

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Child"
#40272-127

Based on a Premise by
Jaron Summers
and
Jon Povill

Teleplay by
Maurice Hurley

Directed by
Rob Bowman

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STAR TREK: "The Child" - 9/20/88 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Child"

CAST

PICARD	HESTER DEALT
RIKER	
DATA	
PULASKI	Voice-Over
TROI	REPULSE VOICE
GEORDI	
WORF	
WESLEY	
GUINAN	
CREWMEMBER	
TRANSPORTER CHIEF	
TEACHER (MISS GLADSTONE)	
IAN (BABY)	
IAN (AGE THREE)	
IAN (AGE EIGHT)	

Non-Speaking
CREWMEMBERS
MEDICAL ASSISTANTS
SECURITY TEAM
GROUP OF KIDS

Voice-Over
SICKBAY VOICE
COMPUTER VOICE

STAR TREK: "The Child" - 9/20/88 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Child"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

SHUTTLE BAY

MAIN BRIDGE

CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM DOOR

CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

CHIEF ENGINEER'S OFFICE

MAIN ENGINEERING

CORRIDOR

ANOTHER CORRIDOR

CREWMEMBERS' QUARTERS

TROI'S QUARTERS

CARGO DECK FIVE

TEN-FORWARD

OBSERVATION LOUNGE

CARGO HOLD FIVE

DOCTOR PULASKI'S OFFICE

SICKBAY - MATERNITY

CORRIDOR -

ENTRANCE TO SICKBAY

CORRIDOR -

ENTRANCE TO TROI'S QUARTERS

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

TRANSPORTER ROOM THREE

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

USS REPULSE

'AUCDET NINE

STAR TREK: "The Child" - 9/20/88 - PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Child"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

'AUCDET NINE	O-det Nine
GUINAN	GUY-nun
RACHELIS	Ra-CHEL-is
DELOVIAN SOUFFLE	Del-O-ve-an
MAREUVIAN TEA	Ma-RU-ve-an
THEASIAN TEA	Thee-A-see-an
PROMETHEUS	Pro-ME-thee-us
ALGORITHMS	AL-gor-i-thums
HEURISTICS	Hur-ISS-tics
VOILA	Vwa-LA
CYANOACRYLATES	Si-a-no-AK-re-lates

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Child"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND THE USS REPULSE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise has rendezvoused with the other Federation ship near the spectacularly beautiful binary system -- Alvacorn Major.

1A INT. ENTERPRISE - SHUTTLE BAY (OPTICAL)

The shuttlecraft leaves the Enterprise for the USS Repulse.

2 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard is not on the bridge. RIKER has the command chair - DATA is at Science Station, WESLEY is at Conn - Worf is at Tactical. The other positions are filled by n.d. crewmembers. Riker watches the Main Viewer as the shuttlecraft closes with the Repulse.

RIKER

(to Worf)

Open hailing frequencies.

WORF

Hailing frequencies opened.

RIKER

Repulse, this is the Enterprise.
We are getting underway.

REPULSE VOICE

Acknowledged, Enterprise.
Transfer complete -- good luck on
your mission.

RIKER

And to you.

REPULSE VOICE

Give my regards to your captain.
Repulse out.

2 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

The Shuttle Bay is secure.

RIKER

Thank you Mister Crusher. Make all preparations to get underway.

3 OMITTED

4 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard is there with GEORDI. Geordi is showing Picard the plans for a device he is proposing to build.

GEORDI

We will construct this large enclosure on Cargo Deck Five.

The door CHIME SOUNDS.

PICARD

Come.

Riker enters and makes his report.

RIKER

The transfer is complete. Doctor Pulaski is being shown to her quarters. We are ready to get underway.

PICARD

Very good. Take a look at the containment module our new chief engineer has designed.

Riker steps over.

RIKER

"Chief engineer," that has a nice ring to it.

GEORDI

It does to me.

(then to business)

Each will have total atmospheric control... temperature, radiation, light, humidity, plus electrical spectrums.

RIKER

And these are put into the large containment area?

4 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Yes, these modules will keep the specimens alive -- the large containment area will keep us alive. Now, I have to go and replicate this five hundred and twelve times. This will mean it will be necessary to divert power from the warp engines to the replicator.

PICARD

How long will we be on impulse power?

GEORDI

For a few hours, but it can't be helped.

Picard nods.

RIKER

When we leave 'aucdet Nine - I'm going to want all the power you can slam into those warp engines.

GEORDI

You'll have it.

Geordi exits.

PICARD

I will relieve you at zero three zero zero.

Riker acknowledges and leaves.

5 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

as Riker walks back onto the bridge.

RIKER

Take us out of orbit, Mister Crusher -- set course for 'aucdet Nine.

WESLEY

Aye, sir. Course for 'aucdet Nine has been input.

5 CONTINUED:

RIKER
Maximum impulse velocity.

WESLEY
Aye, sir.

RIKER
Engage.

6 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

as it makes a slow graceful turn.

7 EXT. SPACE - ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise starts as a dot in the distance -- quickly approaches at impulse speed and makes a close passby. After a beat, a heretofore unseen speck begins to glow, then moves -- chasing after the starship.

8 EXT. SPACE - ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

as the glowing ENERGY closes on the Enterprise. It catches the ship and approaches from the rear -- going between the warp engines.

9 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Minimal crew. Data is at the Science Station studying the display screen.

DATA
Engineering -- this is Science One.
I just observed what appeared to
be a random energy transference.

10 INT. CHIEF ENGINEER'S OFFICE

Geordi is working at the panel on the far wall.

GEORDI
Where?

DATA'S COM VOICE
Aft. Outboard of the port
nacelle.

10 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Hold on -- I'll check.

10A INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Geordi moves to the center console.

GEORDI

No -- I show nothing here, Data.

11 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data is not satisfied and continues running checks.

RIKER

Problem, Commander?

DATA

Possibly. An unexplained power fluctuation.

RIKER

Let me know if it reoccurs.

12 EXT. SPACE - CLOSE ON THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The ball of light moves closer to the Enterprise. It slides along the skin of the ship; then, without damage to the hull, the ball goes inside.

13 INT. CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

The corridor is empty. If there were nighttime in space, this would be it. The ship is quiet. The little glow of energy emerges. It pauses as though getting its bearings, then cautiously moves off.

14 INT. CORRIDOR - ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

We FOLLOW the glow as it continues along. The turbolift doors open and TWO CREWMEMBERS exit. The glow blends into the corridor wall and neither crewmember sees it. The glow falls in behind them as they pass.

15 INT. CORRIDOR - ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

At an intersection the crewmembers turn left. The energy again pauses, then continues straight ahead resuming its journey - or is it a search? The energy exits up through the overhead.

15A OMITTED

16 INT. CREWMEMBERS' QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

The energy enters. It pauses over the sleeping form of one of the male crewmembers... then moves away.

17 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

The energy enters the room, passing effortlessly through the closed door. It pauses -- again getting its bearings. It has a definite sense of purpose as it moves slowly toward the sleeping form on the far side of the room.

18 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE BED (OPTICAL)

We recognize COUNSELOR DEANNA TROI. The energy pauses by her head, then LEAVES THE FRAME as it moves down her body. We HOLD on Troi's face. After a beat she turns -- the restless movements of a tortured dream... sweat beads up on her forehead, SUDDENLY she wakes. For a moment she does not move -- then she looks around the room for the "person" (lover) she knows must be there. There is no one. The room is empty. But she knows that someone or something has been there and that she will never be the same again.

Off her look of concern... and fear... we:

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

19 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

as it continues along at impulse speed.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 42073.1.
There has been an outbreak of a
yet unclassified Plasma Plague
in the densely populated Rachelis
system. We are on an emergency
run to a Federation Research
station on 'aucdet Nine, where
specimens of Plasma Plague are
kept. We will then transport that
deadly cargo to Science Station
Tango Sierra, where hopefully an
antidote can be manufactured.
Every hour we delay, thousands
die.

20 OMITTED

20A INT. CARGO DECK FIVE

In the center of the huge cargo bay, a crewmember is
assembling a very large containment area which will
hold the five hundred and twelve modules.

GEORDI

How's it going?

CREWMEMBER

Finished, just waiting to insert
the modules.

21 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard comes out of his Ready Room:

PICARD

Number One.

RIKER

Lieutenant La Forge says we will
be able to engage the warp drive
within the hour.

21 CONTINUED:

Picard nods an acknowledgement as he takes his seat.

PICARD

Mister Data, when we receive a complete list of all the specimens we will be carrying, I want you and Doctor Pulaski to go through it... by the way. Where is our new doctor? Has she reported in?

RIKER

Not yet.

Picard is obviously irritated by the breach in procedure.

PICARD

Sickbay, this is the captain.

SICKBAY VOICE

Sickbay, aye.

PICARD

Is Doctor Pulaski there?

SICKBAY VOICE

(slight hesitation)

Ah... no, Sir. The doctor is in Ten-Forward.

PICARD

What?!

(surprised, then
annoyed)

A few hours on board and she's already found Ten-Forward.

Riker starts to rise.

RIKER

I'll go and get her.

PICARD

No, Number One. I'll go.

Picard rises and strides toward the turbolift.

WORF

Not the best way to meet your new captain.

22 INT. CORRIDOR

As Picard exits the turbolift, he encounters Wesley.

WESLEY

Hello, Captain.

PICARD

(a greeting)

Ensign Crusher.

Picard continues to stride purposefully down the corridor with Wesley a few steps behind trying to keep up.

PICARD

I'm sorry this mission will delay your reunion with your mother.

WESLEY

It's all right. I can use the time to finish some projects.

PICARD

(dismissive)

We shouldn't be more than a week or so.

Wesley wants to continue the conversation.

WESLEY

It is going to be hard to leave the Enterprise...

PICARD

Mixed feelings for all of us.

Picard glances back and sees the look of sadness in the young man's eyes.

PICARD

(continuing)

It's always difficult leaving any ship, as it was for your mother when she left to become head of Starfleet Medical. But going from one assignment to another is part of the life which you are choosing.

WESLEY

Yes, but this isn't "any" ship.

22 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Truly.

Wesley stops and watches Picard continue to Ten-Forward. The sadness remains in the young man's eyes.

23 INT. TEN-FORWARD

As Picard enters he crosses with a CREWMEMBER. The crewmember's reaction tells us very clearly that Picard is not a frequent visitor to Ten-Forward. We FOLLOW Picard as he walks over to the BARTENDER. This is the first time we get to see this wonderful room.

24 ANOTHER ANGLE - PICARD AT BAR

GUINAN is behind the bar.

PICARD

(greet's her)

Guinan.

She nods a greeting.

GUINAN

Captain.

PICARD

Where's Doctor Pulaski?

With a hand motion, Guinan indicates a table.

25 ANOTHER ANGLE

as Picard approaches one of the tables. We can see that DOCTOR KATHERINE PULASKI is talking with someone, but we cannot see with whom. Picard strides purposefully up. Clearly his ire is up.

PICARD

Doctor Katherine Pulaski?

Pulaski looks up.

PULASKI

Ah... you must be Captain

Picard...

25 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Doctor -- protocol on your last assignment might have been lax, but here on the Enterprise...

PULASKI

(she abruptly cuts him off)

Sit down, Captain. You better listen to this.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE - TABLE

We now see that the doctor is with Troi. Picard and Troi exchange looks. Picard senses trouble and moves a step closer.

27 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Riker, Data, and Worf have assembled. Picard enters with Doctor Pulaski and Troi. As he walks briskly toward his seat.

PICARD

(he touches his communicator)

Lieutenant La Forge, status report.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

The containment area is completed, the last of the modules are being inserted.

PICARD

Take us to warp six as soon as possible.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Acknowledged.

Picard takes his seat and moves on to other -- equally urgent business.

PICARD

This is Doctor Katherine Pulaski. We will handle the formal introduction later.

27 CONTINUED:

The SUBTLE APPRAISALS, the doctor of the crew and the crew of the new doctor, are cut short as Picard takes his seat and announces.

PICARD
(continuing)
Counselor Deanna Troi is
pregnant.

The reactions of the crew. During what follows we will INTERCUT the reactions of everyone. These will change as each new piece of information is revealed. Data, almost in awe. Life, any life, is amazing to him. Riker glances over at Troi and thinks however briefly of what might have been. Worf -- suspicious, distrustful.

RIKER
A baby!

Worf is noncommittal, Data curious. Riker surprised, and the question is clearly on his mind (whose baby?).

RIKER
(continuing)
This is a surprise.

TROI
More so for me.

Before Riker can react to that statement, Pulaski takes control of the meeting.

PULASKI
This pregnancy is unlike anything
I have ever encountered. Since
she came to me a few hours ago,
I have made two complete
examinations of Counselor Troi.

She activates the wall viewer on which appears the sonic representation of a healthy, humanoid fetus.

PULASKI
(continuing)
This is from the first
examination. The fetus is about
halfway through the first
trimester -- about six weeks old.
Understand, we...
(MORE)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

PULASKI (Cont'd)
(indicating herself and
Troi)
... believe conception occurred
about eleven hours ago.

RIKER
What?

PULASKI
It gets better.

The screen changes.

PULASKI
(continuing)
The second exam, an hour later
was consistent, except for the
fact that the fetus "appeared"
to be several weeks older.

She steps away from the screen.

PULASKI
(continuing)
At this growth rate, Counselor
Troi will have her baby within
the next thirty-six hours. The
normal gestation for a Betazoid
is ten months.

For a beat, the group is in stunned silence.

RIKER
I do not mean to be indelicate,
but...
(pause)
... who's the father?

TROI
Last night, while I slept...
something... which I can only
describe it as a presence, entered
my body.

Troi turns and looks at the image of the fetus.

27 CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD

A life-form of unknown origin and intent is breeding right now inside Counselor Troi. Our purpose here is to determine what is to be done about this very "unusual" situation. Discussion.

RIKER

Let me get this straight -- Deanna was impregnated by... by what?

(to Pulaski)

Doctor, what do your tests show? Is it a humanoid? An alien?

She stands, goes to the display screen and activates it.

PULASKI

It's a male human... or in this case half-human -- half-Betazoid.

RIKER

Exactly the same as Deanna!

PULASKI

In every way. There is no indication from any of my tests of any other genetic patterns except hers.

28 TROI

We HOLD on Troi as she continues to watch the child moving inside her. The discussion fades from her consciousness.

RIKER

I don't think this is a random occurrence. There is a purpose here -- a reason. What, I don't know.

WORF

Captain, obviously the pregnancy must be terminated.

RIKER

Why?

28 CONTINUED:

WORF

For the safety of the ship and crew.

Troi stares at the moving fetus on the viewscreen. Seeing it, alive, helpless, touches other emotions. However it was conceived, it is hers. She does not completely lose her uncertainty and apprehension, but other, stronger instincts begin to emerge.

RIKER

Worf, you can't assume its intent is belligerent.

WORF

That is my safest assumption.

DATA

Captain, this is a life-form. Not to allow it to develop naturally would deny us the opportunity to study it.

WORF

If the fetus is aborted, laboratory analysis is still possible.

RIKER

Is there any health risk to Counselor Troi if the fetus is aborted?

PULASKI

Medically, no.

PICARD

Doctor, is that your recommendation?

As the words swirl around her, she knows in her Betazoid heart that the child must be born, and she makes her decision. Troi gets everyone's attention.

TROI

Captain, do whatever you feel is necessary to protect the ship and the crew... but know this. I am going to have this baby.

Everyone reacts, then:

28 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

I believe that ends the
discussion.

29 OMITTED

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

30 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

coming out of warp.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. We have finally arrived at 'aucdet Nine. We will pick up the specimens of Plasma Plague and transport them to Rachelis.

30A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

approaching 'aucdet Nine.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

It is only because so many lives are at stake that I am willing to put this ship and crew at such great risk.

31 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Picard is in his command seat, Riker beside him. Data is at Ops and Wesley has the Conn. Troi enters from the aft turbolift. She is FIVE months pregnant. The crew can't help watching as she crosses and takes her place next to Picard.

PICARD

How are you feeling?

TROI

I should be feeling uncomfortable with all the changes in my body... but, I'm not. I feel fine -- better than fine. Wonderful.

There is a look of concern in his eyes - not only for his counselor, but because he still isn't sure what is going to be born onto his ship.

RIKER

Standard orbit.

31 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

Standard orbit, aye.

PICARD

Open hailing frequencies.

WORF

Hailing frequencies open.

PICARD

'Aucdet Nine, this is Captain
Jean-Luc Picard of the USS
Enterprise.

There is a pause, then the viewscreen comes alive.
A MAN APPEARS. He's dressed in a disposable lab coat
and wearing a twenty-fourth century medical mask pushed up on
the top of his head. His name is LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
HESTER DEALT. INTERCUT VIEWSCREEN WHERE NECESSARY.

HESTER

Ah... yes... Enterprise you're
here at last. Good.

PICARD

Excuse me, to whom am I speaking?

HESTER

Oh... I'm Lieutenant Commander
Hester Dealt. The medical trustee
of the Federation Medical
Collection Station.

PICARD

Are the specimens ready for
transfer?

HESTER

Yes, but with your permission I
would like to inspect the
containment area before we
proceed. It is not that I doubt
the ability of your crew; we just
cannot afford a mistake.

PICARD

I appreciate your caution -- in
the same vein, I need a complete,
detailed manifest of everything
which you intend to bring on board
my ship.

31 CONTINUED: (2)

HESTER

I will allow access to the
computer banks.

The screen returns to a view of 'aucdet Nine.

PICARD

(to Data)

Download the inventory and go
through it with Doctor Pulaski.

(to Riker)

Number One, arrange to have Hester
Dealt transported up.

TROI

Captain, I'm suddenly feeling a
little tired. I'll be in my
quarters if you need me.

Picard nods. Troi gets slowly up and walks to the
turbolift. Picard watches her leave. In the b.g. Worf
also watches. He is still very uneasy.

32 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS

She steps up to her sink. She touches her face with a
wet cloth as she studies her image in the mirror. The
emotional strain of this event is etched on her
features. She looks down at her swollen body....

TROI

It won't be long now. Soon
you'll arrive and so many
questions will be answered.

The thought makes her smile.

33 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit around 'aucdet Nine.

34 INT. CARGO HOLD FIVE

Hester Dealt continues his inspection on the
containment area, which is a very large rectangular
object suspended off the floor of the Cargo Deck. It
has a very sophisticated monitoring system for the
hundreds of compartments within.

34 CONTINUED:

HESTER

This is very good. Exactly what's needed.

GEORDI

I just followed your instructions.

HESTER

Good. Exactly what I wanted.

Hester moves around the containment area -- over -- under -- up -- down -- inspecting it from every possible angle.

HESTER

(continuing)

Five hundred and twelve compartments. Individually controlled. Very good. Independent of one another. Perfect. Ah, they can be monitored from here. And, isolation is assured. Very, very good.

GEORDI

I wanted to be sure they wouldn't get out.

HESTER

Good, Lieutenant. Very good indeed.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

How's it coming, Mister La Forge?

HESTER

It will be just a little while longer. I want to go over it again in more detail.

GEORDI

It will be another couple of hours, Commander.

HESTER

You do understand, it's critical that we have zero growth.

34 CONTINUED: (2)

GEORDI

(then to Hester Dealt)

Oh, yes. I understand. So, you go over it as many times as you want.

34A EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit around 'aucdet Nine.

PICARD (V.O.)

It's been fourteen hours since we arrived at 'aucdet Nine. Hester Dealt is making final selections of the specimens we will carry. Meanwhile, we continue to receive desperate pleas from the Rachelis System.

35 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data is finishing up something at Science One.

DATA

Captain, the final manifest has been received.

PICARD

At last. Review it with Doctor Pulaski. I want both of you to be completely familiar with it.

DATA

Aye sir.

Data leaves Science One and crosses to the turbolift.

36 INT. CORRIDOR

The turbolift doors open and Data steps into the corridor. As he turns toward Sickbay he sees Troi, walking with some difficulty. He quickly goes to her aid.

TROI

Data -- help me get to Sickbay.

He offers his arm for support and together they continue along.

37 INT. DOCTOR PULASKI'S OFFICE

The Doctor looks up as someone enters.

38 ANOTHER ANGLE

It's Troi and Data.

TROI

It's time.

PULASKI

Oh, you bet it is. Let's get you
into Sickbay.

As she helps Troi through Sickbay, Data touches his
communicator.

DATA

Worf -- assemble your security team
in Sickbay.

PULASKI

Is that necessary?

DATA

Yes -- captain's orders.

He then follows them into Sickbay.

PULASKI

(to Troi)

Strange to need armed guards in
the delivery room.

TROI

Yes, and strange to think my child
is the cause.

PULASKI

Before you referred to it as "the
child," now it's become your
child.

TROI

Yes, whatever his beginnings,
that's what he's become.

They exit Sickbay.

39 INT. SICKBAY - MATERNITY

They enter and Pulaski leads Troi to the bed. Her MEDICAL ASSISTANTS move to prepare for the delivery. Data comes up behind them.

PULASKI

How frequent are your contractions?

TROI

Very close together.

PULASKI

In all my other deliveries -- with a couple of exceptions -- the father was present.

TROI

Difficult under the circumstances.

PULASKI

It's unfortunate you have to go through this alone. It helps to have someone with you.

DATA

Perhaps I could serve in that capacity. I can quickly review the procedures I will be required to execute.

PULASKI

Troi is going to need the comfort of a "human" touch... Not the cold hand of technology.

Data reaction.

TROI

Doctor. I think Commander Data will do nicely.

A look from the doctor to Troi and back to Data.

PULASKI

Your choice.

40 ANOTHER ANGLE

as the doctor and her assistants prepare Sickbay and Troi for the delivery.

40 CONTINUED:

TROI

There is nothing specific you have to do, Data, you just have to be with me.

PULASKI

There is nothing to be nervous about.

DATA

This is very interesting to me. Although I understand in technical terms how life is formed, there is still a part of the process which eludes my understanding. I began my existence as an adult. I have no memory -- no cognizance of conception, birth, childhood, so to be allowed to witness this event is...

Troi grabs his hand.

TROI

It's happening.

DATA

(alarmed)

Doctor!

Pulaski steps over.

PULASKI

This is an impatient baby. He's eager to make his appearance.

She picks up her hypospray.

PULASKI

(continuing)

I'll give you something for the pain. It won't in any way diminish the experience.

TROI

I have felt no pain.

PULASKI

None?

TROI

No... none at all.

40A INT. CORRIDOR - ENTRANCE TO SICKBAY

Worf and SECURITY TEAM arrive.

41 ANOTHER ANGLE - SICKBAY

They now have Troi in position in the birthing chair. Worf and the security team enter and take up their positions as Pulaski and her Assistant prepare for the delivery.

PULASKI

Have your security team stand over there. I understand the need to have you here, but keep out from under foot.

42 AND NOW THE BIRTH (INTERCUT THE PIECES OF THE EVENT)

This is more than just the wondrous act of life. It has as well the added tension of Worf and his security team. Data, and his first close encounter with creation of the thing he understands least -- life. As this sequence begins, Riker appears in the background. He stands to the side -- out of the way, but there in case his friend, Deanna Troi, needs him.

WE WILL LAY THIS OUT, BASED ON HOW A CHILD IS BORN ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH CENTURY ENTERPRISE.

And the CHILD comes out -- Worf edges closer -- the doctor takes it to one side. Ties the cord, cleans it, and brings it back to Troi. This is an effortless birth -- no pain -- no strain.

PULASKI

Are easy births the norm for Betazoids?

TROI

Not according to my mother.

PULASKI

(as she hands it to Troi)

It's a boy. A normal, healthy, six pound, three ounce baby boy.

Then to Worf.

42 CONTINUED:

PULASKI
(continuing; without
any edge)
You can come the rest of the way
in now.

Worf enters and approaches the baby as he would a
deadly snake.

43 ANOTHER ANGLE

as Worf and the newborn exchange looks.

PULASKI
No threat here, Lieutenant, you
and your men can relax... it's
just a baby.

Worf reacts.

44 TROI

as she holds the baby. Data leans in to see the child.

DATA
It was remarkable. Thank you for
allowing me to participate.

PULASKI
Do you have a name?

TROI
Ian Andrew, after my father.

PULASKI
(she touches her
communicator)
Captain.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Picard here.

PULASKI
Counselor Troi is the mother of
a very healthy baby boy. Mother
and child are both doing well.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Counselor, my best wishes to you
and your son.

44 CONTINUED:

TROI
Thank you, sir.

Riker now steps forward to pay his respects. He leans down and kisses her on the forehead.

TROI
(continuing)
Have you been here all along?

RIKER
Yes.
(then just for her)
He's beautiful, Deanna... just like his mother.
(to Worf)
I don't think you are going to be needed here, Lieutenant.

Worf nods an acknowledgement and leads his security team off. Riker and Troi exchange looks and he too exits.

PULASKI
How do you feel?

TROI
Fine. Absolutely wonderful and thank you, Doctor... for everything.

PULASKI
(as she does a scan of Troi and the baby, her face registers surprise)
Amazing.

45 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit around 'aucdet Nine.

46 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The turbolift opens and for the first time Pulaski steps onto the bridge.

46 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Welcome to the bridge, Doctor.
How's Counselor Troi? Did she
have a good night?

PULASKI

I have delivered dozens of babies.
But none like this. There was
no pain, no trauma. It was
effortless for both of them.

PICARD

I'm not sure of your point.

PULASKI

She had the baby yesterday. If
I were to examine her now, I would
not be able to tell that she just
had a baby, or ever had a baby.
It's as though the incident never
happened.

PICARD

(to Data)

How long before we are ready to
begin the transfer?

DATA

Two hours, nineteen minutes.

PICARD

(he stands)

You have the Conn, Number One.

RIKER

Aye, sir.

PICARD

Doctor, you would accompany me,
please. I think it's time I paid
my respects.

47 INT. CORRIDOR - ENTRANCE TO TROI'S QUARTERS

Picard and Pulaski approach the doorway. The CHIME
SOUNDS. From inside Troi says:

TROI

Come in.

The doors open and they enter.

48 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS

Troi's back is to him. She is doing something with her child.

PICARD

I wanted to come by and see how
you were and have a look at
your...

At this moment the CHILD looks out from around Troi.
It is already THREE YEARS OLD!

PICARD

(continuing)
... baby! My goodness.

The Doctor takes out her medical recorder and does a
quick body scan of the child.

PICARD

(continuing)
How old is he?

PULASKI

In actuality a day.

PICARD

Yes, but...

PULASKI

... In appearance, almost four
earth years old.

TROI

Ian, say hello to Captain Picard.

PICARD

You mean he can talk?

The boy answers.

IAN

Hello.

Picard is stunned.

PICARD

Hello, Ian.

Picard moves closer.

IAN

Don't worry. Everything is fine.

48 CONTINUED:

Off their reactions we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

49 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in a parking orbit near 'aucdet Nine.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. We are faced with two major problems: Troi's child and the deadly cargo we are about to load, which is so desperately needed in the Rachelis system. In the hours since his birth, Troi's baby has continued to age and now appears, physically and mentally, to be a child of eight. And still there is no indication as to who he is, or why he is here.

50 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard and everyone else in place.

RIKER

Sickbay, this is the bridge. We are ready to begin loading.

PULASKI'S COM VOICE

We need a little more time. It's taking longer than we anticipated.

51 INT. DOCTOR PULASKI'S OFFICE (OPTICAL)

She is at her desk-top computer terminal as Data enters.

PULASKI

Data,
(she says "Data" with
a short A)
look at this.

DATA

(he corrects her)
Data.

51 CONTINUED:

PULASKI

What?

DATA

My name. It is pronounced Data.

PULASKI

(with a wry smile)

Oh?

DATA

You called me Data.

PULASKI

What's the difference?

DATA

One is my name and the other is not.

PULASKI

Is this possible?

Data is puzzled by the apparent non sequitur. Pulaski stands, picks up her medical recorder, steps over to Data and begins a body scan.

PULASKI

(continuing)

In all of your neural nets, algorithms, and heuristics, is there some combination which makes up a circuit for bruised feelings?

Data looks confused.

PULASKI

(continuing)

Apparently so, because I think I just offended your tender sensibilities.

She looks at the puzzled Data.

PULASKI

(continuing)

Possible?

Then with an amused look, gets back to business.

51 CONTINUED: (2)

PULASKI

(continuing; indicating
the CRT)

I am unfamiliar with these
symbols.

Data steps around and examines the screen.

DATA

It indicates a genetically
engineered biological life-form.

PULASKI

About twenty percent of the
specimens fall into that category.
(to herself)
Some eager beaver at play.

DATA

Query... "eager beaver?"

PULASKI

In this case, 'eager beaver'
refers to some overachieving
genetic engineer, who probably
for lack of something better to
do forced this strain of virus
to mutate, just to see how bad,
bad can get.

(touches her
communicator)

Captain Picard.

INTERCUT WITH MAIN BRIDGE AS NEEDED.

PICARD

Picard here.

PULASKI

Just so you fully appreciate the
risks we are about to take...

PICARD

Enlighten me.

PULASKI

If the most innocuous specimen
on the manifest list gets loose,
it will destroy all life on the
Enterprise in a matter of hours.

51 CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD

I understand, Doctor. Do you have a recommendation?

PULASKI

Considering how desperately this is needed, no I don't. Just want you to know what we're carrying.

PICARD

Thank you, Doctor. Commander Data, if you have completed your review, you are needed in Transporter Room Three.

DATA

Yes, sir.

(to Pulaski)

Excuse me, Doctor.

PULASKI

That's okay...

(with long A, then short A)

Data, Data... whatever.

He gives the doctor a look. Doctor Pulaski returns to her viewscreen.

52 INT. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA (OPTICAL)

Troi is standing by the door with the TEACHER (MISS GLADSTONE). They are watching a GROUP OF KIDS playing with a half a dozen puppies. Sitting right in the middle of everything and playing with abandon is IAN, WHO IS NOW ALMOST EIGHT. Troi is enthralled by the actions of her "son."

TROI

Ian!

The boy looks up and smiles when he sees his mother. Then he notices a LITTLE GIRL next to him. Ian takes his hands off the puppy, and puts them (without any sense of threat, just curiosity) on the girl's hair.

MISS GLADSTONE

He's a very tactile child. He wants to touch and feel everything.

52 CONTINUED:

TROI

Come on, sweetheart, time to go.

Ian scrambles to his feet and trots over to his mother and gives her a big hug.

MISS GLADSTONE

Unbelievable -- I think he's actually grown since you dropped him off.

IAN

I like it here, Mommy.

TROI

I thought you would. Thank Miss Gladstone for having you, and let's go get you something to eat.

IAN

(to the teacher)

Thank you.

Ian then turns and waves to the other kids who are still involved with the puppies.

IAN

(continuing)

Bye...

Some of the other children wave -- most are too involved in what they are doing to notice.

TROI

(also to the teacher)

Thank you.

Miss Gladstone nods an acknowledgement, then watches them leave. Her eyes reflect the amazement she feels about Troi's unusual child.

53 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM THREE

Data arrives.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

The transporter is not making a positive lock.

53 CONTINUED:

DATA

The built-in inhibitor is
restricting onloading of
life-forms known to be hazardous
to the occupants of this ship.
Have you attempted override?

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

I don't have the authority.

Data steps in behind the console.

DATA

Computer, recognize -- Lieutenant
Commander N-F-N, N-M-I, Data.

COMPUTER VOICE

Authorization accepted.

DATA

Initiate override protocol.

COMPUTER VOICE

Override protocol is not
recommended in this situation.

DATA

Acknowledged. On my authority
-- begin override.

There is a pause.

COMPUTER VOICE

Sequence complete.

The TRANSPORTER CHIEF inputs the coordinates.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF

Cargo Deck Five. We will commence
transport on your command.

54 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE

Riker, Geordi and a couple of crewmembers are by the
containment grid. Geordi does a final visual survey of
the area.

GEORDI

Transporter Three -- we are ready
to receive.

55 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM THREE

as Data watches the Transporter Chief manipulate the controls.

56 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE (OPTICAL)

Riker and Geordi watch as the deadly little ampules are BEAMED into position. Next to Geordi is a CRT which reads out the contents of the little containers.

GEORDI

(to Data)

Data, the first batch is in place.
Ready for the next.

RIKER

Inform me when loading is complete
and the cargo secure.

GEORDI

Aye, sir.

Riker exits the Cargo Deck as the second batch of specimens appears within the containment grid.

57 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM THREE

The Transporter Chief sets in the coordinates and beams up the next load.

58 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS

Troi and eight-year-old Ian are there. The doors open. Picard and Pulaski enter.

PULASKI

I wanted to stop by and see how
Ian was doing.

TROI

We're doing fine. I was just
going to give Ian his supper.

IAN

(to Picard)

Do you want your supper now, too?

PICARD

No, Ian, but thank you for the
invitation.

58 CONTINUED:

IAN
You're welcome.

A spoon which Ian is playing with more than using, slips out of his hand and falls on the floor. Picard retrieves it.

IAN
(continuing)
Have you ever played with puppies?

Picard looks to Troi for an explanation. Troi smiles.

TROI
They had a litter today in the nursery.

PICARD
No, I have never played with puppies.

IAN
You'd like it. You should go to the nursery while the puppies are still there.

PICARD.
Perhaps later.

Troi puts the boy's supper down in front of him. It includes some hot steaming soup. Picard and Pulaski watch as Ian examines his food. He tries to touch the steam coming off the soup, then feels the wetness on his little fingers. Everything connected with his physical senses fascinates the child. He sticks his hand into the hot soup and holds it there for a beat:

IAN
(pulling it out)
Ouch...

He looks at his scalded fingers. Tears well up in his eyes and like any other child his age; he runs to his mother.

IAN
(continuing)
Ow... Mommy... ow...

Troi gathers the boy into her arms as the doctor steps over.

58 CONTINUED: (2)

PULASKI

Let me look at that.

Ian holds out the fingers and watches with great interest as Pulaski uses one of the instruments from the pocket of her smock to medicate the fingers.

PULASKI

(continuing)

It's not serious.

Ian studies his fingers as he realizes the pain is gone. Then he touches his cheek and feels the tears.

IAN

My face is wet.

Troi gently dries his tears with the tips of her fingers, then lovingly strokes his hair.

TROI

Is it better now, sweetheart?

The boy nods and cuddles in against his mother.

PULASKI

He allowed himself to be burned.

PICARD

Yes, for the experience.

PULASKI

Who is he? Why is he here? What does he want?

59 PICARD

He watches the child intently.

PICARD

Ian, could you tell us why you are here?

IAN

Because Mommy said it was time to eat.

Reactions from Troi and the doctor.

59 CONTINUED:

PICARD

No, I mean... why you are here
on this ship?

IAN

I live here.

TROI

Ian, the captain wants to know
if you are ready to tell us why
you came here.

IAN

No. Not yet.

Ian picks up the glass, which unlike the soup, this is
cold.

TROI

The answer is within him. When
his cognitive powers develop
sufficiently, he will be able to
articulate it.

PICARD

I hope he will tell us soon.

He takes some of the liquid into his mouth... rolls
it around, swallows some, and lets the rest run down
his chin. Picard watches as Ian pours some of the
liquid onto his leg just to know how it feels, then
he turns and walks toward the exit.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Captain to the bridge.

PICARD

I'm on my way, Number One.

(to Troi)

Keep me apprised of his progress,
Counselor.

Pulaski stays behind with Troi and her baby.

IAN

(too late for Picard
to respond)

Bye...

60 OMITTED

61 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard steps off the turbolift to the bridge. Riker is beside him. Data is at Ops -- Worf at the Tactical Station. The other positions are filled with n.d. crewmembers.

RIKER

The cargo has been loaded and is secure.

PICARD

Take us out of orbit, Number One
-- then set a course for Rachelis
-- warp nine.

62
thru OMITTED
63

64 EXT. TEN-FORWARD (OPTICAL)

Wesley steps up to the window, still carrying the weight of his decision. Guinan watches him cross the room and stand in front of the large center window.

65 GUINAN AND WESLEY (OPTICAL)

She comes up beside him.

GUINAN

Can I get you something?

WESLEY

No. I just wanted to stand here.

GUINAN

I don't blame you -- it's beautiful.

WESLEY

Yes.

GUINAN

How about some nice Mareuvian Tea?

WESLEY

No. Nothing thank you.

65 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

You're going to be leaving soon.

WESLEY

Yes.

They both watch as the Enterprise leaves orbit. The planet 'aucdet Nine slips away. As Wesley watches the ship maneuver into position, Guinan watches him.

GUINAN

What do you see when you look out there?

WESLEY

Over there is the Lorenze cluster, and there Arneb and there Epsilon Indi.

GUINAN

No, I don't mean that. I mean when you look there don't you see your future?

Wesley gives her a little sideways look.

WESLEY

It will still be there.

GUINAN

How about a cup of nectar direct from Prometheus?

WESLEY

No -- nothing. That's the third time you've asked me.

GUINAN

It's what I'm expected to do. Don't you always do what's expected?

WESLEY

I try to.

GUINAN

Even if it's not what you really want?

65 CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY

Sometimes. Sometimes you have to consider others more than yourself.

GUINAN

That's true. But sometimes the game is to know when to consider yourself more than others and to give yourself permission to be... selfish.

He looks at her. Then -- before he can answer, the Enterprise leaps to warp speed. The star field becomes a spectacular display. We PLAY THE REACTIONS of Guinan and Wesley.

66 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

moves along at warp speed.

67 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE (OPTICAL)

A concerned Hester Dealt is scanning the containment grid with his very sophisticated monitoring equipment.

HESTER

(real concern)

Something's wrong.

Geordi approaches Hester Dealt.

GEORDI

What is it?

HESTER

Growth.

GEORDI

Where?

HESTER

L-seven-three.

Geordi steps over to the side of the containment area, and activates a CRT screen. The screen has a display of the 512 modules inside. Each has a series of indicators, ONE ON THE FAR SIDE IS FLASHING. Geordi manipulates the panel so the display turns, giving him a better look at the flashing light.

67 CONTINUED:

GEORDI
(touches his
communicator)
Bridge, this is Cargo Deck Five.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
Yes, Lieutenant La Forge.

GEORDI
There is a malfunction in the
containment area.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
How serious?

HESTER
Very.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

68 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

traveling at warp speed.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. For reasons as yet unknown, one of the specimens of Plasma Plague is growing.

69 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE

Geordi and Hester Dealt continue checking. With a handheld monitoring device, Hester Dealt makes a sweep of the Cargo Deck.

GEORDI

(touches his
communicator)

Captain, the power to the containment grid must have somehow been affected when we increased to warp velocity.

INTERCUT THE MAIN BRIDGE AS NEEDED

PICARD

I don't see how that would be possible.

GEORDI

I don't either, but if we could return to impulse, we would know for sure.

PICARD

Impulse velocity.

70 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

as it comes out of warp.

71 OMITTED

72 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The tension level is growing.

PICARD
Report, Mister La Forge.

73 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE

Geordi waits as Hester Dealt checks his monitoring equipment, then shakes his head.

GEORDI
There's no change. It wasn't the
warp drive.

74 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard did not expect any. Riker is on his feet and heading for the turbolift.

RIKER
Permission to leave the bridge.

PICARD
Granted.

RIKER
Commander Data, you're with me.

Data leaves his position and follows Riker.

PICARD
Doctor Pulaski.

75 INT. DOCTOR PULASKI'S OFFICE

Pulaski is running through some medical records.

PULASKI
Yes, Captain.

PICARD'S COM VOICE
We are having some difficulties
on Cargo Deck Five -- your presence
is requested.

She is thoughtful for a beat.

75 CONTINUED:

PULASKI

I'm on my way.

75A INT. TEN-FORWARD (FORMERLY SCENE 71)

Wesley and Guinan are at the bar. Wesley is eating a twenty-fourth century Enterprise version of an ice cream sundae. His mood is much lighter, indicating he has come to some decision regarding his future.

WESLEY

You never talk about yourself.

GUINAN

Sure I do... all the time.

WESLEY

People say you are very old...

GUINAN

Oh?

WESLEY

... and that you knew Captain Picard when he was on the Stargazer.

GUINAN

No. I never met the captain until I came onboard.

WESLEY

Everyone is very curious about you.

GUINAN

I'll bet they are.

WESLEY

About where you come from.

GUINAN

Where do they say?

WESLEY

I heard that you're from Nova Kron and that...

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Mister Crusher, report to the bridge.

75A CONTINUED:

He's on his feet and heading for the door.

WESLEY

I've got to go.

Wesley stops and turns back.

WESLEY

(continuing)

Thank you.

GUINAN

There's nothing like a dish of
Delovian souffle.

WESLEY

I didn't mean the souffle, I meant
for... well... the rest. Thanks.

GUINAN

That's why I'm here.

76 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The turbolift opens and Wesley Crusher comes onto the
bridge.

PICARD

Take the Conn, Mister Crusher.

Wesley replaces the crewmember at that position.

PICARD

(continuing)

On this course -- increase velocity
to warp nine.

WESLEY

Aye, sir. Warp nine.

77 OMITTED

78 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE

Hester, Data, Riker are gathered around the monitoring
equipment. Geordi is off to one side peering at a
distant sector of the containment field. THE INDICATOR
LIGHT OF L-SEVEN-THREE CONTINUES TO FLASH.

78 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Why that module and not the others?

DATA

Computer, run diagnostic on module L-seven-three.

COMPUTER VOICE

All circuits functional.

GEORDI

(reading it off)

Temperature -- as set -- minus ninety-seven degrees. Humidity -- twelve percent. Lumins -- zero. Electromagnetic containment integrity... Everything right down the line... exactly as it should be.

DATA

Perhaps it is a sensor malfunction. Computer -- query. Is growth actually occurring?

COMPUTER VOICE

Confirmed.

79 ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

as the door opens and Doctor Pulaski enters. She nods a greeting to Riker and the others, then steps over beside Geordi who continues studying the distant section of the containment grid.

RIKER

One of the specimens is growing.

PULASKI

(to Hester Dealt)

Destroy it, now.

HESTER

I can't.

RIKER

Data, prepare to jettison that module.

79 CONTINUED:

HESTER

We can't do that either. It will go into a spore and remain until it comes in contact with a planet or another ship. The results would be disastrous.

RIKER

Commander, your attitude tells me that however bad I think this is... it's worse.

HESTER

(he indicates the
containment area)

This is not going to hold it.

RIKER

Go on.

HESTER

The rate of growth is increasing. Within thirty minutes it will push out of the module. Within two hours, it will breach the containment area.

GEORDI

It can't break through this.

HESTER

Yes it can.

RIKER

(touches his
communicator)

Captain. We may not be able to get control of this situation. I recommend making arrangements to transfer all non-essential personnel to the saucer section. If we lose containment we should be prepared to separate.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Make it so.

PULASKI

Why this one specimen and none of the others? Something is stimulating it. Do you have its etiology? How it was developed?

79 CONTINUED: (2)

Hester inputs the freestanding viewscreen, and the HISTORY OF "L-SEVEN-THREE" APPEARS. Pulaski looks at it.

PULASKI

It's a mutated strain developed by Doctor Susan Nuress during an outbreak of Plasma Plague seventy years ago in the Oby System.

(she pauses as she continues to read)

It was number nine in a series of tests. This particular one bombarded by low levels of Eichner radiation.

(then she turns to Hester)

Could exposure to Eichner radiation stimulate growth?

As a reflex act, Hester Dealt makes a sweep of the area with his handheld monitor.

HESTER

Yes, it could, but...

He stops... his expression says...

HESTER

(continuing)

Uh, oh...

PULASKI

Don't tell me.

HESTER

I'm detecting low levels of Eichner radiation.

RIKER

Why didn't you catch it before?

HESTER

Because it wasn't here before..

PULASKI

Well, it is now. What emits that type radiation?

DATA

A subspace phase inverter.

79 CONTINUED: (3)

GEORDI

We don't have one.

DATA

Certain cyanoacrylates.

PULASKI

Also, not on this ship... What else? Because it's here and we better find it.

Data has no answer.

80 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

Troi is putting the child to bed. She touches a control panel near the windows which turns them to their opaque configuration.

IAN

I can feel that some of the people are very... worried.

TROI

Yes. I feel it as well, but don't you worry.

IAN

It's me Mommy -- I'm the reason.

TROI

What?

IAN

It's me.

TROI

You?

IAN

Yes. I have to leave you now, or it will be very bad for everyone.

TROI

What are you saying?

He smiles up at her.

IAN

I have to leave now.

80 CONTINUED:

TROI

Leave?

(senses what he is about
to do)

You are going to die. No. No,
you can't.

He smiles up and closes his eyes.

TROI

(continuing; she touches
her communicator)

Sickbay, this is Counselor Troi,
I need the doctor in my
quarters... right now.

(then she lifts Ian to
her)

No... Ian... No.

Off Troi's reaction.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

81 INT. TROI'S QUARTERS

as Pulaski leads the others to Troi's quarters.

TROI

It's Ian. Please... please hurry.

Pulaski moves quickly to the unconscious child; pulls back the covers. She removes an instrument from her smock and makes a scan of the child's body. In the b.g., Picard enters with Riker and Data.

TROI

(continuing)

Save him, you must save him.

PULASKI

What happened? Did he eat anything? Did he fall?

TROI

No.

Data, using his tricorder, confirms with a nod to Riker.

DATA

The child is the source of the unusual radiation.

TROI

He said he's the reason the ship is in danger.

DATA

That analysis is correct.

Pulaski injects the child with hypospray.

PULASKI

I'm losing life signs.

Troi stands by helplessly. Like any mother in this situation, she is beyond grief. Tears streak her face.

TROI

Oh, please. Please save him.

82 PULASKI

resets the injector and again she administers a dose of hypospray. She waits for a reaction. There is none.

83 ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

The room is very quiet. Pulaski stands.

PULASKI

I'm sorry.

Troi moves next to the cot on which the child is lying. She is beyond despair. Her heart has completely broken. The others allow her a moment alone, then as Riker is about to move to Troi's side, a LIGHT -- the glowing energy which we saw at the beginning -- gathers from within the child and slowly rises. As it does, the body that was Ian fades away until there is only the LIGHT.

84 INTERCUT REACTIONS (OPTICAL)

Troi reaches out and with cupped hands she collects the LIGHT, cradles it gently and brings it to her. As she holds it close, it makes her face all aglow. Slowly the pain and despair drain away, and through the tears she smiles. The joy she now feels shines from her eyes. The Betazoid within her, embraces the essence of the entity before her and she knows now why he came and what he wanted. Then, in an act of pure love, she releases the glowing energy as she would a dove. For a beat the LIGHT seems reluctant to leave. Then it does. It passes effortlessly through the wall of the ship and away. Troi stares after it for a beat.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

(excited -- relieved)

Captain. The containment field has stabilized.

PICARD

Thank you, Lieutenant.

Troi turns and looks at her captain and shipmates.

TROI

Then Ian was right. He was the cause.

84 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Apparently so.

Troi pauses, gathering her feelings and picking her words carefully. She settles her emotions.

TROI

He is a life-force entity... as we passed each other in space he was curious and wanted to know about us, and he thought the best way to learn was to go through the process. To be born, to live as one of us and in that way to understand us.

She pauses, then:

TROI

(continuing)

Captain, he never meant any harm.

Picard nods -- he knows that is true.

RIKER

There was a moment when you smiled.

TROI

(she smiles again)

He said thank you.

(she pauses)

I told him we will miss him -- and I will.

The others will also miss him.

85 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

as it enters orbit near Science Station Tango Sierra.

86 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard is in his command chair, Riker beside him, Wesley at Conn.

PICARD

Standard station approach, Mister Crusher.

86 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

Standard approach, aye.

PICARD

Transporter Room Three, this is the captain. We have arrived. Let's make this transfer with all deliberate speed, and get on about our business.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Yes, sir.

RIKER

I will be glad to be relieved of this cargo.

Picard rises.

PICARD

You have the bridge, Number One.

RIKER

Yes sir.

As Picard crosses the bridge, Ensign Wesley Crusher buttonholes him.

WESLEY

Captain.

PICARD

Yes Ensign?

WESLEY

Could I see you when you have a moment?

PICARD

In my Ready Room when your duties permit.

WESLEY

Thank you, sir.

Picard continues on and leaves the bridge.

87 INT. CARGO DECK FIVE (OPTICAL)

Geordi and Hester Dealt are standing next to the containment area.

87 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Good luck.

The TRANSPORTER BEAM takes over and removes Hester Dealt from the Enterprise.

GEORDI

(touches his
communicator)

Data, you can lock on to the first
group and begin transporting on
my mark.

88 INT. PICARD'S READY ROOM

The CHIME RINGS.

PICARD

Come.

The doors open. It's Ensign Crusher. He enters and stands in front of Picard's desk.

PICARD

Yes, Ensign.

WESLEY

(hesitant)

Captain... I have thought about
this a lot. I want to remain on
the Enterprise.

PICARD

Oh. Have you discussed this with
your mother?

WESLEY

No, before I do that, I wanted
your permission to stay.

PICARD

Wes, it's a little more
complicated than that.

WESLEY

Captain, for right now... this
is where I want to be. This is
where I feel I belong.

Picard studies the young man for a beat.

88 CONTINUED:

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Captain -- transfer complete. We
are ready to leave orbit.

PICARD

Make it so, Number One.
(then to Wesley)
Return to your position.

Wesley hesitates a beat because he still hasn't
received an answer.

89 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard -- followed by Wesley -- comes on to the bridge.
Troi steps off the turbolift and takes her place.

RIKER

All stations secure.

PICARD

Take us out of orbit, Mister
Crusher and lay in a course for
the Morgana Quadrant.

WESLEY

Yes, sir.

Picard takes his seat.

PICARD

(loud enough for
everyone to hear)
Mister Crusher has requested to
remain on the Enterprise.

RIKER

I'm not surprised. How did you
respond?

PICARD

I haven't as yet, Number One.
I don't think it's my decision
alone. His remaining will cause
difficulties for us all.

RIKER

Yes, indeed. With his mother not
around, who will see to his
studies?

89 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Exactly. That duty would fall
to Commander Data.

RIKER

And, who'll tuck him in at night?

WESLEY

Come on, Commander.

WORF

I will accept that responsibility.

TROI

Well, we know he'll get his sleep.

PICARD

Then, Number One, that leaves you
the task of guiding young Mister
Crusher through his most hazardous
journey -- from youth to man. Are
you willing to serve?

RIKER

Difficult question...

Wesley turns and looks at Riker with a plea in his
eyes. INTERCUT look between them.

RIKER

(continuing)

... Yes, I think I can do that.

PICARD

All right then. Mister Crusher,
communicate with your mother at
Starfleet Medical headquarters.
Give her my regards and tell her
you have my permission to remain
on board the Enterprise.

There is a big smile on Wesley's face.

PICARD

(continuing)

But, that I will abide by her
wishes.

WESLEY

Yes, sir... thank you sir... I
just know she'll agree.

89 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Now -- if you have course and speed
laid in.

WESLEY

(back to duty)

Yes sir, they are.

PICARD

Then, Mister Crusher -- engage.

90 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

moves off to its next assignment.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END