughs along with him.

RIKER

(to com)

Resume.

A long beat and then his tone turns serious again.

35A CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

It's just important to me... that
I don't... let you down, Jean-Luc.

JEAN-LUC

You never have, Dad... you've
always been there for me.

RIKER

I'll have to take your word for
that... because I don't remember
any of it... Not your first
tooth, your first step...
nothing... And I want to
remember.

They share a long look. Then Jean-Luc moves to him
and hugs him... they hold each other for a moment...
the Turbolift doors open, but they don't move...

RIKER

Guess there's only one thing to
do. We've got to make some new
memories...

They exchange a happy look and EXIT.

36 INT. CORRIDOR

As Jean-Luc and Riker walk together...

RIKER

I don't know if it's still in the
memory banks, but I used to have
this great fishing program on the
Holodeck...

36 CONTINUED:

JEAN-LUC
The Curtis Creek program?

RIKER
You know it?

JEAN-LUC
Sure. We've gone to Curtis Creek
lots of times.

RIKER
Want to go again?

JEAN-LUC
You bet!

RIKER
Then as soon as the negotiations
are out of the way, we're going
fishing.

JEAN-LUC
Great!

They enter the Turbolift.

37 INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS

Riker and Jean-Luc ENTER. All smiles.

JEAN-LUC
(mid story)
... Then Mom tried to net the fish,
and she fell in the creek, too.
And then you tried to pull us both
out, and you fell in!

RIKER
I'm almost glad I can't remember
that!

They both laugh. Then...

JEAN-LUC
Mom really liked Curtis Creek.
We went there for picnics and
stuff lots of times.

RIKER
(beat)
What was she like... your Mom.

37 CONTINUED:

Jean-Luc's good humor fades quickly.

JEAN-LUC

(quiet)

She was great... I think about
her a lot...

Riker senses the boy's unspoken anguish... but doesn't
know what to say. An awkward moment... then Jean-Luc
fingers his game outfit.

JEAN-LUC

I better go change.

Riker watches him leave, then takes a seat at his desk.
Right now, this new world, and all it offers, is
beginning to seem very real to him. Then he faces the
desk console. Casual.

RIKER

Computer. Display family record.
Riker. William T. Limit to
visuals.

38 ANGLE ON COMPUTER SCREEN (OPTICAL)

After a very short lag time, we see MOS home
video-style images taken in Riker's Quarters.
The camera unsteadily roams the room to settle on
Riker working at his desk, seemingly unaware of what
is happening.

Then a child slips into shot, wearing a colorful
costume, his face obscured by a mask. The disguised
boy sneaks up on Riker... then leaps at him. Riker
starts, registering mock fear. Jean-Luc takes his
mask off, revealing his smiling face. Then he points
to camera and as Riker "reacts" to having been caught
by his son's candid camera... they both laugh and hug.

38A ANGLE ON RIKER

Watching with a smile... then he frowns. Where's his
wife in this?

RIKER

Computer. Display family record.
Riker, Mrs. William T.

The screen goes blank.

38A CONTINUED:

COMPUTER VOICE

Please restate request.

What the hell? Riker quickly becomes frustrated...
and then Jean-Luc returns, sleeving into a fresh tunic.

JEAN-LUC

What's wrong, Dad?

38A CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

The computer's still not acting right. I'm having trouble finding a visual record of your mother.

Jean-Luc frowns. Upset.

JEAN-LUC

But I know Mom's pictures are there. Did you give a Stardate?

As Riker shakes his head, Jean-Luc faces the console.

JEAN-LUC

(to desk console,
patiently)

Computer. Display family record.
Riker, Mrs. William T. Home file.
Stardate 58416.

The console lights up and the boy smiles as...

39 ANGLE ON COMPUTER SCREEN - (OPTICAL)

No delay this time. We see more MOS home videos of the Rikers in their quarters. Jean-Luc and Riker sit at a table as a beautiful young woman (MINUET) enters the scene. She carries a birthday cake, which she places on the table. And as Jean-Luc blows out the candles and his parents applaud...

RIKER (OPTICAL)

Stares at the images of his "wife" -- recognizing her. His face sets... he knows...

RIKER

(softly, to himself)
'Min... Minuet?'

Jean-Luc doesn't realize the game is over.

JEAN-LUC

Mom was beautiful, wasn't she?

RIKER

(softly)
Yes...

40 CONTINUED:

He turns off the computer, gives Jean-Luc a long look.
The boy reacts with puzzlement.

JEAN-LUC
Dad... what's wrong?

A moment of strained silence... then...

GEORDI'S COM VOICE
La Forge to Riker.

RIKER
(keying insignia)
Riker here.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE
Captain... please come to the
Bridge.

Riker nods, jaw set. The jig is up.

RIKER
On my way.

A determined Riker EXITS... leaving a concerned
Jean-Luc alone.

41 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker ENTERS from the aft Turbolift and approaches
Geordi, who is working at his engineering station.

RIKER
What's the problem?

GEORDI
I've had to shut down the warp
engines, Captain.

RIKER
Why?

GEORDI
The antimatter containment fields
were fluctuating. Nothing to
worry about, though.

41 CONTINUED:

RIKER

(oh, come on!)

We're on the edge of the Neutral
Zone on impulse power, and you're
not concerned?

GEORDI

I'll have the engines back on
line in no time, sir.

41 CONTINUED: (2)

Riker's anger builds. He surveys the Bridge... knowing this all a sham... and he decides to kick it apart. He glares at Geordi...

RIKER
(sarcastic)
As fast as you tracked down that faulty processing accelerator?

GEORDI
(defensive)
I'm running a Level One diagnostic...

RIKER
... for thirty hours... ? It's never taken you more than four. You're not capable of that kind of incompetence, La Forge.

GEORDI
But, sir...

Riker moves on to Ops to confront Worf.

RIKER
Where did you get that scar?

WORF
(proudly)
In combat, sir.

RIKER
What battle? When? Which unit, which sector?

Worf just stares at him. Riker charges on... into the command area to face Data.

RIKER
If we left immediately, when would we arrive at Outpost Twenty Three?

DATA
At Warp One, in three days, four hours...

41 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER

How about at Warp Seven?

(to Data's silence)

At Warp Eight? At Warp Nine?

What's wrong, Data? What happened
to all those millions of
calculations per second?

DATA

Pardon me, sir... but I am
receiving subspace interference
which limits my abilities. I
can't operate as quickly as...

Riker catches the mistake, jabs home...

RIKER

What did you say, Commander?

DATA

I said I cannot operate --

RIKER

No. That's not what you said.
You said "I can't." You used a
contraction. Didn't you?

Picard, Troi, and Tomalak ENTER from the aft Turbolift
and observe as...

DATA

Sir, I can explain --

RIKER

-- No you can't. Don't even try.

Picard steps into the command area.

PICARD

Captain Riker, this is no way to
act in front of Ambassador...

RIKER

Shut up!

Picard stops dead. Reactions all around.

PICARD

What did you say?

41 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER
(hammering)
Shut up, as in close your mouth,
and stop talking.

Picard is speechless. Troi steps into the breach.

TROI
Will... I can sense how upset you
are. You're angry, impatient
--

RIKER
Back off, Deanna.

Picard and Troi are at a loss. There is a great
silence on the Bridge.

RIKER
Well... anyone else want to speak
up. Or can we end this...
charade?

42 WIDE - THE ENTIRE BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Disappears. The Bridge, Picard, Troi, and the staff
officers all SHIMMER AWAY to reveal a Romulan Holodeck.
A stunned Riker is left alone with Tomalak. The
Romulan steps up to Riker. Grim...

TOMALAK
As you wish, Commander Riker.
The charade is over.

And as Riker reacts...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

43 INT. ANTEROOM TO ROMULAN HOLODECK (OPTICAL)

Begin on Riker as a ROMULAN TECHNICIAN applies a blinking, hand-held device to his beard. The device GLOWS, causing the grey to vanish from Riker's beard and hair. Through this...

RIKER

(evenly)

The Enterprise... my son... you created it all.

Pull back to include Tomalak and TWO ROMULAN GUARDS.

TOMALAK

With the help of our neural scanners... and what you would call a Holodeck.

The Technician passes the device over Riker's communicator and pips, returning them to normal. Then...

TOMALAK

Now please tell me... how did you discover the truth? The future we constructed for you should have been... convincing.

RIKER

It wasn't. There was the computer time lag, for one thing.

TOMALAK

Unavoidable. Our scanners have a limited response time. So whenever you strayed from our... expectations...

(with a shrug)

But surely that was not enough to...

RIKER

To smash your house of cards? No, it was the visual record of my "wife," Minuet. Bad move.

43 CONTINUED:

TOMALAK

(surprised)

But we chose someone from your past who is still alive... a woman you were extremely attracted to...

RIKER

Your mistake, Tomalak. Minuet was nothing more than a computer generated fantasy I once experienced on another Holodeck.

Tomalak is not buying this.

TOMALAK

Impossible. In your mind, that woman exists... physically. Your feelings toward her remain quite... passionate.

RIKER

She was part of a very special program.

Tomalak shakes his head and sighs.

TOMALAK

So much effort... so little accomplished.

Riker cuts to the chase.

RIKER

If Outpost Twenty-three is what you're after... Why didn't you just use your neural scanners to probe my mind?

TOMALAK

Our scanners are calibrated for Romulan brain patterns. When it comes to human brains, they are less efficient. There were gaps in the information we gathered from your memory.

Now it's Riker's turn to express his doubts.

43 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Gaps? After what I've just seen,
I find that hard to believe.

(MORE)

43 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER (Cont'd)

You recreated the Enterprise,
the crew... every nuance, every
sound, smell... perfectly
accurate. I sure didn't notice
any gaps...

(beat)

I don't buy it, Tomalak.

Tomalak's tone changes, turning dangerous.

TOMALAK

We are wasting time.

Tomalak turns and gestures to the guards.

TOMALAK

Bring him.

Off Riker's reaction...

44 INT. TUNNEL TO HOLDING CELL (OPTICAL)

As Tomalak and the two Romulan guards escort Riker...

TOMALAK

(mid-explanation)

When you and your colleagues
transported to this planet, you
were less than a kilometer from
this base. Your capture was a
simple matter.

RIKER

My colleagues... ?

TOMALAK

We allowed them to transport
safely back to the Enterprise.
But your signal was... diverted.

RIKER

My people won't stop looking for
me, Tomalak.

TOMALAK

They already have.

Riker reacts... They pause by a holding cell cut into
the living rock. One of the guards deactivates the
force field lights.

45 INT. HOLDING CELL (OPTICAL)

As Riker and the Romulans ENTER...

TOMALAK
(ironic, to Riker)
Please say hello to your son.

And Riker reacts to... a ragged, dirty little boy huddled in a corner of the cell. It is Jean-Luc.

RIKER
(surprised)
Jean-Luc?

TOMALAK
That is not his name, of course.
Nor have you ever really met him.
We merely... used his image to
augment your program.

Riker carefully approaches the boy... who flinches away and scuttles to another corner of the cell. Riker reacts, then glares at Tomalak.

RIKER
What have you done to him?

Tomalak ignores the question.

TOMALAK
While I am gone, please give
careful thought to your situation.

He EXITS with the guards. As the cell's force field is reactivated, Riker faces the boy.

RIKER
(gently)
What's your name?

Silence. Riker tries again.

RIKER
Look... if we're going to get out
of here, you've got to trust me...

The frightened boy cringes in the corner, unwilling to so much as look at the man. Riker takes a step toward him, but stops as...

RIKER
Easy... I won't hurt you.

45 CONTINUED:

The boy covers his face with his hands, peering fearfully through his fingers with panicky eyes.

RIKER

Who are you? How did you get here?

No answer. But Riker doesn't give up. He kneels near the boy.

RIKER

My name is Will.

45 CONTINUED:

The boy slowly sits up... studies Riker... then...

ETHAN/JEAN-LUC

Ethan...

Ethan and Riker hear footsteps and face the force field, watching, as two guards stride down the tunnel and past the holding cell.

ETHAN

They brought me here... with my parents...

Ethan turns away from the field to face Riker.

ETHAN

(continuing)

We were at a research station on Miridian Six.

RIKER

(a gentle inquiry)

Miridian Six... near the Neutral Zone? I thought it was uninhabited...

ETHAN

The station was set up last year.
(quietly)
Then the Romulans came...

The boy stops. Riker frowns.

RIKER

It's odd the Enterprise wasn't advised...

Riker changes tack, probes tenderly.

RIKER

Where are your parents, now?

ETHAN

(after a pause)

They took them away.

Another beat. Riker doesn't know any kinder way to ask the next question.

RIKER

Do you know why the Romulans are keeping you here?

45 CONTINUED: (2)

ETHAN

No...

(his fear showing)

... I just want to get away.

Riker kneels, takes the boy by the shoulders...

RIKER

Ethan... I'll get us out of here...

ETHAN

(resigned)

How? Even if we do get away, they'll find us.

(beat)

They found me when I escaped before.

That gets Riker's attention.

RIKER

You escaped?

ETHAN

(nods)

I hid in a secret place... for weeks... but they caught me when I went out to find food.

They hear approaching footsteps and Riker stands to face them as...

46

thru OMITTED

47

48 INT. TUNNEL OUTSIDE HOLDING CELL (OPTICAL)

Tomalak and a guard approach the cell. The guard deactivates the force field and they both ENTER.

49 INT. HOLDING CELL (OPTICAL)

Tomalak faces Riker and Ethan.

TOMALAK

I want that information, Commander. I want the location of Outpost Twenty-Three.

49 CONTINUED:

Riker doesn't bother to answer. Tomalak barely maintains his poise.

TOMALAK

Very well. I have been given permission to use whatever means are necessary...

49 CONTINUED: (2)

Ethan suddenly bolts for the open door. Riker reacts...

RIKER

Ethan... no!

Tomalak also reacts, shouts...

TOMALAK

Stop him!

The guard quickly reaches out, grabs Ethan by the collar. The boy kicks and screams, struggling against the guard's grip.

ETHAN

Let me go...

Tomalak looks away from Riker for only a moment... but it's long enough. Riker punches Tomalak, who goes down. The guard reacts, tries to keep a firm hold on the struggling Ethan as he draws his phaser. But Ethan knocks the Romulan's arm up toward the ceiling...

ETHAN

Don't!

The phaser goes off, firing into the ceiling. Then the guard shoves the boy aside... which buys Riker the time to punch him out, too. As the guard slumps to the floor, Riker picks up his phaser, hurries to Ethan, helps him out of the cell.

50 INT. TUNNEL - OUTSIDE THE HOLDING CELL (OPTICAL)

As they hurry down the corridor...

RIKER

This secret hiding place of yours... ?

ETHAN

This way...

A phaser beam suddenly blasts the wall close by. They react and RUN...

51 THE END OF THE TUNNEL (OPTICAL)

Another Romulan guard approaches, weapon at the ready... But before he can fire again...

52 RIKER (OPTICAL)

fires, knocking the guard off his feet.

53 INT. ANOTHER TUNNEL

Riker and Ethan round a corner and come face to face with a surprised Romulan guard. The Romulan goes for his weapon. Too late. Riker fires first. As the guard falls, Riker and Ethan run toward...

53A ANGLE ON AIR CONDITIONING GRATE

The boy stops by the floor level air conditioning grate, swings it open, and motions.

ETHAN

In here...

Riker follows him as Ethan climbs inside, then pulls the grate shut behind them.

54 OMITTED

55 INT. A NARROW CRAWLSPACE

Almost pitch black. The only light comes through the slots in that grate. Ethan hurriedly slides bolts into place, securing the grate as echoing footsteps approach in the tunnel beyond...

... Riker and Ethan freeze against the walls on either side of the grate as the feet and legs of the Romulan guards appear in the tunnel outside.

One of the Romulans kneels down, peers through the grate... then suddenly seizes it with his hand and gives it a hard shake as we...

56 OMITTED

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

57
thru OMITTED
60

61 INT. CRAWLSPACE - CONTINUOUS

Riker's hand tightens on that captured phaser as the guard gives the grate a last shake... then steps away to rejoin his companion...

61A RIKER'S POV - THROUGH GRATE

The guards move off down the corridor... paying close attention to the sensing device one of them holds.

62 OMITTED

63 INT. CRAWLSPACE

Riker reacts, puzzled, to the fading footsteps of the Romulans in the tunnel. He turns to Ethan and whispers.

RIKER

Their sensors should have picked us up...

Ethan picks up a lantern from the top of a nearby crate, activates it, and plays its beam across the rock. As they move a short way down the crawlspace to a jumble of oddly shaped crates and freight containers...

ETHAN

They can't... I heard them say there's something in these rocks...

RIKER

Heavy metals?

ETHAN

(nodding)
Right...

Ethan starts shoving a large crate aside to reveal a dark entryway. Riker moves to help him.

63 CONTINUED:

Then Ethan lights their way with the lantern as Riker follows him through the entryway into...

63AA INT. CRAWLSPACE - ANOTHER SECTION

Riker and Ethan move through the narrow crawlspace.

RIKER

When you escaped last time...
how'd you manage it?

ETHAN

I acted like I was sick... when
the Romulans took me to the
infirmary, I ran away.

Ethan pauses, faces Riker.

ETHAN

I was lucky... I found this place
the same day.

Riker nods appreciatively as they move on to...

63A INT. SECRET ROOM

... Where Ethan activates a light cell, bathing the room
in a soft glow.

ETHAN

... The Romulans forgot all about
this storeroom when they rebuilt
the tunnels.

The boy crosses to a pile of crates stacked in a corner
of the cluttered room... starts searching through them.

ETHAN

After I got away last time...

Ethan produces a folded piece of synthetic cloth.

ETHAN

(continuing)

... I mapped out all their tunnels.

He lays the cloth out across a crate... to reveal a
rough map of the base. As Ethan points things out...

63A CONTINUED:

ETHAN

Supply depot, communications,
living quarters... and the shuttle
bay.

RIKER

(instantly intrigued)
How many guards at the shuttle
bay?

ETHAN

Only two or three.

Riker thinks about it, shakes his head.

RIKER

Stealing a shuttle would get us
nowhere... too easy for the
Romulans to track one of their
own ships.

(MORE)

63A CONTINUED:

RIKER (Cont'd)
(points at map)
But we could break into
communications. Send a message
to the Enterprise.

Ethan looks doubtful. Shakes his head.

ETHAN
We can't do that... The
transmitter is on a
voice-activated security system!

RIKER
Do you know whose voice it
accepts?

ETHAN
Only Ambassador Tomalak.

RIKER
(reacts)
Who?

ETHAN
Tomalak.

RIKER
Ambassador Tomalak.

Ethan looks up at him, suddenly aware of the man's
stunned reaction. Riker just stares at him.

RIKER
Tomalak is a Romulan Captain.
The only time he was called
"Ambassador" was in their Holodeck
fantasy. How would you know about
that?

ETHAN
You... you told me about it.

Riker shakes his head, no I didn't.

RIKER
Who are you? What's your part
in all this?

63A CONTINUED: (2)

They react to a sudden, off screen explosion and the sounds of the approaching Romulans. Ethan turns to Riker, shouts a warning...

ETHAN
They've found us!

RIKER
(calm)
But you said their sensors didn't work in this tunnel.

ETHAN
They must have fixed them. We've got to go!

He grabs at Riker, but he won't budge.

RIKER
And where will we go, Ethan?

ETHAN
To the shuttle bay! There's still time.

RIKER
No... I've had enough.

And they both react as...

63B TOMALAK AND TWO GUARDS

Step into the room.

TOMALAK
Commander... surrender your weapon...

And as the three Romulans raise their weapons... Riker drops his phaser and casually lifts his arms, palms up.

RIKER
No more games. No more fantasies.
I'm not going to play anymore.

Then Riker makes eye contact with Ethan. A last, sad moment between them. And the boy relaxes... he knows the game has finally and truly ended. Then...

64
thru OMITTED
65

66 THE ROMULANS (OPTICAL)

Suddenly SHIMMER away.

67 THE ENTIRE ROOM (OPTICAL)

Also disappears... to reveal the immense cavern where our story began. Riker and Ethan are left alone in the huge room. Riker stares at the boy. Shocked.

RIKER

It was never the Romulans... it was you all along, wasn't it?

Ethan hangs his head. Then we go to...

68 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - THE REAL ENTERPRISE

Picard and Data are at an aft station, huddled over a monitor.

DATA

There is no question about it, sir. It is his signal.

Picard acknowledges this with a nod. Then Troi, Worf, and Geordi watch, concerned, as...

PICARD

(to com)

Picard to Riker... can you read me?

RIKER'S COM VOICE

(after a beat)

Riker to Picard. I'm here.

The general relief at the sound of Riker's voice is obvious.

69 INT. ALIEN CHAMBER

Riker and Ethan.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Are you all right?

69 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Yes... What about Worf and Geordi?

PICARD'S COM VOICE

We beamed them up an hour ago... They're fine.

69A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

PICARD

But we lost you in mid-transport. Where have you been? What is going on down there?

RIKER'S COM VOICE

I'm not sure, sir.

Picard raises an eyebrow as we go back to...

69B INT. ALIEN CHAMBER (OPTICAL)

Riker and Ethan.

RIKER

But I think I'm about to find out... stand by.

Riker keys his insignia and faces the boy, who is sad but calm.

RIKER

What should I call you? Ethan... Jean-Luc?

ETHAN

(sad)

It doesn't matter.

Riker crosses to the wall, listens to a faint humming beyond.

RIKER

This room... it's more than just a Holodeck, isn't it?

69B CONTINUED:

ETHAN

(almost proud)

Much more. The neural scanners
read my mind... give me anything
I want. Just like they tried
to give you everything you
wanted.

Riker is furious... and for good reason.

RIKER

What I wanted? You probed the
Enterprise... lured us here...
so you could play games with me.
I didn't want any of that... you
did. Why?

The boy looks older, sadder, less the child.

ETHAN

My world was invaded... my
people... killed. My mother
brought me here... so our enemies
would never find me.

Riker reacts... tone changing.

RIKER

But they found her, didn't they?

Ethan nods -- the memory, distant as it is, still
painful.

ETHAN

She knew they would never stop
looking for her... So she made
sure I would be safe...

He touches his forehead, then gestures at the
surrounding walls as...

69C ANGLE - INCLUDING CAVERN WALLS (OPTICAL)

Brief SHIMMERS here and there as the various components
of Ethan's scanners "uncloak" and reveal themselves.

ETHAN

She left the scanners to protect
me... and to give me everything
I wanted.

69C CONTINUED:

Riker reacts to the youngster's pain. Abandoned by his own father, he knows what it's like to be a lonely little boy.

RIKER

Everything... then why kidnap me?

ETHAN

(after a pause)

I wanted you to stay. It's been so long... I just wanted somebody... real. I... thought you would be happy... I'm sorry...

Riker is gentle... but insistent.

RIKER

I have to return to my ship.

(a beat)

Come with me. You don't have to stay here anymore... you don't have to be alone anymore...

The boy hesitates. A long beat as he considers. Then...

70 ANGLE - FAVORING ETHAN - (OPTICAL)

The figure of the boy SHIMMERS... and for the first time, we see him in his true, alien form.

THE ALIEN

My real name is Barash.

Riker smiles, holds out his hand, and says...

RIKER

To me, you'll always be Jean-Luc.

The alien takes Riker's hand. A silent and special moment between them... then Riker keys his insignia.

RIKER

Two to transport...

And as they DEMATERIALIZE, go to...

71 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As she warps AWAY.

(NOTE: This will be the first exterior view of the Enterprise we see after the shot of it in orbit around Alpha Onias Three.)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END