

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Qpid"  
(f.k.a. "Q Love")  
#40274-194

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FINAL DRAFT

JANUARY 31, 1991

STAR TREK: "Q Love" - 2/5/91 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Q Love"

CAST

PICARD	Q
RIKER	VASH
DATA	SIR GUY GISBOURNE
BEVERLY	ELDERLY SERVANT
TROI	
GEORDI	
WORF	
	Non-Speaking
	VARIOUS ARCHEOLOGY
	COUNCIL MEMBERS
COMPUTER VOICE	
	A VULCAN COUNCIL MEMBER
	TROOP OF MEN-AT-ARMS
Non-Speaking	EXECUTIONER
SUPERNUMERARIES	CASTLE GUARDS
	SERVANTS
	MEMBERS OF THE COURT

STAR TREK: "Q Love" - 2/5/91 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Q Love"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE

CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

TEN FORWARD

CORRIDOR

PICARD'S QUARTERS

VASH'S QUARTERS

MEETING ROOM

SHERWOOD FOREST

A GLADE

NOTTINGHAM CASTLE

MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBERS

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

SHERWOOD FOREST

NOTTINGHAM CASTLE

STAR TREK: "Q Love" - 1/31/91 - PRONUNCIATION

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Q Love"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

clavicular            klaw-VICK-you-lahr

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Q Love"  
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The ship orbits a small, orange hued planet.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log, stardate 44741.9.  
We have arrived at Tagus Three  
where the Enterprise is to serve  
as host of the Federation  
Archeology Council's annual  
symposium.

2 INT. READY ROOM

PICARD, intently studying his monitor screen.

PICARD (V.O.)

I look forward to giving  
tomorrow's keynote address with  
great anticipation.

The DOOR CHIME SOUNDS.

PICARD

Come.

TROI ENTERS. Picard barely glances up from the  
monitor. Troi smiles at Picard's preoccupation.

TROI

I thought you'd want to know,  
Captain, the Council members have  
all been beamed aboard and  
assigned quarters.

PICARD

Excellent.

2 CONTINUED:

TROI

(a hint)

It really is quite late, Captain.

Picard motions her over to the monitor.

PICARD

Tell me, Counselor, in regard to my lecture, which do you suppose would provide greater clarity? A chronological structure, or a division of each excavation's findings into various sociological, religious, and environmental sub-groupings?

TROI

I thought you had already decided on a chronological structure.

PICARD

(nodding; but not quite convinced)

Still, there is something to be said for a more scientific approach.

TROI

Captain, may I make a suggestion?

PICARD

By all means.

Troi finally has the Captain's complete attention.

TROI

Relax! You've written a brilliant speech.

PICARD

It needs to be. Tomorrow I'll be addressing some of the greatest scientific minds in the Federation. Switzer, Klarc-Tarn-Droth, McFarland. Giants in the field of Archeology. Next to them I'm nothing but an enthusiastic amateur.

2 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI

I doubt they think of you as an amateur... not when it comes to the ruins of Tagus Three.

PICARD

(modestly)

Well, I have done my homework... I've examined the findings of every archaeological expedition conducted on the planet's surface...

TROI

It's unfortunate the Taguans no longer allow outsiders to visit the ruins.

PICARD

(wistful)

Indeed. Especially since we still know so little about their origin...

He gestures toward the monitor.

PICARD

Hopefully, I've been able to construct some intriguing theories of my own.

TROI

I'm sure the council members will agree that you have.

PICARD

(smiling)

Your support is appreciated, Deanna.

Picard stands.

PICARD

Screen off.

CU screen as it goes blank.

3 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS

The door OPENS. Picard ENTERS looking somewhat fatigued.

The first thing he notices -- is a Horga'hn sitting on his desk. Picard looks at it, curious... where the hell did this thing come from? Then...

VASH (O.S.)

Bring back any memories?

Picard turns to see VASH stepping out of the shadows near the door. For a moment he's taken completely off-guard.

PICARD

Vash? How did you get in here?

She smiles... and moves closer.

VASH

I came in through the window.

Picard barely has the chance to regain his aplomb when she snakes an arm around him and they kiss. It's going to last awhile.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS - MORNING

Vash, wearing the same outfit from the night before, and Picard, in his dress uniform, sit at a table eating a breakfast of rolls and jam. Though there is still a warm afterglow from the evening's activities, Picard is slightly ill at ease about playing host to Vash aboard the Enterprise.

PICARD

I had no idea you were a member  
of the Archaeology Council.

Vash only smiles.

PICARD

You are a member?  
(a beat)  
Aren't you.

4 CONTINUED:

VASH  
(smiling)  
More or less.

PICARD  
Why have you come to Tagus Three?

VASH  
To see you, of course.

PICARD  
Is that the only reason?

VASH  
Isn't it enough?

She's moves closer to him. It's an intimate moment.

PICARD  
(smiling)  
I wish I could believe you?

VASH  
(smiling right back)  
I'd be disappointed if you did.  
(a beat)  
I really have missed you,  
Jean-Luc.

But before they can act on a mutual impulse the DOOR  
CHIMES. Picard waits until Wash steps away before  
answering.

PICARD  
Come.

BEVERLY strides in.

BEVERLY  
I'm sorry I'm late...  
(noticing Wash)  
Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you  
had company.

PICARD  
That's quite all right, Doctor.  
Beverly Crusher allow me to  
introduce Wash. A friend of mine  
with the Archeology Council.

The two women exchange greetings.

4 CONTINUED: (2)

BEVERLY

(to Vash)

I didn't mean to interrupt. The Captain and I often share morning tea.

VASH

Yes, Jean-Luc has told me all about you.

BEVERLY

Really? When was that?

VASH

On Risa. Where we met.

Beverly is finding this all very interesting.

BEVERLY

I see.

(to Picard)

That must have been during your vacation last year.

PICARD

(giving nothing away)

So it was.

BEVERLY

(to Vash)

I'm surprised he never mentioned you.

VASH

So am I.

She shoots Picard a look, but no explanation is forthcoming.

VASH

Are you busy, Doctor?

BEVERLY

Not at the moment.

VASH

I was wondering, I would love to see some more of this marvelous ship...

4 CONTINUED: (3)

BEVERLY

I'd be delighted to show it to you. If that's alright with you, Jean-Luc.

PICARD

Of course.

But he doesn't seem thrilled at the prospect. As Vash passes him on the way out...

VASH

(sotto voce)

Don't worry, I promise to behave myself.

Picard does not look reassured.

5 INT. TEN FORWARD

The lounge is only lightly populated at the moment.

Riker is seated alone having a drink.

Beverly and Vash ENTER.

BEVERLY

And this is Ten Forward, where the Council's welcoming reception is to be held this afternoon.

VASH

(liking what she sees)

I couldn't think of a better location.

(a beat)

Tell me, does Jean-Luc come here often?

BEVERLY

No, not often.

VASH

I didn't think so.

BEVERLY

The Captain is a very private man.

5 CONTINUED:

VASH

He certainly acted that way when  
we first met.

(smiling)

But I managed to loosen him up.

Beverly would definitely like to learn more about this  
woman.

BEVERLY

Would you like something to drink?

VASH

Please.

Beverly walks over to the bar. Wash checks out the  
view from the window as Riker APPROACHES.

RIKER

Eternity never looked so lovely.

VASH

Excuse me?

RIKER

I was referring to the view.  
Eternity never looked so lovely.

Wash gives him a shrewd appraisal.

VASH

You must be Commander Riker.

RIKER

(surprised)

I'm afraid you have me at a  
disadvantage.

VASH

I didn't mean to interrupt. I  
believe you were about to tell  
me that my eyes are as mysterious  
as the stars.

Riker is intrigued. How the hell did she know?

RIKER

(thinks he's figured  
it out)

You're a Betazoid.

5 CONTINUED: (2)

VASH

Not at all. It's just that  
Jean-Luc does quite a good  
imitation of you.

RIKER

He does?

Beverly comes back with the drinks.

BEVERLY

I see you two have met.

RIKER

Not exactly.

BEVERLY

Vash is a member of the Archeology  
Council. And a friend of the  
Captain.

RIKER

So I've gathered.

BEVERLY

They met during his visit to Risa.

RIKER

On Risa?

(amused)

That must have been a better  
vacation than he let on.

VASH

You mean he never mentioned me  
to you either?

RIKER

Believe me, if he had, I would  
have remembered.

VASH

(a bit frustrated)

You'd think he'd have told someone  
about me.

COMPUTER VOICE

Doctor Crusher, please report to  
Sickbay.

5 CONTINUED: (3)

BEVERLY

On my way.

(to Vash)

I'm afraid I won't be able to  
finish up our tour.

(a beat)

Perhaps Commander Riker could fill  
in for me.

RIKER

It would be my pleasure.

Beverly leaves. Riker and Vash head for the door.

VASH

So you're the one who asked  
Jean-Luc to buy the Horga'han.

RIKER

That was me.

VASH

Tell me Commander, do you collect  
sexual fertility symbols?

RIKER

I wouldn't call it a very large  
collection.

And they're out the door.

6 INT. BRIDGE

DATA and GEORDI at Science Station, WORF at Tactical.  
N.D.'s elsewhere.

Riker and Vash EXIT the aft turbolift.

RIKER

And that brings us to the Main  
Bridge, the Command center of the  
Enterprise, and the end of our  
tour.

He brings her over to the Science Station.

RIKER

Vash, I'd like you to meet  
Commander La Forge and Commander  
Data...

6 CONTINUED:

An exchange of greetings. Riker gestures over to Worf who looks on with disapproval.

RIKER

And this is Lieutenant Worf.  
(noticing Worf's scowl)  
Something wrong, Lieutenant?

WORF

Sir, I was not informed that  
Council Members had been granted  
bridge clearance.

RIKER

I think we can make an exception  
in this case, Mister Worf. Vash  
is the Captain's guest.

Interested glances all around. Worf is somewhat at  
a loss for what to say.

WORF

(finally)  
Welcome aboard.

Riker leads Vash over to the Command area.

VASH

Is this where Jean-Luc sits?

RIKER

(pointing it out)  
That's the big chair.

To everyone's surprise she sits down in it. It  
provides a definite sense of power.

VASH

I can see where being a starship  
Captain does have its rewards.

PICARD (V.O.)

I'm glad you approve.

All eyes turn to Picard who has just exited the Ready  
Room. Vash stands.

6 CONTINUED: (2)

VASH

Jean-Luc. Commander Riker was  
just showing me the bridge.

Picard looks at Riker.

RIKER

Doctor Crusher was called to  
Sickbay.

Picard nods. An awkward beat of silence.

PICARD

So, did you enjoy your tour?

VASH

Very much.

PICARD

Good.

Another awkward moment.

VASH

I guess I'll head back to my room  
now and get ready for the  
reception.

PICARD

By all means.

(a beat)

Well, I suppose I'll see you then.

VASH

I look forward to it.

She turns and makes the long walk back up the ramp to  
the turbolift.

RIKER

(watching her go)

Fascinating woman.

No comment, from Picard.

7 ANGLE ON

Data and Geordi. Geordi has also watched Vash EXIT  
the bridge.

As the turbolift doors close he breaks into a grin.

7 CONTINUED:

DATA

You find something humorous,  
Geordi?

GEORDI

Didn't you notice how ill-at-ease  
the Captain seemed around Vash?

DATA

Yes. However I see nothing  
amusing in his hostility toward  
her.

GEORDI

That wasn't hostility, Data.  
(off Data's look)  
He likes her.  
(a beat)  
A lot.

Still smiling, Geordi turns back to the science  
monitor. A puzzled Data is left pondering the  
intricacies of human relationships.

8 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The ship maintains standard orbit.

9 INT. TEN FORWARD

The reception. COUNCIL MEMBERS mingle with the crew.  
A rather informal time is being had by all.

10 NEW ANGLE

Vash has cornered TROI over by a buffet table.

10 CONTINUED:

VASH

I don't understand, I thought  
being ship's counselor meant the  
Captain confided in you.

TROI

He does. When he feels it's  
necessary.

VASH

And he never spoke to you about  
me?

TROI

Not that I can recall.

VASH

Not even a hint?

TROI

You must understand, the Captain  
is a very...

TROI & VASH

(together)

Private man.

VASH

I know...

She spots Picard who is deep in discussion with a  
Vulcan Council Member.

VASH

Will you excuse me?

TROI

Certainly.

Vash walks off.

11 NEW ANGLE

Vash passes by Worf, Geordi, Beverly and Data.

WORF

(still watching Vash)

Nice legs.

(off Geordi's look)

For a human.

12 NEW ANGLE

Picard and the Vulcan.

PICARD

I agree, the Vulcan excavations on Tagus Three were extensive. Unfortunately, they were confined to the northeastern part of the city.

Vash appears at his elbow.

VASH

Jean-Luc, we need to talk.

One look and Picard knows she means it.

PICARD

(to the Vulcan)

Pardon me.

He and Vash move to a private spot.

PICARD

The reception seems to be a success.

VASH

Forget the reception for a moment. How come you've never mentioned me to your friends?

PICARD

What would you have me tell them?

VASH

Maybe that we met, for one thing. That we had an adventure together. Some fun...

PICARD

I'm afraid that wasn't possible.

VASH

Why not?

PICARD

It would have been... inappropriate.

VASH

I wasn't expecting you to go into any intimate details.

12 CONTINUED:

PICARD

A Captain does not share his  
personal feelings with his crew.

VASH

Is that a Starfleet regulation?  
Or did you make that one up  
yourself?

PICARD

I'm sorry if you're upset.

VASH

And I'm sorry if my being here  
embarrasses you.

And with that she turns and walks away.

HOLD ON a perplexed Captain Picard.

13 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker at command. N.D.'s at Conn and Ops.

Picard ENTERS from the forward turbolift.

RIKER

How was the reception?

PICARD

(brusque)  
Splendid.

He EXITS into the Ready Room.

14 INT. READY ROOM

Picard ENTERS and stops as he SEES --

15 Q

seated at his desk dressed in a Starfleet uniform.

Q

Jean-Luc! How wonderful to see  
you again.

15 CONTINUED:

ON PICARD'S REACTION...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

16 INT. READY ROOM - CONTINUOUS (OPTICAL)

As before.

Q

Well don't just stand there, say something.

Picard advances into the room.

PICARD

Get out of my chair.

Q

I was hoping for something more along the lines of "Welcome back, Q. It's a pleasure to see you again old friend."

PICARD

We are not friends.

Q

You wound me, mon Capitain.

Q snaps his fingers and now it's Picard who sits at his desk and Q who stands before him.

Q

There, perhaps now your manners will show some improvement.

PICARD

What brings you here, Q? Have you been banished from the Continuum once again?

Q

Hardly. They're still apologizing to me for the last time.

PICARD

Then what is it you want?

16 CONTINUED:

Q

Must I always have a reason to stop by. I was in the sector and...

(Picard doesn't buy it)

Alright. You force a confession from me. The truth is I have a debt to settle.

PICARD

A debt?

Q

To you, Picard. And it gnaws at me. It interferes with each day.

PICARD

I have no idea what you're talking about...

Q

Without your assistance at our last encounter, I never would have survived. I would have taken my own life but for you, Jean-Luc.

PICARD

We all make mistakes.

Q

Your good deed made possible my reinstatement into the continuum. And I resent owing you anything... so I'm here to pay up... what shall it be... tell me and I'll be gone...

PICARD

Just be gone. That will suffice nicely.

Q

No, it must be something... something...

(searching)

...constructive. My new word for the day.

PICARD

Some other time, all right? Right now I have several things to attend to.

16 CONTINUED: (2)

Q

Yes, your speech. I've read it.  
I found it dull and pedantic.  
Much like yourself.

(an idea)

I could help you with it.

PICARD

No.

Q

You've never actually been to the  
ruins in Tagus Three, have you?

PICARD

They've been sealed off for over  
a century.

Q

How can you write about what you  
haven't seen?

16A ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Q is suddenly wearing a safari suit...

Q

(brightening)

I'll take you there!

PICARD

Impossible. That would mean  
breaking Taguan law.

Q

Must you always be so ethical?

(thinking)

I suppose we could travel back  
in time. You could see what Tagus  
was like two billion years ago.  
They really knew how to have fun  
in those days.

PICARD

I'm afraid my answer is still no.  
My lecture will have to stand on  
its own. Now, will you please  
leave my ship.

Q

Then you refuse my help?

16A CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD  
Completely.

A beat as Q broods. Then finally...

Q  
(mildly)  
You're simply impossible to find  
a gift for, Picard.

And he's gone.

PICARD  
(to Conn)  
Commander Riker, report to my  
Ready Room.

Riker ENTERS.

RIKER  
Yes, Captain?

PICARD  
I've just been paid a visit by  
Q.

RIKER  
Q?  
(concerned)  
Any idea what he's up to?

PICARD  
He wants to do something nice for  
me.

Riker REACTS. That definitely sounds like trouble.

RIKER  
I'll alert the crew.

OFF Picard's look of approval:

17 INT. CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

Picard EXITS the turbolift. He heads down the Corridor  
on the way to meet with one of the Council Officials.  
At the hall he hesitates, turns left instead of right.

18 NEW ANGLE

Picard HALTS at a doorway. RINGS the bell.

18 CONTINUED:

VASH (V.O.)  
Who's there?

PICARD  
It's me.

VASH (V.O.)  
Who?

PICARD  
Jean-Luc.

The door slides open. Vash stands in the entrance.

VASH  
Yes.

PICARD  
May I come in?

VASH  
What for?

PICARD  
To talk.

VASH  
I'm listening.

PICARD  
If it's all the same to you I'd  
rather this discussion not take  
place in a public corridor.

He slips past her.

19 INT. VASH'S QUARTERS

The first thing Picard notices are various digging  
tools piled in a corner. He looks over at Vash.

VASH  
I thought these were "private"  
quarters.

Picard picks up a PADD off the table.

20 INSERT PADD

A map of the ruins of Tagus.

21 BACK TO SCENE

Picard places the Padd back on the table.

PICARD

And I thought I was the only  
reason you came to Tagus.

VASH

I never fooled you for a second.

She moves closer to Picard.

VASH

Still, you are the most important  
reason.

PICARD

Am I?

Vash steps away.

VASH

That's the trouble with being such  
a well known liar. Even when I  
tell the truth no one believes  
me.

Picard refuses to be swayed.

PICARD

I'm afraid all this equipment will  
have to be confiscated.

VASH

Is that necessary?

PICARD

I could have you placed in the  
brig.

VASH

Why don't you?

PICARD

If the Taguans were to catch you  
down there...

VASH

You gave me the same warning about  
Sarathong Five.

PICARD

I remember.

21 CONTINUED:

VASH

Well, it didn't stop me from going there. I brought back some very impressive artifacts, too.

PICARD

Which you no doubt sold for a nice profit.

VASH

(angry)

It's what I do!

PICARD

Not while you're aboard my ship. I will not allow it.

VASH

Let's get one thing straight, Picard. I can not change who I am for you or anyone else.

PICARD

Nor can I change who I am.

VASH

(calmly)

Then we have nothing more to say to each other.

PICARD

So it would seem.

Picard leaves. Vash sits at the table. She's depressed and upset.

22 NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Q's head APPEARS from the bulkhead behind her. He's obviously overheard their discussion and found it fascinating.

23 INT. CORRIDOR

As Troi, Geordi and Data walk down it...

23 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

What do you think it is?

DATA

What do I think what is?

GEORDI

About her. That, you know, gets to the Captain.

DATA

Perhaps it is their common interest in archaeology.

TROI

I don't think so.

DATA

But Counselor, as an archaeologist, her company would certainly be intellectually stimulating to the Captain.

GEORDI

She's not just stimulating his intellect, Data...

TROI

It's really none of our business.

They turn a corner and come face to face with...

23A Q (OPTICAL)

Leaning against a wall. Wearing a Starfleet uniform again.

Q

You want to know about Picard and that woman? I'll tell you...

We HEAR the SOUND of BIRDS CHIRPING in the air.

23A CONTINUED:

Q  
(sneering)  
It's love.

He DISAPPEARS.

24 INT. PICARD'S QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

Picard ENTERS, disgruntled. He goes into his bedroom, which is dark. As he enters, he sees a figure under the covers in his bed. A slight smile creeps to his lips. He moves to the bed, pulls back the covers to reveal Q.

Q  
Sleeping alone, Picard?

PICARD  
I'm in no mood for your  
foolishness, Q.

Q  
I thought there was something  
different about you. You seemed  
tense, preoccupied. Somewhat...  
smaller.

(a beat)  
At first I thought it was that  
horrible lecture of yours. But  
I was mistaken.

PICARD  
Whatever game you want to play  
will have to wait until tomorrow.

Picard gets into bed but Q refuses to be ignored.

Q  
I had such hopes for you,  
Jean-Luc. I thought you were a  
bit more evolved than the rest  
of your species. But now I  
realize you're as weak as all the  
others.

(a beat)  
Still, it pains me to see the  
great Picard brought down by a  
woman.

24 CONTINUED:

Picard, tries not to feign disinterest.

PICARD

What woman?

Q

Don't play coy with me Captain. I witnessed your little spat with Vash. Nor will I soon forget that look of misery on your face. The pain. The anguish. If I didn't know better I would have thought you were already married.

PICARD

You really must be bored, Q. You're letting your imagination run away with you.

Q

This human emotion of Love is a dangerous thing, Picard. You are obviously ill equipped to handle it. She's found a vulnerability in you... a vulnerability that I've wanted to find for years. If I had known this sooner, I would have arrived as a female. Mark my words, Jean-Luc, this is your Achilles heel..

PICARD

Believe what you wish.

Q

You deny you care for this woman?

Picard doesn't answer.

Q

Believe me, Picard, I'd be doing you a big favor if I simply turned her into a Klabnian eel.

PICARD

(very seriously)

Stay away from her, Q.

Q

I only want to help... my debt to you...

24 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

(interrupting)

... is hereby nullified. I don't  
want your help... your advice...  
your favors... or for that matter  
-- you. Can you understand that  
once and for all?

Q

You would have me stand idly by  
while she leads you to your  
destruction?

PICARD

Yes!

Q

As you wish.

And once again, he's gone.

A concerned Picard is left wondering what Q meant by  
that last remark.

25 INT. MEETING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

As Picard and Riker ENTER...

RIKER

Knock 'em dead, Captain.

Picard nods and moves toward the podium; Riker toward the audience.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE

All seats are filled in anticipation of Picard's lecture. Vash sits among the Council Members. Our regular crew members are present as well.

26A ANGLE - PICARD

As he steps up to the podium. He's waited for this moment a long time.

PICARD

Ladies and gentlemen, members of the Archeology Council. Welcome. It is the mystery of Tagus Three that brings us together today... a mystery that has invited more argument and deduction than the best Sherlock Holmes or Dixon Hill tale. Well, if you'll excuse the conceit, you're about to hear my own detective story.

26B

thru OMITTED

26C

26D ANGLE - TROI AND BEVERLY (OPTICAL)

Suddenly, a hunting cap, with feather, appears on Beverly's head. As Troi attempts to point this phenomenon out to Beverly, a similar cap appears on her own head. They stare at each other in disbelief.

PICARD (V.O.)

For several years, I have been trying to unravel the secrets of Tagus Three. Needless to say, I have not succeeded.

26E ANGLE - PICARD

Still unaware that anything is amiss.

PICARD

However, I have, I believe,  
turned up some new information,  
that if nothing else, raises a  
whole new set of mysteries that  
I hope we can discuss during our  
time together.

26F ANGLE - RIKER AND GEORDI (OPTICAL)

Riker reacts to the quarterstaff that appears in his  
hand; Geordi to the mandolin that appears in his.

PICARD (V.O.)

There have been nine hundred and  
forty-seven known Archaeological  
excavations conducted on the  
planet's surface.

26G ANGLE - DATA (OPTICAL)

who finds himself wearing a cowl... and holding a leg  
of lamb.

PICARD (V.O.)

Out of that number some  
seventy-four are generally  
considered to have revealed  
findings of major importance.

26HA ANGLE - WORF

Astounded by the chaperone which has appeared on his  
shoulders.

PICARD (V.O.)

The earliest took place some  
twenty-two thousand years ago.

26H ANGLE - PICARD (OPTICAL)

who along with the rest of the theater audience is  
beginning to realize that something peculiar is going  
on.

26H CONTINUED:

PICARD

The last was completed within  
the last four hundred years.

Suddenly he's dressed in a jerkin and cap of familiar  
Lincoln green. The audience REACTS. So does Picard.  
Then, as a yeoman's bow appears in his hand...

PICARD

What the hell... !

He VANISHES.

27 EXT. FOREST - DAY - (OPTICAL)

Picard, Riker, Geordi, Data, Worf, Beverly and Troi all  
APPEAR at the same time... all dressed in period  
costume. Beverly and Troi wear men's clothing.  
Beverly also carries a sword; Troi a longbow and  
arrows. Data is bald except for a soupbowl fringe  
plastered to his forehead. Riker wears a yellow jerkin  
and carries his quarterstaff. Worf is dressed like a  
dandy and Geordi still holds his madolin.

As they all react...

PICARD

(raging)

Q!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

28 EXT. FOREST - DAY

As our heroes survey the scenery around them...

TROI

Is this Tagus Three?

PICARD

I doubt there are many oak trees  
on Tagus. No, my guess is this  
is supposed to be Earth.

(off reactions)

Sometime around the twelfth  
century. And this is England,  
Sherwood Forest to be precise.  
Or at least Q's re-creation of  
it.

28 CONTINUED:

RIKER

That explains these costumes.

PICARD

Exactly, Number One.

(a beat)

Or should I say, John Little.

Riker studies Picard to see if he's serious.

BEVERLY

If he's Little John, that would  
make you...

PICARD

I know. Robin Hood.

A beat as this sinks in.

WORF

Sir, I protest. I am not a merry  
man.

DATA

On the contrary, Lieutenant Worf,  
your clothing identifies you with  
the character of Will Scarlett.  
Just as Geordi's Mandolin suggests  
he is Alan-A-Dale.

RIKER

And you, Mister Data, bear a  
striking resemblance to one Friar  
Tuck.

Data examines his stomach.

28 CONTINUED: (2)

WORF

I will not play the fool for Q's  
amusement.

He takes off his cap, looks at it in disgust, and  
slams it on the ground.

PICARD

You're quite right, Worf.

(loudly)

Do you hear that Q? You may as  
well return us to our ship  
immediately.

They react to a horse's shrill whinny and turn to  
see...

29  
thru OMITTED  
30

30A SIR GUY OF GISBOURNE

Mounted on a sleek charger, sword drawn.

SIR GUY  
I have you at last, Robin Hood.

As he charges at Picard...

30B NEW ANGLE

Worf draws his own sword to defend his Captain...

30C ANOTHER ANGLE

Sir Guy rides past Worf, cutting him across the shoulder with his sword. Worf is ready to fight on, but... Suddenly an arrow slams into a tree next to Picard...

30D ANGLE - SEVEN MEN AT ARMS

Coming over a nearby hill. Longbows at the ready.

30E RESUME ANGLE - PICARD AND WORF

Three more arrows strike trees around them. Picard sees there's only one hope to escape.

PICARD  
Quick. Into the forest.

31  
thru OMITTED  
31B

31C ANGLE - WORF

prepares to cover their retreat.

31D ANGLE - PICARD

Hanging back as the others disappear into the trees.

PICARD  
Mister Worf. That's an order.

Worf follows Picard into the forest.

31E OMITTED

31F NEW ANGLE

A furious Sir Guy turns to his men, who search the underbrush.

SIR GUY  
Enough, you fools. We'll never  
find them in the greenwood.

32 INT. FOREST - A GLADE - DAY

Picard and his crew are resting. He approaches Worf who is being tended to by Beverly (sans tricorder.)

BEVERLY  
(applying a makeshift  
bandage)  
I've managed to stop the  
bleeding.

33 NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Q appears on horseback. He's garbed in the cloak and livery of the High Sheriff of Nottingham.

33 CONTINUED:

An angry Picard approaches Q.

PICARD

It's about time you showed up,  
Q.

Q

I'd prefer it if you addressed  
me as His Honor the High Sheriff  
of Nottingham.

PICARD

We will not share in this  
pointless fantasy of yours.

Q dismounts.

Q

Fine. Wait here and do nothing.  
By mid-day tomorrow, you'll all  
be safely back aboard your ship.  
But you will have to accept the  
consequences of your inaction.

PICARD

What consequences?

Q

What's the one thing Robin Hood  
is famous for?

33 CONTINUED: (2)

A beat. Nobody answers. Then...

GEORDI

Robbing from the rich to give to  
the poor?

Q

Besides that.

DATA

Are you referring to his rescue  
of Maid Marian from Nottingham  
Castle?

Q

Right you are, Data.

Q looks over at Picard with glee.

Q

And it just so happens that Sir  
Guy of Gisbourne has decreed that  
Marian's head comes off tomorrow  
at noon.

PICARD

(grimly)

Vash.

Q smiles. He's enjoying himself thoroughly.

Q

The choice is yours my dear,  
Robin. You can either take your  
ease here within the sylvan glade  
or risk your life to save a woman  
you care nothing about.

PICARD

My feelings toward Vash are  
irrelevant. I'd attempt to save  
any innocent life, as you well  
know.

33 CONTINUED: (3)

Q

But what of your merry men? Are you willing to put them in jeopardy as well? Is Vash's life worth losing hers or his or even his... ?

(the last being Worf)

Though I admit he would make a perfect throw rug at Nottingham Castle.

PICARD

Q, I ask you to end this now, before anyone else gets hurt.

Q swings up onto the horse.

Q

Impossible. You see, I've given this fantasy as you call it, a life of its own. I don't know how things will turn out anymore than you do.

(a beat)

But of one thing I am certain. If you dare set foot in Nottingham Castle, blood will be spilled.

He, and the horse vanish.

34 EXT. NOTTINGHAM CASTLE - DAY - (OPTICAL)

Establishing.

35 INT. MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

A small, stark room in the tower; minimal furniture to include a wooden bench. Vash, dressed in Marian's virginal white, paces the floor. She's watched by an ELDERLY SERVANT.

SERVANT

You'll wear yourself out with all that pacing, M'lady.

35 CONTINUED:

VASH

I told you to stop calling me  
that. My name's Vash.

SERVANT

My poor lamb, it's a brain  
sickness you've got for sure.  
Can't I get you something to ease  
your suffering?

VASH

I could use a drink.

SERVANT

It wasn't spirits I was thinking  
of M'lady.

She picks up a wooden box.

SERVANT

I have here some nice fresh  
leeches to drain the fever.

Vash points to the door.

VASH

Out. Get out.

The servant rushes to the door, but before she can get  
there it opens and Sir Guy ENTERS.

SERVANT

Oh, her mind's in an awful  
turmoil, Sir Guy.

Sir Guy stares at Vash with undisguised desire.

VASH

Who the hell are you?

SERVANT

M'Lady, everyone in Nottingham  
knows, Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

VASH

Sir Guy of what?

Her Servant rolls her eyes towards heaven, and shaking  
her head hurries out of the room.

Sir Guy closes the door behind her.

35 CONTINUED: (2)

SIR GUY

Do not mock me, Lady Marian. I'm  
prepared to offer you one final  
chance to change your mind.

He grabs hold of her.

SIR GUY

Will you marry me?

Vash pulls away and slaps him across the face.

35 CONTINUED: (3)

SIR GUY  
(coldly)  
I see. Then the execution will  
proceed as scheduled.

Sir Guy turns to leave.

VASH  
What execution?

SIR GUY  
(turning back)  
I warn you Marian, this pathetic  
attempt at feigning madness will  
not save your life.

VASH  
(shocked)  
You mean I'm the one getting  
executed?

Though Vash is at a loss to explain how she came to be  
in this current predicament, a lifetime of adventure  
has honed her survival instincts to a razor's edge.

VASH  
Sir Guy, wait? Can't we talk this  
over?  
(a beat)  
I admit, I haven't been myself  
lately.  
(flashing her best  
smile)  
Perhaps we've both been acting  
a bit hasty.

She sits down on the bench. Pats the space next to  
her.

VASH  
Please.

Sir Guy smiles. Delighted.

36 EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY

We hear bad mandolin playing in the background as Troi  
pulls back on a bow and lets fly an arrow. We HEAR  
the THWACK of impact. CAMERA PANS OVER to the tree  
that was her intended target. There's no sign of the  
arrow.

36 CONTINUED:

PAN OVER a few feet to the right. Data is standing with an arrow in his chest.

Troi hurries over.

TROI

Data, are you alright?

A beat, as Data checks his systems.

DATA

The arrow impacted just above my sixth intercostal support, penetrating my secondary subprocessor.

Data moves his arm up and down and in and out.

DATA

(continuing)

Fortunately, none of my biofunctions seem impaired.

Data pulls the arrow out of his body. He offers it to Troi who is much relieved.

DATA

Do not get discouraged. I believe your aim is improving.

36A NEW ANGLE

Beverly is checking Worf's wound in the background as Geordi sits on a log strumming the mandolin... it sounds like fingernails on a blackboard.

Worf gets up, crosses to Geordi, and takes the mandolin out of his hands. He walks over, and smashes it against a tree. Hands the neck back to Geordi.

WORF

Sorry.

37 NEW ANGLE

A relieved grin from Riker as he watches Picard buckle on his sword.

37 CONTINUED:

RIKER

It's about time we got out of here, sir.

PICARD

Not we Commander. You and the others are to wait here until I return.

RIKER

You're not planning to go after her alone, are you?

The others gather around.

PICARD

This is not a mission. It's personal, between Q and myself. I don't want any of you involved.

RIKER

But Captain...

PICARD

You have your orders, Commander. I expect you to follow them.

With a final glance at his crew, Picard heads off towards Nottingham.

On Riker's worried look we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

38 EXT. COURTYARD INSIDE WALLS OF CASTLE - NIGHT

Cold, imposing, and lit by flickering torches. We see a limited section of the yard... Heraldic banners hang from the walls. A circular staircase rises to the tower.

Only a few servants are visible as a haughty Q (still dressed as the High Sheriff) surveys his domain with smug satisfaction.

Nearby is an EXECUTIONER. Off to the side, a TINKER, with his back to us, repairs the chains on a pair of shackles. The massively built Executioner is busy sharpening the blade of his broad axe against a foot powered grindstone. He pauses to inspect his work. Q, passing by, barely taps the edge of the blade with his index finger.

Q

A touch sharper, shall we?

The Executioner starts up the grindstone.

Q suddenly halts in confusion as he discovers a surprising sight before him.

39 NEW ANGLE

Vash and Sir Guy, looking surprisingly chummy as they approach from another part of the courtyard. She carries a bouquet of fresh-picked flowers. Sir Guy holds up a pomegranate. Vash smiles and demurely nibbles it.

A suspicious Q approaches them.

Q

Such benevolence, Sir Guy,  
allowing the condemned prisoner  
fresh air.

SIR GUY

You're mistaken, Sheriff. Maid  
Marian has consented to be my  
wife.

39 CONTINUED:

Q looks at Vash in disbelief.

Q

But that's impossible?

Vash motions to a servant who approaches with a tray and two goblets of wine.

VASH

(innocently)

Not at all. Though I admit a maiden seldom has the opportunity to win herself such a noble husband.

She takes a goblet from the tray and hands it to Sir Guy...

SIR GUY

A toast to the most beautiful bride-to-be in all of England.

He goes to drink.

Q

Hold there, Sir Guy.

He knocks the goblet to the ground.

SIR GUY

Have you taken leave of your senses?

Q

It could be poisoned. Some foul scheme of Robin Hood. She's in league with him still, I'll warrant.

VASH

Robin Hood?

A beat as Vash absorbs this rather bizarre accusation. She has no choice but to bluff her way through it.

VASH

Oh, Robin Hood... that was over long ago.

Q

Why, all of Nottingham knows you're in love with him.

39 CONTINUED: (2)

VASH

That's a lie.

(to Sir Guy)

He... bewitched me. Put me under  
some evil spell.

Sir Guy gives her hand an encouraging pat.

SIR GUY

Just as I suspected.

(to Q)

You can add sorcery to the list  
of charges against that rogue.

Q

But Sir Guy, if anyone has been  
bewitched it's you.

Sir Guy stands. His hand is placed firmly on the hilt  
of his sword.

SIR GUY

Silence. Any further impudence  
and it'll be your head on the  
chopping block.

(a beat)

Guards, escort the Lady Marian  
to her chamber.

VASH

(standing)

But I'd much rather stay with you.

SIR GUY

Of course you would, my child.  
But I have important business to  
discuss with the Sheriff.

(a beat; then dripping  
with implication)

And you must prepare for your  
wedding.

VASH

I count the hours.

She kisses him. She allows herself to be led away, but  
not before her eyes flash him the promise of future  
delights.

Sir Guy and Q watch her depart.

39 CONTINUED: (3)

SIR GUY  
Lovely creature.

Q  
(with grudging  
admiration)  
She is intriguing.

Q is determined not to allow his well-laid scheme go astray.

Q  
Sir Guy, perhaps it would be wise  
to keep this wedding a secret for  
now.

SIR GUY  
What are you babbling about?

Q  
You still hope to capture Robin  
Hood, don't you?

SIR GUY  
I live for the moment.

Q  
(thinking of Picard)  
Well, if he were to hear that  
Marian's life was no longer in  
danger, there would be no need  
for him to come to Nottingham to  
rescue her.

Sir Guy slaps Q on the back.

SIR GUY  
By heavens, you're right. No word  
of my wedding shall leave these  
walls.

(MORE)

39 CONTINUED: (4)

SIR GUY (Cont'd)

(a beat)

What better way to celebrate a  
marriage than with an execution.

Sir Guy and Q share a chuckle, then go their separate  
ways.

Q

(musing)

This could be fun.

40 NEW ANGLE

Q crosses by the Tinker hammering at a chain. The  
Tinker looks up once Q has passed him by, REVEALING  
himself to be Picard in disguise.

41 INT. MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Vash paces around the room. Suddenly she stops.  
Listening to what could be a faint rustling. The noise  
ceases. Vash continues to pace. The rustling resumes,  
louder now. Again, Vash stops pacing. The sound,  
and now it's clearly the rustling of vines, is coming  
from outside her open window. She moves towards the  
embrasure, when SUDDENLY a hand APPEARS on the ledge.  
With a final GRUNT, Picard lifts himself through the  
window. Vash throws herself at him.

VASH

Jean-Luc. Am I glad to see you.

She throws herself into his arms, and kisses him.

VASH

You would not believe what I've  
been through. One minute I'm on  
the Enterprise... the next thing  
I know I'm here in Nottingham.  
First, they're going to chop my  
head off... and now I'm supposed  
to marry someone named Sir Guy...  
and everyone insists on calling  
me Marian...

41 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Yes, I know.

VASH

You do? But how...

For the first time she notices his outfit.

VASH

You're Robin Hood?

41 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

My staff and I were brought here  
by an old adversary of mine named  
Q. I'll tell you the rest once  
we're safe.

He leads her towards the window.

PICARD

Come, we don't have much time.

VASH

Are the others outside?

PICARD

They're waiting for us back in  
Sherwood.

That brings Vash to a quick stop.

VASH

You mean you came alone?

PICARD

Yes, now let's...

VASH

What kind of plan is that?

PICARD

An excellent one if you'd only  
hurry up.

But Vash refuses to budge.

VASH

You do realize our lives are at  
stake here.

PICARD

Only too well.

VASH

And this is the best strategy  
you could come up with? One man  
against an entire castle.

PICARD

I suppose you know of a better  
one.

41 CONTINUED: (3)

VASH

How about this? You go. I'll stay here.

She walks away from the window.

PICARD

And do what?

VASH

Marry Sir Guy if I have to.

PICARD

(ironic)

That is brilliant.

VASH

If there's a way to escape, I'll find it, eventually. With my head still attached.

PICARD

You don't really expect me to leave you here?

He reaches for her. She pulls away.

VASH

I can take care of myself.

PICARD

Must you be so stubborn?

Suddenly the door is flying OPEN and Sir Guy enters backed by a retinue of SOLDIERS.

SIR GUY

There'll be no escape for you this time, Robin Hood.

PICARD

(to Vash)

Behind me.

He steps in front of her and reaches for his sword. But Vash is quicker. She pulls the blade out of his scabbard and points it at his chest.

VASH

You should have left while you had the chance.

41 CONTINUED: (5)

Sir Guy advances on them, smiling.

SIR GUY  
Well done, my dear.

VASH  
(sweetly)  
Consider it my wedding present  
to you.

The Guards lead Picard away.

42 EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Picard and the Guards come down the stairs. He barely glances at a beaming Q as he's hurried away. Sir Guy follows behind.

Q  
Congratulations, Gisbourne. I  
see you've snared the jackal.

SIR GUY  
It's Marian who deserves the  
credit. Took him with his own  
sword.

On Q's astonished REACTION...

43 INT. MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Vash is seated at a table, writing feverishly. Her SERVANT ENTERS and scuttles across the room to her.

SERVANT  
You sent for me, M'Lady?

VASH  
You must take this letter to  
Robin's men.

SERVANT  
You want me to go to Sherwood  
Forest? At this time of night?

VASH  
You'll leave immediately.

43 CONTINUED:

SERVANT  
(glancing out the  
window)  
But it's dark. I'll get lost.

Vash continues to write.

SERVANT  
Besides, it's not safe. What with  
all them hedge robbers and worse  
lurking about.

VASH  
Please, this is urgent.

SERVANT  
You ask me, you'd be better off  
staying with Sir Guy. He's got  
a future. Why you'll be living  
in London before you know it.

VASH  
But you must go. Otherwise,  
they're going to kill him.

She's about to offer the folded letter to the Servant,  
when the door SWINGS open. Vash leaps up dropping the  
letter on the table as Q ENTERS.

VASH  
How dare you come barging in here  
this way!

Q  
I come to offer apologies for my  
harsh words earlier. I had no  
idea you were so ruthless. The  
cold blooded way you betrayed  
Robin was most impressive.

Q is now standing right by the table. Vash forces  
herself not to glance down at the letter.

VASH  
That's most gracious of you.

Q  
I admit I was surprised...  
(a beat)  
Though perhaps not as surprised  
as Jean-Luc.

43 CONTINUED: (2)

Now it's Vash's turn to be surprised.

VASH

You're Q.

Q

(bowing)

And you are a very interesting woman.

He notices the letter.

Q

What's this?

She tries to snatch it away.

VASH

Give me that.

But it's too late.

Q

A letter to Riker?

(reading)

Quick... Come to Castle... Must save Captain...

(cheerfully)

Why this is wonderful. Such marvelous duplicity. You certainly fooled Sir Guy. And me as well.

(a shrewd glance at Vash)

I do believe you're worth further study.

VASH

(turning on the charm)

Am I?

Q

Unfortunately, we won't have the time.

(shouting)

Guards!

They enter.

43 CONTINUED: (3)

Q  
Take this traitor away.  
(to Vash)  
It appears there's going to be  
a double execution.

Vash is marched from the room.

And as Q gloats over this latest turn of events:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

44 EXT. COURTYARD - THE NEXT DAY

A CROWD has gathered to SEE the show. Sir Guy and Q sit together at a dais at one end of the courtyard.

45 NEW ANGLE

the stairs leading to the tower. We HEAR VOICES coming down off-camera, drawing close.

PICARD (V.O.)

My fault?

VASH (V.O.)

Yes, your fault.

PICARD (V.O.)

We'd have been safe in Sherwood if you hadn't grabbed my sword.

Picard and Vash, both wearing shackles, come into VIEW as they walk toward CAMERA...

VASH

I grabbed it to prevent you from being killed.

PICARD

You should have never interfered.

VASH

You were the one interfering.

PICARD

I was trying to rescue you.

VASH

Next time don't bother.

PICARD

I won't.

They come to a halt in front of the executioners block. Q steps forward to meet them.

45 CONTINUED:

Q

Don't you two ever stop arguing?

No response.

Q

Tell me Picard, as you stand here facing the termination of your insect existence, do you see what has led you to this end?

(beat, no reply)

Was she worth it?

PICARD

Can we just get this over with.

VASH

(hurt)

Are you implying I'm not worth it?

But Picard keeps his eyes fixed on Q.

PICARD

Your game was for my benefit, Q. She is innocent in all this.

Q

She is many things, none of them innocent.

PICARD

Let her go.

VASH

Jean-Luc, you do care.

Q

A gallant gesture Picard. But a futile one.

(a beat)

Farewell. I hope you'll both be happy together.

He moves aside as Sir Guy rises to his feet.

SIR GUY

(to Picard & Vash)

You have been found guilty of outlawry and high treason. Do you have anything to say before sentencing is carried out?

45 CONTINUED: (2)

Impassive stares from the prisoners.

SIR GUY

Ready them for the block.

The Guards remove the chains.

45AA NEW ANGLE

A group of hooded monks have entered the courtyard. Beneath the hoods are Riker, Worf, Geordi, Data, Beverly and Troi.

45A ANGLE - PICARD AND VASH

already kneeling at the block.

45B ANGLE - THE MONKS (OPTICAL)

taking in the scene in front of them. Worf reaches for the sword beneath his robe. Geordi lays a restraining hand on Worf's arm.

GEORDI

Too many of them. We'd never  
get to the Captain...

RIKER

Data, we need a diversion. Now.

Data opens his left arm, revealing the circuitry and blinking lights within. He pulls out three small components and fastens them together.

DATA

(to Riker)

Please stand back, Commander.  
Microfusion cells can be somewhat  
dangerous under high  
temperatures...

Riker stands back. Data tosses the components into the Tinker's fire. The fire FLARES briefly, then there is a small explosion and a dramatic pyrotechnic discharge which startles the Executioner and the onlookers.

45B CONTINUED:

Amidst the confusion that follows, Picard leaps to his feet and rams his elbow into the executioner's stomach, knocking him to the ground. Picard then grabs hold of one of his guards, and pulls his sword free of its scabbard.

45C OMITTED

45D NEW ANGLE

Riker, Worf, Geordi, Troi, Beverly and Data (who has closed the panel on his arm) throw off their monk's robes.

VOICES

It's the outlaws. Robin's band.

Sir Guy unsheathes his sword.

SIR GUY

Guards. Take Marian to the tower.

Vash whirls and punches one of her captors but two others drag her up the stairs.

Picard SEES Vash being taken away and tries to follow. A guard tries to block him and is cut down.

46 NEW ANGLE

As our crew beats back the attacking soldiers.

46A DATA

holds out his arm and "clotheslines" one soldier as he charges by. Then Data looks up at...

46B ANOTHER SOLDIER

who lunges toward him with a sword. The man stops in mid-thrust, shocked, as...

Data catches the tip of the blade between his thumb and forefinger... and slowly CURLS it back.

47 NEW ANGLE

Q watches the battle that rages around him with  
delight.

48 NEW ANGLE

Picard comes face to face with Sir Guy.

SIR GUY

I'll have you know I'm the  
greatest swordsman in all of  
Nottingham.

48 CONTINUED:

A quick flurry of cuts and parries as they test each others skill.

PICARD

That's very impressive.

They engage again.

PICARD

But there's something you should know.

A furious series of strikes ending with their swords crossed at the hilt, their faces inches apart.

SIR GUY

And what would that be?

PICARD

I'm not from Nottingham.

He pushes Sir Guy away.

49 NEW ANGLE

Gradually Picard forces Sir Guy up the stairs leading to Marian's room. Sir Guy, panic building, takes a vicious cut at Picard's head. Picard ducks, thrusts upward, and stabs Sir Guy through the body.

Sir Guy tumbles off the staircase.

50 INT. MARIAN'S CHAMBER (OPTICAL)

Vash, listens to the SOUNDS of battle.

Suddenly, the door SWINGS and Picard races in.

VASH

Jean-Luc.

She runs into his arms. Picard is fed up with all this, tosses the sword to the floor.

PICARD

(shouting)

It's over, Q. Now get us out of here.

Q APPEARS in the room.

50 CONTINUED:

Q

(applauding)

My compliments, Captain. I doubt Robin Hood himself could have done better.

PICARD

If any of my people are hurt...

Q

Sadly, they're all fine... but the point is they could have been killed, and you might have been too... all for the "Love Of A Maid." My debt to you is paid, Picard, if you have learned how weak and vulnerable you really are... if you can finally see how "Love" brought out the worst in you...

VASH

Nonsense. You're absolutely wrong. It brought out the best in him.

(to him, intimately)

His nobility, courage, self-sacrifice. His tenderness.

Q

(to Vash)

You're good. Very good.

PICARD

(end of his patience)

Enough of this.

Q

Indeed.

He snaps his finger and Picard DISAPPEARS.

51 OMITTED

52 INT. MEETING ROOM (OPTICAL)

The room is empty. Picard, in uniform, suddenly APPEARS at the podium. Riker and the others APPEAR back in the audience, exactly where they were sitting before. All back in their Starfleet uniforms. They look around in confusion.

RIKER

Everybody here?

TROI

Where's Vash?

Picard scans the room. No sign of her.

PICARD

Computer, locate Council Member Vash.

COMPUTER (VOICE)

Council Member Vash is not aboard the Enterprise.

Off his look of concern...

52A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

still in orbit.

53 INT. READY ROOM (OPTICAL)

Picard ENTERS. As the doors CLOSE behind him Vash MATERIALIZES.

VASH

Hello, Jean-Luc.

PICARD

(smiling)

Well, this is a relief. I was afraid that Q...

VASH

There were a few things he wanted to discuss with me.

53 CONTINUED:

PICARD

I'm surprised he wasn't too busy  
gloating over his victory.

VASH

(beat)

He was right about one thing,  
Jean-Luc. As ridiculous as it  
was, his game did prove how much  
you care.

53 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

I may not share my feelings with  
my crew, but I do have them.

A warm moment passes between them.

VASH

I'm going to miss you, Picard.

PICARD

I wouldn't be surprised if our  
paths cross again.

VASH

I'll see to it.

They kiss.

PICARD

So, where are you off to now?

VASH

I haven't made up my mind.

54 CONTINUED:

VASH

Remind you of someone you know?

PICARD

(amused in spite of  
himself)

As a matter of fact... yes.

Q

(to Vash)

We are going to have fun. I'll  
take you places no human could  
ever hope to see.

VASH

(to Picard)

Who can resist an offer like that?

Picard sees there's no way to change her mind. He  
advances on Q.

PICARD

As payment in full for your debt  
to me, you will guarantee her  
safety...

Q

She will not be harmed, Jean-Luc.  
I promise you that.

Picard looks over at Vash. A silent farewell.

Q

Well, aren't you going to kiss  
her good-bye?

Picard and Vash stare at him until he gets the hint.

Q

Oh, all right.

He VANISHES.

Vash smiles at Picard.

VASH

Well aren't you?

A final kiss. Then Vash steps back.

VASH

Goodbye, Jean-Luc.

She VANISHES.

55 C.U. PICARD

A beat. Then a trace of a smile appears on his face.

56 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

turning towards the unknown.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END