

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Home Soil"  
#40271-117

Story by  
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3RD REV. FINAL DRAFT

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STAR TREK: "Home Soil" - 12/2/87 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Home Soil"

CAST

PICARD	KURT MANDL
RIKER	ARTHUR MALENCON
BEVERLY	LUISA KIM
DATA	BJORN BENSEN
TROI	
TASHA	
WORF	
GEORDI	
WESLEY	
ENGINEER (FEMALE)	

Voice-Over

COMPUTER VOICE  
TRANSLATOR VOICE  
TRANSPORTER CHIEF

STAR TREK: "Home Soil" - 12/2/87 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Home Soil"

SETS

INTERIORS

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE

CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

VELARA III

MEDICAL LAB

LUISA'S QUARTERS

CORRIDOR BY MEDICAL LAB DOOR

ENGINEERING

OBSERVATION LOUNGE

TERRAFORMING BASE

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE HYDRAULICS ROOM

HYDRAULICS ROOM

MAIN CONTROL ROOM

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION  
"Home Soil"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE - VELARA III IN B.G.

The ship is ENTERING a parking orbit of the yellow-ochre, featureless planet.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, stardate 41463.9.  
We are mapping the Pleiades  
Cluster which has many young  
planets and we've been asked by  
the Federation to visit a group  
terraforming Velara III, which  
we would very much like to see.  
Communications have been erratic  
and there is some concern about  
their welfare.

2 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

PICARD, RIKER, DATA, TROI, TASHA, GEORDI and WORF --  
at their respective stations -- all study Velara III  
on the Main Viewer. As Velara III SETTLES INTO PLACE  
on the Main Viewer:

GEORDI

Entering standard orbit -- now.

PICARD

It takes special people to live  
in such desolation.

TROI

Visionaries, who don't see this  
planet as it is, but as it will  
be.

RIKER

I've always wanted to see  
terraforming in operation.

PICARD

Hailing frequency, Lieutenant Yar.

2 CONTINUED:

TASHA

Hailing frequencies open, sir.

PICARD

Velara III base, this is Captain  
Picard of the starship Enterprise.

No response.

PICARD

(continuing)

Lieutenant Yar... ?

TASHA

No equipment malfunction on either  
end, sir. They are receiving.

PICARD

Velara III, this is the Enterprise.  
Come in please.

Still nothing. Some tense glances among personnel.

GEORDI

(after a beat)

Maybe nobody's home.

3 ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

ZOOM IN until WE CAN MAKE OUT the ribbed dome of the  
Terraforming Station.

DATA

We are sensing life-forms, sir.

PICARD

(concerned)

Velara III, do you copy?

Then the IMAGE of PROJECT DIRECTOR KURT MANDL APPEARS,  
somewhat disheveled. He is Picard's age, and appears  
to be taken off guard. He could be of German decent,  
somewhat stiff.

MANDL

Velara Base to Enterprise. Uh...  
yes, Captain. Director Mandl  
here. Sorry for the delay. We  
weren't expecting visitors.

4 ANGLE ON TROI

just enough to ESTABLISH that a small alarm bell is ringing, but not enough for a comment.

5 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

PICARD

Terraform Command has asked us to see how you were getting along.

MANDL

... We were a little behind, but we're back on schedule.

6 CLOSE ON TROI AND PICARD

watching and listening intently.

TROI

(quietly)

We alarm him for some reason.

PICARD

(a pause)

Your staff is all well, I presume, Director?

MANDL

Understandably tired. We're all working very hard, Captain.

PICARD

Is there anything we can do to help?... You and your staff are welcome aboard for a change of scene and some rest. We have some Holodecks you might enjoy.

MANDL

No disrespect, sir, we can't afford to take the time.

Troi touches Picard, indicating he should CLICK OFF.  
Picard DOES SO.

TROI

His fear is escalating.

6 CONTINUED:

MANDL

If you'll excuse me, I must get  
back to work.

TROI

I sense deliberate concealment,  
sir.

Picard takes it in, concerned.

7 FEATURING PICARD -- INCLUDE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

While Picard delivers the following, Mandl seems  
distracted.

PICARD

(to Troi)

Of what?

TROI

I don't know, but it's intense.

Picard nods and CLICKS BACK ON.

PICARD

We've heard so much about your  
remarkable achievements in  
terraforming, that my staff would  
very much appreciate looking  
around.

MANDL

(hesitant)

... It's not really the best time.  
We are at a critical phase just  
now.

PICARD

We do not require any special  
attention.

MANDL

(softer)

I'm trying not to be rude, sir,  
but it would be inconvenient just  
now.

Pause. Troi signals Picard to CLICK OFF again.

7 CONTINUED:

TROI

He's concealing something and it's more than just being too busy. Your announcement about coming down has pushed him almost to the point of panic.

PICARD

Whether he wants us or not...

(touching his com)

Director Mandl, unless you are absolutely refusing permission for us to land on your station, please prepare to receive my away team.

MANDL

(curtly)

As you wish.

Riker, Tasha, Data and Geordi rise and head for the door. Worf and another crewmember replace Data and Geordi.

PICARD

Stay on your toes, Number One. Counselor, perhaps you should go along. A man this tense is unpredictable.

Troi rises and JOINS the away team.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit.

9 INT. TERRAFORMING BASE (OPTICAL)

Riker, Data, Geordi, Troi and Tasha BEAM IN.

Present in the room are ARTHUR MALENCON, LUISA KIM and BJORN BENSEN, Hydraulics Specialist, Biosphere Designer and Chief Engineer, respectively. Expecting the visitors, Malencon, and Bensen are guarded. Luisa on the other hand is friendly and open.

LUISA

Welcome to Velara III. Remember it as it is now, because in a couple of decades you won't recognize the place.

(steps forward)

Luisa Kim. Gardener of Edens.

RIKER

Commander William Riker, USS Enterprise. This is Lieutenant Commander Data, Counselor Troi, Lieutenant Yar and Lieutenant La Forge.

The other two members of the terraforming team reluctantly move forward -- both are tense.

LUISA

This is Bjorn Bensen, Chief Engineer, and Arthur Malencon, our Hydraulics Specialist,

Bensen steps over to Data. He looks him over.

BENSON

An android.

Data nods.

TASHA

And third in command of the Enterprise.

9 CONTINUED:

After a look of surprise, Bensen takes Data's offered hand and examines both sides of it, as if he's checking out a new piece of remarkable equipment.

BENSEN

Where were you manufactured --  
are there others like you?

DATA

Both matters are subjects of  
protracted discussion.

BENSEN

Remarkable.

Bensen turns and joins Malencon at their work. The team members take in their surroundings. We are in a twenty-fourth century power and hydraulics facility, more square-cut and mechanical than the Enterprise. Large, working machinery, on which "the bolts show." The computers are more heavy duty and their jumper cables show. This room is the hub of the operation, with corridors and doors leading off in four different directions. Beneath it all is the LOW RUMBLE of HYDRAULIC EQUIPMENT at work.

LUISA

We don't get visitors. It's  
exciting to have you here.

RIKER

We weren't sure how we would be  
received. Director Mandl seemed  
less than enthusiastic about our  
interest.

LUISA

(warmly)

I should apologize for him. We  
are at a critical phase. Usually  
he's quite charming.

Riker returns her smile.

RIKER

We'll stay out of your way, it's  
just that we've never seen a  
terraforming station, and couldn't  
resist the opportunity.

9 CONTINUED: (2)

LUISA

How much do you know about the process?

DATA

The theories -- the reports -- but nothing firsthand.

LUISA

Oh, wonderful. Then let me show you around.

As she turns and leads them to a screen, Troi moves to Riker.

TROI

(sotto voce)

The other two are as veiled and secretive as Mandl, but she is not.

10 ANGLE TO INCLUDE LUISA'S SCREEN (OPTICAL)

As the away team watches, the screen SHOWS a lifeless, uniformly brown, dead planet.

LUISA

What we're doing is so exciting, so -- inspiring. We take a lifeless planet and little by little transform it into an M-class environment, capable of supporting life. Terraforming makes you feel a little godlike.

(beat)

Is that a terribly arrogant thing to say?

DATA

Not at all. It is accurate.

11 INTERCUT

with REACTIONS and COMMENTS of the away team. During this, Luisa seems attracted to Riker.

11 CONTINUED:

LUISA

The first phase is selecting the planet. That's very important. It must have the right mass and gravity, the correct rate of rotation, and a balanced day and night. The planet must also be without life or having the prospect of life delveloping naturally. The Federation makes that decision. Then...

(she pauses a beat for emphasis)

... we take over.

Riker and the others are taken by her ingenuous enthusiasm.

LUISA

(continuing)

What you see here -- this station -- is Phase Two. Phase Three involves the water. Usually we create basins, using hydraulic landscaping, but the water on this planet is subsurface, and extremely high in salt content. We are just about to begin pumping and filtering that water, removing the salt, oxygenating and replacing. Next we introduce micro-organisms, and when the process is complete...

Her screen now SHOWS several large separated areas of green. The away team exchange looks of admiration.

LUISA

(continuing)

... eventually, we'll have a lush, arable, biosphere.

While this goes on, Data's attention is caught by Malencon.

RIKER

You make it sound poetic.

LUISA

(brightly)

I think it's the best occupation in the universe.

11 CONTINUED: (2)

Data CROSSES to Malencon's work station and glances at his blueprints.

12 ANGLE - DATA AND MALENCON

Malencon is working near a computer screen FILLED with hydraulics plans -- pipes, sprayers, probes, plans for channels, rivers and bays. Geordi STEPS UP beside him.

DATA

The efficiency of your hydraulic landscaping is elegant.

How could Malencon not be flattered?

MALENCON

It isn't yet -- but it will be. Right now, I'm disturbed by erratic power surges in several of the servomechanisms that control the hydraulic probes.

GEORDI

Could it be the increased conductivity caused by the high saline content?

MALENCON

(with the enthusiasm of one scientist to another)

That was my first thought, but..

Bensen puts a cap on the conversation.

BENSEN

Arthur.

Malencon catches himself.

BENSEN

(continuing; curtly)

We checked that out. That wasn't it.

13 TROI AND RIKER

They exchange a glance at this behavior.

14 ANOTHER ANGLE

as Mandl ENTERS the room.

MANDL

I'm Director Mandl. I am sorry about being so abrupt during our initial contact, being isolated one tends to forget the social graces. Are you seeing everything you want?

TROI

What you are doing here is miraculous.

MANDL

What we are doing here is working on a difficult, demanding timetable, and there will be no miracle unless Malencon gets the hydraulic probes back on line. We are set to step up to full conversion, immediately.

(crisply; to Malencon)

Shouldn't you be in the hydraulics chamber, Arthur?

Malencon is caught off guard.

MALENCON

Now?

15 TROI

She picks up on the tension.

16 MANDL

He steps toward Malencon for emphasis.

MANDL

Yes.

MALENCON

(rising, nervous)

All right, Kurt.

Malencon HURRIES OUT.

17 ANOTHER ANGLE

Troi and Riker exchange a glance at this behavior.

18 GEORDI

indicating Malencon's computer screen.

GEORDI

That must be the master subsurface pump. Impressive.

DATA

(indicating another area  
on the computer screen)

This is interesting. How the water table is a thin ribbon between the sandy surface layer and the rock below.

GEORDI

And it follows the contour precisely.

DATA

(nodding)

Which would require extreme precision from the probe controls.

Mandl ENTERS SHOT, on guard as he hears this. He goes to the computer and calls up another program.

MANDL

Here's something which should interest you. The vegetation graphs are really the key element to successful terraforming.

CAMERA BACK as everyone steps closer to look, except Troi.

RIKER

Incredible. It's planned month by month, decade by decade.

MANDL

Every single thing we do is specific and exacting. You see grand, romantic concepts. I see unyielding rock under an ocean of sand.

19 ANGLE - TROI

She suddenly registers a severe emotional shock.

TROI  
(overlapping, alarmed)  
Commander... !

as all hear the alarm in her voice. Her internal sensors are scanning the facility.

RIKER  
What is it, Deanna?

Her face suddenly registers emotional shock.

TROI  
(almost in pain)  
Malencon. He's in trouble.

A perception immediately followed by a WARNING SIREN and the o.s. SOUND of LASER BLASTS. Reactions. Riker is first OUT of the room, FOLLOWED by Data, Geordi and Tasha. Mandl is NEXT, FOLLOWED by Troi. Bensen and Luisa, exchanging a look, BRING UP THE REAR.

20 INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE HYDRAULICS ROOM

The o.s. LASER BLASTING is LOUDER, accompanied by SHOUTS and CRIES of PAIN by Malencon on the other side of the closed door. ANGLE ADJUSTS as Riker and the group CONVERGE ON the sliding door. Riker tries the handle -- locked. He alone... and then he and Data pull at the handles -- no go. Mandl SQUEEZES UP.

RIKER  
Can you open it?

Mandl presses the auto-decoder pad, tries the door. But it still won't open.

MANDL  
It's jammed.

TASHA  
Let me try.

The o.s. SCREAMS STOP. The LASER BLASTS CEASE. Reactions: "Is the threat over?" Troi looks sad.

TROI  
We're too late.

Mandl tries the auto-decoder pad again, and this time the door OPENS.

21 INT. HYDRAULICS ROOM - MANDL'S POV

The central monitoring column, from which laser arms extend and sink laterally into the "surround," has been trashed. On the floor is the equally trashed body of Arthur Malencon.

22 REVERSE ANGLE

as folks CROWD INTO the doorway. Mandl has a look of fear etched across his face. Luisa, very emotional, covers her eyes, turns away. Bensen is sick. Our away team looks from the body on the floor to Mandl back to the body. Tasha stares at Mandl.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

23 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit.

PICARD (V. O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. What began as a routine visit to the Federation group terraforming Velara III has become a serious situation. Arthur Malencon, the hydraulics engineer, has been killed in an extraordinary accident.

24 INT. TERRAFORMING BASE - HYDRAULICS ROOM

as before, with Malencon's body. PAN the mess of twisted metal until WE SETTLE on the doorway where Data waits with the others, except for Geordi and Bensen.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Situation report, Number One.

RIKER

(tense, trying to save  
a life)

For safety reasons, we're shutting off all power to the hydraulics room before entering to recover the body. Then we'll beam him up to Sickbay, but from the look of his wounds, it's probably hopeless.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Keep me informed.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Data... ?

Data taps his communicator.

DATA

Go ahead, Geordi.

25 INT. MAIN CONTROL ROOM/HYDRAULICS ROOM  
(INTERCUT AS DESIRED)

Geordi stands before an array of computer panels examining a display SHOWING the FLOW CHART of the operation, AND a DIAGRAM OF THE CROSSED-HUB LAYOUT as Bensen works some controls, then nods to Geordi.

BENSEN

All set.

GEORDI

We have your section powered down now. Bensen has locked the master servomotor drive system. It should be safe in there now.

TASHA

I'm going in.

DATA

I will go with you.

Data and Tasha ENTER the room, moving to Malencon's body. She quickly affixes a communicator to the body, touches it, says:

26 CLOSE ON TASHA AND BODY (OPTICAL)

TASHA

Transporter Room, this is Lieutenant Yar. Two to beam up to Sickbay.

Concerned to get the body to Sickbay as soon as possible, she waits as she and the body DEMATERIALIZE.

27 BACK TO DOORWAY (OPTICAL)

LUISA

I want to go. We should be with him.

(to Mandl)

Kurt, please come too.

Mandl shows reluctance, but, seeing the looks on everyone's faces, he acquiesces. Riker touches his com.

27 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Transporter Room, this is  
Commander Riker. Beam up four  
at my coordinates.

Luisa, Mandl, Troi and Riker DEMATERIALIZE. Data now  
moves into the room proper, prying his way through the  
wreckage.

DATA

(on com)

I have seen malfunctions, but  
this is unprecedented. Almost  
as if the laser drill attempted  
to tear itself apart.

BENSEN

(off Geordi's look)

I can't explain it.

DATA

(into com; reflecting)

The laser blasts seemed to end  
when the yelling stopped.

Data goes to the room's computer control console.

BENSEN'S COM VOICE

Maybe Arthur stopped it -- only  
not in time.

DATA

Not possible.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Then what are you suggesting?

Data studies at the control panel.

DATA

Uncertain.

(to Geordi)

Geordi, would you please return  
power to the control console in  
this room. I want to reactivate  
the program.

Geordi and Bensen do as requested, systematically  
toggling a bank of switches. (END INTERCUT)

28 DATA'S ANGLE - CONSOLE

A localized panel LIGHTS UP. Data pushes buttons. The laser drill begins its normal functioning. Data watches it for a beat as it systematically blasts into the bore holes. He then turns his attention back to the console.

DATA

(into com)

I am running the base drilling program.

29 ANGLES - VARIOUS (MECHANICAL EFFECTS) (OPTICAL)

While Data is preoccupied with the computer program, the firing head on the laser drill, lifts and turns -- no longer sighting down the bore holes -- it is now taking dead aim on Data. The NOISE from the arm alerts Data who TURNS and DODGES the BLAST which it WHISTLES BY his ear. Again IT FIRES.

DATA

Servos OFF!

30 INT. MAIN CONTROL ROOM

Geordi and Bensen scan the panels. Nothing in here has changed.

BENSEN

They are off!

GEORDI

Data, what's happening?

DATA'S COM VOICE

Too much to explain.

31 OMITTED

32 INT. CORRIDOR

Geordi and Bensen RUN toward Data's location hearing the SOUND of LASER BLASTS. Geordi touches the Communicator.

GEORDI

La Forge to Enterprise. We have a problem!

33 INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE HYDRAULICS ROOM

The door is closed as Geordi and Bensen RACE TO it.

GEORDI

Open the door!

DATA

STAY OUT! It is under control.

WE HEAR THRASHING, BLASTING, CLATTERING, sounding like a battle skirmish. WE PLAY OFF the REACTIONS of Geordi and Bensen. They look at each other, astonished, unable to comment. Suddenly -- SILENCE.

GEORDI

Data --

For a beat there is no answer. Then the door OPENS.

34 INT. CORRIDOR - HYDRAULICS ROOM DOOR

Geordi ENTERS, FOLLOWED by Bensen, happy to see Data in good shape.

GEORDI

Are you injured?

DATA

No.

34A BENSEN'S POV INTO HYDRAULICS ROOM

He has eyes only for the wreckage that was once sophisticated equipment.

34B BACK TO SHOT

BENSEN

A year's work destroyed!

DATA

I had no choice.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Away team report now! What is happening?

35 INT. ENTERPRISE - CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard, Tasha and Geordi are staring at a perfectly calm Data. Mandl stands in a corner.

35 CONTINUED:

DATA

(to Picard)

... We were attempting to trace the source of the malfunction when it attacked me.

MANDL

How much more of this fantasy must I listen to?

PICARD

None at all, Mr. Mandl. Until this is sorted out, I've provided temporary quarters for you and your crew. I suggest you use them.

MANDL

You're overstepping your authority, Picard! You have no right to interfere.

PICARD

An attack on one of my crew gives me the right, Mr. Mandl.

MANDL

I have a schedule to meet!

PICARD

Your schedule is on hold, until I have a satisfactory explanation of what happened.

Mandl, seeing that argument is useless, turns to exit. Picard stops him with:

PICARD

(crisp)

Director Mandl. Wait.

(to Tasha)

Escort the director to his quarters.

TASHA

Aye, sir.

Mandl and Tasha EXIT.

PICARD

Proceed with your report.

35 CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

It would appear that the laser drilling systems had been reprogrammed.

(beat)

As soon as its memory bank received power, it turned itself on and went after me. Fortunately, I was able to cope with it.

GEORDI

(bank shot)

Not by much, from what I saw.

DATA

I believe it was programmed to destroy any person moving in that room.

PICARD

Speculation or certainty?

DATA

Certainty.

GEORDI

It would have required the talents of a master programmer.

DATA

But it was done.

PICARD

Then the question is not who, because obviously it was one of the three remaining terraformers. The question is why. What are they hiding? What is so important it could make one of them, or all of them desperate enough to take a life?

GEORDI

Shall I have them brought in, sir?

PICARD

Not yet.

Picard rises and they FOLLOW him to:

36 INT. ENTERPRISE - MAIN BRIDGE

as they RETURN FROM the Ready Room. Riker, Tasha, Troi and Worf at their stations. BEVERLY is also present.

PICARD  
Doctor Crusher?

BEVERLY  
Malencon never had a chance.  
The injuries were too severe, the  
damage too extensive.

Picard nods sadly.

RIKER  
The entire Velara III facility  
has been powered down, Captain.

WORF  
We've just completed a remote  
power feed to the life support  
systems.

PICARD  
Good. Data, I want you and Geordi  
to return for a more careful  
inspection.

DATA  
What are we to look for, sir?

PICARD  
Evidence of tampering, negligence,  
sabotage... whatever. I don't  
know, but the answer's there, on  
the planet.

Data and Geordi EXIT.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Tasha, I'd like you to provide  
Counselor Troi and me with  
complete personnel files on our  
three guests. Psych profiles,  
training, everything. I'm looking  
for motive, intent... the  
psychological capacity to commit  
one murder and attempt another.

TASHA  
Aye, sir.

36 CONTINUED:

Tasha turns to the aft station.

PICARD

(continuing, to Riker)

It seems we've become policemen,  
Number One.

Riker reacts, not enjoying the forecast.

37 INT. HYDRAULICS ROOM (OPTICAL)

DIM interior ILLUMINATION filters in through the translucent dome. Data and Geordi MATERIALIZE among the apparently inert junk. They move cautiously at first, but everything does seem to be inert.

38 VARIOUS ANGLES

as Data probes among the junk. Then, eventually, he examines the opening to the tubular tunnel which had been occupied by one of the sensor arms.

39 POV - SMALL FLASHES

It doesn't last for more than half a second at a time, but something about the size of a rice grain BLINKS several times.

40 ANGLE - DATA

Unaccustomedly startled, he draws back. He looks around to make sure nothing else is happening. Then, he gets close and looks again. ANOTHER BLINK or two. He scans the little thing with his tricorder. Nothing. Shaking his head, he touches his communicator.

DATA

Geordi. I need some visual  
assistance.

41 ANOTHER ANGLE

as Geordi JOINS him. Data indicates the "rice grain," BLINKING in a rapid, non-repetitive pattern, looking like HIGH SPEED MORSE CODE in LIGHTS, with pauses and breaks, like language syntax.

41 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

What is it?

With a very puzzled look at Data and the lights and back again, Geordi applies his Tricorder.

GEORDI

(continuing)

Inorganic. Nothing but basic elements. No carbon... sandy texture... But the flashes are almost... musical. I see color variations and rhythms which are like a melody.

DATA

Speculation. Could it be alive?

42 CLOSE ON GEORDI

stunned. He looks down at the FLASHING LIGHT.

GEORDI

How could it be alive? It's inorganic.

DATA

Whatever this is, it could be what they are covering up -- and the reason someone killed Malencon.

As though in answer, the "rice grain" BLINKS FASTER, and in a fancier pattern than ever. Off Geordi's and Data's reactions, WE:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

43 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. On my order, Data's startling discovery of a possible indigenous and inorganic life-form -- something hitherto thought impossible...

44 INT. ENTERPRISE - MEDICAL LAB

Beverly is preparing an elaborate scan, its object being the contents of a basketball-sized, transparent bell jar, anchored to a stable base, on a platform under a scanner.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

... has been beamed aboard so that its true nature might be uncovered.

WESLEY hovers over her shoulder, as do Picard, Data, and Geordi.

45 ANGLES

From the BLINKING CONTENTS OF THE SPHERE, WE RECOGNIZE Data's discovery. The BLINK is rapid, like a visual hum. They crowd around.

46 BEVERLY

She lowers the overhead device until it covers the bell jar.

BEVERLY

(to Computer)

Activate.

There is a pause as the device is activated.

46 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

(continuing; to group)

Let's be sure of what we have here.

(to the scanner)

Is the sample organic?

COMPUTER VOICE

Negative carbon. Negative known life components. Substance inorganic.

DATA

Recheck analysis.

COMPUTER VOICE

Rechecking... Analysis verified. Not organic.

BEVERLY

Magnify to screen.

Beverly and the others glance up to a screen situated atop the scanner (WHICH WE CANNOT YET SEE) as the machinery responds to her commands.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

Magnify -- factor rate five.

(beat, and:)

Hold surface. Rate ten.

(beat, and:)

Hold.

Everyone leans in for a closer look.

47 POV - THE SCREEN

WE SEE A NETWORK of tiny BEAD-LIKE THINGS, connected by a WEB, like the synaptic structure of brain tissue. This structure SPARKLES DAZZLINGLY as energies flow along its "CIRCUITRY." We have isolated about FIVE OR SIX OF THE "BEADS."

PICARD (O.S.)

What are we looking at?

WESLEY (O.S.)

It's really beautiful. Whatever it is...

A HUMMING SOUND BUILDS... then LEVELS OFF.

48 BACK TO SCENE

as all react to the sound.

PICARD  
(rhetorically)  
What's causing that hum?

BEVERLY  
Computer, what is the magnification?

COMPUTER VOICE  
Twenty five thousand diameters  
and holding.

BEVERLY  
Analysis. The pattern of the  
flashes.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Not random or repetitive or  
sequential. Pattern not  
recognized.

BEVERLY  
What is the source of the flashes?

COMPUTER VOICE  
Unable to specify. Theoretically  
not possible from this substance.

BEVERLY  
Disregard incongruity and theorize  
as to source?

Pregnant pause, and:

COMPUTER VOICE  
Life.

On the collective "take," especially from Data:

49 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Picard is already verbally engaged with Mandl. Riker,  
Troi and Tasha are in the b.g.

MANDL  
What do you mean a life-form?!  
What life-form?! A Federation  
recon expedition certified Velara  
III lifeless.

49 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Understandable, given this particular life-form's novel nature.

MANDL

And just what is that nature?

PICARD

Doctor Crusher is still making her determination.

(beat)

I presume you know the Prime Directive, Mr. Mandl.

MANDL

Are you saying I knowingly defied it?

PICARD

I don't know. But I intend to find out.

(level beat)

You're a man obsessed with what he does. Who knows what an obsessed man would do to keep going? Kill, perhaps?

MANDL

(exploding:)

I create life! I don't take it!

Mandl STORMS FROM the room. Tasha FOLLOWS him. A pause, and then:

PICARD

What do you think?

RIKER

You hit him pretty hard, Captain.

PICARD

Counselor?

TROI

It was useful.

(to Picard)

I felt two levels. He knew about the life-form. The idea of murder seemed to shock him. I couldn't tell if it was the whole idea, or just being accused of it.

49 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

What about his file, Lieutenant Yar? Could he have accomplished the reprogramming that Data says took place?

TASHA

Mandl holds advanced degrees in Computer Science as well as Artificial Intelligence. It's possible.

PICARD

What about the others? Including the victim.

TASHA

Only the victim had the required expertise. But Malencon did work where the... whatever-it-is... was found. Trying to suppress that knowledge would be motive for murder... if Mandl were obsessed enough.

TROI

Terraformers are often obsessive. It goes with the career profile.

RIKER

How do you read the designer?

TROI

Possessed of a highly abstracted reality. Lovely visions, little data.

(smile)

You might do better than I.

50 INT. LUISA'S QUARTERS

She is lying on her sofa, her arm over her eyes. She wears a tasteful robe. There is a gentle KNOCK on the door. She seems not to hear it.

RIKER (O.S.)

Luisa... are you all right?

She seems reassured by his voice. She sits up and wipes away the tears the arm had been covering.

50 CONTINUED:

                  LUISA  
                  (flatly)  
                  It isn't locked.

Riker ENTERS.

                  RIKER  
                  Mind a visitor?

She shakes her head and indicates a comfortable seat. He sinks into it. She looks at him, on the edge of hysteria. Just the edge. She is about to become either the world's greatest liar or its greatest innocent.

                  LUISA  
                  Is it true... did you really find  
                  a life-form?

                  RIKER  
                  It's still being debated in some  
                  quarters. But I think so, yes.

                  LUISA  
                  What's it like?

                  RIKER  
                  We have nothing to compare it to,  
                  but it's microscopic... seems  
                  colonial... simple... and  
                  inorganic.  
                  (gentle)  
                  That's why the recon scouts missed  
                  it. This one wasn't your mistake.

She rises and faces him.

                  LUISA  
                  Everything I've worked for is  
                  falling apart.

She starts to cry.

                  RIKER  
                  It's very beautiful. I'll arrange  
                  for you to see it, if you like.

She forces a softening on herself, returns his gaze.

                  LUISA  
                  Perhaps later.

He nods warmly, and EXITS.

51 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - ANGLES (OPTICAL)

Picard, Worf, Tasha, Troi. Other crewmembers filling in for Data and Geordi. The MED SCANNER SCREEN IMAGE is on the Main Viewer. All those who haven't yet seen it are having their minds appropriately blown.

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE

Captain, this is Doctor Crusher.  
I think you'd better come to the  
Medical Lab.

52 INT. MEDICAL LAB

Data, Geordi, and Beverly are working with the analytical apparatus. Wesley watches. Picard ENTERS. Data and Geordi are peering into the bell jar.

PICARD

What is it?

BEVERLY

Geordi observed movement.

GEORDI

It's not exactly movement, it's  
a shift in the energy pattern.

DATA

Without external influence.

WESLEY

Couldn't coordinated static  
charges promote the shift?

Data registers intrigue at the thought.

DATA

Yes, if any were present in the  
jar, but none is.

Geordi suddenly reacts to something he alone is seeing.

GEORDI

It's changing.

They all move close to the Jar. Their faces almost  
right against it.

PICARD

I can't see any difference.

52 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

The infrared range is increasing.

Picard glances at the scanner screen.

53 POV - SCANNER SCREEN

It's BRIGHTER. The surface starts to OSCILLATE.

54 ANGLE - GROUP AROUND BELL JAR

As they move still closer -

55 ANGLE - BELL JAR (OPTICAL)

The "rice grain" EMITS a bright LIGHT which fills the lab. Geordi seems almost blinded.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Input overload. Input overload.

The COMPUTER VOICE ZAPS OUT. The HUM from the container gets slowly LOUDER.

56 ANGLE - OUR PEOPLE

REACTING to the increasing hum.

DATA

It is projecting an energy field!

GEORDI

And it's increasing!

The BRIGHT LIGHT denies a chance to clearly see the contents of the bell jar, but:

57 THE SCANNER SCREEN

is now completely FILLED WITH a SPARKLING CHAOS. The ROOM LIGHT shows PATTERNED INTENSITY CHANGES.

58 BACK TO SCENE

Beverly is alarmed.

59 CLOSE POV - BELL JAR CONTAINER (OPTICAL)

The WHITE LIGHT DIMINISHES enough to REVEAL the SINGLE GRAIN HAS BECOME TWO SMALL GRAINS, joined like Siamese twins.

60 BACK TO SCENE (OPTICAL)

DATA

Only life can replicate itself,  
Doctor. Inorganic or not, it is  
alive.

BEVERLY

Activate quarantine field.

A tinted FORCE FIELD attempts to SURROUND THE CONTAINER, at her command. Then the field weakens, its GLOW DIMMING as the LIGHT from the Siamese grains BRIGHTENS. It then REVERSES, as the force field attempts to assert itself.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

Quarantine field full!

It stabilizes for a moment, then the quarantine field slowly DIMS.

BEVERLY

(continuing; more  
imperative)

Full shield backup!

COMPUTER VOICE

Translation request being patched.

PICARD

Translation? From whom?

BEVERLY

Evacuating lab.

As they EXIT, WE HEAR:

COMPUTER VOICE

Full shield backup in place but  
weakening... translation grhjkj  
wljkdh...

60 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

What's going on with the  
translator circuit?

61 INT. CORRIDOR - MEDICAL LAB DOOR

as it SLIDES CLOSED. Beverly, Data and Geordi look  
at each other. Picard touches his communicator.

PICARD

(into communicator)  
bridge, this is the captain.  
Request emergency power to  
increase lab quarantine seal...

62 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Riker turns to Worf:

RIKER

Do it, Mister Worf.  
(into com)  
What's the nature of the problem,  
Captain? We've lost visual.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

We have confirmed Data's discovery  
is life, but more than that - it  
is intelligent.

RIKER

How do you know?

PICARD'S COM VOICE

(beat, and:)  
It has just taken possession of  
the Medical Lab.

62A INT. CORRIDOR - MEDICAL LAB DOOR

PICARD

Because it's trying to communicate  
with us!

Riker and the rest REACT as we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

63 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. We are attempting to deal with the aggressive inorganic life-form which Data brought up from the planet. It has taken over the Medical Lab, and is apparently attempting to communicate with us.

64 INT. ENTERPRISE - MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Riker, Worf, Geordi and Troi are at their stations. Other crewmembers fill in at the other posts. Beverly and Data standing by.

WORF

It generates enough energy to interfere with surrounding systems.

PICARD

Mr. La Forge -- can we see into the lab yet?

GEORDI

Negative, Captain. But, reducing backup to the quarantine seal might help.

PICARD

(to Beverly)

Doctor?

BEVERLY

I wouldn't.

PICARD

Continue backup to shield, Lieutenant.

TASHA'S COM VOICE

Director Mandl and the others are in the Observation Lounge as you requested.

64 CONTINUED:

PICARD  
Counselor, I'll need you.  
(to Riker)  
You have the bridge, Number One.

65 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Seated around the table are Mandl, Luisa, and Bensen. Tasha stands at the door and steps aside to permit Picard's and Troi's ENTRANCE as Picard takes control of the room.

PICARD  
(to Mandl)  
What do you know of this  
life-form?

The mention of "life" gets curious reactions from Bensen, Luisa and Mandl.

MANDL  
Nothing.

PICARD  
You knew of its existence.

Mandl returns Picard's stare.

MANDL  
Yes.

LUISA  
(shocked)  
Is this true?  
(turning on Mandl)  
You knew there was life on Velara  
III?

MANDL  
(hot)  
I knew there were random energy  
patterns -- I knew that. But  
that's not life. Not by any  
definition I have ever heard.

PICARD  
But, you tried to hide that  
knowledge from us.

65 CONTINUED:

MANDL

They're meaningless silicon  
crystals, which rebroadcast sunlight.  
This is absurd.

PICARD

They are not only alive but they  
have intelligence.

Mandl is stunned.

MANDL

Why do you say that?

PICARD

They're trying to communicate  
with us.

MANDL

(astounded)

Communicate with you?

PICARD

I need information, now. When  
did you first see them? What  
were they doing? Why did you  
think they were alive?

Mandl hesitates. Bensen starts to respond.

BENSEN

... There were patterns, in the  
sand, appearing and disappearing --

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Captain, we've regained a visual  
on the lab.

PICARD

(into Com)

Patch visual to Observation  
Lounge...

All look toward the small viewscreen in the lounge.

66 POV - VIEWSCREEN - MEDICAL LAB IN VIEW (OPTICAL)

as the bell jar, and whatever is in it, SHIMMERS.

67 INT. ENTERPRISE - MAIN BRIDGE

Data, Geordi, and Worf are working together at the aft Science Stations looking at the same SHIMMERING image. Each tapping keys at consoles, reading info. All eyes are on individual displays.

WORF

I cannot understand the patterns.

GEORDI

Neither can I.

DATA

Please show me the spectral analysis.  
Magnification twelve K.

Now Geordi is operating the console. With each entry he makes, the computer voice responds. The following should play very FAST.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Silicon... Germanium...

DATA  
Transistor material.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Gallium arsenide...

GEORDI  
Emits light when charged.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Cadmium selenide... sulfide...

DATA  
Emits charge when lit.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Water... impurities...  
Sodium salts...

WORF  
Conductor.

WORF  
But is it alive?!

COMPUTER VOICE  
Probability positive...

WORF  
(to computer)  
I wasn't asking you.

FEMALE COM VOICE  
Engineering to bridge.

68 ANGLE - COMMAND AREA

Riker responding.

RIKER  
This is Commander Riker, go ahead.

68 CONTINUED:

FEMALE COM VOICE

The backup on the lab seal is fluctuating, sir. I think you should come down here.

RIKER

On my way.

(on his EXIT)

Data, you have the bridge. Inform the captain.

Data moves to his new station. Riker ENTERS the turbolift.

69 INT. ENGINEERING - COMPUTER CONSOLE

The ENGINEER, female, and very much into the job, is busy operating the computer. Riker ENTERS.

RIKER

Status, Ensign?

ENGINEER

The quarantine seal is getting weaker. Every time I try to redirect backup... it goes somewhere else.

(feeling crazy)

I think I've... it's... locked three people in a turbolift and two more in the programmers' rest room.

RIKER

(indicates panel)

If that's reading right, there is no seal.

(beat)

Give me a lab interior image.

They both look at a viewscreen over the computer console, and to their amazement,

70 POV - VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

On which is clearly seen a very benign LAB INTERIOR.

RIKER (O.S.)

Magnify.

71 INSERT - BELL JAR

On the platform sits the bell jar container, within which is a relatively tranquil globular cluster of "rice grains," about the size of a golf ball, pulsing mildly. The PULSING is contained in the bell jar.

72 BACK TO SCENE

Riker touches his communicator.

RIKER

Captain, this is Riker.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

We see it too, Number One.

73 ANGLE - THE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

Suddenly, a BOLT of LIGHT shoots from the bell jar toward the Medical Lab computer console.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

(imperative)

Get that seal back up!

74 BACK TO SCENE

While the Engineer struggles:

ENGINEER

(a little scared)

No matter what I do, the energy goes somewhere else. What if it hits the Nursery... Or Sickbay... ?

RIKER

(nods)

Hold off.

(into com)

Impossible, Captain. We haven't got the power.

75 INT. ENTERPRISE - MAIN BRIDGE - ANGLES

The full complement, including Mandl, Luisa and Bensen -- all with eyes on the viewscreen. Suddenly, WE HEAR A DISSONANT TUNED NOISE trying to make itself intelligible.

75 CONTINUED:

DATA

The Universal Translator is  
coming on line.

The NOISE becomes something more recognizably VERBAL,  
though still unintelligible.

76 ANGLE TO MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

The beautiful, RADIATING rice ball in the Container,  
its LIGHTS PULSING IN SYNC with the SOUND. A TIRADE  
BEGINS, clumsy at first, but unmistakably angry.  
INTERCUT REACTIONS.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

Ugly... Ugly... Giants... Bags  
of Mostly Water...

PICARD

Bags of mostly water?

DATA

An accurate description, sir, of  
humans. You are, after all, over  
ninety per cent water, surrounded  
by a flexible container.

PICARD

(after reacting)

Do you understand me?

TRANSLATOR VOICE

We understand. We ask you be gone...  
We call... We talk... You not listen.

Riker ENTERS from the turbolift, hurrying to join his  
captain as:

PICARD

We didn't hear you. We come in  
peace.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

Ugly Bag of Mostly Water... we try  
at peace... you still not listen.

(getting clearer)

Bag in Dome on Sand of Home...  
we killed.

76 CONTINUED:

RIKER

It killed Malencon.

TROI

(telepathically)

We see and hear you now. We didn't know you were there. You are beautiful to us. All life is beautiful.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

Bag in dome did know. Made some of us die. Made us kill. War is now with you.

77 ANGLE - TO INCLUDE MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

The bell jar Image FADES, REPLACED by the featureless Velara III.

PICARD

Can you hear me?

As a reply, the ship BUFFETS and SHUDDERS.

PICARD

(continuing)

Duty stations! Report!

GEORDI

(checking console)

Restabilizing, sir.

78 ANGLE FAVORING PICARD

scanning the bridge, seeing the consoles LIGHT UP.

DATA

Sir...

PICARD

What is it, Data?

DATA

That chaos in the lab, when we were studying it... must have been the energy surge of a reproductive cycle.

(beat)

It is now a colony of single cells which organize as a computer.

78 CONTINUED:

PICARD

(nods)

More is stronger.

BAM. The ship is BUFFETED again, harder. OFF  
everyone's REACTION, WE:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

79 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental.  
We've stumbled on a life-form...

80 INT. MEDICAL LAB

on the bell jar and the golf ball cluster of "grains"  
contained within. There is a LIGHT FLICKER from the  
life-form as:

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

... biologically and  
psychologically difficult for  
us to fully understand.

(beat)

The only thing totally clear is  
that this microbrain, as we've  
come to call it, has declared war  
on us.

81 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - ANGLES (FORMERLY SCENE 83)

Everyone at their stations.

RIKER

Their range of influence appears  
to be concentrated in the Medical  
Lab, Captain.

TASHA

All non-essential personnel have  
been moved to the most distant  
areas of the ship, sir.

PICARD

Data -- any analysis of those  
bolts of light they emit?

81 CONTINUED:

DATA

That seems to be their method of reprogramming, Captain. Each bolt of light consists of negatively and positively charged ions. A series of program instructions, as it were.

(disturbed)

They seem to have a quicker rapport with our computers than we do.

WORF

What do you expect? They are computers.

PICARD

Have we disabled the Medical Lab computer console?

RIKER

Aye, sir, as soon as Data determined the microbrain's method of operation.

82 OMITTED

82A ANGLE

on Geordi and his console. The COLORS of his panel display are RUNNING UP AND DOWN the visible spectrum.

GEORDI

I am picking up a decrease in the infra-red intensity.

83 WIDER TO INCLUDE THE OTHERS (FORMERLY SCENE 85)

WORF

Maybe the life-form has reached its own energy limit.

BEVERLY

Or maybe this is not the end of it.

(at their looks)

With single-celled life-forms... at least organic ones, cell division can be preceded by a resting state.

83 CONTINUED:

RIKER

The calm before the storm.

PICARD

Let's use the calm. Medical Lab  
on main viewer.

Tasha moves to comply.

84  
thru OMITTED  
85

86 MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

WE CAN SEE THE bell jar on its pedestal in the Lab.  
The golf ball cluster of "grains" is BARELY FLICKERING.  
No rays, no bolts of light.

DATA

It does seem dormant.

PICARD

Lieutenant Yar - set coordinates  
to beam it back where it came  
from.

TASHA

(hits buttons, and:)  
Coordinates set.

PICARD

Energize!

She hits the button. WE GET the SOUND OF THE  
TRANSPORTER. The BEAM even COMES PART WAY toward the  
bell jar and its microbrain occupant. But the damn  
thing won't dematerialize.

87 NEW ANGLE

EXCLUDING the viewscreen. Riker reads a console.

RIKER

Transporter power has been  
redirected, sir. We are unable  
to affect it.

87 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Life-form or not... intelligent  
or not -- the safety of this ship  
and all on her are my primary  
responsibility.

(moment, and:)

Data -- evacuate the air from the  
Medical Lab. I want a vacuum in  
there.

Data punches in the command... reads his panel.

DATA

Environmental systems fail to  
respond to commands, Captain.  
It appears the microbrain has  
successfully interfaced with our  
computer.

Picard considers his alternatives.

PICARD

Suggestions?

(silence)

Anyone?

88 OMITTED

88A INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE - ESTABLISHING  
(FORMERLY SCENES 81 AND 82)

Picard, Data and Beverly are with Mandl, Luisa, and  
Bensen. The lounge viewscreen will eventually put  
referenced IMAGES ON A SCREEN.

PICARD

I need your help. We have  
communicated with the life-form  
discovered on Velara III.

MANDL

You have what?!

PICARD

It has told us that it attempted  
to communicate with you, and you  
ignored it.

MANDL

If it was trying to communicate  
with us, we didn't understand  
that.

88A CONTINUED:

BENSEN

We didn't try.

PICARD

What you were doing was so threatening to them that they killed your hydraulics engineer to stop it. They have declared a state of war.

MANDL

A state of war?!

PICARD

Yes, and we're on the defensive. I need your help. I have to find some way to fight them. We no longer have control of the Medical Lab, or the computer. At this moment they have the power to destroy this ship and everyone on it.

MANDL

Unbelievable. What can we do to help?

PICARD

They said you killed some of them. I need to know how.

MANDL

I -- I don't know.

PICARD

Exactly what was Malencon doing when he was killed?

Luisa responds.

LUISA

There is a very thin layer of highly saline water under the sandy topsoil. He was siphoning that off.

PICARD

Why would that kill some of them?

For a beat no one has an answer.

BEVERLY

Liquid supports life. Perhaps somehow, that saline water sustained them.

88A CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

It connected them.

LUISA

I don't understand.

BEVERLY

The microbrains are like our brain cells. Individually a cell has life -- but not intelligence -- yet when interconnected their combined intelligence is formidable.

LUISA

So that saline fluid is their circuitry.

PICARD

And to prevent its loss, they killed Malencon.

LUISA

(depressed)

If we had continued to remove the water... we would have destroyed them all.

PICARD

Reason enough for anyone to go to war.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Captain -- it's happening again!

89 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

PULL BACK from Main Viewer to SEE the recently dormant GOLF BALL starting to GLOW again. The GLOW is STEADY and POWERFUL. WE ALSO SEE A QUIVERING of the surface. But then the entire image is SHROUDED in LIGHT, OBSCURING OUR VIEW. The bell jar suddenly RUPTURES. The LIGHT DIMINISHES. Everyone is at their stations. Luisa, Bensen and Mandl are also present.

RIKER

If this keeps up, that thing will tear the Enterprise apart!

89 CONTINUED:

DATA

Captain -- sensors indicate the microbrain expends a tremendous amount of energy during its reproduction cycle. Yet, there is no discernible power drain from our own systems.

PICARD

Then what's feeding the damn thing!?

GEORDI

Data and I found traces of cadmium salts. Cadmium is a conduit for converting infra-red into electricity.

PICARD

Meaning?

DATA

Meaning the microbrains might be photoelectric.

PICARD

Okay, let's see if darkness will neutralize them. Kill the lights in the lab, Mr. La Forge. We can at least do that.

Geordi tries, but to no avail.

GEORDI

Sorry, Captain, can't do it by remote.

PICARD

Number One...

He's already dashing to the turbolift.

RIKER

On my way.

Riker EXITS. Luisa, eyes on the Main Viewer, moves close to Picard. As much to herself as to him:

89 CONTINUED: (2)

LUISA

(seeing it all now)

The creatures must have evolved  
at that narrow layer where the  
light got through the sand to the  
water... Drop the water a  
centimeter below the light  
penetration level and they starve.

90 INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE MEDICAL LAB

as Riker ARRIVES. He opens a wall panel near the door,  
finds the right switches.

RIKER

(into com)

Kill lab lights -- now!

91 INT. LAB - SIMULTANEOUSLY

The golf ball-sized microbrain FLICKERS SLIGHTLY. The  
LIGHTS GO OUT. In the resulting DARKNESS, all WE CAN  
SEE is the PULSATING WHITE GLOW of the microbrain.

92 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

All eyes on the Main Viewer. A beat, and:

TASHA

It's slowing down.

93 ANGLE - MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

The PULSING SLOWS. And seems to get DIMMER at the same  
time.

GEORDI (O.S.)

Getting dimmer, too.

Then, a surprise. SOUND from TRANSLATOR.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

We copy fine now... more light  
please...

94 BACK TO SCENE

favoring Picard as.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

Darkness death terrible. Go home  
to warm sand...

(finally)

War over.

Picard allows himself a smile, his first in a long  
time.

PICARD

We are happy to agree with you.

DISSOLVE TO:

95 INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE MEDICAL LAB

Riker looks into the darkened lab through the open  
doorway.

96 INT. MEDICAL LAB

Riker ENTERS in the DIM LIGHT.

RIKER

Riker to Transporter Chief. Pick  
up the coordinates of the bell  
jar in the Medical Lab for return  
to Velara III.

TRANSPORTER CHIEF'S COM VOICE

... Coordinates entered, sir.

RIKER

Riker to bridge. Captain, we're  
ready to beam it back to the  
planet.

97 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Data, Troi, Tasha, Geordi, Worf and Wesley are  
at their stations.

DATA

I wish we were able to learn more  
about them.

97 CONTINUED:

PICARD

In time, Mr. Data. When we're better prepared.

TROI

(to microbrain)

Our apologies.

PICARD

And our respect.

(then)

Lieutenant Yar...

TASHA

Coordinates set, sir.

PICARD

Energize!

The microbrain DEMATERIALIZES. As all watch:

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, stardate 41464.2.  
Declaring indefinite quarantine  
for the Velara System...

98 EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

... Returning to starbase with  
surviving Terraformers.

And then she's GONE.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END