

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Best of Both Worlds, Part II"

#40274-175

Written by
Michael Piller

Directed by
Cliff Bole

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FINAL DRAFT

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STAR TREK: "Worlds" Part Two - 7/9/90 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Best of Both Worlds" Part Two

CAST

PICARD	ADMIRAL HANSON
RIKER	LT. COMMANDER SHELBY
DATA	LOCUTUS (PICARD-BORG)
BEVERLY	
TROI	
GEORDI	
WORF	
WESLEY	Non-Speaking SEVERAL BORG
GUINAN	
O'BRIEN	
GLEASON	

COMPUTER VOICE

Non-Speaking
SUPERNUMERARIES
MISC. SECURITY PERSONNEL

STAR TREK: "Worlds" Part Two - 7/10/90 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Best of Both Worlds" Part Two

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
 MAIN BRIDGE
 BATTLE BRIDGE
 CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
 MAIN ENGINEERING
 SICKBAY
 DATA'S LABRATORY
 CORRIDOR
 TURBOLIFT
 OBSERVATION LOUNGE
 TRANSPORTER ROOM

ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE

THE BORG SHIP
 INTERIOR CHAMBER
 OPERATING ROOM

ADMIRAL HANSON'S SHIP
 (GALAXY CLASS STARSHIP)
 READY ROOM
 BATTLE BRIDGE

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
 BATTLE SECTION
 SAUCER SECTION

THE STARFLEET SHIPS
 USS CHEKHOV
 USS KYUSHU
 USS MELBOURNE
 ETC.

ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE

THE BORG SHIP

SATURN (FROM SPACE)

MARS (FROM SPACE)
 UNMANNED PODS

EARTH (FROM SPACE)

STAR TREK: "Worlds" Part Two - REV. 7/3/90 - PRONUNCIATION

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Best of Both Worlds" Part Two

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

LOCUTUS	low-KEW-tus
ITERATIVE	IT-er-ah-tiv

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Best of Both Worlds" Part Two
TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL) - LOCUTUS ON SCREEN

barely reacts to Riker's order to fire. Red alert continues. We hear a low rumbling, slowly growing...

RIKER

Eyes locked on Locutus. The rumbling grows.

GEORDI

at the Engineering Station... monitoring readings...

GEORDI
Deflector power approaching
maximum limits. Energy discharge
in... six seconds...

As the rumble heightens to a roar...

VARIOUS REACTIONS

Beverly... Troi... Worf... Wesley... Shelby... finally
back to Riker...

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Close on the main deflector dish as it glows...
pulses... and then erupts in a blinding beam that
strikes --

EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

A forcefield absorbing the continuing blast.

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

The ship shakes...

CONTINUED:

WORF

The Borg ship is undamaged.

SHELBY

Impossible...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Warp reactor core
primary coolant failure.

GEORDI

Can't maintain it much longer,
Commander...

Riker never takes his eyes off Locutus...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Exceeding reaction
chamber thermal limit.

RIKER

Cease fire.

Geordi runs through a series of commands on his
panels...

GEORDI

Shutting down warp engines.

The roar stops... the silence is eerie... The Bridge
crew is stunned.

RIKER

(unbelievable)

They couldn't have adapted that
quickly...

LOCUTUS

(on the contrary)

The knowledge and experience of
the human Picard is part of...
us... now. It has prepared us...
for all possible courses of
action. Your resistance is
hopeless...

(beat)

... Number One.

7 CONTINUED: (2)

And on the frightening intimacy of the moment... on
Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Alone... The Borg ship is gone.

RIKER (V.O.)

First Officer's Log, Stardate
43999.1. The Borg ship has
resumed its course toward Earth.
We are unable to pursue pending
repairs to the Enterprise.

9 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Riker, Geordi, Troi, Worf, Beverly and Shelby. Admiral
Hanson is on the viewscreen; he is in his Ready Room on
a Galaxy Starship.

RIKER

... and as we anticipated, the
blast burned out the main
navigational deflector... we also
have damage to shields and the
reactor core.

GEORDI

We should be back up in eight to
twelve hours, Admiral.

Hanson frowns, acknowledges...

HANSON

Well, we'll miss you at the party.

RIKER

The Enterprise will be there, sir.
Maybe a little late. But we'll
be there.

HANSON

Your engagements gave us valuable
time. We've mobilized a fleet
of forty starships at Wolf 359
and that's just for starters...
the Klingons are sending
warships... Hell, we've even
thought about opening
communications with the
Romulans...

9 CONTINUED:

SHELBY

You realize, Admiral, that with the assistance of Picard, the Borg will be prepared for your defenses.

Hanson takes a long beat as though he's considering the dreadful ramifications of this fact. But that's not what he's thinking about at all. He finally speaks.

HANSON

Lieutenant... a few years ago, I watched a freshman cadet pass four upper classman on the last hill of the forty kilometer run on Danula Two... damndest thing I ever saw... only freshman to ever win the Academy marathon. I made it my business to get to know that young fellow... got to know him very very well... I'll tell ya, I've never known anyone with more drive, determination or more courage than Jean-Luc Picard. There's no way in hell he would assist the Borg. I want that clear.

SHELBY

Of course, Admiral...

HANSON

He is a casualty of war.

BEVERLY

Then... we have abandoned all hope of recovering him.

HANSON

(reluctantly
acknowledges)

In less than twenty-four hours, this armada's going to hit that Borg vessel with everything we can muster. Either they survive or we do. As for Picard...

(beat)

A great man has been lost. Your Captain. My friend.

He sighs, looks down a beat and then up.

9 CONTINUED: (2)

HANSON

Commander Riker... I hereby
promote you to the field
commission of Captain.

Push in on Riker...

HANSON

The Enterprise is your ship now.
Congratulations. I wish the
circumstances were different.

RIKER

Good luck, Admiral.

HANSON

To us all.

He signs off.

10 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

warping toward Earth.

11 INT. BORG SHIP

Moving down a row... no activity... the Borg are in
their regenerative state, in their compartments...
finding Locutus in a compartment, 'asleep'... a shudder
crosses his face as though a nightmare has invaded his
mind... suddenly his eyes open in a panic...

12 MATTE SHOT - THE BORG SHIP INTERIOR (OPTICAL)

An agonizing human cry echoes through the chamber...

13 A BORG IN HIS COMPARTMENT

reacts to the commotion... methodically EXITS and moves
to Locutus, who resists his efforts to restrain him...
another Borg joins them... together they escort him
out of his compartment...

14 INT. BORG OPERATING ROOM - MONTAGE SEQUENCE (OPTICAL)

Small and no different than any other area of the ship
except there is a medical table...

14 CONTINUED:

Locutus is lying on his back, conscious as one Borg prepares to use a long, probing implant device to add a bio-chip... another Borg prepares a huge mechanical arm to attach... and as we slowly push in to Locutus' face... and into his eye... a single tear is in one corner... and as the operation commences, his eyes close and after a beat, slowly, the color in his human face begins to drain further and further away until he is ashen white.

15 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Riker stands at the window, now wearing a Captain's rank, looks around... moves closer to Picard's desk... and studies the empty chair... and it is a symbol of the man... and he cannot bring himself to sit there. So he sits in the chair he always sits in... facing the Captain's desk. A chime. He reacts... stands...

RIKER

Come.

Troi ENTERS. Riker is glad to see her, smiles, warm.

RIKER

Hi.

TROI

You wanted to see me?

And already it's different between them... he is the Captain now and that inherently creates an emotional barrier.

RIKER

How's the crew?

TROI

Throwing themselves into the work to be done... the emotional impact hasn't been fully realized yet...

RIKER

(understands)

I guess Starfleet training kicks in and takes over...

15 CONTINUED:

TROI

(acknowledges)

We know the risks, tell ourselves
we're prepared for the
consequences... and yet, something
like this cuts deeper than we can
admit at first. He was our
Captain. It's like losing the
leader of a nation or the head
of a family.

RIKER

(a beat)

He was more of a father to me than
my own.

Troi nods sympathetically...

RIKER

When I saw him like that...
mutilated...

TROI

You did what you had to do...
nobody doubts your love for him...

RIKER

Was there any part of him left,
Deanna?

TROI

(slow)

Yes. I can still sense his
humanity

RIKER

(looks down)

Then you must have sensed his
pain...

Her silence tells him she does.

RIKER

I don't envy your abilities.

He cannot stay with the intensity of this moment...
Breaking the tension --

15 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

I'd better check on the progress
of our repairs...

(beat)

There won't be any changes... as
far as I'm concerned it's his
ship, his crew... and everything
we do, every battle we fight, it's
for him.

(beat, warm)

I'm glad you're here to help me
with this.

TROI

Thank you, Captain.

And as they both realize their intimacy will be never
quite the same again.

RIKER

(dismissed)

Counselor...

Their eyes say more than their words. And as she
leaves, we stay a beat on him as he begins to realize
it's lonely at the top and he glances once more at --

16 THE DESK

and the empty chair... where he still has not been
seated.

17 INT. TURBOLIFT

as it opens and Riker and Worf ENTER.

RIKER

... and Mister Crusher has
suggested a chip might be designed
that will automatically retune
phasers to a random setting after
each discharge...

WORF

That would be a great advantage.

17 CONTINUED:

RIKER

We should also see if we can find
some way to neutralize their
forcefields, Worf... we've got
to show them we can adapt too.

(to com)

Engineering.

(continuing to Worf)

We're not just fighting the Borg
anymore... we're fighting the life
experience they've stolen from
Captain Picard... how the hell
do we defeat an enemy that knows
us better than we know
ourselves... ?

WORF

The Borg have neither honor nor
courage... that is our greatest
advantage.

RIKER

I hope it's enough.

17 CONTINUED: (2)

The doors open. They EXIT...

18 OMITTED

19 INT. ENGINEERING

The warp reactor where Geordi and Shelby are supervising repairs, checking panels, sensors...

GEORDI

Engine control processors are back up...

SHELBY

Accelerator coils are responding normally...

GEORDI

Forward shields at fifty-eight percent... aft shields --
(reacts as he studies sensors)
Sensors must be down...

SHELBY

Checking... sensors are fine... no, aft shields have completely failed... dammit... auxiliary generators are out again...

Riker and Worf ENTER. Seeing Worf --

CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Just the man I need.

(to Riker)

We're having problems with the
aft shields... generators are
going on and off line... I could
use your help, Worf...

Riker nods his approval. Geordi and Worf start to
move...

19 CONTINUED:

RIKER

How soon do we get underway,
Geordi?

GEORDI

Still a couple hours... Commander
Shelby can fill you in...

Geordi and Worf EXIT... Riker and Shelby are alone...
the first time they've been alone since the big
Turbolift argument... and the tension of their
relationship hangs over the scene.

SHELBY

The main navigational deflector
is functional again... Sherbourne
and Barclay are running through
the final testing sequence now...

RIKER

The warp reactor core?

SHELBY

Reconstruction is proceeding
normally... it's slow work. If
we can nail down this shield
generator problem, I agree with
La Forge... we should be at
operating capacity in two or three
hours...

RIKER

Good.

An uncomfortable beat of silence as they study each
other...

SHELBY

Anything else, sir?

RIKER

Yes. You did a good job on the
Borg ship.

SHELBY

I didn't get Picard.

RIKER

You stopped them. You gave us
our shot.

19 CONTINUED: (2)

Shelby realizes that Riker is being extraordinarily generous and she appreciates it. About to apologize for her earlier attitude --

SHELBY

Sir...

RIKER

Commander, we don't have to like each other to work well together. In fact, I expect you to continue to keep me on my toes.

SHELBY

(quick)

Some might define that as the role of a first officer.

Riker reacts, frowns...

RIKER

Damn, you are ambitious, aren't you, Shelby...

SHELBY

Yes.

Riker shakes his head, almost smiles. She does have chutzpa.

SHELBY

(continuing)

Captain Riker, based on our past relationship, there's no reason I should expect to become your first officer... except you need me. I know how to get things done. And I have the expertise in the Borg...

RIKER

You also have a lot to learn, Commander.

SHELBY

(beat, taking it as a rejection)

Yessir.

19 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER

(beat)

Almost as much as I had to learn when I came aboard as Captain Picard's first officer. He reminded me of that fact when I commented on what a pain in the neck you are.

SHELBY

(relieved)

Yessir.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Data to Riker. Message from Starfleet, Captain.

RIKER

Go ahead, Data.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Starfleet reports it has engaged the Borg at Wolf 359.

On Riker's reaction...

20
thru OMITTED
25

26 INT. ENTERPRISE MAIN BRIDGE

Riker ENTERING in a hurry from the Turbolift. Data, Wesley and supernumeraries.

DATA

Admiral Hanson on subspace, Captain...

RIKER

On screen.

27 ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Hanson's image on screen... he's on a Battle Bridge at Red Alert... reception is breaking up... his ship is clearly in battle... some shaking...

RIKER

Admiral...

27 CONTINUED:

HANSON

(calm but worried)

The fight does not go well,
Enterprise... we're attempting
to withdraw and regroup.
Rendezvous with fleet...

Transmission ends suddenly... subspace hiss and snow
fills the screen... on Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

28 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

warping.

RIKER (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 44000.3.
Repairs are complete. The
Enterprise is warping to
rendezvous with Starfleet at Wolf
359. Subspace communications from
the site of battle have been cut
off possibly by Borg interference.

29 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Riker, Data, Geordi, Beverly, Shelby, Worf, Troi.

RIKER

Lieutenant Worf, everyone at this
table shares my respect for your
service to this ship. But right
now, I need your experience at
tactical... Mister Data, I
realize that your very nature
omits ambition. Nevertheless,
I want you to know I thought
seriously about you as first
officer as well...

DATA

Thank you, sir...

RIKER

But this is not a time for change.
I need you all where you are,
where Captain Picard always relied
on you.

(with some tongue-in-cheek)

I have been... reluctantly...
forced to conclude that Commander
Shelby, our expert on the Borg,
is the ideal choice at this time
for first officer.

29 CONTINUED:

Shelby has softened a bit by now, appreciates the humor at her expense... the staff nods congratulations. On to business...

RIKER

Based on our last communication, we have to assume the Borg have survived the fleet's attack... your thoughts on our next encounter...

SHELBY

What about the heavy graviton beam we were talking about... ?

GEORDI

I've gone over it four times... The local field distortion just wouldn't be strong enough to incapacitate them...

DATA

Doctor Crusher and I have been working on an interesting premise...

BEVERLY

With our recent experience in nanotechnology, we might be able to introduce a destructive breed of nanite to the Borg...

SHELBY

Nanites?

DATA

Robots small enough to enter living cells.

RIKER

How much time would it take to execute this...

BEVERLY

That's the problem. Two, three weeks.

TROI

In two or three weeks, nanites may be all that's left of the Federation.

29 CONTINUED: (2)

There's an ominous silence as the ideas run out.

WORF

We have the new phaser adapters...

GEORDI

(grim)

Perhaps in concert with photon
torpedoes... we can slow them
down...

But this is a crew with little hope and ultimately all eyes turn to their Captain. A long beat as Riker feels the responsibility of command.

RIKER

I'm sure Captain Picard would have something meaningful and inspiring to say right now. And to tell you the truth, I wish he were here to say it, cause I'd like to hear it, too.

30 ANGLE - THE FACES

around the table.

RIKER (O.C.)

(continuing)

I know how difficult this transition is for all of you. I can take over for him, but I can never replace Captain Picard and would never hope to...

31 RIKER

And in that moment, Riker wonders as he looks around the table whether he's reaching them...

RIKER

(a beat)

Whatever the outcome, I know our efforts in the coming battle will justify the faith he had in all of us.

(beat, bailing out)

Dismissed.

As they rise to leave...

32 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Riker ENTERS, frustrated, not sure what the hell he's going to do, not pleased with the way he handled the meeting... once more he looks at --

33 ANGLE - THE DESK

with no one behind it...

34 RIKER

RIKER
What would you do?

A chime.

RIKER
Come in.

The door opens to reveal Guinan. She ENTERS.

GUINAN
May I speak to you, Captain?

RIKER
(reluctant)
Well, actually Guinan... right now, I...

GUINAN
(will not be denied)
Picard and I used to talk... now and again, when one of us needed to... I guess I'm just used to having the Captain's ear...

And sacrilege as it might be, she sits behind the desk in the Captain's chair. Riker reacts.

GUINAN
I hope I'm not imposing.

Riker studies her, let's get this over with.

RIKER
What's on your mind?

34 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

I've heard a lot of people talking down in Ten Forward... They expect to be dead in the next day or two.

It is said casually, stating a fact... A beat as Riker studies her, wonders what she's getting at.

GUINAN

(continuing)

They like you, Riker. They trust you. But they don't believe anyone can save them.

RIKER

(defensive)

I'm not sure anyone can.

GUINAN

The way I see things, if a man is convinced he's gonna die tomorrow, he'll probably find some way to make it happen.

(beat)

The only one who can turn that around... is you.

Riker has had just about enough of this tutoring session with the bartender...

RIKER

(with an edge)

I'll do the best I can.

GUINAN

You'll have to do something you don't want to do.

(off his look)

Let go of Picard.

RIKER

(calmly angry)

Maybe you didn't hear -- yesterday, I tried to kill him.

GUINAN

You tried to kill whatever that is on the Borg ship. Not Picard. Picard is still here, still in the room with us.

(MORE)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

GUINAN (Cont'd)

(beat)

If he had just died, it would be easier. But he's been taken from us a piece at a time.

They study each other a long beat. Both feel the loss intensely.

GUINAN

Did he ever tell you why we were so close?

RIKER

No.

GUINAN

Then I'm not going to tell you either. But it was beyond friendship, beyond family... and I will let him go. You must, too.

(beat)

There can only be one Captain.

RIKER

It's not that simple... This was his crew... he wrote the book on this ship...

GUINAN

And the Borg know everything he knows...

RIKER

Yes...

GUINAN

Then, it's time to throw the book away.

(beat)

You must let him go, Riker. It's the only way to beat him... the only way to save him.

He reacts. She stands.

GUINAN

This chair is yours.

And she EXITS. After a beat, he slowly moves to the empty chair and sits down.

35 OMITTED

36 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data, Wesley, Shelby, Worf and supernumeraries are on the Bridge. Shelby wears Commander rank pips.

WESLEY

(on com)

Captain, we're approaching the Wolf system.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

On my way.

Riker ENTERS from the Ready Room.

RIKER

Slow to impulse. Take us to the battle coordinates, Ensign... yellow alert...

WORF

Sensors are picking up several vessels, Captain...

RIKER

The fleet?

DATA

(checking)

There are no active subspace fields... Negligible power readings...

RIKER

Lifesigns?

DATA

Negative, sir.

WORF

Visual contact.

RIKER

On screen.

37 ANGLE - VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

and the Bridge crew reacts with horror as they see the wreckage of the Starfleet armada... it is like Pearl Harbor. Passing by one dead ship after another...

38 TWO SHOT - RIKER AND SHELBY

as she recognizes and calls out the names... and slow
push to Riker...

SHELBY

The Chekhov... The Kyushu...
The Melbourne...

On Riker's face...

39 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

as it passes through the cemetery of dead ships...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

40 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse, going through the devastation as before.

41 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

Sir, sensors are picking up unusually strong magnetic eddy currents, bearing two-zero-zero, mark two-one-one.

RIKER

Data, your analysis...

DATA

It could indicate the course of the Borg ship...

RIKER

Ensign Crusher, set a course that follows those currents...

WESLEY

Aye, Captain.

RIKER

Commander Shelby, you will prepare to initiate your plan of separating the saucer section when we find the Borg.

SHELBY

Sir. I must remind you that Captain Picard was briefed on that plan... the Borg will be prepared for it...

RIKER

I'm aware of that, Commander. In fact, I'm counting on it.

She reacts...

SHELBY

Crusher, Cartaino, Gleason -- report to the Battle Bridge...

41 CONTINUED:

As the regulars are replaced at their posts by supernumeraries... on the move...

RIKER

Mister Data and Mister Worf, I
have a special mission for you...

42 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

at Warp.

43 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Locutus is escorted, almost like a pet dog on a "heel" command, to the area near the center chamber where communication takes place... he is less Picard than he was before... more Borg... The facial color is gone... a huge Borg arm has been added... as he positions himself --

43A ANGLE (OPTICAL)

a wide viewscreen reveals a small image of a ship approaching... an effect magnifies the image to reveal it as The Enterprise.

44 LOCUTUS

reacts... over his face --

RIKER'S VOICE

Locutus of Borg, this is Captain
William T. Riker of the U.S.S.
Enterprise.

45 ANGLE - THE VIEWSCREEN - RIKER'S IMAGE (OPTICAL)

from the Battle Bridge...

LOCUTUS

You may speak.

INTERCUT:

46 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Riker, Wesley at Conn, GLEASON at Ops, others as needed. Shelby, Data and Worf are notably absent.

RIKER

We wish to end the hostilities.

LOCUTUS

Then you must unconditionally surrender.

RIKER

We are prepared to meet to discuss your terms.

LOCUTUS

(a beat)

It is unlikely that you are prepared to discuss terms. It is more likely that this is an attempt at deception.

RIKER

Come now, Locutus, if Picard's knowledge and experience is part of you, then you know I have never lied to him... in fact, you should implicitly trust me, is that not so?

Locutus is having difficulty processing Riker's routine...

LOCUTUS

Picard implicitly trusted you.

RIKER

Then trust me now. Meet with me to discuss terms.

The Borg influence takes over in Locutus.

46 CONTINUED:

LOCUTUS

Discussion is irrelevant. There are no terms. You will disarm all weapons and escort us to sector zero-zero-one where we will begin the assimilation of your culture and technology.

Riker turns away from the screen... signals to cut off transmission...

RIKER

Mister Gleason, can you pinpoint the Borg's source of transmission?

GLEASON

(acknowledging)

I can put you within thirty meters of it, sir...

RIKER

(to comm)

Mister O'Brien, report...

INTERCUT:

47 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'Brien with Data and Worf...

O'BRIEN

The Borg have adapted their electromagnetic field to prevent main Transporter functions, sir...

RIKER

(to comm)

As expected. Mister Data and Mister Worf, you will proceed as we discussed...

DATA

Aye, Captain...

Data and Worf each don an armpack.

48 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Locutus at the viewscreen. Riker turns back, reopens communications.

48 CONTINUED:

RIKER

We would like time to prepare our people for assimilation.

LOCUTUS

Preparation is irrelevant. Your people will be assimilated as easily as Picard has been.

49 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

RIKER

Does it involve a lot of needles... because I just hate needles...

LOCUTUS

Your attempt at a delay will not be successful, Number One. We will proceed to Earth and if you attempt to intervene we will destroy you.

RIKER

Take your best shot, Locutus, cause we're about to intervene.

Cuts off communication... Starfield and the Borg ship return to the viewscreen.

RIKER

Reset subspace communications to scrambler code Riker One...

GLEASON

Scrambler code Riker One, acknowledged.

RIKER

(to com)
Commander Shelby, report...

INTERCUT:

50 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Shelby at command with supernumeraries at other posts.

50 CONTINUED:

SHELBY
Ready for separation.

RIKER
Make it so.

51 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The separation begins...

51A INT. ENGINEERING

GEORDI
Docking latches clear, separation
complete...

52 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY
Saucer velocity one hundred meters
per second and increasing.

RIKER
Open fire... all weapons...

53 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

SHELBY
Fire...

54 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Locutus watches the two separating parts of the
Enterprise and this is nothing unexpected... the
viewscreen scanners promptly focus on the battle
section because Locutus knows that's where the power
is...

55 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

reaches out its tractor beam toward the battle
section...

56 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY

Borg tractor beam attempting to
lock on, Captain...

56 CONTINUED:

RIKER
Evasive maneuvers... pattern Riker
Alpha...

WESLEY
Riker Alpha, confirmed...

57 EXT. SPACE - THE BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

moving quickly by...

58 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY
They're ignoring the saucer
section completely...

RIKER
(murmuring toward the
Borg ship)
Just as you should, Captain...
Ensign, evasive pattern, Riker
Beta...

WESLEY
Riker Beta, confirmed...

RIKER
(to comm)
Commander Shelby, proceed with
second phase...

59 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

SHELBY
Acknowledged.
(to tactical officer)
Fire antimatter spread...

60 EXT. SPACE - THE SAUCER SECTION (OPTICAL)

Fires a spread of antimatter pellets exploding in a
spectacular display toward the Borg ship...

61 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

As the viewscreen pans toward the saucer section,
Locutus and other Borg look at the antimatter
display... and this is unexpected...

62 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

Pushing to Riker...

RIKER

Launch shuttle...

63 INT. SHUTTLE

Data and Worf inside...

DATA

Shuttle launch sequence
confirmed... departing Enterprise
in three seconds...

64 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE SAUCER SECTION (OPTICAL)

As the shuttle leaves the ship... becoming part of the
forest of anti-matter pyrotechnics...

65 INT. BORG SHIP - LOCUTUS

studies what's happening... Picard's mind working
unwillingly... suggesting reponses...

66 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

The Borg ship terminates the tractor beam aimed at the
battle section... initiates another beam in the other
direction toward the anti-matter spread.

67 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY

The Borg tractor beam has moved
toward the anti-matter spread.

GLEASON

They might be picking up engine
ionization from the shuttle...

RIKER

(to com)

Data, cut your engines... take
her in unpowered...

67A EXT. SPACE - THE SHUTTLE (OPTICAL)

to see the shuttle moving through the antimatter field toward the Borg ship... the tractor beam sweeps by, just barely missing the shuttle.

68 INT. SHUTTLE - OVER THE SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

The shuttle shakes.

69 OMITTED

70 INT. BORG SHIP - LOCUTUS

watches.

71 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

Favoring Riker...

WESLEY

They're gonna make it...

INTERCUT:

72 INT. SHUTTLE - OVER THE SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

As it moves up close and personal to the Borg ship...

WORF

Shuttle has penetrated the Borg electromagnetic field...

Data is already out of his seat...

DATA

(checking sensors)

The shuttle escape transporter should provide adequate power to beam us onto the Borg ship from here, sir...

RIKER'S COM VOICE

And back, Mister Data?

DATA

Yessir, there should be enough energy for two transports.

72 CONTINUED:

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Proceed.

Worf moves out of his chair... and joins Data by the transport unit as he punches some overhead keys and they DEMATERIALIZE...

73 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Locutus and the Borg react as Worf and Data MATERIALIZE several meters away... Worf and Data have phasers... blast away at the Borg near-by, several go down... Locutus turns and as Worf rushes him, his forcefield goes on, but Worf and Data together spray a wide, fan-shaped phaser blast that dissolves the forcefield and Worf tackles Locutus to the ground as Data continues to cover him with phaser shots at other Borg...

74 LOCUTUS AND WORF (OPTICAL)

struggle on the ground as Data comes up and sedates Locutus with a hypo... and then he hits the arm band and they DEMATERIALIZE...

75 INT. SHUTTLE (OPTICAL)

They MATERIALIZE...

WORF

Mission accomplished... we have him...

Touching a control panel:

DATA

Firing shuttle thrusters...

76 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

RIKER

Beam them out of there, Mister O'Brien...

77 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'BRIEN

Locked in...

78 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

fires their cutting beam and obliterates the shuttle.

79 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

Data and Worf support the unconscious Locutus as they
MATERIALIZE...

O'BRIEN
Transport successful, sir...

80 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

On a push in to Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

81 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Still in two sections... the Borg ship is taking no offensive action.

82 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

As before.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Captain, we've sustained damage to the impulse drive... the saucer section is disabled...

GLEASON

Reading subspace field fluctuations from the Borg ship... looks like they're getting ready to increase power...

RIKER

Stand-by, La Forge...

WESLEY

(to himself)

The saucer section... it's a sitting duck...

RIKER

Prepare to draw their fire...

WESLEY

(surprised)

Captain, the Borg ship... it's moving away...

83 ANGLE - THE VIEW SCREEN (OPTICAL)

As the Borg ship warps away.

83 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

It's resuming its course to Earth,
sir...

RIKER

Rendezvous with the saucer
section... lay in a course of
pursuit...

84 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

reconnects.

85 INT. SICKBAY

Picard/Borg is on an emergency medical bed... Riker
watches as Beverly examines him...

BEVERLY

There's extensive infiltration
of microcircuit fibers into the
surrounding tissues... his DNA
is being rewritten...

RIKER

Can you revive him?

BEVERLY

(reluctant)

I'd like more time to study the
structural changes in the motor
pathways...

RIKER

Doctor, we don't have more time.
Once he was wired into the Borg,
they knew everything he knew.
I'm hoping it goes both ways.
If we're lucky, he had access to
everything we need to know about
them... especially their
vulnerabilities.

Beverly understands... uses a hypo to begin to revive
him... he stirs...

85 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Jean Luc... it's Beverly... can
you hear me...

His eye opens...

LOCUTUS

Beverly... Crusher...

BEVERLY

Yes... don't try to move...

LOCUTUS

I am... on board the Enterprise.

RIKER

That's right.

LOCUTUS

A futile maneuver.

They react. He sits up.

RIKER

Locutus...

LOCUTUS

Incorrect strategy, Number One...
to risk your ship and crew... to
retrieve only one man... Picard
would never have approved...

BEVERLY

(to comm)

Security...

LOCUTUS

You underestimate... us... to
believe this... abduction would
be of any concern...

Worf and two security men ENTER...

LOCUTUS

There is no need for
apprehension... I intend no harm.

There is a moment where the human Picard peeks
through... seems to resist but he is helpless...
Almost as a plea to his own alter ego --

85 CONTINUED: (2)

LOCUTUS/PICARD

No harm.

Locutus continues.

85 CONTINUED: (2)

LOCUTUS

I will continue... aboard your ship... to speak for the Borg ... as they continue... without further diversion... to sector zero zero one... where they will force your unconditional surrender.

On reactions...

86 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - SCIENCE STATION

Riker and Beverly looking over Data's shoulder as he works at monitors... an Okudagram showing some signal measurements... Shelby at command... Wesley at Conn.

DATA

Using multimodal reflection sorting, I have been able to detect a complex series of subspace signals between Locutus and the Borg ship...

BEVERLY

That's how they're controlling him?

DATA

It is not just a matter of control, Doctor. The signals are interactive across a subspace domain similar to that of a Transporter beam. I would hypothesize that these frequencies form the basis of the Borg's collective consciousness.

RIKER

Can't we block them?

DATA

Possibly. But, as you will recall, on several occasions, we have witnessed the Borg removing key circuits from injured comrades... no doubt separating them from the group consciousness.

RIKER

The injured Borg immediately self-destructed.

86 CONTINUED:

DATA

That is correct, sir.

BEVERLY

Cutting the link to Locutus might
be fatal to Captain Picard.

Riker frowns... thinks...

RIKER

We have to find a way to reach
him... we must know what he
knows...

BEVERLY

Without these interactive signals,
it would only be a matter of
microsurgery... I could do it...
but as long as those Borg implants
are functioning, there's no way
I can separate the man from the
machine.

DATA

(beat, an idea)

Then perhaps... there is a way
I can access the 'machine',
Doctor.

Riker reacts and...

87 INT. SICKBAY

Worf and the two security men watch as Picard examines
Sickbay... as though he is scanning the technology...
satisfied, he comes to Worf and begins to scan him...

LOCUTUS

Worf.

Worf silently studies him, mixed feelings.

LOCUTUS

Klingon species. A warrior race.
(beat)
You too will be assimilated.

WORF

The Klingon Empire will never
yield.

87 CONTINUED:

LOCUTUS

Why do you resist? We only wish
to raise... quality of life...
for all species...

WORF

I like my species the way it is.

LOCUTUS

A narrow vision. You will...
become one with the Borg. You
will... all... become one with
the Borg.

Riker, Data and Beverly ENTER...

LOCUTUS

The Android... Data... primitive
artificial organism... you will
be obsolete in the new order...

As he scans Data, Beverly comes around and hypos him
in the neck, he loses consciousness... Riker and Worf
grab him as he falls...

RIKER

(to Security men)
Take him to Data's lab...

SHELBY'S COM VOICE

Shelby to Riker...

RIKER

Go ahead...

SHELBY'S COM VOICE

Captain, the Borg have entered
sector zero-zero-one...

On Riker's reaction...

88 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

As it moves by us at impulse... we follow to reveal
the familiar 'Monument Valley', if you will, of our own
solar system... as the Borg ship passes by Saturn...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

89 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

still at warp.

90 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Shelby at command, Wes at conn, Riker and Worf ENTER from the Turbolift. Supernumerary at Ops.

SHELBY

The Borg have dropped out of warp, sir... Jupiter Outpost Nine-Two reported visual contact at twelve hundred hours, thirteen minutes...

RIKER

Planetary defenses?

SHELBY

Responding. No reports on effectiveness... but I can't believe that against the Borg...

RIKER

(interrupting)

Mister Crusher, at their current speed, when will they reach Earth?

WESLEY

Twenty-seven minutes...

RIKER

The soonest we can intercept?

WESLEY

(beat, grim)

Forty-two minutes, sir.

RIKER

(to com)

Riker to Data... your status?

INTERCUT:

91 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

This is the set up we had in "The Offspring"... the raised biobed, the impressive technical equipment... Troi, Beverly, O'Brien and the one security man observe... Picard is off-camera... Data is working at panels... checking monitors... he is seen in profile...

DATA

The initial cybernetic connection into Captain Picard's neural net pathways has been established... Mister O'Brien is ready to process the Borg signal through the transport pattern buffer.

RIKER

Make it so. And with dispatch, Mister Data...

As Data turns, he reveals an open panel on his head...

DATA

Proceeding immediately, sir. Data out.

Over the above, Data has hit a series of panels and now...

92 ANGLE - THE BIOBED

begins to lower... revealing Locutus, still unconscious, stripped of clothes, his hideous mutilation clearly exposed... transfers are patched to the Borg side of him...

Data moves into position beside him and begins to attach himself to the biobed transfer device...

DATA

The neural link will be established in three stages... Doctor, I suggest you closely observe Captain Picard's lifesigns while Chief O'Brien monitors my positronic matrix activity at each stage... Counselor, hopefully you will be able to determine if I am reaching Captain Picard.

O'BRIEN

At what point should I shut it down if there's a problem?

DATA

I do not know. I have never done this before.
(touching a series of panels)
Initiating first neural link...

93 BEVERLY

at monitors with human lifesigns displayed...

BEVERLY

The Captain's vital signs are stable...

94 O'BRIEN

looking at an Okudagram...

O'BRIEN

Positronic activity unchanged...

95 RESUME - DATA

DATA

First neural connection is confirmed... I cannot report any significant access to the Borg consciousness...

He glances at Troi who shakes her head, no...

96 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

moving by Mars... unmanned pods attack it... the Borg ship destroys them easily... moves on... and now we reveal their final destination... the familiar shape of Earth straight ahead...

97 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

It is confirmed... the Borg have broken through the Mars defense perimeter...

WESLEY

Enterprise approaching the Terran system, sir...

RIKER

Slow to impulse... time to intercept...

WESLEY

Twenty-three minutes, fourteen seconds, sir.

98 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse power moving by Saturn...

99 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

Second neural connection is confirmed... I still cannot report any significant access... proceeding with the final link...

He pushes a series of panels... and this time the result is dramatic... there is a visible jolt to Picard...

100 BEVERLY

reacts... checking her monitor...

BEVERLY

Significant increase in premotor
area and hypothalamus activity...
his heartrate is accelerating
rapidly...

101 O'BRIEN

watching his sensors...

O'BRIEN

Sir, your submicron matrix
activity is increasing
exponentially.

Data is absorbing information at an incredible rate...
like an internal blastoff...

DATA

Neural connections are complete.
I... have... access to the Borg
subspace signals... Processing...
processing...

TROI

Data...

DATA

Stand by... processing...

O'Brien looks at Beverly with great concern...

DATA

Fascinating. The Borg group
consciousness... is divided into
subcommands... necessary to carry
out all functions...
communications, defense,
navigation... they are all
controlled... by a root command...
implanted in each --

Suddenly...

102 THE BORG ARM

on Picard rises and attempts to disengage the
connections on the biobed...

103 THE SECURITY MAN

charges forward... and the arm pushes them easily off the biobed... it moves back toward the connections, but

104 DATA

grabs the Borg hand and holds it back from the controls using his extraordinary strength...

105 THE TWO ARMS

locked in a symbolic arm wrestle for control of Picard... and finally after straining at both ends, Data wins by breaking the arm off at the wrist joint...

105A THE BROKEN BORG 'HAND'

continues to move in Data's hand...

106 RESUME SCENE

BEVERLY

Data, I'm picking up increased neural activity in Captain Picard... localized in the prefrontal and parietal lobes...

O'BRIEN

The Borg might be trying to terminate their link with him...

DATA

Negative... subspace signal configuration is unchanged. The cause of increased neural activity is unclear...

TROI

No, it's not... it's him...

Slowly...

107 PICARD'S HUMAN ARM

is reaching out, his hand struggling to find -- finally grasping -- Data's wrist and holds it tightly... clinging to life... a first contact with the human...

108 REACTIONS

from Data... Beverly... O'Brien...

109 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

TROI'S COM VOICE

Troi to Bridge. Data has made first contact with Captain Picard...

RIKER

Can you communicate with him, Data?

DATA'S COM VOICE

I have been unable to create a neural path around the Borg implants, sir... it is Captain Picard himself who has somehow managed to initiate contact...

WORF

Sir, the Borg have halted their approach to Earth...

SHELBY

I think we got their attention...

RIKER

Time to intercept... ?

WESLEY

Two minutes, four seconds...

RIKER

They're worried... they're worried that we've got access to Picard... we've got two minutes to figure out what we can do with it...

INTERCUT:

110 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

Sir, it is clear the Borg are unable or unwilling to terminate their subspace links...

BEVERLY

That may be their achilles heel, Captain... their interdependency...

RIKER

What do you mean, Doctor?

BEVERLY

He's part of their collective consciousness... Cutting him off is like asking us to disconnect an arm or a foot... we can't do it.

SHELBY

(extrapolating)

They operate as a single mind...

RIKER

If one jumps off the cliff... they all jump off the cliff...

(to com)

Data, is it possible to plant a command in the Borg collective consciousness...

DATA

It is conceivable, sir... it would require altering the pathways from the root command, to affect all iterative branchpoints in...

RIKER

(interrupting)

Make every effort, Mister Data...

DATA

What command shall I try to plant, sir... ?

RIKER

Something straightforward... like 'disarm your weapons systems'...

110 CONTINUED:

WORF

Visual contact with the Borg...

SHELBY

On screen.

111 ANGLE - THE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

to see the Borg ship long range... Earth in the background.

RIKER

Magnify.

The image is magnified...

WORF

Sensors reading increased power generation from the Borg...

RIKER

Red alert. Load all torpedo bays... ready phasers...

WORF

Aye, Captain...

RIKER

Status of the Borg weapons...

WORF

Borg weapon systems are fully charged...

RIKER

Data... ?

INTERCUT:

112 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

Attempting to reroute subcommand paths, Captain... defense systems are protected by access barriers...

112 CONTINUED:

Panning down to find Picard's hand still holding on to Data's wrist...

113 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

and the Borg squaring off one last time with Earth as the backdrop... the Borg ship sends out their tractor beam...

114 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The ship shakes...

WORF

Borg attempting to lock on tractor beam...

RIKER

Rotate shield frequencies...
(to com)
Data, report...

INTERCUT:

115 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Shaking continuing...

DATA

I am unable to penetrate defense systems command structure, Captain...

SHELBY

Try the power systems, Data... see if you can get them to power down...

DATA

Acknowledged... attempting new power subcommand path...

116 ANGLE - PICARD

shaking with the ship... stirring...

INT. ENGINEERING - GEORDI

at a console...

GEORDI
Shields have failed...

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER
Fire all weapons.

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

once again in the grips of the Borg tractor beam...
firing at will... but it is a hopeless cause...

INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA
I cannot penetrate the Borg power
subcommand structure... all
critical subcommands are
protected, Captain...

INTERCUT:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Close on Riker as the truth sets in...

SHELBY
Then it's over.

RIKER
Mister Crusher, ready a collision
course with the Borg ship...

Wesley reacts, turns and looks for confirmation...
Repeating --

RIKER
(quietly)
You heard me. A collision
course.

WESLEY
Yessir.

RIKER
Mister La Forge, prepare to go
to warp power...

122 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Picard groans, whispers...

PICARD

Sleep.

122 CONTINUED:

And it is only by sheer force of will, the power of the man, that Picard is able to reach through the control of the Borg consciousness... and whisper this word...

BEVERLY

Data, he's regaining
consciousness...

PICARD

Sleep.

TROI

(reacts)

It is Captain Picard speaking,
not Locutus.

PICARD

Sleep. Data.

And then under extreme pressure, his will is suppressed and he loses consciousness...

BEVERLY

He's exhausted.

DATA

Yes, Doctor... but if I may make
a supposition, I believe his
message was not intended to
express fatigue but to suggest
a course of action.

123 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

Borg cutting beam activated...

And Captain Riker prepares to give the last fateful order of his short but colorful career...

RIKER

Mister Crusher, en...

DATA'S COM VOICE

Data to Bridge... stand by...

RIKER

Stand by all stations...

123 CONTINUED:

DATA'S COM VOICE

I am attempting to penetrate the
Borg regenerative subcommand
path... it is a low priority
system and may be accessible...

124 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Borg cutting beam reaches out to the Enterprise...

125 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Crack of impact... a dreadful shake...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Outer hull breach.

WORF

Sir... shall I execute evacuation
sequence...

RIKER

Negative, Mister Worf... Mister
Data, your final report...

DATA'S COM VOICE

Stand by...

RIKER

I can't, Mister Data...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Inner hull failure
imminent on decks twenty-three,
twenty-four, and twenty-five...
Decompression danger...

126 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Suddenly, the attack simply ends.

127 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Reactions.

127 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Data? What the hell happened?

INTERCUT:

128 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

I successfully planted a command
in the Borg collective
consciousness, sir. It
misdirected them to believe it
was time to regenerate. In
effect, I put them all to sleep.

129 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Reactions.

RIKER

To... sleep.

DATA

Yessir.

RIKER

Status of Borg power drive... ?

WORF

Minimal power...

RIKER

Electromagnetic field?

WORF

Nonexistent.

RIKER

(reacts)

Commander Shelby, take an away
team and confirm that the Borg...
are... asleep.

SHELBY

Delighted, sir.

As she EXITS...

130 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Shelby, Worf and Gleason MATERIALIZE... They examine the Borg... who are all in their compartments...

SHELBY
(keys insignia)
Shelby to Enterprise. It's true.
They're all in their regeneration
mode.

INTERCUT:

131 INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR

Riker on the move...

RIKER
(keying insignia)
Any indication to how long we can
keep them like this...

132 INT. BORG SHIP

SHELBY
Checking...

WORF
(to Shelby)
Commander, tricorder readings are
fluctuating rapidly...

Shelby comes over... reacts...

SHELBY
Enterprise... there are
indications here that their entire
power net's about to feed back
on itself. I'd say we're looking
at a self-destruct sequence
activated by the Borg's
malfunction... do you want us to
attempt to disarm it...

133 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Riker has just entered... Beverly has heard. Data is still tied up with Picard...

133 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

There's no way to know what the
destruction of the Borg ship will
do to him...

DATA

We should also consider the
advantages of further examination
of the Borg and their vessel, sir.

RIKER

(beat)

I don't think so. Mister Data,
separate yourself from Captain
Picard.

Data follows the order as --

RIKER

(keys insignia)

Away Team, get yourselves home.
Mister Crusher, upon their return
move us to a safe position.

And as Beverly watches with a personal concern, Data
gently removes Picard's hand from his wrist...

134 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise moves away and... the Borg ship
explodes... in several decentralized small bursts.

INTERCUTTING:

135 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Picard shudders...

135A THE BORG SHIP

blows apart.

135B PICARD

lies still... After a long beat, his eyes open... he
smiles weakly...

135B CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

Life signs are stable... the DNA
around the microcircuit fiber
implants is returning to normal...

TROI

How do you feel?

With a voice hoarse from fatigue...

PICARD

Almost human.
(smiles slightly)
With a bit of a headache...

BEVERLY

We'll get you to Sickbay...
(to Riker)
We won't have any trouble getting
these implants out now.

RIKER

(to Picard)
How much do you remember?

PICARD

Everything.
(beat)
Including some brilliantly
unorthodox strategy by a former
first officer of mine.

There's a special look between them and...

136 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Orbiting Earth.

137 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard has had his surgery... his face is half-bandaged...
he is back in uniform. With him is Riker,
still wearing his Captain's pips.

137 CONTINUED:

RIKER

... and Earth Station McKinley has advised they're ready to begin refitting the Enterprise.

PICARD

Have they estimated the time for repairs... ?

RIKER

Five to six weeks...

A chime.

PICARD & RIKER

Come.

They glance at each other as Shelby ENTERS... slightly confused... moves to Riker...

SHELBY

Request permission to disembark, sir...

Riker defers to Picard, thereby clearly relinquishing command.

PICARD

Permission granted. They picked a fine officer for the task force, Commander.

SHELBY

We'll have the fleet back up in less than a year...

(to Riker)

I... imagine you'll get your choice of any Starfleet command, sir...

Riker grins, exuding confidence...

RIKER

Everyone's so concerned about my next job. With all due respect, Commander... sir...

(with a nod in

Picard's direction)

... my career plans are my own business, no one else's.

(beat)

But it's nice to know I'll have a few options.

137 CONTINUED: (2)

SHELBY

I hope I'll have the fortune of
serving with you again.

(turning to Picard)

Captain...

Picard nods, dismissing her. And she EXITS.

RIKER

Course to Station McKinley is laid
in and ready, sir...

PICARD

Make it so, Number One.

Riker grins and EXITS and we stay a beat on Picard as he turns in his chair and looks out his window... and as he drinks his tea, there is a definite incomplete thought here, not an entirely happy ending... a man recovering but not recovered.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END

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Thank you.