

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Contagion"
#40272-137

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STAR TREK: "Contagion" - REV. 01/10/89 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Contagion"

CAST

PICARD	CAPTAIN DONALD VARLEY
RIKER	ROMULAN SUB-COMMANDER TARIS
DATA	
PULASKI	Non-Speaking
TROI	YAMATO CREWMEMBERS
GEORDI	ROMULAN CREWMEMBERS
WORF	
WESLEY	Voice-Over
	ICONIAN COMPUTER VOICE
O'BRIEN	ROMULAN COMPUTER VOICE
WILLIAMS	
DOCTOR	
Non-Speaking	
CREWMEMBERS	
Voice-Over	
COMPUTER VOICE	

STAR TREK: "Contagion" - 01/04/89 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Contagion"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
MAIN BRIDGE
OBSERVATION LOUNGE
MAIN ENGINEERING
CORRIDOR
TURBOLIFT
ACCESS TUNNEL
TRANSPORTER ROOM

PLANET ICONIA
CONTROL CENTER

ROMULAN BIRD OF PREY "HAAKONA"
MAIN BRIDGE

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
USS YAMATO
PLANET ICONIA
ROMULAN BIRD OF PREY "HAAKONA"

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Contagion"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

slows to sub-warp speed, moving forward on impulse.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, stardate 42609.1.
In response to a desperate plea
for aid by my old friend, Captain
Donald Varley of the USS Yamato,
I am running a grave risk and
taking the Enterprise into the
Neutral Zone.

2 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

PICARD at his desk, scanning a screen of data,
schematics of the Galaxy Class starships, as:

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

This rendezvous is necessitated
by dangerous malfunctions which
are plaguing our sister ship.
Perhaps with both crews working
together we will be able to
eliminate the problem -- before
we are detected by the Romulans.

He taps a touchpad, turning off the screen.

3 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The Ready Room doors open and Picard steps onto the
bridge.

PICARD

Mister Crusher -- how long to
rendezvous?

4 VARIOUS ANGLES AS NEEDED

WESLEY, WORF, and TROI are at their stations. RIKER is at Science One with DATA. Picard crosses to his seat.

WESLEY

Four minutes, thirty-three seconds, sir.

PICARD

Status of download, Mister Data?

DATA

Entire Yamato log will be in our computer by rendezvous.

RIKER

(to Data)

Have you nailed down our little hiccup yet?

DATA

Sir?

RIKER

The odd reading.

DATA

No. It might be due to the problems currently being experienced by the Yamato.

PICARD

Trouble, Number One?

RIKER

I'm not sure, sir.

(to Worf)

We are alone out here?

WORF

Yes, sir. There are no other vessels in the area except the Yamato.

(checks his panel)

Which is coming into viewer range now.

Riker takes his seat next to Picard. Data moves back to his station.

5 COMMAND AREA AND VIEWSCREEN - ANGLES AS NEEDED
(OPTICAL)

The screen displays a majestic view of the approaching USS Yamato, a twin of the Enterprise. Picard and Riker rise and move toward the viewscreen.

WORF

Transmission from the Yamato,
Captain -- on visual.

On screen is CAPTAIN DONALD VARLEY, about Picard's age, but brawnier and white-haired. He is standing near the executive officer's chair. To either side of him are two crewmembers who are inspecting an open panel which shows scorch marks and scattered isolinear chips. A third crewmember crosses in the foreground.

PICARD

Donald, what's a nice Starfleet
Captain like you doing in a place
like this?

VARLEY

It's good to see you, Jean-Luc,
despite your antique humor. I
only hope your people can help
us. The malfunctions are becoming
serious. We lost an engineering
team when the computer shut down
the forcefield in an open shuttle
bay. Eighteen people.

Picard and Riker exchange a look of shock.

RIKER

And no idea what's causing these
problems?

VARLEY

None. They are affecting every
system simultaneously. It's like
the ship has suddenly decided to
fall apart.

(a forced little laugh)

It's beginning to make me think
we should have run these Galaxy
Class ships across a few more
drawing boards before we built
one.

PICARD

Are you suggesting it's a design
flaw?

5 CONTINUED:

Varley is a man under intense pressure who is burying it deep. He's had to call on an old friend for help. He feels helpless and frightened. He has also committed a major offense by entering the Neutral Zone. He's talking a little off the top of his head.

5 CONTINUED: (2)

VARLEY

I don't know. I'm grasping at straws here. All I know is that we've got to get it fixed, and before I lose more than an engineering team.

RIKER

(urgently)

Do you wish to evacuate non-essential personnel to the Enterprise?

VARLEY

No... that would be premature.

PICARD

Donald, we'll get our teams to work. I'm sure neither of us feels too comfortable sitting around the Neutral Zone.

VARLEY

I know what you're thinking, what the hell am I doing here? Well, I had heard rumors about a couple of archaeological digs that started making the Iconians sound a lot less like legend. I did a little investigating, and I located their homeworld.

PICARD

In the Neutral Zone.

VARLEY

In the Neutral Zone.

PICARD

Don, this was quite a risk to run just to satisfy an archaeological curiosity.

VARLEY

No, the risk would be in allowing the Romulans to locate Iconia.

The viewer image of Varley breaks up in STATIC, fading for a beat, then returns.

5 CONTINUED: (3)

VARLEY

(continuing)

Fortunately, I got there first.
It's a virtually dead planet, but
enough of the technology remains
to give the Romulans an edge if
they were ever to find it.

During Varley's speech, more break-up occurs.

PICARD

Don, your transmission is breaking
up.

(rising, then to Data)

Clean that up.

WORF

(tensely)

Sir, there is an energy build-up
in the Yamato's engineering
section.

Picard whirls back to face the screen.

PICARD

Yamato, this is the Enterprise,
come in Yamato.

More STATIC.

WORF

Magnetic seals in the antimatter
chamber decaying!

PICARD

Captain. Don!

The viewer image of Varley BURSTS INTO A BLINDING WHITE
FLASH. PULL BACK to show the Yamato exploding.

PICARD

(continuing)

Shields up!

6 INT. MAIN BRIDGE AND VIEWSCREEN - VARIOUS ANGLES
(OPTICAL)

The bridge crew reflexively shield their eyes. The flash subsides, and the viewscreen defaults to a forward view of space and a barrage of fiery objects, hurtling toward the ship. KLAXONS SIGNAL RED ALERT as the objects batter the Enterprise. The ship is pounded (SFX) and shakes violently.

WORF

Sir!

Worf is staring at the viewscreen. Picard and Riker follow his gaze and stared, stunned, as the Yamato's saucer section, engulfed in flames and explosions, sails past, narrowly missing the Enterprise.

DATA

(quietly)

Sensors indicate no life readings
from the Yamato's saucer section.

WORF

(looks up from his
instruments)

Captain! Another vessel coming
into sensor range.

(ominously)

It is Romulan.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

7 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

On the Main Viewer is the Romulan battle cruiser.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. The Yamato's entire crew and their families, more than a thousand people, have been lost.

Data is at Ops. Wesley is at the Conn station. Riker is seated at his normal position. End on Picard as he finishes the log.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

Circumstances, unfortunately, permit us no pause for grief.

WORF

No response from the Romulan vessel.

RIKER

Arm phasers and prepare to lock on target.

PICARD

(to Data)

Did they attack the Yamato?

DATA

Unknown, sir.

WORF

All their weapons systems have been fully activated. Still no response.

PICARD

(upward glance; then, sternly)

Romulan vessel, this is Captain Picard of the USS Enterprise. Explain your illegal presence in the Neutral Zone --

8 VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

He is interrupted by an UNFAMILIAR FEMALE VOICE. Picard faces the image of the SUB-COMMANDER. She is seated in what we assume to be her command position on the Romulan bridge.

TARIS

Explain yours!

PICARD

Are you responsible for the destruction of the Yamato?

TARIS

No. And believe me, Captain, had we chosen to exercise our right to defend the Neutral Zone, we would not have stopped with one starship. You will leave at once.

Picard makes a slashing gesture to Worf who cuts the com.

PICARD

(looking to his bridge crew)

Comments?

TROI

She is extremely anxious --

WORF

Understandable if she just destroyed a Federation starship.

RIKER

Your scan was inconclusive. We can't be sure of what happened to the Yamato.

TROI

Our presence in the Neutral Zone is provocative. It could force her to respond.

8 CONTINUED:

PICARD

(to Worf)

Open com. We will comply when we have determined the cause of the Yamato's destruction. And when we are fully satisfied that you were not responsible. Picard out.

The Romulan response is to disappear.

WORF

They are engaging their cloaking device.

RIKER

Good. They can't fire when they're cloaked.

WORF

Unless they have overcome that deficiency. The Yamato was destroyed while they were cloaked.

PICARD

Forget the Romulans. I want to know what happened to the Yamato. Number One, assemble the staff for a conference in one hour. And I want answers.

RIKER

Aye, sir.

9 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

stationary, holding in space.

10 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Riker, Data, Worf, and GEORDI are present. Geordi stands by a screen containing a schematic of the Yamato and a blow-up of the affected engineering section. There is a pulsing red dot in the engine area.

10 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

(pointing)

Sensor recordings reveal that what we witnessed was an uncontrolled and catastrophic matter/antimatter mix. The magnetic seals between the chambers collapsed --

PICARD

That's not possible.

GEORDI

Yes, sir, it is, but a highly improbable series of events has to take place before such an occurrence can result.

PICARD

Explain.

GEORDI

In the event of a breach of seal integrity there is an emergency release system which dumps the antimatter.

DATA

Apparently such a dump began, was then halted, and the containment seals were dropped. There was still sufficient antimatter present to lead to the result we observed.

They all look back to the schematic where that deadly red dot is still pulsing.

PICARD

Then there is no evidence that a weapon was used?

Troi enters and moves to a chair. Seats herself.

TROI

I'm sorry I'm late. I was with the children. They have been deeply affected by the Yamato's destruction.

There is a beat while they consider the cost in human terms of this tragedy.

10 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Mister Data.

DATA

Evidence of a weapon? No, sir,
none.

GEORDI

However it happened, the Yamato
did it to herself.

PICARD

Theorize. What do you think
caused this catastrophic
malfunction?

GEORDI

(looking very grim)

I think Captain Varley may have
been correct. There could be
a design flaw.

RIKER

In a Galaxy Class starship?

Murmurs and physical reactions of consternation from
the officers. Picard is stone faced, unmoved.

GEORDI

Yes, sir. It's the most
complicated piece of machinery
ever built. Something could have
been overlooked.

PICARD

Knowing where the flaw is located,
do you think you can isolate and
solve the problem?

GEORDI

We're working on it now.

PICARD

Pull any and all personnel who
might be useful to your task.

They rise, ready to scatter to their assigned tasks.

10 CONTINUED: (3)

TROI

(to Picard)

If we have established that the Romulans were not responsible for the destruction of the Yamato, would it not be prudent for us to withdraw?

PICARD

If this is a design flaw, we better stay where we are and give Geordi time to work. Or what happened to the Yamato could happen to us.

10A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

remaining stationary.

11 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard is standing near his desk, staring at his unactivated console. This is a duty he'd like to skip. He sits down.

PICARD

Computer, access Captain Donald Varley's personal log. Search parameter, locate entries containing the words Romulan and Iconia.

COMPUTER VOICE

Working.

12 COMPUTER VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

Top of the screen shows a date and time code. Varley is slowly turning an alien-looking device in his hands. It is corroded and appears to be very old.

12 CONTINUED:

VARLEY

Personal log. It was kind of Doctor Ramsey to allow me to carry away my own little piece of legend from the archaeological dig on Denius Three. My engineers have examined it, but are completely baffled by the technology. What was its purpose? I'm like a caveman confronted by a tricorder. I'm certain this device is Iconian. But how far had it travelled before it was abandoned on an alien world?

A new image appears. Varley: elated.

VARLEY

(continuing)

Personal log. A galactic Rosetta stone. The starfield shown on the artifact was unintelligible until I took into account two hundred millenia of stellar drift. After that it was easy to pinpoint Iconia.

Screen blips. New image. Varley: thoughtful.

VARLEY

(continuing)

My first officer is questioning the wisdom of my order to violate the Neutral Zone, but I am convinced I have taken the only proper course. Should this advanced technology fall into the hands of the Romulans, we might as well dock our ships and defend ourselves with sticks.

Screen blips. New image. Varley: grim faced.

VARLEY

(continuing)

Personal log. We've been spotted by a Romulan cruiser, but after playing hide and seek through several solar systems, I think I've managed to elude them.

12 CONTINUED: (2)

Screen blips. New image.

VARLEY

(continuing)

The Iconian probe scan -- was it an attempt at communication? If only I knew what we were dealing with here.

Screen blips. New image. Varley: worried and angry.

VARLEY

(continuing)

Personal log. I am unable to send an away team to the surface of Iconia, nor can I scan the energy source on the planet because of these maddening system failures. It is infuriating to be stopped at the threshold of a dream by one's own ship. We are leaving orbit to rendezvous with Picard. If his people can't help us repair the Yamato, I must convince him to continue this exploration. The future well being of the Federation may depend upon it.

The image blips out.

COMPUTER VOICE

No further entries conforming to search parameters.

For a long, grim moment, Picard stares at the blank screen. He then rises and starts to exit. But the doors fail to open. He steps back, giving the doors a quizzical look, then steps forward again. This time the doors open normally. He exits.

13 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Riker is in the Command Chair. Data is at Science One. Picard crosses to the android.

PICARD

Mister Data, there is a reference in Captain Varley's personal log to a probe which scanned the Yamato.

13 CONTINUED:

DATA

Yes, sir. We have a visual record.

PICARD

Put it on Main Viewer.

14 ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

The image does not fill the entire screen. Next to it are a series of read-outs and a reference to the fact that this is from the Yamato log. Rising into view from the surface of a planet comes the probe. It is spherical, about the size of a beachball. It has a hard, transparent shell and, within it, a deep, translucent blue gel, flecked with bits of reflective material. It stops at "eye-level" and emits a BURST OF CRACKLING, SPIDERY ENERGY directly INTO CAMERA.

RIKER

What the devil is that?

PICARD

(to Data)

Have you ever seen anything like that before?

DATA

No, sir, but it appears to be a scanner. Possibly a transmitter.

RIKER

Transmitting what?

DATA

Unknown, sir.

Picard crosses to his Command Chair.

PICARD

Engineering.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

La Forge.

PICARD

Progress on your matter/antimatter scan?

14 CONTINUED:

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Everything continues to check out. I'm starting an analysis of the magnetic coils.

PICARD

Data, when the Yamato was probed, where was she?

DATA

In orbit around a planet at coordinates two two seven mark three five nine.

PICARD

Estimated time of arrival at warp factor eight?

DATA

Twelve hours, sixteen minutes.

WORF

Sir, that would put us substantially closer to the Romulan side of the Neutral Zone.

PICARD

It can't be helped. Ensign Crusher, lay in a course. Warp factor eight.

Riker is staring at him.

PICARD

(continuing)

We are going to assume the Yamato's mission.

RIKER

And risk a war?

PICARD

If that's what it takes to get some answers.

As we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

15 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard is seated at his desk. There is a CHIME.

PICARD

Come.

Wesley enters a little hesitantly. Picard eyes him, a little surprised by the intrusion.

WESLEY

Sir, may I talk to you for a minute?

PICARD

Yes.

Wesley crosses to him. Picard studies the boy's serious face.

WESLEY

It's about the Iconians, sir. I'd always heard that they were just a myth.

PICARD

China was thought to be only a myth until Marco Polo travelled there. No, the Iconians were real. We know that three systems in this sector have a number of cultural similarities. Similarities which can be explained only if there had been a single unifying force.

WESLEY

The Iconians colonized those worlds?

PICARD

Probably conquered.

WESLEY

So they were warlike?

15 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Perhaps. Ancient texts refer to them as the Demons of Air and Darkness, but that could have so many different interpretations.

WESLEY

Air and darkness?

PICARD

Legend has it that they travelled without the benefit of spaceships. Merely appearing from thin air on distant planets.

WESLEY

That sounds like magic.

PICARD

Wouldn't we seem magical to a stone-age people?

WESLEY

(responding to Picard's enthusiasm and echoing it)

How did you find out about all this?

PICARD

Archaeology has been a hobby since my Academy days. But why don't we talk about what really brought you here?

WESLEY

I can't stop thinking about the Yamato. All those people -- dead. I just don't know how you do it. You, Commander Riker, Geordi, you all handle it so easily.

PICARD

Easily. No, not easily.

Picard rises and crosses to the food unit. Keys for a cup of tea.

15 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

(continuing)

Darjeeling tea, hot.
We handle it because we are
trained to, as you will be. But
if the time ever comes when the
death of even a single individual
fails to move us --

Sitting smugly on the shelf of the food unit is a
single flower in a pot. Picard takes a step back, eyes
it, points.

PICARD

(continuing)

That should not have happened.

16 OMITTED

17 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in route to Iconia.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. As
happened with her sister, the
Enterprise is being plagued by
a series of system failures.

18 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

(Log entry will conclude over the fade-in to
Engineering.)

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

So far they are random, but
perhaps early symptoms of what
happened to the Yamato.

Geordi is hurrying from station to station. He holds a
PADD and is making notes. Five other crewmembers
hurry about. The com SOUNDS. With a mutter, he lunges
to answer.

GEORDI

La Forge!

18 CONTINUED:

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Lieutenant, are you making any progress toward a solution to our problems?

GEORDI

A solution, no sir, but I can eliminate one worry. It is not a design flaw. I've been reviewing the Yamato's log, and I think maybe that alien probe had something to do with her problems.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

How?

GEORDI

I'd need to see the thing.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

If it was the probe, that explains the Yamato; but how do you account for the difficulties the Enterprise is experiencing?

GEORDI

I can't.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Are our problems likely to attain the seriousness experienced by the Yamato?

GEORDI

If you want speculation, yes sir, I think they are. I need time.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Lieutenant, time is the one thing which we do not have in abundance.

19 EXT. SPACE - PLANET ICONIA (OPTICAL)

as the Enterprise ENTERS SHOT and assumes orbit. Iconia is a brown and red world. There are few bodies of water. It looks like a dead world.

20 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - VARIOUS ANGLES (OPTICAL)

Picard, Riker, Data, Wesley and Worf are at their stations.

DATA

Scanning.

Picard stands and moves between Wesley and Data. Examines the viewscreen, looking for anything that will tell him more about this place.

PICARD

(impatiently)

Mister Data.

DATA

No life-form readings.

WORF

All major cities have been heavily damaged, and the pattern of destruction is consistent with large-scale orbital bombardment.

PICARD

How long ago?

DATA

Approximately two hundred thousand years.

WORF

There is an energy source in the mountains of the smaller continent.

PICARD

Magnify.

20 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Is this Iconia?

PICARD

Donald Varley died believing that
it was.

Suddenly, we SEE a tiny bright FLASH OF LIGHT on the
planet's surface.

WORF

Captain! Projectile launched from
the planet's surface!

DATA

(checking readings)
Its size and composition match
the probe which scanned the
Yamato.

PICARD

Shields up. Ready the tractor
beam. Lieutenant La Forge, I'm
about to assist you in your
research. A probe has been
launched from Iconia. I intend
to capture it.

21 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Geordi is studying his notes. He has the expression
of a man who has made the final leap of logic and put
together the puzzle.

GEORDI

No, sir, wait!

There is a SQUEAL OF STATIC from the com, causing
everyone in Engineering to cover their ears. The
communications system goes dead.

GEORDI

(continuing)
Captain! Captain!
(no response)
Damn!

He races for the door.

22 INT. CORRIDOR

Geordi runs down the corridor heading for the turbolift.

23 INT. TURBOLIFT

Geordi enters the turbolift.

GEORDI

Bridge!

The turbolift lurches into motion at an incredible speed, SCREAMING along its shaft, decks FLASHING by almost stroboscopically. The sudden acceleration pins Geordi to the ceiling and knocks off his VISOR.

GEORDI

(continuing; shouts)

Emergency stop!

24 ANOTHER ANGLE

The turbolift comes to a sudden, complete halt. The SCREAMING of the air in the shaft STOPS, and Geordi falls to the floor. Barely a beat... then the lift SCREAMS off in another direction, pinning him against a wall.

GEORDI

Emergency stop! Stop dammit!

Another sudden halt -- and Geordi rolls toward the doors. He rolls across his VISOR, but manages to get a grip on the VISOR.

25 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - ANGLE ON THE PROBE (OPTICAL)

Picard and Riker stand in front of their command positions watching the viewscreen as the probe approaches. Worf leans in tensely over his console ready to key the tractor beam.

WORF

Tractor beam ready, sir.

PICARD

Prepare to lower shields,
Mister Crusher.

25 CONTINUED:

Suddenly the turbolift doors WHOOSH open, and Geordi tumbles out. He jams on his VISOR. Riker moves to assist him. Geordi looks up and sees the probe now dangerously near to the Enterprise.

RIKER

Geordi, are you --

Shrugging off the helping hands:

GEORDI

Destroy it, sir, quickly!

Picard is not a man to waste words when one of his top officers is so obviously in distress.

PICARD

Worf, target phasers!

Worf quickly punches several touchpads on his console.

WORF

Phasers locked on target.

26 ANGLE -- PAST PICARD TO VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The probe almost on top of the Enterprise. It begins to spit its energy.

PICARD

Fire!

PHASERS FIRE, striking the probe. It EXPLODES.

PICARD

(continuing; cool as
ice)

Mister La Forge, are you all right?

GEORDI

Yes, sir, and thank you for trusting me. If that thing had managed to scan us, we would have had no hope of saving the Enterprise.

Various reaction shots from the bridge crew as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

27 OMITTED

28 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Present are Picard, Riker, Geordi, and Data.

GEORDI

That probe was a transmitter sending an alien computer program. The same program that is currently aboard the Enterprise and trying to rewrite our software in its own image. We have two completely incompatible computer systems trying to interact.

RIKER

So that's why the ship's instruments have become so erratic.

GEORDI

Yes.

PICARD

What can you do?

GEORDI

Not very much. The Iconian program is so sophisticated I don't think I'll ever understand it.

DATA

Consider, Captain, this program has entered an alien data base -- ours -- and in less than seven hours it has managed to not only learn our system, but has also begun to reprogram our computer.

PICARD

(to Geordi)

So the earlier probe was responsible for the Yamato's destruction.

28 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Only insofar as the probe transmitted the program.

RIKER

But we weren't scanned by the probe. So how did this thing get aboard the Enterprise?

DATA

We downloaded the Yamato log, and contained in the log was the program.

PICARD

So why haven't we suffered their fate?

GEORDI

The program affected all systems on the Yamato simultaneously. But with us, the program was deposited in a specific section of our mainframe. It's having to work its way out from that location. That gives us a little breathing space.

RIKER

Not much. Reports of injuries are mounting.

DATA

Doctor Pulaski is unwilling to trust the turbolifts. She is sending medical teams through the access tunnels.

GEORDI

Sir, the Enterprise computer system is a lot like our bodies with a voluntary and involuntary system. Probably ninety percent of what happens on this ship is done automatically, completely beyond our control. We're sitting on a bomb that could go any second -- or never.

28 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Can you stop this thing?

GEORDI

I'll give it my best shot.

29 OMITTED

29A INT. SICKBAY

PULASKI chews out one of her medical staff. Sickbay is a scene of orderly chaos. The single remaining doctor is bouncing between three patients, the readouts on the biobeds are going crazy.

PULASKI

The biobeds aren't working.
The ship's falling apart and
you're wasting my time about
biobeds? I've got thirty-five
emergency calls scattered across
twelve decks and my trauma teams
are being run ragged trying to
respond.

(almost to herself,
flinging up her hands)
Biobeds!

The doctor is trying to work with a patient with a broken arm. Frustrated, he calls for Pulaski:

DOCTOR

Doctor Pulaski.

PULASKI

What?

DOCTOR

I've got a problem here.

Pulaski storms past the chastised nurse to where the harried doctor is staring at the broken arm and a shell that isn't doing its job.

DOCTOR

(continuing)
The knitter isn't working.

PULASKI

Use a splint.

A beat as the doctor stares uncomprehendingly at Pulaski.

PULASKI

(continuing)
Splint. It's a very ancient
concept -- two flat pieces of wood
or plastic, a bandage. The broken
limb is kept immobile.

STAR TREK: "Contagion" - REV. 01/12/89 - ACT THREE 27A-28.

29A CONTINUED:

DOCTOR

That's crazy, that's not
practicing medicine.

PULASKI

Oh yes it is. A time-honored way
of practicing medicine -- by
using your head and your heart
and your hands. So jump to it.

The doctor jumps to it.

STAR TREK: "Contagion" - REV. 01/12/89 - ACT THREE 28AA.

30 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

Geordi and Data (mood lighting if desired).

GEORDI

Dammit!

DATA

Try a bypass on the shield control
interface.

GEORDI

No go. Let me see if I can
directly access the master
program.

STAR TREK: "Contagion" - REV. 01/09/89 - ACT THREE 28A.

30 CONTINUED:

His fingers fly across the key pads. Suddenly the
console passes a powerful electric shock into Geordi,
freezing him to the console. Data pulls Geordi off
the console. Feels for a throat pulse. Geordi is
already recovering and fends him off.

GEORDI

(continuing)

What happened?

30 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

Any answer would be mere speculation. This is just another example of how our actions have random results.

GEORDI

Thank you, Data, I noticed.

31 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Present are Picard, Riker (mood lighting if desired).

RIKER

Life support has failed on Decks Seven and Thirteen.

Picard gives no reaction to this report.

RIKER

(continuing)

Suppose this thing manages to rewrite our entire system? It's so far beyond us that we don't have a hope of understanding it, much less controlling it. Our ignorance could kill us.

PICARD

We may never reach that point. A variation of what happened to the Yamato may destroy us first.

RIKER

So we just sit here while the ship disintegrates around us?

PICARD

The probe was launched from Iconia, probably by an automated system. There may be records near the launch site which could help us find a solution.

RIKER

I'll form an away team.

PICARD

I will lead it.

31 CONTINUED:

RIKER
You will lead it?

PICARD
Yes.

RIKER
We've had this discussion a
hundred times before.

PICARD
Will, ever since I was a cadet
I've studied the Iconians. I have
to be the one to go.

Riker slowly nods.

PICARD
(continuing)
The Enterprise is yours.

RIKER
For as long as she lasts.

32 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

O'Brien behind the console. Tools lie scattered
around the transporter, isolinear chips, etc. Picard,
Data, and Worf on the platform (mood lighting if
desired).

O'BRIEN
I've got a fix on the energy
source, and for the moment this
baby...
(points to the
transporter console)
... is working, but that could
change in an instant.

PICARD
We're aware of the risks.
Energize.

They DEMATERIALIZE.

33 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Riker in the Command Chair with Troi at his side. Wesley is at his station. WILLIAMS is at Tactical, supernumeraries at the other positions (mood lighting if desired).

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Transport complete.

RIKER

Stay sharp, Mister O'Brien, I want to be able to pull them out at a moment's notice.

WESLEY

Commander, Romulan vessel!

At Wesley's call Riker's focus is jerked to the viewscreen where a Romulan vessel is appearing. Following dialogue must proceed very quickly.

RIKER

Open hailing frequencies.

WILLIAMS

They're arming photon torpedoes!

RIKER

Shields up! Go to Red Alert!

WESLEY

Shields not responding.

WILLIAMS

They are preparing to fire photon torpedoes!

RIKER

Ensign Crusher, we need those shields!

WESLEY

I'm trying, sir!

WILLIAMS

Firing.

Everybody turns to face the viewscreen and tenses as they prepare to die. Nothing happens.

RIKER

What happened?

33 CONTINUED:

WILLIAMS

(confused)

Instead of firing they suddenly
disarmed and cancelled.

RIKER

Fate protects fools, little
children and ships called
Enterprise.

(to Williams)

Lock phasers on the Romulan, but
hold your fire.

WESLEY

Sir, the shields are up.

RIKER

(almost to himself)

Impeccable timing.

WESLEY

Uh, shields are back down.

WILLIAMS

Phaser banks are down.

WESLEY

The shields are back up.

TROI

In another time and another place
this could be funny.

RIKER

Status of the torpedo banks?

WILLIAMS

They're down too.

RIKER

In case it should become necessary
to fight, do you suppose you could
find me some rocks to throw at
them?

Williams just shrugs and looks helpless. She returns
to tinkering with the console.

WILLIAMS

Sir, the Romulan torpedoes are
continuing to arm and disarm.

33 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Maybe their attempt to fire
was not intentional.

(to Williams)

Open hailing frequencies.

WILLIAMS

Open.

The viewscreen comes up revealing the Romulan
sub-commander.

RIKER

Romulan vessel, this is Commander
William Riker, first officer of
the USS Enterprise. Why did you
attempt to fire on us?

TARIS

This is Sub-Commander Taris of
the Haakona. Why have you
penetrated deeper into the
Neutral Zone?

RIKER

Why are you still here?

TARIS

I have claimed this planet for
the Romulan Empire.

RIKER

This is the Neutral Zone. Nobody
can claim anything.

TARIS

You will withdraw or I will be
forced to destroy your ship and
your away team.

She is interrupted mid-speech. There is break-up on
Taris's face. CUT TO a view of the Romulan ship as it
cloaks and uncloaks, cloaks and uncloaks. As it
cloaks, communication is lost. Then returns when the
ship reappears. Taris is looking rattled as she
appears and disappears.

RIKER

What the hell?

Taris is back on viewscreen. She is once again fully
in control.

33 CONTINUED: (3)

TARIS

This is your final warning, I
will not --

33 CONTINUED: (4)

RIKER

(interrupting)

Having a little trouble with your systems, Commander? Maybe we could consider postponing the war until we solve our more immediate problem?

TARIS

You're stalling for time.

WESLEY

Sir, another probe launched from the planet, heading for the Romulan.

RIKER

(to Williams)

Have we got our phasers back?

WILLIAMS

No, sir.

RIKER

Taris, if you've got phaser capability, you better use it now!

TARIS

What?

RIKER

Destroy that probe!

Taris blips out, and we have a view of the cruiser with the incoming probe. The probe reaches eye level and is destroyed by phaser fire. Taris does not return.

RIKER

(continuing)

And not even a thank you.

TROI

Sub-Commander Taris is deeply frustrated, probably because her ship is as crippled as the Enterprise.

WESLEY

Why would the Romulans be having problems? They haven't been probed.

33 CONTINUED: (5)

RIKER

They must have tapped into the Yamato log. Taris got a whole lot more than she bargained for.

WILLIAMS

Commander, sensors indicate the Romulans are attempting to transport a team.

(a beat)

They lost them, complete molecular break-up.

TROI

So the captain is safe for the moment.

RIKER

Safe from the Romulans.

(rises)

Maintain Red Alert, and try to keep those shields up just in case Taris feels she has to act on her threat.

WESLEY

(slewing around in his chair)

Sir, what about the away team? With our shields up we can't beam them back.

Riker looks to the viewscreen at the ominous image of the Romulan cruiser. To the empty captain's chair. We can see his dilemma as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

34 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM

The away team is exploring. They have beamed into a dimly lit room. The walls are covered with controls and conduits. Directly across from them is a wall which contains three silver gateways. In the center of the room is a pentagon-shaped "table" about waist high. At the center of the table is a large, softly glowing, translucent blue dome. It is flecked with the same bits of reflective material as the probe. Around the dome, extending to the edge of the table, are countless colored keys. There are also flat screens set in each of the five angles of the table. Each screen is a different geometric shape -- a square, a triangle, an octagon, a pentagon and a rectangle. There is alien script beneath the screens and on certain parts of the control walls. Data is scanning with his tricorder. Worf has his phaser out. Picard just roams the room.

WORF

(touching his insignia)
Enterprise. Come in Enterprise.
Still no response, sir.

PICARD

Keep trying them. Communication
is going to be erratic.

WORF

I do not want to become a
permanent resident of this
planet.

PICARD

Nor do I, Mister Worf.

DATA

Scans indicate no other life-forms
on the planet.

PICARD

I would not expect any. Judging
from the severity of bombardment,
I doubt any Iconians survived.

Picard claps his hands and briskly rubs them together
as he approaches the console.

34 CONTINUED:

PICARD

(continuing)

Well, Mister Data, let us see if we can make sense of this.

DATA

Aye, sir.

Picard studies the alien writing as Data joins him.

PICARD

This is very reminiscent of Dinasian.

DATA

Yes, sir. There are also similarities to Dewan and Iccobar.

PICARD

Is it possible that they are all branches of a language family beginning with Iconian?

DATA

Yes.

PICARD

Run a comparison between simple, basic words in Dinasian, Dewan and Iccobar. Let's see if we can't reconstruct a common root language.

Data goes into his analysis mode.

DATA

Accessing.

34A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Troi and Riker are in the Command Chairs. Williams stands tensely at Tactical. Wesley is at Ops. A supernumerary mans Conn.

RIKER

You're jumpy.

TROI

The tension on the ship is very high.

34A CONTINUED:

RIKER

What's your recommendation?

TROI

Give everyone something else to think about, some place to focus their attention.

RIKER

All right, let's consider evacuation.

TROI

(surprised)

To the planet?

RIKER

It's risky with Taris sitting out there -- it's probably impossible to pull off, but it will give everyone something to do. You go and start organizing it.

TROI

But you will need me if you have to negotiate with Taris again.

RIKER

I'll manage. Right now they're more important.

Troi exits.

35 OMITTED

36 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard and Worf are studying the console. Data comes out of his analysis mode.

DATA

Captain, your original hypothesis was correct. Iconian is the parent tongue for a language family consisting of Dewan, Iccobar and Dinasian. I have constructed a basic working understanding through a comparison of common root words such as mother, father, food, death, child, home, tribe, pain, love, mine, yours, ours --

36 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Data, Data, Data -- the point.

DATA

You do understand that my interpretation of the symbols will not be exact?

PICARD

Yes, let's get on with it.

DATA

(pointing to a set of symbols)

This would appear to be the manual override.

He touches the keys, and a LOW HUMMING fills the room. The light within the globe intensifies. Worf stiffens with hand on phaser. Suddenly rays lance out from the globe. Our people react. The rays strike the panels on the back wall and intersect in the room to form the gateway. It spins slowly. Each time it comes around, a new image appears through the opening. It makes one full revolution every couple of minutes. Appearing is a courtyard of a house with an alien-colored sky, a desert scene with a city in the distance, a street with iron balconies and pastel stucco walls, a grassy field (and eventually the Enterprise and the Romulan bridges). Picard walks forward and stares in wonder.

DATA

That was not manual override.

PICARD

(to himself)

Demons of Air and Darkness, indeed.

WORF

What is that?

PICARD

A gateway.

WORF

The scenes could be holographic images.

36 CONTINUED: (2)

Data steps forward and thrusts his arm through the gate. From his elbow down, the arm is gone. Picard reacts quickly to this foolishness. Leaping forward, he grabs Data by the shoulders and pulls him back just as the scene changes.

PICARD

Data, that was very foolish.

36 CONTINUED: (3)

DATA

But we have established it is not a holograph. If I step through and investigate, we would determine whether it is truly a gateway.

PICARD

No, Data. You might not be able to get back, and I can't risk losing you.

WORF

If it's not illusion, this gate would seem to take you beyond the confines of this planet.

PICARD

Is this how the Iconians travelled? Stepping across light years as easily as we would cross a room? Those worlds might be in distant sectors of our galaxy.

Picard takes a turn about the room, studying the gateway.

PICARD

(continuing; almost to himself)

This is what Varley feared. What he lost his life for.

WORF

Sir?

PICARD

The Romulans could turn this technology into a weapon.

WORF

Like the Iconians did.

DATA

No, I believe that to be incorrect. Captain, there is nothing in this room to indicate it was used as a military command center. It is much more akin to a transporter room.

36 CONTINUED: (4)

WORF

But the probe was hostile.

PICARD

We can't make that assumption. The probe's effect on the Yamato was devastating, but I suspect that was by accident rather than design.

WORF

We do know that the Iconians were conquerors.

PICARD

Do we? The little we know was passed down by the descendants of the people who attacked this world. I'm beginning to think the Iconians may have been the victims of some very bad press.

DATA

Sir?

PICARD

There's an unfortunate tendency in most cultures to fear what they don't understand. It is possible that their enemies, when confronted with this technology, were driven to attack the Iconians out of fear.

Worf turns back to the gate to contemplate Picard's words. Picard and Data return to the console. Occasionally Data runs scans with his tricorder. Suddenly the bridge of the Enterprise appears.

WORF

Sir!

36 CONTINUED: (5)

The other two whirl at the note of urgency in his voice and have a brief glimpse of the Enterprise before it is replaced by an alien landscape. The Romulan bridge appears, vanishes; and we again have an alien landscape.

WORF

Was that really the Enterprise?

PICARD

I believe that it was. Gentlemen, we have a way home.

(a beat)

I think the Iconians might have outfoxed their enemies. Perhaps they didn't all die in the bombardment; some may have passed through this.

Data runs more scans with his tricorder.

DATA

Sir, there is a vast underground power source which is controlled by this console.

He points to a bank of lights which had not been lit previously, but are now glowing brightly.

DATA

(continuing)

My triggering of the gateway has caused a dramatic upsurge in power levels.

(runs more scans)

Ah, I have access.

Symbols appear on one side of the screens. Data studies them. He begins to input using the keys on the console.

WORF

Sir, the Enterprise again.

PICARD

Time the rotation.

36 CONTINUED: (6)

Suddenly the globe emits a HIGH-PITCHED TONE followed by a beam of sickly green light. There is a SOUND OF CRACKLING as the ray envelops Data. It travels the length of his body, rendering him immobile. The energy flow stops, and Data -- stiff as a board -- starts to topple. He is caught by Worf who eases him to the floor. Data lies unmoving, eyes open but devoid of expression, staring at the ceiling.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

37 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard, seated on the floor, cradles Data.

PICARD

Data, respond.

Data shudders, a shiver running from his head to his feet. Blinks.

DATA

Captain.

WORF

Are you all right?

DATA

No, I am damaged.

Worf and Picard have gotten Data to his feet, but he is swaying drunkenly and can barely stand.

PICARD

How bad is it?

DATA

The Iconian program is attempting a rewrite of my basic software. Physical manifestations --

Data abruptly cuts off and seems to go into analysis mode.

WORF

Sir, without him we have no hope of deciphering the program.

We see Picard's terrible agony as he realizes that the Enterprise may be doomed.

PICARD

How long until the Enterprise reappears?

WORF

Six minutes if the cycle holds.

37 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Stand ready, Mister Worf, and go through with Data. Geordi can learn from him. Maybe help him.

WORF

Sir, we have not yet established that that...

(a gesture to the gate)

... is truly a gateway.

PICARD

This will be the test.

WORF

Aye, sir.

PICARD

(holding out a hand)

Data, give me your tricorder.

With a hand that shakes like a palsy victim, Data removes the tricorder. He then hesitates, moving his head like a questing stork.

DATA

Sir, what is your present location?

PICARD

I'm right in front of you... Data, what is it?

DATA

Please, take the tricorder. I am unable to sufficiently pinpoint your location to be able to hand it to you.

PICARD

You're blind.

DATA

Yes, sir.

Picard takes the tricorder from Data's hand. He has to peel back the android's fingers because Data has such a grip on the device. Data's equilibrium is shot, and he walks in a tight circle around himself. He then collapses again.

37 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD
(handing the tricorder
to Worf)
Destroy this.

WORF
But, sir, it contains the record
of all that we have discovered
here.

PICARD
And that is precisely why it must
be destroyed. Time?

WORF
Three minutes.

PICARD
(to himself)
I am running out of time. We
all are.

Picard kneels beside Data and pulls him up until the android is supported against his shoulder. Worf lays the tricorder on the floor of the chamber and fires his phaser at it. The tricorder VANISHES.

PICARD
(continuing)
This room and the technology
contained in it must be destroyed.
It cannot be allowed to fall into
Romulan hands.

DATA
I understand...

PICARD
How! How do I do it? How can
I destroy everything? Control
room, the probes? All of it.

DATA
The... power... source.

37 CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD

I detonate it?

DATA

Yes.

PICARD

(giving Data a shake)

How? What do I do?

DATA

The... probes.

PICARD

Probes... the probes. Launch?
Do I launch the probes?

Data nods.

PICARD

(continuing; to Worf)

What's that going to do? Nothing.

DATA

Doors.

PICARD

Doors?

WORF

Perhaps the probes are in a
launch bay.

Data nods energetically.

PICARD

The doors will open automatically
when the launch begins. I'd have
to override.

DATA

Yes.

PICARD

The power source! The backwash
from the rockets will spill into
the main power grids and cause
an overload.

DATA

Cor... rect.

37 CONTINUED: (4)

PICARD

Which control keys? Damn, I
forgot you can't see.

DATA

Help.

Picard rightly assumes that Data wants to be helped to the console. With Worf's help they get the Android to his feet and over to the console. This dialogue has to fly.

DATA

(continuing)

Describe.

37 CONTINUED: (5)

PICARD

We're directly opposite the gateway. There is a rectangular screen.

DATA

(shakes his head)

Left... one meter.

PICARD

Triangular screen. The lights directly above are solid amber. To the left red --

DATA

Cor... rect. Key... blue, amber... amber... red.

PICARD

That's the launch sequence?

Data nods.

PICARD

(continuing)

How do I override the doors?

DATA

Blue, blue, blue.

PICARD

I hope you're not stuttering.

(to Worf)

I don't know how long a delay there will be between the launch and the detonation. I'll hold off keying the launch sequence until you're through the gate. How long until the Enterprise returns?

WORF

Almost time, sir. Captain, you will be killed.

PICARD

I'll go through the gate.

WORF

But where will you end up?

37 CONTINUED: (6)

PICARD

Any place is going to be better than this room. Worf, I'm depending on you. Get Data back to the Enterprise. He may be their last hope.

Worf helps Data. At the time expected, the bridge of the Enterprise appears and the Klingon steps through.

38 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Access panels are open. The bridge is a complete mess. Still mood lighting. People work at the various stations. Riker is overseeing this last-ditch effort. Worf and Data APPEAR.

RIKER

Worf! What happened? Where's the captain?

Data makes small mewling little sounds, then falls silent.

WORF

We must take Data to Engineering.

Worf shifts Data into a fireman's carry, and he and Riker start moving.

39 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

CLOSE UP on Geordi's hands as he runs scans on Data. PULL BACK to reveal Riker watching tensely. The scanner is emitting a steady beeping sound.

GEORDI

I don't know how to help him. But comparing recorded norms for Data to the current readings, it's clear that all his functions are going crazy. If we had an expert -- Maddox, or somebody --

The steady blip of the scanner suddenly becomes a flat, steady tone; and the line goes flat.

GEORDI

(continuing)

He's gone.

40 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM

Picard keys in the launch sequence. A LOW HEAVY RUMBLING fills the room. A MECHANICAL, ALIEN-SOUNDING VOICE begins what is obviously a countdown.

COMPUTER VOICE

Kandar se. Kandar ere.

41 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Only a few seconds have passed. Geordi reaches out and closes Data's eyes. Then abruptly the android's eyes reopen. Data sits up.

GEORDI

Data!

RIKER

What the hell?

DATA

Ah, I have access.

Suddenly things begin to fall into place for Geordi.

GEORDI

The self-correcting mechanism --

DATA

(looking for Picard)

Captain? Captain?

GEORDI

It's constantly kicking in to make minute adjustments in the positronic brain.

DATA

This is the Enterprise. How did I get here?

RIKER

He cleared the Iconian program from his own system. How?

DATA

Iconia? I was on Iconia. Now I am on the Enterprise.

RIKER

Geordi, this is critical. How?

41 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Let me think for a second. There was an incompatible program running through Data's system, so the mechanism started searching for a way to keep him alive. The solution must have been a shutdown and a total wipe of all affected memory.

DATA

Query. What have I forgotten?

RIKER

One question. Can we do the same thing with the Enterprise?

41 CONTINUED: (2)

GEORDI

I don't see why not... but it will have to be a complete shutdown. We turn her off, effect a wipe of the Yamato log and every subsequent event since we downloaded it. I'll then reload all the ship's programs from the protected archives in the main core.

RIKER

Geordi, a shutdown means that the shields are going to be coming down too, and we're hanging nose to nose with a Romulan battle cruiser.

GEORDI

Hey, Commander, whether it's Romulan phasers or our own warp engines we're just as dead.

RIKER

Make it so.

Geordi whirls to obey. Data is very confused, but he's still game and ready to be of help.

DATA

Can I help?

42 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM

Picard is keying the override sequence. The RUMBLING becomes a ROAR. Suddenly the room is shaking. Steam erupts from the console. The countdown continues over this scene.

COMPUTER VOICE

Kandar more, kandar sete, kandar ne.

43 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

A shot of the ship completely dark. Suddenly the lights come up on the vessel.

44 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Riker walks in like a man with a purpose and hangs over the terminal.

O'BRIEN

All systems functioning.

RIKER

Lock on the captain and bring him back.

O'BRIEN

Scanning, sir. Got him.

45 INT. ICONIAN CONTROL ROOM (OPTICAL)

Sparks are flying off the console. The room is shaking. Steam coming out of the walls. The gate is showing the bridge of the Enterprise. Picard runs for it, but at the last minute it switches to the bridge of the Romulan cruiser. Picard hesitates for an instant, then plunges through just as the globe shatters. Over all of this the countdown continues:

COMPUTER VOICE

Kandar qetar, Kandar jet, kandar piqe, kandar...

46 INT. ROMULAN MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Taris stands in astonishment as Picard APPEARS. Her bridge is a disaster. Sparks off some of the consoles, etc. Two Romulan crewmembers with phasers move in on Picard. Over all there is a HOWLING KLAXON and lights flashing. A MONOTONOUS VOICE announces:

COMPUTER VOICE

Setha-tri par trukatha.

47 INT. ENTERPRISE TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'BRIEN

I've lost him!

RIKER

Damn it!

O'BRIEN

Got him! Sir! He's on the Romulan ship.

47 CONTINUED:

RIKER

How the hell... never mind.
Energize!

O'Brien's hands as he engages the transporter.

48 INT. ROMULAN MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

TARIS

(bitterly)
You did this.

COMPUTER VOICE

Setha-ki par trukatha.

PICARD

Did what?

TARIS

Activated the auto-destruct. I
at least have the satisfaction
that you will die with us.

COMPUTER VOICE

Setha-mille par trukatha.

PICARD

(feeling the effects
of the transporter
kicking in)
Not I think, today, Commander.

He DEMATERIALIZES.

49 INT. ENTERPRISE TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard BEAMS IN and plunges off the platform. Reaches
over the console and hits the com:

PICARD

Bridge.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Yes, sir.

PICARD

Get us out of here. The Romulan
ship is set for auto-destruct and
they can't deactivate it.

49 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Wait, sir.

(to O'Brien)

Open a hailing frequency.

Picard steps back and regards his First Officer in
puzzlement.

49 CONTINUED: (2)

O'BRIEN

Open, sir.

RIKER

Commander Taris, prepare to receive a transmission from our chief engineer. He'll instruct you on how to purge your system.

A beat.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Commander, your transmission has been received and acknowledged.

RIKER

Now, Mister Data, warp speed please -- just in case Taris's engineer is not as efficient as Lieutenant La Forge.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Yes, sir.

(a beat)

Captain, sensors picking up a large explosion on the surface of Iconia. It is equivalent to a force twelve hydrogen explosion. Blast radius is nine hundred kilometers.

Picard and Riker begin walking toward the doors. Data continues to burble on over their dialogue:

DATA'S COM VOICE

(continuing)

The dust particles entering the stratosphere will take an estimated seven months to fall back to the surface. The diminution in sunlight will have the effect of lowering average daily surface temperatures on Iconia by fifteen degrees Celsius.

PICARD

I see Data's back to normal.

RIKER

With a little touch of amnesia.

49 CONTINUED: (3)

Picard pauses and surveys the lights, glances about the Transporter Room.

PICARD

It seems that everything is back to normal. Well done, Commander.

RIKER

(with a grin)

Thank you, sir.

49 CONTINUED: (4)

The two officers exit as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END