

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Q Who?"
#40272-142

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REVISED FINAL DRAFT

FEBRUARY 24, 1989

STAR TREK: "Q Who?" - 2/24/89 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Q Who?"

CAST

PICARD	Q
RIKER	
DATA	Non-Speaking
TROI	BORG ONE
GEORDI	BORG TWO
WORF	BORG THREE
WESLEY	
GUINAN	
O'BRIEN	
SONYA	

Non-Speaking
CREWMEMBERS
SECURITY MAN

STAR TREK: "Q Who?" - 2/24/89 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Q Who?"

SETS

INTERIORS

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

USS ENTERPRISE

CORRIDOR

MAIN BRIDGE

BORG SHIP

OBSERVATION LOUNGE

TURBOLIFT

MAIN ENGINEERING

TRANSPORTER ROOM

TEN-FORWARD

GUINAN'S OFFICE

SHUTTLECRAFT

BORG SHIP

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Q Who?"
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise as it is traveling at impulse speed.

2 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MAIN ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

GEORDI is coming down the corridor, he sees a young twenty five to twenty eight year old ensign -- who has newly arrived on the Enterprise. She is very energetic, and enthusiastic in an open and ingenuous way, which is both appealing and refreshing. Her name is SONYA. She is standing in front of a food dispenser panel.

SONYA

Hot chocolate, please.

The hot chocolate appears.

GEORDI

We don't ordinarily say "please" to food dispensers.

SONYA

(amused)

Since it's listed as "intelligent Circuitry", why not? After all, working as much with artificial intelligence as we do, can be dehumanizing -- right? So, maybe we can combat that tendency with a little simple courtesy.

She removes the cup of hot chocolate.

SONYA

(continuing)

Thank you.

They walk toward Main Engineering.

2 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

For someone who has just arrived,
you certainly aren't shy with your
opinions.

SONYA

Ooops -- have I been talking too
much?

GEORDI

No.

2 CONTINUED: (2)

SONYA

(the words come out in
a rush)

I do tend to be a motor mouth,
especially when I get excited...
and you don't know how exciting
it is to get this assignment.
Everyone in class -- and I mean
everyone -- wants the Enterprise.
I mean, it would have been all
right to spend some time on Ranuos
Six to do phase work with
anti-matter... that's my
speciality.

GEORDI

I know -- that's why you got this
assignment.

SONYA

(off Geordi's smile)

Did it again. It's just that...

GEORDI

I know, you're excited. Sonya.

SONYA

Yes.

GEORDI

I don't think you want to bring
that hot chocolate around these
control stations.

SONYA

Sorry. I shouldn't even have this
in engineering. We were talking
and I just forgot I had it in my
hand...

And as she turns to take it out of the room.

SONYA

(continuing)

I'll finish it over here.

(looks back, and
seriously)

Lieutenant La Forge, it won't
happen again.

Then as she turns around she crashes right into CAPTAIN
PICARD.

2A PICARD

The cup full of chocolate hits him right in the chest.

2B SCENE

For a moment everyone freezes. Geordi starts forward.

GEORDI

Actually it's my fault, sir...

He looks down at his soiled uniform.

PICARD

Yes, I'm aware of how often you
order picnics to be held in here.

Sonya is about to die from embarrassment.

SONYA

Oh no. Oh, Captain... I'm
sorry... oh..

(she tries to brush it
off)

... I wasn't looking and...

(she pulls her hand
away)

Oh.. It's all over you.

PICARD

Yes, Ensign. It's all over me.

SONYA

At least let me...

In trying to brush it off, she just makes it worse.
She looks up at Picard, who through it all is
maintaining as much of his dignity as possible.

PICARD

Ensign... ah...

SONYA

(she straightens up to
her best military
posture)

Ensign Sonya Gomez.

2B CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Ensign Gomez is a recent Academy graduate. She transferred on at Starbase one seventy three.

Picard's attention is on the widening chocolate stain that Sonya is creating.

PICARD

Ensign...

(restraining her)

I think it would be simpler if you let me change my uniform?

GEORDI

Captain, I really have to accept responsibility for this.

Picard has been looking from one to the other, beginning to understand what is happening between Geordi and Sonya.

PICARD

Yes, Chief Engineer. I believe I do understand now.

SONYA

I'm very excited about this assignment Captain, and I promise I'll...

(she looks at the chocolate stain on Picard's uniform)

... try very hard to serve you and this ship to the best of my ability.

PICARD

I'm sure you will. Carry on.

2B CONTINUED: (2)

Picard then turns and strides off.

2C SONYA AND GEORDI

SONYA

First impressions right. Isn't that what they say -- first impressions are the most important.

GEORDI

I'll give you this... it's a meeting the captain won't soon forget.

SONYA

What a way to start my first assignment.

Off Geordi's reaction:

3 OMMITTED (3)

4 INT. CORRIDOR

Picard walks past a crewman -- who notices the stain on his uniform, but quickly averts his eyes so as not to embarrass the captain. Picard turns and enters the turbolift.

4A INT. TURBOLIFT

The doors close.

PICARD

Deck nine. Officers' quarters.

The turbolift moves off. Then stops. The doors open, and while still looking down at the stain on his uniform, Picard steps off.

4B INT. SHUTTLE

Picard is not in a corridor of the Enterprise -- he's on a shuttle! He turns around and the turbolift doors are gone.

4C SCENE

He looks up. There is a crewman at the controls.

PICARD

Crewman? What's going on?

The crewman turns.

4D CREWMAN

It's Q.

Q

There, there, my dear captain.

4E PICARD

Reacts.

PICARD

Q.

4F SCENE (OPTICAL)

Picard moves closer to Q.

Q

(re: the stain)

My, my -- haven't we been careless.

Q passes his hand over the stain on Picard's uniform and the stain disappears.

Q

There -- a little cleaning service.
I am more than happy to provide.

PICARD

We agreed you would never trouble
my ship again!

Q

I always keep my arrangements,
sir. We are nowhere near your
vessel.

Picard looks out and sees a field of stars. Then back
to Q.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise moving along at impulse speed.

5A INT. CORRIDOR

Geordi and Sonya are walking to Ten-Forward. She is in a clean uniform.

GEORDI

I read your graduating thesis.
I wouldn't have requested you if
you weren't the best.

She's uncomfortable with the compliment and shrugs it off, changes the subject.

SONYA

Where are we going?

GEORDI

To Ten-Forward. We're going to
forget about work. We are going
to sit, talk, relax, look at the
stars. You're going to learn to
slow down.

SONYA

(very intense)

No, that's the one thing I can't
do.

GEORDI

(gently)

You're awfully young to be so
driven.

5A CONTINUED:

SONYA

Yes, I am. I had to be. I had to be the best because only the best get to be here. Out here on the edge.

(gripping his arm and giving it a shake)

Geordi, Geordi . . .uh . . .

(dropping the arm abruptly)

Lieutenant --

GEORDI

(grinning)

Geordi

SONYA

Geordi. Whatever is out here we're going to be the first humans ever to see it. And is it here because we believe in it and have therefore created it, or has it created us?

GEORDI

The Grand Unified Theory and Supersymmetry hasn't been seriously discussed for years.

SONYA

They also haven't been disproved. I don't know if it's true or not, but I've got to try and find out.

GEORDI

You're more than a scientist you're a philosopher.

SONYA

No, no, I'm not. Oh, God, don't make me sound profound. There's just so much out there . . . here.

She is gesturing broadly as if somehow she can pull in and embrace the whole universe.

SONYA

(continuing)

I have to see it all. To understand it all, and we haven't got much time.

5A CONTINUED: (2)

GEORDI

Sonya, it's going to be there for you. Believe me.

(a beat)

I promise, I won't let anything exciting slip past without letting you know.

6 INT. TEN-FORWARD

GUINAN is behind the bar. There are a few n.d. crewmembers scattered around the room. The only one of our regulars in Ten-Forward is Geordi, who is sitting at a table by the window with Sonya they are engaged in a very animated conversation.

6A GUINAN

Something gives her pause -- like a whisper only she can hear. She is thoughtful for a beat...

6B SCENE

Guinan steps out from behind the bar and crosses to the center of the room.

6C ANOTHER ANGLE

She stands near Geordi's table for a beat and gazing out at space. In the background Geordi continues his conversation with Sonya.

GEORDI (O.S.)

I understand that you're excited -- so was I. This is your first assignment, everything is new, you are eager and that's great, but...

6C CONTINUED:

SONYA (O.S.)

I've always been an enthusiastic
person, but...

He holds up his hand.

GEORDI (O.S.).

Do me a favor... for a minute,
just listen.

6C CONTINUED:

SONYA (O.S.)

I always do that. Someone nice
-- and you are nice I can tell,
goes out of their way to give me
some helpful advice... and I'm
so busy talking...

In the b.g. we see Geordi quiet her with a gesture.

SONYA (O.S.)

Not another word. Go ahead...
talk.

6D GUINAN

Her brow knits -- like she has just seen the first
indications of a coming storm. She steps to a
communications panel.

GUINAN

Bridge, this is Ten-Forward.

7 INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING RIKER

Who reacts to the unusual call.

RIKER

Guinan?! I don't believe you've
ever called the bridge before.

GUINAN

I've never felt the need. Is
everything alright?

RIKER

How do you mean?

GUINAN

Is there... anything... unusual
happening?

RIKER

(looks around)

Anyone notice anything unusual?

(waits, then)

No Guinan, nothing out of the
ordinary. Why do you ask?

7A ANGLE IN TEN-FORWARD

A thoughtful Guinan responding.

7A CONTINUED:

GUINAN

I'm... I'm not certain. Just a feeling -- something that happened once before. Probably nothing.

(beat)

Please forget I called. Ten-Forward out.

She turns and stares out into space.

8 OMITTED

9 INT. SHUTTLECRAFT

Picard is in the shuttlecraft -- with Q. Picard adjusts a control; Q smiles.

Q

The locator beacon won't help. They'll never look for you this far away.

Picard turns to the com controls.

PICARD

Enterprise -- this is Picard.

There's no response.

PICARD

Stop this foolishness, Q. Return me to the Enterprise.

Q

I'd suggest you change your attitude. Petulance does not become you. We have business.

PICARD

Keeping me a prisoner out here will not force me to discuss anything with you.

9 CONTINUED:

Q
It will in time, my dear Captain.

10 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Guinan steps up to near the table occupied by Geordi and Sonya and looks out at the stars.

SONYA

I appreciate your advice,
Lieutenant. And, I'll take it
to heart.

Geordi notices Guinan's distraction.

GEORDI

Guinan?

She turns.

GUINAN

Can I get you something?

GEORDI

No -- we're fine. Is everything
all right?

She looks over at Geordi for a beat then.

GUINAN

I don't know.

But her expression belies the answer. Geordi nods,
but something about her reaction causes him to:

GEORDI

(gets up)
I think I'll go check out
Engineering.

SONYA

I'll go with you.

Guinan watches them leave then turns and once again
looks out at the stars.

10A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The turbolift doors open and TROI enters. There is
a sense of foreboding in the timing of her arrival.
Reaction from Riker. Troi crosses to her position.

10A CONTINUED:

TROI
Where's the captain?

RIKER
In his Ready Room.

Troi touches a com control.

TROI
Captain -- this is Counselor Troi.

There is no response.

11 INT. ANOTHER ANGLE

RIKER
Computer -- locate Captain Picard.

COMPUTER
The captain is not on the ship.

Before they can react.

11A WORF

Runs a check on his security panel.

WORF
Commander, there is a shuttle
missing from Shuttle Bay Two.

RIKER
All stop.

WESLEY
Answering all stop.

12 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise comes to a complete stop.

13 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

For a beat everyone is silent... waiting.

13 CONTINUED:

WORF

I have hailed the shuttle on all
frequencies -- no response.

13 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

Sensors indicate no shuttle or other ships in this sector.

RIKER

We must assume the captain is onboard the shuttle.

WESLEY

But, how could he get to the shuttle bay, how could he leave the Enterprise without us knowing? It's not possible.

RIKER

Take it easy, Wes. We'll find him. I want to begin a methodical search. Sensors on maximum scan We'll use our present location as the center. Data plot a search pattern from our present coordinates which will cover the most area in the shortest time.

Riker slowly moves back to his chair.

13A DATA

He makes some rapid calculations.

DATA

The search pattern has been input.

RIKER

Engage, Mister Crusher.

14 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise pulls out of frame.

15 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Another angle as the Enterprise approaches from a long distance.

15 CONTINUED:

RIKER (V.O.)

First officer's log. Stardate (xx). We have not been able to determine why, or how, Captain Picard left the Enterprise. We can't even be certain he is in the missing shuttle, although that is the assumption on which we are proceeding. For the last six hours we have been searching without success.

16 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The situation has gone from tense to desperate.

DATA

We have covered the area in a spherical pattern which a vessel without warp drive could traverse in the time allotted.

RIKER

Widen the area...

16A DATA

He inputs the necessary information.

17 INT. SHUTTLE

As before with Picard and Q. Picard attempts to power up the shuttle. All systems are inoperative.

Q

Do we stay out here years?
Decades? Picard, I am ageless
-- you are not.

PICARD

Then the Enterprise will continue on with Riker as captain. Return me to my ship.

Q

You are an impossibly stubborn human.

17 CONTINUED:

Q

(continuing)

If I return you to your ship, you
will agree to give my request a
full hearing?

Picard studies Q for a beat, then nods.

17A INT. TEN-FORWARD

We pull back to reveal Picard and Q, now sitting in Ten-
Forward.

Q

You're right Picard. This is the
proper venue for our discussion.

17B GUINAN

She reacts to the sudden appearance of Q and the
captain.

18 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING WORF

Who is studying his board.

18 CONTINUED:

WORF

Commander. My status board
indicates that the shuttle is back
in Shuttle Bay Two.

Riker reacts.

RIKER

Computer -- locate Captain Picard.

COMPUTER

Captain Picard is in Ten-Forward.

Off Riker's reactions we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

19 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise is at a dead stop.

20 OMMITTED

21 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Picard and Q are seated by one of the front windows. Guinan comes over. Q immediately stands and backs off like a man about to be physically attacked.

Q

You!

GUINAN

None other.

Q

Picard, if you had half the sense you pretend to have, you would get her off your ship immediately -- and if you like I will be more than pleased to expedite her departure.

Picard looks to Guinan.

PICARD

You know him.

GUINAN

We had some dealings.

Q

Those dealings were two centuries ago. This creature is not what she appears to be. She's an imp -- where she goes trouble always follows.

21 CONTINUED:

PICARD

You're speaking of yourself, Q
-- not Guinan.

Q

Guinan? Is that your name now?

PICARD

Guinan's not the issue here -- you
are... We had an agreement that
you would stop meddling with us.

Q

And so I have.

PICARD

What do you want, Q? State your
business and let's get on with
it.

Q

I agree Captain, enough about this
creature -- she's diverting us from
the purpose of my being here.

RIKER (O.S.)

Which is?

Q looks up.

21A SCENE

Riker and Worf stride across Ten-Forward, to join them.

Q

Ahh, the redoubtable Commander
Riker. And micro-brain.

(to Worf)

Growl for me -- let me know you
still care.

Worf reacts.

Q

(returning to the point)
My purpose? Why to join you.

RIKER

To join us as what?

21A CONTINUED:

Q

A member of the crew. Willing
and able -- ready to serve.

Before Riker can react.

Q

(to Picard)

This ship is already home for the
indigent, the unwanted and the
unworthy -- so why not a homeless
entity.

RIKER

Homeless?

Q

Yes.

RIKER

So, the other members of the Q
continuum kicked you out.

GUINAN

Not all of the Q are like this
one. Some are almost respectable.

PICARD

Join us as what? To do what?
Would you start as an ordinary
crewman -- what task is too menial
for an entity?

Q

Do you mock me?

PICARD

Not at all. That is the last
thing I would do. You, by
definition are part of our
charter. Our mission is to go
forth -- to seek out new and
different life forms, and you
certainly qualify as one of the
most unique life forms I have
ever encountered. To learn more
about you is frankly quite
provocative, but you are next
of kin to chaos.

21A CONTINUED: (2)

Q

Captain, at least allow me to
present my argument.

Q takes Picard's silence as permission to continue.

Q

(continuing)

After our last encounter,
(a look to Riker)

I was asked to leave the Q
continuum. Since then, I have been
wandering vaguely -- bored really
-- my existence without purpose.
Then, I remembered the good times
I had with you...

RIKER

The good times!? The first time
we met you put us on trial for
the "crimes of humanity"...

Q

Of which you were exonerated.

21A CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER

The next time we saw you, you asked me to join the Q continuum.

Q

You made a large mistake in not accepting my offer.

PICARD

... and now you say you want to join us.

Q

Yes, more and more I realize that here -- here is where I want to be. Think of the advantages. Now, I neither expect nor require any special treatment. If necessary, although I can't imagine why, I will renounce my powers and become as weak and incompetent as all of you.

PICARD

No.

Q

Oh, come on, Captain, in fairness... let me try, I deserve at least that much.

RIKER

Fairness?! You disrupt this ship -- kidnap the captain!

Q

I add a little excitement, a little spice to your lives and all you do is complain. Where's your adventurous spirit -- your imagination. Think, Picard, of the possibilities.

21A CONTINUED: (3)

PICARD

Simply stated -- we don't trust you.

Q

Oh, you may not trust me, but you do need me. You're not prepared for what awaits you.

PICARD

I don't know that we are prepared, but I do know that we are ready to confront it.

Q

Really?

PICARD

Absolutely. That's why we are out here.

Q

Oh, the arrogance.

(to Guinan)

They don't have a clue about what's "out here".

GUINAN

They will learn -- adapt. That's their great advantage.

Q

They are moving faster than expected -- farther than they should.

PICARD

By whose calculation?

Q

You judge yourselves against the pitiful adversaries you have so far encountered -- the Klingons, the Romulans, are nothing compared to what's waiting.

(MORE)

21A CONTINUED: (4)

Q

(continuing)

Picard, you are about to move into areas of the galaxy containing wonders more incredible than you can possibly imagine... and terrors to freeze your soul. I offer myself as guide -- only to be rejected out-of-hand.

RIKER

I guess we'll just have to get along the best we can without you.

Q

What justifies this smugness?

PICARD

We're not smug -- nor arrogant. We are resolute and we are willing. But more than that we are determined. Your help is not required.

Q

Well, let's just see how ready you are.

GUINAN

Q -- don't do this!

He makes a move of his hand:

22 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise is struck by a great surge of energy and streaks off.

23 INT. TEN-FORWARD (OPTICAL)

Picard and the others react to the blur of stars streaking past. It's a velocity beyond the capabilities of the Enterprise.

24 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data has command of the bridge. Everyone reacts to the sudden burst of speed.

25 EXT. SPACE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise comes out of the spin and stops.

26 INT. TEN-FORWARD (OPTICAL)

The motion has stopped.

(INTERCUT MAIN BRIDGE AS NEEDED)

PICARD

Bridge this is the captain -- all
stop.

WESLEY COM VOICE

Answering all stop.

PICARD

Status.

DATA COM VOICE

According to these coordinates
we have traveled seven thousand light
years, and are located near system
J-two-five.

RIKER

Estimate travel time to the
closest starbase.

DATA COM VOICE

At maximum warp, in two years,
seven months, three days, eighteen
hours we would reach Starbase one
eight five.

Guinan looks out the window.

RIKER

Why?

26 CONTINUED:

Q

Why? Why, to give you a taste of your future. This is a preview of things to come, because if you continue at your present rate of exploration -- very soon you will reach this part of the galaxy.

(to Picard)

Con permiso, Capitan. The hall has been rented -- the orchestra engaged -- it's time to see if you can dance.

With a flash Q disappears.

26 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Guinan, have your people been in this part of the galaxy?

GUINAN

Yes.

RIKER

What can you tell us?

GUINAN

Only that if I were you, I'd start back right now.

Off their look...

27 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise is moving through this new section of the galaxy.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. The entity Q has flung the Enterprise to a distant part of the galaxy, which we are going to take the opportunity to explore.

28 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Everyone is in their place.

WORF

Captain, the sixth planet in the system is Class M.

DATA

There is a system of roads on the planet which indicate a highly industrialized civilization. But where there should be cities there are only great rips in the surface.

WORF

It is as though some great force just scooped all machine elements off the face of the planet.

28 CONTINUED:

DATA

It is identical to what happened to the outposts along the Neutral Zone.

WORF

We are being probed.

RIKER

What's the source of the probe?

Worf checks his console.

WORF

A ship. It is on an intercept course.

PICARD

On screen.

28A VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

A strange ship approaches -- it's unlike anything we have seen.

PICARD

Magnify.

The image on the screen enlarges. The shape of the ship is more apparent. It's box like, with none of the aerodynamic qualities associated with most spaceships including the Enterprise. This is a case of form following function. We are about to have our first encounter with the BORG.

RIKER

Full scan. Go to Yellow Alert.

WORF

Going to Yellow Alert.

RIKER

Keep the shields down -- we don't want to appear provocative.

Worf responds with a nod.

29 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the great Borg ship approaches the Enterprise. Then stops.

30 INT. TEN-FORWARD (OPTICAL)

Guinan is looking out at the Borg ship.

31 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

As before -- everyone watching the viewscreen.

PICARD

Data, what can you tell us?

DATA

The ship is strangely generalized in design. There is no specific bridge or central control area, no specific engineering section -- I can identify no living quarters.

RIKER

Life signs?

DATA

There is no indication of specific life.

RIKER

Lieutenant Worf, what is its alert status?

WORF

I detect no shields, no weapons of any known design.

PICARD

Hailing frequencies.

WORF

Open.

PICARD

This is Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the USS Enterprise.

WORF

No response.

PICARD

Guinan.

32 INT. GUINAN OFFICE (OPTICAL)

Guinan moves into her small office.

PICARD

Activate your viewscreen -- I want you to monitor what's going on up here. I may need your input.

Guinan reaches out and activates her viewscreen. The image is the same as that on the the MAIN VIEWER.

GUINAN

I'm here. I can see the other ship.

PICARD

You are acquainted with this life form?

GUINAN

Yes. My people encountered them a century ago. Our cities were destroyed -- our people scattered across the galaxy. They are called the Borg -- protect yourself or they will destroy you.

Picard looks at Riker.

RIKER

Shields up.

WORF

Yes, sir.

33 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

SUDDENLY a strange creature appears -- it's a BORG. It is a biped -- a cyborg. Part organic and part artificial. There is a metal like device implanted in its head. One arm is artificial with a tool like contraption instead of a hand. The other organic except for the hand. Its eyes are artificial. Its presence triggers RED ALERT.

GEORDI

Security to Main Engineering -- we have an intruder.

34 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Off Picard's reaction as he and Worf exit.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

35 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise in this new section of the galaxy -- with the Borg ship nearby.

36 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Picard, Worf, and security team enter. The Borg is still making a visual survey of the room. It seems to look right through or pass the people as if they are of no consequence.

WORF

He came right through the shields!

Picard approaches. Q appears behind Picard -- to offer sotto voice observations.

Q

Interesting isn't it? Not a he -- not a she. Not like anything you've ever seen. An enhanced humanoid.

PICARD

What do you want?

36A PICARD (OPTICAL)

He steps closer to the Borg. He holds up his open hand.

PICARD

We mean you no harm. Do you understand me?

The Borg strides toward one of the com panels.

Q

Understand you? You are nothing to him. He has no interest in your life form. He's just a scout -- the first of many. He's here to analyze as much about you as he can -- that's how they always start.

(MORE)

36A CONTINUED:

Q

(continuing)

He may attempt to gain control
of the ship. I wouldn't let him.

36A CONTINUED: (2)

Q leaves.

36B SCENE

Picard tries to defuse this situation.

PICARD

Stop -- we cannot allow you to
interfere with the operation of
this ship.

The Borg continues to move toward the com panel.

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf.

Worf motions for one of his security team to intercept
the Borg. The security man steps in front of the
Borg. The Borg knocks the security man on his ass.

36C WORF (OPTICAL)

Worf pulls out his phaser. Worf fires -- the stun
setting means nothing.

36D SCENE (OPTICAL)

The phaser hit has no affect on the Borg. He, or it,
steps to the com panel and affixes the apparatus on his
arm to the computer. SUDDENLY there is a drain on all
systems. The lights dim.

PICARD

Worf -- use whatever means to
neutralize the intruder.

36E WORF (OPTICAL)

Worf adjusts his phaser and fires again.

36F SCENE (OPTICAL)

This phaser hit rips into the Borg knocking him away.
Before anyone can react -- another Borg materializes.
Worf and the others assume a defensive posture. The
second Borg picks up where the first one left off.

36G WORF (OPTICAL)

fires his phaser.

36H SCENE (OPTICAL)

This Borg responds differently. The hit is absorbed. He is apparently surrounded with a force field of some kind. This Borg goes to the back panel. He accesses the computer -- drains it.

Then walks over to the first Borg -- removes some parts from his body and de-materializes. After a beat the dead Borg withers into a line of ash -- which then disappears.

Off Picard reaction.

37 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

An abbreviated staff has been assembled; Riker, Data, Picard and Troi.

PICARD

Because her people had contact with the Borg, I have requested that Guinan participate in this conference. You are aware of what just occurred in Main Engineering.

She nods.

PICARD

Tell, us exactly what happened between your people and the Borg.

37 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

I was not personally involved,
but -- from what I have been told
they came through our system like
a storm of Jaradan Aser beetles
-- and by the time they left,
there wasn't much left of our
society.

RIKER

Guinan, if they are that
aggressive, then I wonder why
neither Borg attacked? They could
have -- but they didn't.

GUINAN

They never do that as
individuals. It's just not
their way. When they decide to
come, they will come in force.
They do nothing piecemeal.

DATA

Then the initial encounter was
solely for the purpose of
gathering information.

GUINAN

Yes.

37 CONTINUED:

PICARD

How do we reason with them? Let them know that we are not a threat?

GUINAN

You don't, at least to my knowledge nobody has so far.

WORF COM VOICE

Captain, we are being hailed.

PICARD

On screen.

37A SCENE - TO INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The image on the viewscreen is of the interior of the Borg ship. Not the bridge, because they don't have one. It is a great chamber with stacks and stacks of slots in which are individual Borg. We can see over a thousand of them, but the ship probably holds more. Some of them are making small controlled movements, otherwise they would appear to be at rest.

37B REACTIONS (OPTICAL)

Picard steps forward.

PICARD

This is Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the...

BORG

(interrupting)

We have analyzed your defensive capabilities as being unable to withstand us. If you defend yourselves, you will be punished.

Viewscreen repaints to exterior Borg ship.

PICARD

Counselor.

TROI

You are not dealing with an individual mind. They do not have a single leader. It is the collective minds of all of them.

37B CONTINUED:

PICARD

That would have some definite advantages.

TROI

Yes. A single leader can make errors. It is less likely for the combined whole.

Q (O.S.)

Picard.

Picard turns.

37B-A VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

Q is now on the viewscreen.

Q

Are you certain you still don't want me as a member of your crew? This would be the time to ask, before everything goes too far beyond your control.

Before Picard can answer...

WORF COM VOICE

Captain -- they have locked onto us with some form of tractor beam.

PICARD

We're on our way.

Picard and the others exit.

37C EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

An energy beam from the Borg ship holds the Enterprise.

38 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard and the others take their positions.

DATA

Whatever this beam is, Captain, it is draining our shields.

38 CONTINUED:

RIKER

If they pull down our shields
we're helpless.

PICARD

On any heading -- warp eight
engage.

38A WESLEY

As he inputs the information and attempts to take the
Enterprise out of danger.

WESLEY

It's holding us here!

RIKER

Increase power!

38A CONTINUED:

WORF

The shields are weakening.

DATA

In eighteen seconds the shields
will be down.

PICARD

Locate the exact source of the
tractor beam -- lock on phasers.

WORF

Phasers locked on target.

PICARD

Fire.

39 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The pin-point phasers from the Enterprise hit into the
Borg ship. But the force holding the Enterprise does
not release.

40 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

WORF

They still have us.

DATA

Shields are down.

41 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise and the Borg ship. Another beam leaves
the Borg ship and makes contact with the Enterprise.

41A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

A CLOSER ANGLE as the Borg ship cores out a piece of
the Enterprise hull.

42 OMMITTED

43 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

WORF

A type of laser beam is slicing
into the Saucer Section.

RIKER

They are carving us up like a
roast.

PICARD

With whatever force you need
terminate that beam.

44 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The beam has cut away a section of the Enterprise and
is now taking it back to the Borg ship.

45 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

PICARD

Fire!

Worf releases a series of blasts from the phaser bank.

46 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The phaser blasts rip again and again into the Borg
ship - the beam holding the section of the Enterprise
disappears into the Borg ship. Another volley from the
Enterprise pounds the Borg ship.

47 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

On the screen we see the battered image of the Borg ship. RED ALERT ends.

DATA

The tractor beam has released.

47 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Damage report.

WORF

Sections twenty-seven, twenty-eight and twenty-nine on Decks four, five and six destroyed.

PICARD

Casualties?

WORF

Eighteen were in those sections and are missing.

RIKER

They couldn't have survived it.

DATA

A force field is maintaining hull integrity.

PICARD

What is the condition of their ship?

WORF

They have sustained damage to twenty percent of their vessel. Life support minimal.

RIKER

(angry)

Why?!

For a beat everyone is in stunned silence.

PICARD

Conference.

RIKER

Worf -- you had better remain at your station.

Worf watches them go.

48 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Guinan is still there as they enter. Riker -- Data - Picard -- Troi.

GUINAN

I am so sorry, Captain.

Picard nods.

PICARD

Guinan -- what else can you tell us about these creatures?

GUINAN

I only know bits and pieces.

PICARD

Anything would be helpful.

GUINAN

They are a mixture of organic and artificial life that has been developed over a thousand centuries.

Behind them Q is revealed (no Q Flash).

47A INT MAIN ENGINEERING

The tension level is high. Sonya is a little dazed, but at her duties like any well trained Academy graduate. She and Geordi.

SONYA

(urgent)

I can't get the shields up.

GEORGI

Divert power from wherever you need it. Anywhere except life support.

SONYA

It wouldn't help. The circuits which control the shields have been fused.

GEORDI

If you can't reprogram them... reroute.

Her hands fly across the panels. Then stops.

SONYA

Eighteen people. Dead -- just like that.

GEORDI

Push it out of your head.

SONYA

I can't. I keep seeing them.

GEORGI

Stop it. We'll grieve later. Right now... let's get those shields operative.

She shakes it off and they both return to reprogramming the shield circuits.

48 CONTINUED:

Q

The Borg is the ultimate user,
with the result that they are
unlike any threat your Federation
has ever faced. They have no
interest in political conquest
-- or wealth or power as you know
it. They simply want your ship
-- its technology. They have
identified it as something they
can consume and use.

RIKER

And you brought us here, exposed
us to it, cost us the lives of
shipmates...

Riker's calm breaks -- he physically moves to assault Q.

Q

Stop -- or you will surely die.

PICARD

Number One.

Riker stops; Picard turns to Q.

PICARD

(continuing)

Eighteen of our people have died.
Please tell us that this is one
of your illusions.

Q

Oh, no. This is as real as your
"so called" life gets.

A FLASH OF LIGHT and Q is gone.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

This is Lieutenant La Forge, Captain.
We have been able to restore power
to the shields.

PICARD

Very good.

WORF'S COM VOICE

Captain, I have the casualty list
coming on screen.

PICARD

Cancel -- time for that later.

48A SCENE

They are quiet for a beat.

RIKER

If there's a chance we are going to have further dealings with the Borg -- now or in the future -- we had better find out as much about them as we can.

PICARD

Visit their ship?

RIKER

In my opinion, we have no choice, sir.

PICARD

(considers it; nods)

Agreed. Assemble a minimal away team and take a look at what's over there.

GUINAN

What?

RIKER

(to com)

Mister Worf. Report to Transporter Room 3.

(to Data)

Data.

Riker and Data stand.

GUINAN

It's not my business but I wouldn't go over there if I were you.

RIKER

Oh, I don't know, Guinan. They visited us... seems only fair that we return the courtesy.

Off Guinan as she watches them exit.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

49 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise, still near the severely damaged Borg ship.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental.
We have been attacked without provocation by an alien race which Guinan calls the Borg. Hopefully, we have neutralized their vessel. Commander Riker is leading an away team in an attempt to learn more about them.

50 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - (OPTICAL)

Riker, Worf and Data enter. All are wearing phasers.

WORF

There are no life sign readings.

O'BRIEN

I have laid in coordinates which should set you down in the least damaged section of the Borg ship.

RIKER

Set phasers on stun, but let's be ready to increase the power if we need it.

They climb on the transporter pad.

RIKER

Energize.

The away team dematerializes.

51 INT. BORG SHIP - (OPTICAL)

The away team materializes in the great open center of the Borg ship. All around there is some evidence of battle damage. The design of the interior is as functional as the exterior. There is no attempt at eye pleasing colors.

51 CONTINUED:

Interspersed with the grey equipment racks are slots, which go floor to ceiling and are occupied by individual Borg.

51A ANOTHER ANGLE

The away team looks around. The Borg closest to them are alive. The away team instantly assumes a defensive position -- expecting the Borg to repel them. But the Borg do not move.

Data takes a tricorder scan of the area. They step closer to one of the Borg.

RIKER

I wonder why they don't react to us, and why the Enterprise did not read any life signs, especially when there are this many.

DATA

Perhaps because this ship was scanned for individual life signs. Apparently when they are in these slots, they become part of the whole and no longer read as separate life forms.

RIKER

(touches his
communicator)
Captain.

52 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (INTERCUT AS NEEDED)

PICARD

Go ahead, Number One.

52 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Our readings were incorrect... the Borg crew survived, but they are in a kind of stasis.

PICARD

Explain.

RIKER

There are slots along the wall, kind of like compartments. There are two Borg in each.

DATA

Captain, I would theorize that the Borg are somehow interconnected through these slots and are working collectively.

RIKER

We are going to look for some way to access their main computer.

52A ANOTHER ANGLE

As the away team moves down the corridor they pass strange pieces of equipment but nothing which is familiar.

52B DATA

Steps over to examine an empty Borg slot.

DATA

Each slot is designed for a specific Borg. Here is where the connection is made.

(he indicates a type of arm rest)

52C SCENE

Riker moves over to join Data -- while Worf stands guard. They are very tense -- at any moment the Borg could leave the slots.

52C CONTINUED:

RIKER

Like a juggernaut which could
start moving at any moment.

DATA

The technology required to achieve
this biological and artificial
interface is far beyond our
capabilities. There are many
advantages.

52C CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Speed being the obvious one. This ship literally thinks what it wants to do and it happens.

SUDDENLY a nearby Borg leaves its slot. The away team assumes a defensive posture expecting an attack. Instead the Borg moves to a panel, executes a program, the purpose of which we do not know. Then, as the away team watches, the Borg returns to its slot.

DATA

Fascinating. Obviously they also function individually.

RIKER

And either they don't see us, or don't see us as a threat.

They move off down the corridor.

52D ANOTHER ANGLE (OPTICAL)

To show the relationship between the away team, and the immense ship.

53 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - ENTERPRISE

Picard is watching the Borg ship on the Main Viewer.

PICARD

Transporter room, this is the Captain.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

O'Brien here Captain.

PICARD

If your lock on the away team wavers in the slightest -- beam them back.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Count on it, Captain.

54 INT. BORG SHIP

As the away team comes into another chamber. There are no walls, or doors as such. This ship lacks the compartmentalization which we are used to. The corridor will simply open onto a wider area.

54 CONTINUED:

Off to the side, part of the ship has been twisted in the phaser attack. Something about it catches Data's eye.

54A ANOTHER ANGLE

Riker moves to the other side of the room. Here are smaller horizontal slots which contain smaller -- younger -- Borg. The "children" are in various stages of "assembly".

RIKER

Captain -- this is incredible.
I have just entered what appears
to be the nursery.

PICARD

Describe it.

RIKER

From the looks of it the Borg are
born as biological life form.
Almost immediately after birth
they begin getting artificial
implants. They have apparently
developed the technology to link
artificial intelligence directly
into a humanoid brain. Pretty
astounding. Something else -- I
haven't seen any females.

DATA

Commander.

Riker turns from looking at the half put together child.

RIKER

What is it?

DATA

The ship appears to be
regenerating.

54B SCENE

Riker and Worf quickly cross to Data. They look at a damaged portion of the ship.

54B CONTINUED:

DATA

Perhaps this explains why they have not taken notice of our presence. Their collective effort is directed at repairing their vessel.

RIKER

Captain, the Borg are using their combined power to repair the ship.

PICARD COM VOICE

Transporter Chief, beam the away team directly to the bridge.

55 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

As the away team stacks up.

PICARD

Now, Mister Crusher -- engage.

56 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise streaks away -- leaving the visibly battered Borg vessel in its wake.

56A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

There is relief that they are putting some distance between themselves and the Borg.

56B OMITTED

57 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

DATA

Captain -- the Borg ship is in
pursuit.

PICARD

On screen.

57A SCREEN (OPTICAL)

We can see the Borg ship coming toward us.

PICARD

Magnify.

The screen changes -- the Borg ship fills more of the screen.

RIKER

Increase by ten to the third.

Now the Borg ship fills the screen -- we can see the hull of the Borg ship change.

RIKER

It's continuing to regenerate itself.

PICARD

Let's see if we can outrun it.
(to com)

Lietenant La Forge, I want maximum warp for as long as you can hold it.

58 INT MAIN ENGINEERING

Geordi is by the pool table. Sonya is in the b.g.

GEORDI

Yes, sir.

He's on the board -- increasing the speed.

GEORDI

We are passing warp eight point five.

58A SCENE

The great engine is moving toward maximum output.

GEORDI

... warp nine.

He looks over and sees a very intense look on Sonya's face as she stares at the engine.

59 CONTINUED:

The Borg ship is gaining.

RIKER

Arm the photon torpedoes.
Recommend we try to slow them
down.

PICARD

Agreed.

WORF

Torpedoes armed.

PICARD

Fire.

STAR TREK: "Q Who?" - 3/2/89 - ACT FOUR 42AA.

58A CONTINUED:

GEORDI

What is it? Is there something
the matter?

She turns toward him.

SONYA

No. You can study the theory -- read
the books -- analyze
schematics... but nothing of it
prepares you for this. I have
just never see or felt anything
so awesome.

GEORDI

Well let's see if we can't raise
the level a few more notches.

Geordi moves to another position on the pool table.
Sonya steps over across from him and watches with
admiration as he fine tunes the warp drive.

59 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

60 EXT. SPACE - THE PHOTONS (OPTICAL)

As the photon leaves the Enterprise.

61 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

All eyes are locked on the main viewer as the photon torpedoed head for the Borg vessel... and explodes in a blinding flash of light.

WORF

They had no effect.

GEORDI COM VOICE

Bridge, this is Engineering. We are at warp nine point six five.

WORF

The Borg ship is still gaining.

The crewman at Science One turns -- it's Q.

Q

They will follow this ship until you exhaust your fuel. They will wear down your defenses. Then you will be theirs.

Picard looks from Q to the main viewscreen and the Borg ship which continues its relentless pursuit.

Q

(continuing)

You're out of your league, Picard. You should have stayed where you belonged.

Off Picard's reaction.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

62 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise is moving at maximum warp followed by the Borg ship.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log supplemental. We are unable to maintain the gap between the Enterprise and the Borg ship.

63 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Engine is pounding. Geordi moves from the pool table. Sonya is beside him -- now under pressure she is very calm.

SONYA

We are at the design limit.

GEORDI

Agreed. Bridge this is Engineering.

PICARD COM VOICE

Go ahead.

GEORDI

You've got all we can give you.

64 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Riker, Data, Troi, and off to the side is Q.

PICARD

I understand, Lieutenant La Forge.

64 CONTINUED:

WORF

Captain -- the enemy vessel is firing on us.

The ship goes to RED ALERT.

65 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise at maximum warp. As the missile arrives -- but instead of striking the ship, it forms a kind of umbrella which engulfs the Enterprise.

66 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

WORF

There are no reports of any damage to the Enterprise.

DATA

The target was not the ship. The weapon was designed to drain the shields.

WORF

Shield effectiveness has been reduced twelve percent.

WESLEY

The Borg ship is closing.

WORF

They are firing again.

67 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

A similiar missile leaves the Borg ship and streaks toward the Enterprise.

68 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

68 CONTINUED:

WORF

Shields have been reduced by forty one percent. Another hit and we will be defenseless.

Q

They are wearing you down. Soon you will be helpless.

RIKER

Arm the photon torpedoes.

WORF

Torpedoes armed.

PICARD

Fire the photons.

69 EXT. SPACE - THE PHOTONS (OPTICAL)

As the photons leave the Enterprise en route to the Borg ship. The torpedoes explode, but the Borg ship is undamaged.

70 INT. BRIDGE

As before.

WORF

The Borg ship was not damaged.

Q

You can't outrun them. You can't destroy them. If you damage them, the essence of what they are remains -- they regenerate and keep coming... eventually you will weaken -- your reserves will be gone... they are relentless.

WORF

The Borg ship is firing

71 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the missile from the Borg ship hits the Enterprise.

72 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

This time the ship is rocked.

WORF

We have again lost the shields.

73 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Borg ship closes on the Enterprise. It fires a beam at the Enterprise. Which hits in the area of the nacelles. The Enterprise comes out of warp.

74 INT. MAIN ENGINEERING

Geordi is at the pool table.

GEORDI

Bridge -- we have lost the warp engines.

74A OMITTED

75 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

Q

Now where's your smugness -- your arrogance? Do you still believe you are prepared for what awaits you? I tried to tell you but listening has never been one of your laudable attributes. It makes me quite happy to now say -- I told you so.

WORF

The Borg ship is re-establishing its tractor beam.

RIKER

Lock on photon torpedoes.

75 CONTINUED:

WORF

Yes, sir.

75 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

Without our shields -- at this range there is a high degree of probability that a photon detonation could destroy the Enterprise.

Riker and Picard exchange looks.

RIKER

Prepare to fire.

Q

I'll be leaving now. You thought you could handle it -- so handle it.

PICARD

Q. End this.

Q

What makes you think I am either inclined or capable to terminate this encounter?

PICARD

If we all die, here and now -- you will never be able to gloat. You wanted to frighten us -- we're frightened. You wanted to show that we are inadequate -- for the moment I will grant that. You want me to say that I need you. Right now -- I need you.

We would expect Q to smirk, but he doesn't. He gives Picard a steady look.

And with a little motion.

76 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

With the same explosion of speed which got us here -- the Enterprise is flung back to where it started.

76A INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Picard and the others react to the streaking stars on the viewscreen as they spin.

76B EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

comes to a stop.

77 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

RED ALERT ends.

RIKER

Position.

77 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

Zero-seven-six mark two-
two-five -- back where we
started.

Q

That was a difficult admission.
Another man would be humiliated
to say those words. Another man
would die before asking for help.

Picard gives Q a steady look.

PICARD

I understand what you have done
here Q, but the lesson could
have been learned without the
loss of eighteen members of my
crew.

Q

If you can't take a little bloody
nose -- maybe you had better go
back home and crawl under your
bed. It's not safe out here.
It's wondrous -- with treasures
to satiate desires both subtle
and gross -- but it is not for the
timid.

Q leaves in a Q Flash.

PICARD

Set a course for the closest starbase.

WESLEY

Course set for Starbase eight
three.

78 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the Enterprise moves off to the starbase.

79 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Picard is there with Guinan.

79 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

Q has set a series of events in motion. Your contact with the Borg came long before it should. When you're ready, it might be possible to establish a relationship with them, but now -- now, you are only raw material to them. And since they are aware of your existence...

PICARD

They will be coming.

GUINAN

You can depend on it.

PICARD

Q might have done the right thing for the wrong reason.

GUINAN

Meaning?

PICARD

Perhaps we needed a good kick in our complacency to get us ready for what's ahead.

Picard leaves Ten-Forward.

Off Guinan reaction:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END