

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Evolution"
#40273-150

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REVISED FINAL DRAFT

JULY 24, 1989

STAR TREK: "Evolution" - 7/25/89 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Evolution"
CAST

PICARD	STUBBS
RIKER	(DATA/NANITE)
DATA	
WORF	
BEVERLY	
TROI	Non-Speaking
GEORDI	ERIC'S GIRLFRIEND
WESLEY	GUARD
GUINAN	CREW OF ENGINEERS SUPERNUMERARIES

WORK CREWMEMBER #1
COMPUTER VOICE
ERIC
ANNETTE
MALE NURSE

STAR TREK: "Evolution" - REV. 7/25/89 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Evolution"

SETS

INTERIORS

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE

SHUTTLE BAY

CORRIDOR

SICKBAY

SICKBAY LAB

SICKBAY WAITING ROOM

ENGINEERING

CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

OBSERVATION LOUNGE

WESLEY'S QUARTERS

TEN FORWARD

COMPUTER ROOM

STUBB'S QUARTERS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"Evolution"
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse speed entering a double star system composed of a small neutron star orbiting a red giant star.

2 INT. SICKBAY LAB - CLOSE ON A TEXTBOOK

something in advanced genetics... lying flat on a lab tabletop. The camera moves slowly along the table to see the paraphernalia of a long night of studying -- containers, microscope, some half-eaten new generation pizza and an almost finished glass of milk... finding a still hand... and moving up the arm to find WESLEY; face flat on the table, eyes closed... and for a beat we may wonder what's happened to him... but then --

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Commander Riker to Ensign Crusher.

Wesley's eyes jerk open... head turns -- where am I, omigod, I fell asleep....

WESLEY
(hoarse)
Go ahead....

INTERCUT:

3 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

On RIKER. DATA and WORF are at their stations.

RIKER
Forget to set your alarm, Wesley?

4 INT. SICKBAY LAB

Wesley scurrying around to clean up the lab top... put away his experiment and equipment...

4 CONTINUED:

he notices one of the containers is open, briefly reacts, quickly closes it... it's barely noted and buried in the humor of the moment.

WESLEY

Uh, yessir. I'm... very sorry.
I'll be right there.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

I didn't think you'd want to miss
this.

Wesley takes one more last look around the room... exits quickly, brushing his hair into some semblance of neatness.

5 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - VIEWSCREEN - THE DOUBLE STARS
(OPTICAL)

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 43102.8.
We have entered a spectacular
double star system in the Kavis
Alpha sector on a most critical
mission of astro-physical
research.

Finding a slightly disheveled man in his sixties (DOCTOR STUBBS) in casual clothes observing data processing on the bridge. The sparkle in his eye is the only hint of his excitement and anticipation... otherwise, he has the confidence of a man who already knows the answer to a question about to be posed.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

Our eminent guest, Doctor Paul Stubbs, will attempt to study the decay of globules of neutronium expelled at relativistic speeds by a massive stellar explosion which will occur here in a matter of hours.

Wesley ENTERS the bridge, looking embarrassed, glances at Stubbs who smiles at him. Wesley sits at his station.

5 CONTINUED:

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

It is virtually a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as dictated by the forces of nature. But frankly, Doctor Stubbs seems much calmer about it all than those of us who are simply charged with the responsibility of delivery and observation.

RIKER

Ensign, our position....

WESLEY

Approaching ten million kilometers from the neutron star...

RIKER

Slow to one third impulse power...

Stubbs stands by Wesley as the viewscreen shows a stream of hydrogen and helium torn from the red giant spiraling toward the neutron star.

STUBBS

Spectacular, isn't it, my young friend?

His voice is as warm as a grandfather's.

WESLEY

Yessir.

And he might as well be in his classroom, the professor sharing the excitement with a young student.

STUBBS

Over and over again, the intense gravitational pull of the little neutron star sucks up the star material from the red giant, and it builds up on the surface until it explodes... every one hundred and ninety six years. Like clockwork. And it is but eighteen hours away.

DATA

Eighteen hours, seven minutes, and ... ten seconds, Doctor.

5 CONTINUED: (2)

STUBBS

(acknowledges)

The interstellar counterpart to Earth's "Old Faithful". The only predictable burst of energy in the universe that can accomplish our goal.

PICARD ENTERS from the Ready Room.

PICARD

Doctor Stubbs, if you want to make a final inspection of the unit...

STUBBS

Captain, I've been inspecting the egg for twenty years... you may lay it when ready.

Picard and Riker react to his offhanded confidence...

PICARD

Begin launch sequence.

RIKER

Shuttle Bay Two, stand-by to launch the uh, "egg"...

6 INT. SHUTTLE BAY - THE UNIT

looks like an egg... it's about the size of a Buick... sitting aboard a small launch pad. In a control booth, a TEAM OF OFFICERS acknowledge the command.

CREWMEMBER #1

Standing by, Commander...

7 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

STUBBS

Do you know how long the experiment will last, Wesley... ?

WESLEY

One billionth of a second.

STUBBS

(reacts)

Now, how would you know that?

7 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

When I heard we were going to be
part of your experiment, I read
all your published works.

Stubbs reacts, impressed.

RIKER

Begin pre-launch sequence.

INTERCUT:

8 INT. SHUTTLE BAY (OPTICAL)

Crewmember #1 touches a panel. A wide door behind the
egg slides open to reveal the spectacular star system.

9 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

DATA

Five minutes to launch site.

Then, suddenly without warning... the Enterprise jolts
sharply... Doctor Stubbs is thrown down to the floor...
The jolts continue...

PICARD

Stabilize.

WESLEY

The ship is not responding.

10 INT. ENGINEERING - GEORDI

Working furiously at his controls --

GEORDI

Checking for failure of inertia
dampeners... Instruments say
they're working...

11 THE UNIT

rattles unstable on its launch pad...

12 THE MAIN VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

The stellar-material roars from the red giant across space in front of us... The jolts continue...

WORF

Captain, we're heading straight into the path of that stellar matter....

PICARD

Shields up.

WORF

Negative. The shields won't respond.

On reactions --

13 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

hurtles toward the fire arc across space and...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

14 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As before, the ship is flying out of control.

15 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

DATA

Impact thirty seconds.

PICARD

Go to manual override to raise shields.

WORF

Shields are rising.

RIKER

Reset dampeners.

INTERCUT:

16 INT. ENGINEERING

GEORDI

Dampeners not responding. Unable to reset.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Reverse impulse engines.

GEORDI

Initiating reverse sequence.

17 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The engines reverse. The ship stabilizes.

18 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Stubbs looks up dazed, from the floor...

DATA

Impact twenty seconds.

18 CONTINUED:

PICARD

The momentum is still taking us
into the path of the
stellar matter.

RIKER

Close the shuttle bay door...
Prepare for impact.

CREWMEMBER#1'S COM VOICE

Door is frozen, Commander...

19 ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

as the stellar matter gently deflects off the shields...

20 INT. SHUTTLE BAY - THE UNIT

shakes.

21

thru OMITTED

22

23 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

The shaking from the collision stops.

RIKER

Commander Data, check all
systems... Medical personnel to
the bridge.

Riker goes to help Doctor Stubbs... his back is hurt.

DATA

All systems functioning normally
again.

PICARD

Computer, explanation for control
malfunction.

COMPUTER VOICE

No control malfunction has been
recorded.

Off their reactions...

24 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in a holding pattern.

25 INT. CORRIDOR

Wesley moving... sees a trio of other teenagers, two attractive girls and one boy, dressed in ski clothes...

ERIC

(friendly)

Hey, Wesley, you need some work on your right turns...

Wesley pauses, responding a little too seriously for a teenager.

WESLEY

They're running a check to find out what happened. Everything's okay now...

One of the girls, ANNETTE, is clearly interested in Wes.

ANNETTE

We're going into the Holodeck to ski in Switzerland, Wes... want to come?

WESLEY

Oh... I can't... I have to check on Doctor Stubbs. He's in Sickbay...

Annette looks disappointed. Eric takes him aside out of earshot... puts his arm around his shoulder.

ERIC

Wesley, I have this awkward situation... Two gorgeous ladies, only one of me and a terrific program where we get snowed in at the ski lodge... just the fire and each other to keep us warm...

(looks for a reaction)

I can hold the storm for you... meet us at the lodge later on.

WESLEY

I can't, Eric. There's just too much to do...

ERIC

(strained)

Yeah, okay... next time.

Annette glances at him as they split up.

26 INT. SICKBAY

Several bruises from the incident are being treated...
DOCTOR CRUSHER treats Stubbs' back as Wesley ENTERS.

WESLEY

The captain asked me to tell you
that our systems are back to
normal and we can make another
launch attempt as soon as you're
ready.

Stubbs nods with a deceptively amiable grin. Beverly
uses a medical tricorder.

STUBBS

Quite a dynamic family team, you
Crushers....

BEVERLY

(smiles at her son)
It's nice to be back together.
I was at Starfleet Medical for
a year... I missed about two
inches of him.

And a lot more. We may sense here that as she listens,
Beverly is considering her relationship with her son...

STUBBS

I'm not sure I'd want my mother
to be flying through space with
me... no, I take that back. I
am sure. I wouldn't want her.
I love her dearly you understand.

BEVERLY

(poking)
Does that hurt?

He acknowledges. She treats it as Stubbs says to
Wesley--

STUBBS

My mother's a formidable woman
too. A woman of letters.
(with many layers)
A great critic.

WESLEY

I know.

26 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

Good Lord, son. You didn't read that unauthorized biography too...

(off his acknowledgment)

I totally deny the story about the consulate's wife on Beldoron. We were only good friends. Is that all the boy does, Doctor, fly the ship and read? Doesn't he have any fun?

BEVERLY

Sure he does...

WESLEY

(interrupting)

My studies keep me pretty busy. I'm trying to get into the Academy... I earn credits for my work on the Enterprise... but it's not the same as being there...

Doctor Crusher finishes the treatment, nods to the nurse.

NURSE

Ready to sit up?

Doctor Stubbs pulls himself up.

STUBBS

I am whole again, thank you, Doctor.

(he stands)

Come along, Wesley, let's make sure Humpty Dumpty is still in one piece.

Beverly thinks about the conversation as Wes follows Stubbs out. The doctor's attention is drawn to:

27 INT. SICKBAY WAITING ROOM (OPTICAL)

The refreshment dispenser is serving continuous cups of drinks, food to no one... spilling over, falling on the floor...

BEVERLY

Computer, fix the food slot...

27 CONTINUED:

COMPUTER VOICE

The food slot is functioning
properly.

BEVERLY

Well, check it again...

27 CONTINUED: (2)

COMPUTER VOICE

The food slot is functioning properly.

BEVERLY

Deactivate food slot.

It finally stops. Off her reaction...

28 INT. ENGINEERING

Geordi on a com panel talking to the Captain... a CREW OF ENGINEERS are working in the background...

GEORDI

We're analyzing the engineering systems data, Captain... so far nothing unusual in the computer log for that time period...

29 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard on the com line as Beverly ENTERS. He motions her to come in.

PICARD

Run a level one diagnostic series. We need a computer that's one hundred percent to run Doctor Stubbs' experiment.

He signs off. For Beverly's benefit --

PICARD

(continuing)

... As well as the food slots in Sickbay.

BEVERLY

It seems to be working again. For the moment anyway...

PICARD

(sitting)

What can I do for you, Doctor?

She sits down, concerned, not sure how to express it yet. But she's come to him as her old friend, not just the captain --

29 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Jean-Luc, how would you feel if you were a seventeen year old and the only starship officer whose mother was on board... ?

Picard takes a moment... he's less comfortable in dealing with her on a personal level... but tries his best.

PICARD

If you're concerned about Wesley, I see no evidence that there's a problem.

BEVERLY

I know. In a funny kind of way... that's exactly my point. We talk. We smile. It's almost too polite.

PICARD

Beverly, this is simply a matter of time. I know how difficult it was to be away.

BEVERLY

(vulnerable)

Tell me about him.

A beat as Picard is somewhat nonplussed at how to respond to a mother who wants to know her son.

PICARD

He's... become a fine officer. He works as hard as any member of the crew... Riker says his studies...

BEVERLY

No, tell me about him.

And this is way out of Picard's comfort zone.

PICARD

He seems well adjusted...

BEVERLY

Does he have many friends... has he been in love... ?

29 CONTINUED: (2)

Picard taps a finger, realizes this is important stuff... but he hasn't a clue what to tell her.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

Jean-Luc, he's come so far, so fast. And since I've been back I don't feel...

PICARD

His dependence?

(beat, as she considers)

He is seventeen, Beverly.

BEVERLY

What were you doing when you were seventeen?

PICARD

Getting into a lot more trouble than Wesley is, I can assure you.

BEVERLY

So was I.

They exchange a smile.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

Isn't that what seventeen is supposed to be?

Off Picard's reaction...

30 INT. SHUTTLE BAY

Wesley and Doctor Stubbs inspecting the unit.

STUBBS

No cracks in the armor... we'll be just fine...

WESLEY

How can you be so calm about everything? If I was about to make this kind of breakthrough...

30 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

I've never doubted for a moment that this day would come, Wesley. And I suspect some day it will come for you as well. I see a lot of me in you.

(Wesley reacts, proud)

In my youth, they called me a vunderkind... do you understand vunderkind... ?

WESLEY

It's German, isn't it?

STUBBS

(nodding)

It means wonder child. It is reserved for those of us who achieve early in life. Now the burden is yours.

WESLEY

The burden?

STUBBS

To fulfill your potential.

(looking inward)

You will never come up against a greater adversary than your own potential, my young friend.

Suddenly Red Alert alarms go off... Wesley reacts.

WESLEY

Red Alert. You should return to your quarters immediately.

31 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - CLOSE ON PICARD (OPTICAL)

PICARD

(urgent)

Still no visual contact? Impossible... Mister Worf, same magnification. Fifty degrees starboard.

Find Riker before the Main Viewer ... it shows only space -- nothing else...

31 CONTINUED:

he moves to join Worf at his station... Geordi and
Data are also on the bridge.

31 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Worf, you're absolutely sure...

32 INSERT - SENSOR SCREEN (OPTICAL)

WORF (O.S.)

The sensors clearly indicate the approach of a Borg vessel.

33 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER

Shields up.

WORF

Shields are not responding.

GEORDI

Manual override is jammed. It's not gonna work this time... we don't have shields, Captain.

He keeps at it.

34 INSERT - SENSOR SCREEN (OPTICAL)

WORF (O.S.)

Captain, they've fired energy weapons at us...

35 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

PICARD

Evasive action.

RIKER

Bring about to two-eight-five mark three.

PICARD

Predict current vector of the Borg ship.

WORF

Vector... is gone.

(beat, reacts)

And so is the Borg vessel.

35 CONTINUED:

PICARD

You're telling me this was another computer glitch?

DATA

It is conceivable that we were viewing a synthetically generated image... although there is no precedent for it.

RIKER

(incredulous)

Our computer was daydreaming... ?

Suddenly, the Enterprise jolts hard... out of control again...

PICARD

Computer, identify malfunction immediately.

In the back, the turbolift doors start opening and closing repeatedly as the computer babbles --

COMPUTER VOICE

Pawn to King Three... Knight to Rook Four... Queen to Bishop Three...

DATA

Controls are not responding.

Suddenly, the engines die.

GEORDI

Impulse engines are down.

Geordi tries to fire up the engine. Nothing.

RIKER

Try warp engines.

Geordi tries... nothing.

GEORDI

Sorry, Commander... I better get back to engineering...

Picard at the viewscreen is frustrated beyond description. On the move --

35 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf, you will
accompany Commander La Forge.
I want a full report on the
prospects for getting our shields
back. Commanders Data and Riker
will join me in the conference
room to consider the future of
this mission... if there is one.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

36 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Picard, Riker and Data...

PICARD

The fact of the matter is we're dealing with a potential breakdown of our main computer...

RIKER

That's hard to accept.

DATA

The system automatically provides for self-correction, Captain. There has not been a system-wide technological failure on a starship in seventy-nine years.

The door slides open and TROI ENTERS, already concerned....

TROI

Excuse me, Captain, Doctor Stubbs has been waiting to see you. I think it might be wise if...

Without waiting for an invitation, Stubbs ENTERS, interrupting. His casual devil-may-care shell is a little shaky, but he still employs it.

STUBBS

Captain, I'm sure you have everything under control, I'd just like to know what's going on.

PICARD

Of course, Doctor. Sit down.
(join us)
Counselor...

Picard and Troi exchange a concerned glance.

PICARD

(continuing)

Commander La Forge is attempting repairs as we speak...

36 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

"Attempting" ... that doesn't sound particularly reassuring.

PICARD

Doctor, if it is at all possible, we will continue this mission as planned.

STUBBS

Captain, if we miss our chance now we don't get another for two centuries. There will be many questions asked by Starfleet if the Enterprise fails in its duty...

PICARD

(sharp)

Nevertheless, my first and foremost concern will be to insure the safety of this ship and its crew...

With that same charming smile --

STUBBS

Insure the safety, Captain or are you really talking about playing it safe?

PICARD

My dear Doctor, in our current position, when that star explodes, you'll get to watch your experiment from the inside out.

STUBBS

(shrugs, casual)

I would rather die than leave.

PICARD

I don't believe you speak for the majority, Doctor.

And Picard and Stubbs lock eyes as Troi studies Stubbs, leans forward caringly --

36 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI

Doctor Stubbs, I know how much
this means to you...

36 CONTINUED: (2)

And this is said with a smile and charm --

STUBBS

My dear Counselor, no insult
intended but please turn off your
beam into my soul. I will share
the feelings I wish to share...

She reacts, stunned by the anger she feels from him.

WORF'S COM VOICE

Lieutenant Worf to Captain Picard.

INTERCUT:

37 INT. ENGINEERING

Geordi and Worf at the pool table... many workers in
the background.

WORF

Captain, all weapons systems are
down.

Reactions.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Estimated time for repairs?

GEORDI

Commander, I don't even know what
to repair yet.

38 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Signing off --

PICARD

Continue to advise.

STUBBS

Well, if we do not take our leave
in time, so be it... it's one sure
way into the history books, eh?

He EXITS. The others exchange a look.

TROI

His nonchalance is studied and
practiced...

38 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Even my sensory perception picked that up today...

TROI

In fact, he's put his entire self-worth on the line with this experiment. He is telling the truth when he says he'd rather die than leave.

(reactions)

And one more thing... he doesn't like women very much.

DATA

Odd. The research material on Doctor Stubbs includes not a few references from gossip columns. It suggests females find him quite attractive.

TROI

Not this one.

39 INT. SICKBAY

Eric helping in Annette, looking cold and shaken, she has a broken leg....

BEVERLY

What happened to you?

ERIC

We had a little accident on the Holodeck....

NURSE

(glances at Beverly)

On the Holodeck... but it's programmed to prevent injuries...

The nurse helps get her on a table...

ANNETTE

I was making a great run down a deserted slope when the ground just seemed to fall away....

Beverly hits her com panel.

39 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Engineering, this is Doctor
Crusher. The Holodecks are to
be closed by my order until
further notice.

As she examines the girl's leg...

BEVERLY

(continuing)

We've been having control problems
today. There's a small fracture
here... this'll just take a
minute...

The nurse hands her an instrument.

NURSE

You look like you could use
something warm inside you... hot
chocolate, maybe?

Eric and Annette smile, nod yes enthusiastically. The
nurse moves away...

ANNETTE

(to Beverly)

Wes almost came along. It's
probably a good thing he didn't.

BEVERLY

I didn't know he was going skiing
with you...

ERIC

It was one of those last minute
things... we tried to grab him
on the way...

ANNETTE

We don't see much of him now that
he's been assigned to the bridge.

And that disturbs Beverly but she doesn't display it.

40 INT. SICKBAY WAITING ROOM (OPTICAL)

The nurse is at the food slot... preparing to remove
two cups of hot chocolate and as he reaches in...

40 CONTINUED:

a red arc of electricity snaps over his body... and he slumps to the ground. Rushing to him...

BEVERLY

Omigod....

ERIC

What happened...

BEVERLY

He's not breathing...

She feels the pulse... uses all her resources to resuscitate him... finally he begins to breathe... she feels the pulse again, it's better...

41 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, standing, reacts to the news delivered by Doctor Crusher. All the regulars except Geordi are present.

BEVERLY

If he had been alone, he would have died.

PICARD

Advise everyone to remain in their quarters when not on duty. Protocol "B" access to all power components. Nobody else uses them unless it's cleared by Commander Riker.

WORF

Sir, is it possible this is not a computer breakdown?

(off Picard's look)

What if it is some form of attack?

RIKER

Our sensors showed no sign of life in this stellar system.

PICARD

They also showed a Borg vessel that did not exist. Counselor Troi?

41 CONTINUED:

TROI

I perceive no life force,
Captain... no feelings of ill
will. But I am not attuned to
every form of life.

Wesley begins to consider a terrible possibility...

PICARD

Data, stay on the sensors... see
if we can't pick up something
out there.

A beat as he sits down, thinking hard....

RIKER

It does almost seem as if
something... or someone is trying
to render the Enterprise helpless.

PICARD

They're not just trying, Number
One. If it's true, they're doing
a damn good job of it.

And Wesley is more than a little worried about what
he's thinking.

42 INT. ENGINEERING

Geordi behind an open panel of components...

43 ANGLE - WESLEY (OPTICAL)

outside the panel... the control systems come on.
Wesley reacts... several other engineers are working as
well.

WESLEY

You got it. Nice going, Geordi...

As he comes around, to an engineer.

GEORDI

Call up the cross-section of
computer core processor
four-five-one, elements
zero-two-hundred through
zero-three-hundred.

43 CONTINUED:

As the engineer works at the computer board... various graphs and circuit board construction flashes across a terminal screen...

GEORDI

(continuing)

In order to get some power, I had to by-pass the computer core and essentially hotwire the connection.

44 THE MONITOR (OPTICAL)

stops at a cross-section of connections labeled "Core Processor 451, Element 0299" and there is a clear lesion visible there. Geordi points it out.

GEORDI (O.S.)

Look at that lesion. No wonder we're coming apart at the seams.

45 INT. ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

GEORDI

It's some kind of continuing disintegration. But from what... I can't tell ya. And I haven't the slightest idea how to stop it.

Wesley's face shows continued concern... something he's hiding... hoping against hope it isn't true.

WESLEY

But it's just a mechanical problem, right?

GEORDI

Increase magnification, factor fifty.

The image grows fifty times.

GEORDI

I don't know, Wesley. Looking at it... if it weren't... impossible... I'd say someone had climbed in there and started taking it apart.

And that's the worst thing that Wesley could hear.

46 INT. SICKBAY LAB

Wesley ENTERS with urgency... gets out the materials he was studying earlier. He opens the container that he had discovered when he awakened and checks it with a scanner. There is no response. He sighs deeply. Something horrible has happened.

47 OMITTED

48 INT. TEN-FORWARD

The room is deserted due to the captain's order to remain in quarters. Wesley moves around a corner down on his knees... setting down a high tech trap...

49 ANGLE - WIDE

to reveal GUINAN sitting on a barstool, calmly watching. Wesley's back is to her. He feels her presence... turns...

WESLEY

Guinan... I didn't think anyone would be here.

GUINAN

I've never been very good at being confined to quarters. Any of my husbands would testify to that.

She rises, comes over slowly to see what he's doing...

GUINAN

What are these things?

Feeling a little foolish --

WESLEY

I'm just setting... traps.

49 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

I run a clean place here.

WESLEY

I know. It's not that. I just...

He's obviously in trouble... their eyes meet. He can't lie to her. Can anyone?

WESLEY

(continuing)

Guinan, I'm scared. Everything that's been going wrong may be my fault.

GUINAN

Pull up a stool, Wesley.

They sit.

WESLEY

I've been working on my final project for Advanced Genetics. It's on nanotechnology. And I've been studying the nanites we have in the Sickbay genetic supplies. They're just like tiny little robots with gigabytes of mechanical computer memory, tiny enough to enter living cells and conduct repairs. They're supposed to be strictly confined to the lab.

GUINAN

Are you trying to say some nanites are on the loose?

WESLEY

(sighs)

Two of them. That's all. See, I just wanted to see how they would interact and function in tandem. In my project, I had proposed a theory that they could actually combine their skills to improve their usefulness. And it was working.

GUINAN

You made a better nanite.

49 CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY

I was pulling an all-nighter to get my final data... and I fell asleep. When I woke up, I realized the container was still open...

(off her look)

It was just a science project.

GUINAN

A doctor once said the very same thing to me... what was his name... Frankenstein, I think.

WESLEY

They're really harmless. They only have the most basic skills. It's almost impossible that they could be responsible...

GUINAN

Almost.

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE

Doctor Crusher to Wesley Crusher.

WESLEY

(reacts)

Go ahead.

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE

I stopped by your quarters, Wes. I assumed you'd be there, since you're off duty.

WESLEY

I was just... I had some things to do...

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE

Orders are orders, Mister Crusher.

Wesley sighs, glances at Guinan.

WESLEY

You won't tell anybody...

A beat as Guinan looks at him.

WESLEY

I know. I will. If it's true.

49 CONTINUED: (3)

He starts to leave.

GUINAN

Wesley...

(he stops)

Think you'll get a good grade?

WESLEY

(glum)

I always get an A.

He EXITS.

GUINAN

(to herself)

So did Doctor Frankenstein.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

50 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. Our computer core has clearly been tampered with and yet there is no sign of a breach of security on board.

51 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Everyone at their stations... Troi is also on the bridge.

PICARD (V.O.)

We have even considered sabotage, but Counselor Troi has not detected any such sentiments. We have engines back and will attempt to complete our mission... but without a reliable computer, Doctor Stubbs' experiment is in serious jeopardy.

Stubbs watches this time with greater intensity.

RIKER

Manual restart sequence?

GEORDI

Manual restart successful... impulse engine functions appear normal.

Riker glances at Picard for orders.

PICARD

Proceed.

RIKER

Shuttle Bay Two, open hangar doors.

52 INT. SHUTTLE BAY

The crew tries, but the doors do not open.

CREWMEMBER #1

Doors did not respond. Repeating
sequence.

As he does,

53 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Suddenly over the loudspeakers, blasting music --
Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever"....

PICARD

What in heaven's name... ?

DATA

It is "Stars and Stripes Forever"
by John Phillip Sousa, a popular
American composer of band music
in the early twentieth century...

PICARD

Yes... yes... I know...

RIKER

Computer, shut off the music....

The music plays on.

DATA

The music is on all communications
channels, Captain.

RIKER

Power... weapons...
communications. We're being
stripped one system at a time...

PICARD

Shut off the power to the bridge.

The music stops and the lights go out... after a beat,
emergency lighting comes on. Picard looks at Troi...

TROI

I feel no hostile emotions
present. No friendly feelings
either. Nothing.

53 CONTINUED:

WORF

Only an enemy without honor
refuses to show himself in battle.

PICARD

We may be fighting a different
kind of enemy than we've ever
known... an enemy that fights a
war of nerves.

(beat)

Resume power to the bridge.

The main power does not return. Picard has no
alternative.

PICARD

(continuing)

Commander La Forge, can you get
us out of this star system
safely...

Moving forward to confront Picard...

STUBBS

No...

... intercepted by Riker.

RIKER

Not now, Doctor.

GEORDI

I'll try, Captain. I don't want
to overload the engines...

PICARD

Do it gently. But do it.

Geordi EXITS. Doctor Stubbs does not even look at Picard.

RIKER

We'll circuit in auxiliary power
to the bridge... and find some
way to silence Sousa if he tries
an encore.

Picard acknowledges, to Riker --

PICARD

The priority is to find out who
or what is doing this and why.

(MORE)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD (Cont'd)
(Riker acknowledges,
EXITS)

Those of us not involved in that
detail should get a few minutes
rest. Commander Data, the bridge,
or what's left of it, is yours.

He EXITS. Wesley glances at Doctor Stubbs who looks away
and EXITS.

54 INT. SHUTTLE BAY

Stubbs stands with his egg in a stark shot of a man
considering the meaning of his life. Moving to find
Wesley entering behind him...

STUBBS
The egg that Stubbs laid.

WESLEY
Nobody will say that...

STUBBS
Nobody will say... anything,
Wesley. We will not even be
mentioned.

Wesley can't speak, feeling guilty.

STUBBS
(continuing; sighs)
I could live with failure.
... Well, maybe not. But never
even to try. To miss your one
chance at bat. Do you know
baseball?

54 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

My dad taught it to me when I was little.

STUBBS

Once, centuries ago, it was the beloved national pastime of the Americas, Wesley. Abandoned by a society that prized fast food and faster games. Lost to impatience. But I have seen the great players make the great plays.

WESLEY

Do you recreate them on a Holodeck?

STUBBS

No, in here...

(his mind)

With the knowledge of statistics... runs, hits and errors... times at bat... box scores. Men like us do not need Holodecks, Wesley. I have played seasons in my mind. It was my reward to myself. For patience. Knowing my turn would come. Call your shot. Point to a star. One great blast and the crowd rises. A brand new era in astro-physics. Postponed one hundred and ninety-six years on account of rain.

55 INT. SICKBAY LAB

Wes has collected his traps. He's scanning a few with no results... but then there's an audio response from his scanner on one. Before he can make a visual check, the door slides open and his mother ENTERS.

BEVERLY

We have to talk.

He glances up at her -- does she know? Did Guinan tell her? She sits by him.

55 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

You really look like you could
use some rest...

Relieved, moving ahead with his work --

WESLEY

I know. It's okay. Really.

BEVERLY

(gentle)

No, it's not. Really.

She takes his hand, stops him from the work.

WESLEY

I'm just checking some traps that
I set... to see if I can find out
what's happening to the ship.

BEVERLY

On someone's orders... ?

WESLEY

We're running out of time for
Doctor Stubbs...

BEVERLY

Wesley, you can't put everything
on your own shoulders. Even when
you're off duty, you're on duty...

WESLEY

Mom, you don't understand...

BEVERLY

You're a seventeen year old boy...

He looks at her... not used to be treated as a child.

WESLEY

I'm an acting officer... I have
responsibilities....

BEVERLY

(cautiously)

I'm beginning to think... maybe
we're all expecting too much of
you.

55 CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY

(reacts)

I've done everything anyone has asked of me and more. You don't know... you haven't even been here.

That pretty well gets down to it. And Beverly understands that conflicts come with being a real parent... and is ready to resume that role.

BEVERLY

I'm here now, Wesley.

Wesley, like any normal teenager, does not seem to get it at all, but somewhere deep inside, a part of him may begin to feel her love and concern. This is not going to be resolved soon.

BEVERLY

C'mon, I'll help you finish this up... what are you looking for?

He looks at her with guilty eyes, sighs...

BEVERLY

Wesley... ?

WESLEY

Mom, I think I've made a horrible mistake.

She reacts, curious, but puts a comforting hand on his shoulder as he focuses a microscopic camera on his trap... they look together at --

56 A MONITOR - (OPTICAL)

an electronically reproduced image -- six tiny, startlingly busy, mechanical devices in constant motion...

From the next scene --

BEVERLY (O.S.)

Nanites. Tiny machines built from the atom up.

57 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

The image is patched to a monitor. Picard, Riker, Data, Beverly, Wesley and Doctor Stubbs are present.

BEVERLY

Designed to have exposure only to the inside of nuclei during cellular surgeries. Until then, they are kept tightly confined in a non-functional state.

DATA

(studying them)
These are not ordinary nanites.

BEVERLY

No, these have... evolved.

STUBBS

(cynical)
Evolved... how does a machine evolve...

WESLEY

It's true. I'm responsible. I allowed two of the nanites to interact for my school project to increase their capabilities. And... they escaped.

PICARD

School... project...

57 CONTINUED:

PICARD
(continuing)
Just how far have these things...
evolved?

Beverly glances at Wesley who puts some microscopic raw
material into the device...

INTERCUT:

58 MONITOR - (OPTICAL)

As the material is added to picture, the nanite gets
even busier, apparently devouring it....

WESLEY
This is a sample of linear memory
crystal from our computer core.

RIKER
(reacts)
It's like candy to them...

But in a second, it's clear -- suddenly there are
twelve of the nanites.

59 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Reactions.

BEVERLY
They're now capable of
mechanically replicating
themselves. And who knows what
else....

DATA
It is conceivable that with each
new generation they enhance their
own design. The rate of evolution
would be...extraordinary.

PICARD
How many generations are we
dealing with here?

DATA
Engineering, display computer
core processor four-five-one,
element zero-two-nine-nine.

59 CONTINUED:

The monitor makes the patch to the lesion...

59 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

Increase magnification, factor
one thousand.

60 THE ENLARGED IMAGE - (OPTICAL)

reveals scores, millions of little nanite flecks...

61 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Reactions.

PICARD

(understatement)

A few.

(beat)

Can it be possible that they know
what they're doing...

RIKER

Why would they attack us?

STUBBS

Why does a mosquito bite your ear
and who cares? The answer is
simple. Call an exterminator.

BEVERLY

Doctor Stubbs, these nanites are
apparently operating with a new
collective intelligence... working
together, teaching each other
skills...

Data considers that, moves to examine... he is
processing all the facts before taking a position.

DATA

Doctor, are you suggesting they
are becoming a... civilization?

Beverly looks at him... if the shoe fits....

STUBBS

Oh really. I'm sorry but this
is nonsense. You can't have a
civilization of computer chips.
They're made in a plant in Dakar
Senegal. I've watched the
construction.

61 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Then how do you explain what
you've seen here?

STUBBS

It's no more mysterious than
watching a strain of the Leutscher
virus reproduce itself. And that
at least is a bona fide lifeform.
How many disease germs and viruses
have you destroyed in your time,
Doctor Crusher?

She is forced to acknowledge.

PICARD

I cannot exterminate... something
that "may or may not" be
intelligent.

STUBBS

(unbelievable)
My good Captain...

PICARD

(sharp)
There is still time.
(beat)
Ensign Crusher, work with Data
to find some way to remove them
safely. If things get worse,
we'll take stronger measures.

61 CONTINUED: (2)

Picard, Riker move out. Doctor Stubbs glares after Picard.

62 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

holding outside the double star system.

63 INT. COMPUTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

Data and Geordi make further studies of the core infestation as Wesley assists. Over the section in which they are working, we read "Processor 451" with various element numbers.

Doctor Stubbs ENTERS. Apparently calmer.

STUBBS

Gentlemen. I need a computer functioning perfectly in less than eight hours... and we still have core reconstruction to consider...

WESLEY

We're testing a low level gamma field that might reduce their processing speed.

STUBBS

Have you considered a high level charge?

DATA

(reacts)

High level gamma radiation would kill them, Doctor Stubbs.

63 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

I know.

And without warning, he calmly pulls a scanner from his pocket... aims it at processor four-five-one. Wesley reacts --

WESLEY

Doctor Stubbs...

Doctor Stubbs turns back to processor four-five-one and fires the gamma charge...

64 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard and Riker.

PICARD

I can't get the story of David and Goliath out of my head. How long do we wait, Number One?

RIKER

We can continue to bypass parts of the computer that are affected... but if these nanites are spreading all over the ship...

As if in answer to the question, he detects an odd scent in the airflow...

PICARD

Do you smell a change in...

And suddenly both of them are racked with coughing, struggling to breathe... they move quickly out to:

65 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Where the SUPERNUMERARIES are also suffering from the air, choking...

PICARD

(to com)

Picard to La Forge...
enviromental system malfunction
on the bridge... acknowledge...

No response. Riker moves into position at a console...
reading data display... struggling to stay conscious...

RIKER

Nitrogen oxide... toxic levels...

Riker keys in several commands... finally, moves to
a manual override.... there is a WHOOSH sound as a
change occurs in the air supply system...

RIKER

I've switched to manual control
of the air handling system...

Breathing becomes easier, but then the ship shudders...
the power goes on and off... a small electrical
explosion pops out of one control panel... someone is
trapped in the turbolift, pounding... finally, pulls
the door open and it's Worf holding Doctor Stubbs... Data
behind them.

WORF

He entered a computer access
room and sterilized one of the
processors with gamma radiation.

DATA

The nanites in the upper core
are all dead, Captain.

On Picard's reaction, as the chaos continues...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

66 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before. The shuddering... light failures... turbolift opening and closing... it all continues. Troi and Doctor Crusher have joined the others on the bridge.

STUBBS

You have no choice now... it is a matter of survival.

PICARD

If you were a member of my crew, sir, I would...

STUBBS

(over-lapping)

But I am not a member of your crew, sir... I am a representative of the highest command of the Federation... which has directed you to perform my experiment...

PICARD

If one man, woman or child on my ship dies because of your experiment... I will have your head before the highest command of the Federation...

STUBBS

Good Lord, you are talking about machines with a screw loose. Simply turn them off. And be done with them.

Troi studies Doctor Stubbs carefully, is worried about what she feels. And then she suddenly feels something else... she isn't sure at first what it is...

DATA

Doctor Stubbs, your own actions have provided evidence to the contrary. After you destroyed the nanites in the core, they immediately responded by interfering with our life-support systems.

(MORE)

66 CONTINUED:

DATA (Cont'd)

It is hard to accept these as random actions by machines with "loose screws". In effect, you may have proven that the nanites do have a collective intelligence.

TROI

Captain, I'm feeling a vague presence. It wasn't there before. It is not hostility... More like a primitive sense of self-preservation.

BEVERLY

If they have evolved this far... into emotional growth... how can we destroy them now?

WORF

The ship is at risk. Extermination may be the only alternative left.

STUBBS

A good point...

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf, Doctor Stubbs is to be restricted to his quarters until further notice.

Worf nods to a GUARD who takes Stubbs by the arm and escorts him out. Suddenly, the chaos ends. The ship is eerily still. (Note: it is because Stubbs is on the move that the attack has subsided but our crew doesn't know that yet.)

PICARD

Data, can you find me a way to communicate with these things?

DATA

With intelligence, they have the capacity for language.

(MORE)

66 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA (Cont'd)

But it will depend on how far
their evolution has brought them.
We could modify the circuits in
the universal translator to make
it capable of communications with
them...

PICARD

Proceed.

67 INT. STUBBS' QUARTERS

He's inside as the door slides open and Troi stands
there. The guard is visible outside.

TROI

May I come in?

He gives her his best casual shrug.

STUBBS

You just can't resist, can you,
Counselor?

TROI

I only want to help.

STUBBS

("bored")

Yes, yes... to break the shell...
to get in touch with my true
feelings. What is this
preoccupation women have with
de-mystifying me? It must be the
challenge. Climb me. Because
I'm there.

TROI

I am only worried about your state
of mind, Doctor.

67 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

All right, Counselor... what is it that has you so worried?

TROI

Your single-mindedness, your need to have this experiment work...

STUBBS

But it will. Picard has no choice now. He must defend the Enterprise.

(tossing it all off with a grin)

Counselor, when this is over, I will show you New Manhattan on Beth Delta-One as you've never seen it and we will laugh over glasses of champagne.

TROI

(beat)

Your self portrait is so practiced, so polished....

STUBBS

(smiles)

Yes, isn't it, though?

TROI

It is stretched so tight that the tension fills this room. And if you finally... fail... I fear it will snap.

A long beat as she studies him sadly. She has failed and they both know it. She prepares to leave.

67 CONTINUED: (2)

STUBBS

A good try, Counselor. But sometimes when you reach beneath a man's self portrait, as you so eloquently put it, deep down, inside... what you find... is nothing at all.

She reacts and EXITS. Alone, we may see that, in a way, he too is sorry she failed.

68 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - SCIENCE ONE (OPTICAL)

has now become a montage of symbols, numbers, letters... a pause where a response might be... but there is none...

INTERCUT:

69 DATA - CU (OPTICAL)

types at a keyboard at his station... broadcasting these messages... waiting for a response... nothing.

70
thru OMITTED
71

72 INT. STUBBS' CABIN

As he lays alone... studying the ceiling... the sound of a cheering crowd fills his head...

STUBBS

Lockman on first, Dark on second... Thompson at the plate... Branca on the mound...

Stubbs closes his eyes... and watches the game in his mind as we move off to find... starting at the far corner of the room... a computer terminal goes blank... and then moving across the room toward Stubbs... a light on a com panel goes dark... and any other power components fall dead as though a plague were sweeping across the room sapping the energy from everywhere...

73 STUBBS

lays unaware and...

74 THE LIGHTS OVERHEAD

are swallowed one by one by the "plague"...

75 HIS EYES

open with a start... and he sees

76 HIS POV - THE LAST LIGHT GOES OUT

and...

76A IN THE DARK (OPTICAL)

an arc of electricity surges from the lights above,
virtually raising him and as he screams...

77 EXT. STUBBS' CABIN

The guard hears... moves to the door... but it doesn't
open... and as the yelling continues... the guard
forces the door open and Stubbs staggers out, falls
unconscious.

78 INT. SICKBAY

Picard ENTERS as Beverly works on Doctor Stubbs.

BEVERLY

He's coming around...

His face is flushed and sweaty as though he has a
fever... he mumbles fearful groans...

PICARD

I have to believe this was not
an arbitrary attack...

BEVERLY

Has Data made any progress in
contacting them?

Picard shakes his head. Suddenly, Doctor Stubbs' hand
moves out and grabs Picard's wrist. In a hoarse voice:

78 CONTINUED:

STUBBS

You must protect me. Kill them.

The ship shudders... the lights go off and on... the attacks have begun again (as the nanites realize Stubbs is still alive.) And Picard looks at the man, realizes he has come to the end of his alternatives.

79 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - SCIENCE ONE (OPTICAL)

the montage of symbols, numbers and letters... no response.

80 DATA - CU (OPTICAL)

at his station... intense, wanting a response... getting nothing. Pull back to include Riker and Worf watching the exercise. Geordi and Wesley are not there. The attacks continue. Picard ENTERS.

PICARD

Commander Riker, on my signal, we will gamma-irradiate all computer systems throughout the Enterprise to end this conflict.

RIKER

Worf, prepare to activate gamma pulse generators.

Data continues to watch the screen.

WORF

Electromagnetic scanners ready, Captain.

Picard pats Data on the shoulder -- nice try. Data will not give up. As Picard takes a deep reluctant breath...

81 ON SCIENCE ONE (OPTICAL)

A symbol appears in the pause space...

DATA

Captain...

Data types again... Picard watches... Worf and Riker stop their sequence, watch... again the same symbol...

81 CONTINUED:

DATA

I have established contact.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

82 INT. SICKBAY

Doctor Stubbs looks better as he awakens, looks around, sits up...

83 ANGLE - HIS POV - THE SICKBAY GENETICS LAB

where Wesley continues to study the nanites.

84 WESLEY

turns to see Stubbs standing at the doorway.

WESLEY

Are you okay?

STUBBS

I will be. As soon as we finish off these pests.

Wesley looks at him with different eyes... and he's not disrespectful but Stubbs can feel it...

STUBBS

Wesley, do not be too harsh in your judgment of me... until you've walked a lifetime in my shoes.

Stubbs puts his hand on Wesley's shoulder. Wisely --

STUBBS

(continuing)

We are no different, you and I. For you right now, it's getting into the Academy. For me, it's the egg. Others will never understand how important our work is to us. It's everything we live for.

WESLEY

(a beat)

Doctor Stubbs, I want to go the Academy. But if I don't, I have other things to live for.

84 CONTINUED:

And it is clear and honest and now there is no one for Stubbs to share his game with. Softly --

STUBBS

Of course you do.

And Wesley looks away and Stubbs stands there, a lonely old man who knows exactly who he is.

85 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data is at Science One working the keyboard as the others, including Troi, watch as we...

INTERCUT:

86 ON SCIENCE ONE (OPTICAL)

where now Data's long "sentences" are answered by a few symbols from the nanites... and a few more each time...

DATA

They are virtually learning the concept of communication as we continue, Captain... each new generation is making modifications.

PICARD

Can we actually talk to them yet?

DATA

I think it is worth an attempt...

PICARD

Ask them for a cease-fire... put it in whatever words you think they'll understand.

Data types in his symbols... a response on the screen...

DATA

(surprised)

Captain, their answer is... no.

PICARD

Tell them it is critical to their survival as well as our own.

86 CONTINUED:

Data sends the message and receives a response.

DATA

Their answer is no.

The captain thinks hard, looking for the opening.

TROI

I sense that after the incident
in the computer core, there is
very little trust...

A thoughtful beat.

PICARD

Bring Doctor Stubbs to the bridge.

Riker EXITS to handle it personally.

WORF

The universal translator has its
limits. I prefer to negotiate
eye to eye with my enemy...

PICARD

I don't think there's much chance
of that here.

Data hears that... and an idea begins to form....

87 INT. CORRIDOR

Moving to the bridge... Riker escorting Doctor Stubbs...

STUBBS

(fearful)

But they have already tried to
kill me once...

RIKER

"One sure way into the history
books", Doctor...

And they ENTER...

88 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Picard looks at Stubbs with ice in his eyes.

PICARD

Tell them the human who destroyed
their comrades is here and wishes
to address them...

STUBBS

(reluctant)
Captain, if I might...

PICARD

And you, sir will explain your
error and apologize and pray that
we can negotiate a peace we can
all live with... is that clear?

Stubbs acknowledges. Before relaying the message...

DATA

Captain, if a face to face
negotiation would be helpful,
I would like to volunteer myself
as a conduit.

RIKER

Yourself, Data?

DATA

I can easily furnish the nanites
with a schematic design of my
neurological structure. Entering
my neural network would require
only their most basic skills.

BEVERLY

That's what they were designed
for.

DATA

They could easily penetrate the
molecular fabric of my
hand-covering into the nerve
circuitry and interface with my
verbal programs.

A beat. Incredible reactions all around.

88 CONTINUED:

WORF

If they have control of a
Starfleet commander, they become
an even greater threat.

PICARD

How do we know we'll ever get them
out of you, Data...

DATA

There are considerable risks.
But it would also represent a
gesture of trust on our part.
It could be an important step
toward peace.

A long beat.

PICARD

All right. Propose it to the
nanites.

Data types it in... we see the code go out over the
viewscreen... followed by a quick set of schematic
designs of Data. After a long beat there is a short
response.

DATA

The answer is yes.

Off reactions --

TIME CUT TO:

89 INT. COMPUTER ROOM - ON DATA (OPTICAL)

Data is at the computer terminal, as before,
communicating with the nanites. Picard, Worf and
Stubbs are present.

90 WIDE ANGLE (OPTICAL)

DATA

They are ready, Captain.

PICARD

Proceed.

90 CONTINUED:

Data puts his hand under a magnification device.

91 DATA'S FINGER (OPTICAL)

appears on the screen of the magnification device.
Data touches a control; the image magnifies, and we see
glimmers of light passing into the skin.

92 INT. COMPUTER ROOM

After a beat, Data reacts to the invasion and his
movements become the slightest bit mechanical as though
he is being operated by remote control... he stands.

His eyes become less innocent, more curious. Data
moves to Picard and Riker, looks them over.

DATA/NANITE

You are very strange looking
creatures.

Picard and Riker exchange a look... it's worked.

PICARD

In our travels, we have
encountered many other
creatures... even stranger-looking
than we are... and all of us try
to co-exist peacefully.

DATA/NANITE

The urge among us to destroy all
of your kind is intense. Why did
you attack us?

PICARD

We misinterpreted your actions
as an attack against us.

92 CONTINUED:

DATA/NANITE

We were only seeking raw materials
for our replication process.

PICARD

Yes, but you endangered the vessel
in which we all travel.

Data looks around at the room like he's seeing it for
the first time...

PICARD

You almost killed a crewmember.

DATA/NANITE

We meant no harm. We were only
exploring.

PICARD

We understand. We are also
explorers and we mean no harm to
any life-form.

Data stares at Doctor Stubbs. He knows his time has
come.

STUBBS

I am the one responsible for the
deaths in the computer core.

DATA/NANITE

We know who you are.

Stubbs blinks a bit, a lump wells up in his throat.

STUBBS

I... deeply regret the incident.
I am a scientist on an important
mission. Your... your colleagues'
exploration of the core memory
put our mission at risk. I only
meant to protect a lifetime of
work from being destroyed.

92 CONTINUED: (2)

STUBBS
(continuing; beat, for
once lost for words)
I am at your mercy.

A beat. To Picard --

DATA/NANITE
What is "mercy"?

PICARD
He asks you to forgive him. This
conflict was started by
mistakes... on both sides. Let
us end it here and now.

DATA/NANITE
(a beat)
We agree.

PICARD
I pledge to you that we will
provide any assistance you need
for your continued survival.

DATA/NANITE
Thank you, but we have evolved
beyond any need for your
assistance. This vessel has
become too confining. We require
relocation.

Reactions.

93 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Back in the dual star system.

PICARD (V.O.)
Captain's log, Stardate 43104.7.
Doctor Stubbs has generously used
his influence to arrange the
designation of planet Kavis-Alpha-Four
as the new home of the Nanite
Civilization. Plans to negotiate
a treaty are underway.
(MORE)

93 CONTINUED:

PICARD (Cont'd)

Commander Data's neural network
has been vacated... He has been
returned to us, unharmed, and with
the help of the nanites, our
computer core has been
reconstructed in time for the
experiment...

93A INT. SHUTTLE BAY (OPTICAL)

The unit is launched into space...

94 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

All the main crew... Stubbs is at a back science
station. Data is Data again and at his post.

DATA

Ten seconds to stellar blast.

WESLEY

We're at forty million kilometers
from the neutron star.

RIKER

Hold your position.

On the viewscreen, the neutron star explodes in a
dazzling fireworks show... swallowing the unit in
blinding light.

95 STUBBS

at Science One, completely enthralled in his work...
collecting data as it pours into the computer...

96 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

PICARD

Doctor?

Doctor Stubbs doesn't hear Picard or at least doesn't
acknowledge... we don't know if the experiment has been
successful or not... he is awash with numbers, facts
figures. Picard and Riker exchange a glance.

96 CONTINUED:

But the last look is Wesley's who watches the doctor alone in his own world, obsessed with the moment he's given his life for.

96A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

leaving the neutron star.

97 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Beverly sits at the bar with Guinan.

BEVERLY

Do you have any children, Guinan?

GUINAN

A lot.

BEVERLY

Ever have any trouble relating to them?

GUINAN

Just one.

BEVERLY

One?

GUINAN

He wouldn't listen.

BEVERLY

Well, they all go through that.

GUINAN

Not in a species of listeners.

BEVERLY

Did he grow out of it?

GUINAN

Well, it's taken a few hundred years or so but I've brought him around.

BEVERLY

How?

GUINAN

A mother shapes her child in ways she doesn't even realize. Sometimes just by listening.

She motions Beverly to see --

98 ANGLE - WESLEY AND ANNETTE

entering. Beverly exchanges a glance with Guinan,
pleased.

GUINAN

Cute couple.

BEVERLY

Now, see, that's healthy for a
boy his age. I mean that as a
doctor not just a mother. It's
good to see him having fun... with
an attractive young woman... who
obviously looks at him with
extraordinary affection...

Raised eyebrow...

BEVERLY

(continuing)

What do you know about this girl?

Off Guinan's reaction...

99 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Moving away at warp speed and...

FADE OUT.

THE END